

DIVINE MOTION

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## OUTLINE

### I. The Meaning and Need of Conservation.

#### A. Definitions and Explanation of Terms:

1. Motion as change.
2. Change as the production of an effect by a cause.
3. Creation as change from potency to act.
4. Creation belongs to God; production to the creature.

#### B. The Need:

1. Motion as presupposing a Prime Mover--God.
2. Causality as requiring a First Cause--God.
  - a. First Cause as producing the effect wholly.
  - b. Secondary Cause as producing the effect wholly.
3. Creation as continuing with the creature's existence is called Conservation.
  - a. Direct Conservation: God's power constantly exerted in favor of the creature.
  - b. Indirect Conservation: the working together of two causes to produce an effect.
4. Concurrence: the relationship of two total causes, the First Cause (God) and the secondary cause (creature), to produce a total effect.

### II. Concurrence or Divine Motion.

#### A. Kinds of Concurrence:

1. Previous: a determination of the First Cause impelling the secondary cause to operate.
2. Simultaneous: a communication of the entity of action and its effect to the secondary cause.

## B. Divine Motion as Simultaneous Concurrence.

### 1. Various Explanations of Concurrence.

- a. Occasionalism: God acts in all things; the action of the creature serves as the occasion for the operation.
- b. Pantheism: there is only one operation, that the divine. Creatures become absorbed in God.
- c. Molinism: secondary causes can act independent of the First Cause.
- d. Thomism: there exists a definite relationship of the secondary cause to the First Cause, both being true causes.

### 2. The manner whereby God works in every agent.

- a. The First Cause produces an effect as ens.
- b. The secondary cause produces an effect as tale ens.
- c. But the effect is produced primarily by God, secondarily by man as the instrumental cause.
- d. The effect is produced wholly by both causes.

### 3. Rejection of contrary views.

## III. Divine Motion and Human Freedom.

A. The Difficulty: the subordination of secondary causes to the First Cause. This subordination seems to destroy the freedom of the creature.

- 1. Thomistic Explanation: the First Cause communicates to the secondary cause the "mode" by which it acts freely.

### 2. Scriptural affirmation.

B. The Question of Moral Evil.

1. Sin as a negation, a defect.

2. Man as the cause of the sin; God the cause of the act in such a way that He is not the cause of the sin.

C. "How God concurs" is a saner view to take than "Whether God concurs" in seeking an understanding of the topic of Divine Motion.

1. Concurrence as one of the natural mysteries.

2. The importance of considering Concurrence as connatural to man's activities.

3. An oration as the fitting expression of this Divine Motion.

## DIVINE MOTION

There is an axiom in Scholastic Philosophy which states the principle that "nothing moves unless it is moved by something other than itself".<sup>1</sup> From our sense-experience we see that things move and we can consequently conclude that they move by virtue of some mover. By the "movement" which the mover produces in the thing moved is meant any transit, any change, from one state of being to another. Motion is most readily illustrated by local movement, that is, by the movement of bodily things in space. We find such in the rising and setting of the sun (as it is commonly spoken of), in the rustling of the leaves, in the darting fly, in the creeping clouds, in the heaving ocean. But this is not the only kind of motion. And we frequently observe a series of these changes effected by digestion causing another type of change, that from childhood into adulthood, for example.

Now, in these movements there is required both a mover and the thing moved. Not a great deal of attention will be needed to see that the mover and the thing moved cannot possibly be identified. As far as local movement is concerned the point is expressed in the physical law of inertia which tells us that bodies at rest tend to remain at rest until they are moved, and that bodies in motion remain in motion until they are stopped. What is true of local motion in bodies is true of change of quality or quantity and of all motion.<sup>2</sup>

It is obvious then that every mover is, in turn, moved by some other mover. Upon conceiving of such a series of movers our mind is forced to exclude the possibility of a regress to infinity in this series and naturally posits the necessity of an unmoved Prime Mover. Such a Prime

Mover would need to be "pure act" in order not to have a potency to be moved. In his Metaphysics, Aristotle considers being (among various ways) as actual and as potential.<sup>3</sup> Being as actual is existing being; being as potential is existible being. A thing is actually what it is; potentially what it may become. The potentiality of a being is either objective (capacity of an existing being for an act). An example of the former: the future chick which can come from a fertilized egg laid by the hen is said to be in objective potency. An example of the latter: water can become steam or ice depending on the degree of temperature affecting it. Or, this dynamite is said to be able to destroy some mountain.

Now, the more actual a thing is, the more perfect it is. In other words, the greater the actuality of a thing, the less is its capacity for being perfected. Or, the greater the actuality, the less the potentiality. As reason sees it, there must be a First Being that is entirely actual (Pure Act), with no perfectibility or potentiality about it. This we call God.<sup>4</sup> In the series of movers, each is the cause of the following mover and this same series is likewise said to be a series of efficient causes. Now, if the series of accidental movers requires a Prime Mover, then likewise does the series of efficient causes require an unaffected efficient First Cause. This we call God.<sup>5</sup>

In a being which is the Prime Mover and the First Cause, we have shown there to be an ability for acting "ad extra". To act on beings outside the active agent requires a power and since we understand God to be the Prime Mover and the First Cause, then He is said to have a power to act "ad extra".<sup>6</sup> Now, the power of acting on things outside the agent is a creative power of the Prime Cause. For the power of the Prime Cause

supposes nothing to empower it. For if it did it would be a contradiction to say that the creative power is the ability to produce something out of nothing. But, since God is the First Cause, then the divine power is a creative power. And, consequently, we find that the principal cause of creation is a cause which touches the thing under the aspect of being. Since creation is productio ex nihilo it is repugnant for there to be anything to do the creating except an uncreated Creator. This we call God, Who is said to be the Principal Cause of Creation.<sup>7</sup> Now, whatever is created is inferior to the Creator, for it is produced from nothing and began to exist while the Creator was never produced but is His own existence. And it is repugnant to consider the possibility of the Creator creating a being which is superior to the First Cause. This would demand non-existence to have always existed--which is a contradiction. And what is inferior to the Creator is dependent upon it for it is the cause of its very being, without which it could not exist. Saint Thomas Aquinas argues that the same cause which gives perfection gives being and this belongs to government. Now, God is the cause, not of some particular kind of being, but of the whole universal being. And since there can be nothing which is not created by God, neither can there be anything which is not subject to His government.<sup>8</sup>

Since the word "creation" in its passive sense expresses the term or object of the creative act, or the object in its entitative dependence on the Creator, it follows that, as this dependence is essential and hence inamissible, the creative act once placed is co-extensive in duration with the creature's existence. As it continues with the existence of the creature it is called conservation: an act which is nothing else than the unceasing influx of the creative cause upon the existence of the creature.<sup>9</sup>

Conservation, then, as it applies to God's action, will mean the creative act preserving in existence the creatures it has produced from nothing. Now, the conservation which God exercises over things in the universe will be both indirect and direct.<sup>10</sup> It is indirect insofar as God's action will be required to prevent obstacles from interfering with the continued existence of a creature; but also always and essentially direct, for the creature will continue to exist only as long as God's enduring act of creation upholds it.<sup>11</sup>

It is not only to conserve the existence of things in the universe that the influence of the creative act must be constantly exerted, but also to make possible the activity of created causes. God is First Cause both in the sense that He gives origin to all other things, and the further sense that He is the source of all causality in the universe and is active in all causation. The activity of God in the operation of all finite or second causes is called the divine co-operation or concurrence.<sup>12</sup>

Many of the Deists attribute to the world a complete independence of God in its operation now that it has been in motion since the time of the initial creation by God. The opinion concerning the activity of human creatures is that their powers merely evolved since that first creation. But, God's power is required at every moment to sustain creatures in being and to concur with them in their activities. Creatures are true causes and produce true effects. But, since they are effects of a cause superior to them, they are only secondary causes in themselves. God is the First Cause since He needs no other cause to operate; man is a secondary cause since he can produce effects although he himself is an effect of the First Cause. This ability to effect is derived from the First Cause and dependent upon it and hence it is the sustaining of



creatures in existence that we understand by the term "conservation" and the co-operation with the creature's activity that we understand by the term "concurrence".<sup>13</sup> It is the purpose of the writer to discuss concurrence in this paper.

The Scholastics ordinarily use the term "concurrence" to signify a relationship of the secondary causes to the First Cause. For them, concurrence denotes the relationship of two causes which concur with one another in producing one effect. A partial cause produces only a partial effect while a total cause produces the whole effect. In other words, to concur means "to run alongside of" or "to go along with"; as one horse concurs with another in pulling a cart up the hill. But it is a demonstrable truth that in creatural actions, the creature is the total cause of the effect, and in another way, God is the total cause of the effect. God and creature do not conspire together to produce the effect (each contributing a part of the efficacy); but rather, God as the First Cause, and the creature as the secondary cause, produce the effect, each wholly but in a way different from the other.<sup>14</sup>

Hence, in this treatment of the topic of concurrence, the word "concurrence" is better used to signify the relationship of two total causes, the First Cause and the secondary cause.<sup>15</sup> We can truly say that both God as First Cause produces an effect wholly and is thus a total cause, and man as secondary cause produces an effect wholly and is thus a total cause. For the sake of example we have a whole letter as it comes from the writer and the same whole letter as it comes from the pen. Man is the principal cause owing to the fact that he acts in virtue of his own power; while the pen is the instrumental cause since it does not act in virtue of its own power but only insofar as it is moved by the

principal cause. The principal cause is regarded as first when it produces an effect independently of all other causes (this is God alone), or as secondary when it is itself dependent on the prime cause (this is the class into which we say creatures fall). But when we think of God as co-operating physically and immediately with second causes, we must not represent this to be as if God were the partial cause of the effect. God cannot be a partial cause. God is the complete cause of the effect in the order of first causality, while the second cause is the total cause in the order of second causality. Each is exerting complete causality in its own order.<sup>16</sup>

Saint Thomas reasons thus: "We must understand that one thing can be said to be the cause of the action of another in many ways. In one way because it gives to another the power of operating . . . and in this way God is the cause of all the operations of nature, because He has given to all natural things the powers through which they can operate . . . . And this He has done as one who continually upholds such powers in being; for He is the cause of the powers conferred, not only as far as their becoming is concerned, as a producer is, but also as far as concerns their being, so that God can be said to be the cause of the action inasmuch as He gives the natural power and preserves it in being. And because nothing moves or acts of itself unless it is the unmoved mover, a thing is said to be the cause of the action of another in a third way inasmuch as it moves the other to action. And here we do not mean by giving or conserving the active power, but by applying that power to action, just as a man is the cause of an incision made by a knife because he applies the sharpness of the knife to the incision . . . . (And because following the series of moved movers will lead us at length

to God as the Unmoved Mover) it follows that God is the cause of the action of every natural agent as one moving and applying the power of the agent to action."<sup>17</sup>

Concurrence can be considered as: (1) previous, when the power of God communicates to the creature the entity of the operation and its effect.<sup>19</sup> The force of simultaneous concurrence falls directly upon the effect, that is, on the operation exercised. Simultaneous concurrence is to be considered on the part of the First Cause. This is Divine Causality which communicates to the secondary cause the entity of action and its effect. God communicates the actions and effects as coming from the secondary cause and depending upon it. On the part of the secondary cause, simultaneous concurrence is said to be that action of the secondary cause and its effects, as they are communicated by the First Cause.<sup>20</sup> Hence, this Divine Causality comes to be the Divine Concurrence, or the Divine Power actively exercised upon the creature (the secondary cause) to elicit operations, to determine and to direct them, and to support them in being, in such a way that these operations are wholly ascribable to the creature as their secondary cause, and wholly ascribable to the Creator as their sole First Cause.<sup>21</sup> For the Scholastics, then, simultaneous concurrence is said to mean conservation from the point of view of causality. God creates and sustains the secondary causes and thereby concurs with every action produced by those causes. Thus, the foregoing can be summarized into:

#### GOD CREATES AND SUSTAINS THE SECONDARY CAUSES.

Now, there remains the task of considering the fact of this Divine Concurrence, the action of God, or better yet, the Divine Motion (as it is sometimes called).

From the very outset of our attempt to treat of simultaneous concurrence it is necessary to emphasize the fact that this Divine Motion is connatural with act. It is not a question of inaugurating something new but merely viewing what naturally exists. There is no strain of agents. But, by the very fact that God is Pure Act, He sustains all things in being and hence it can be said that from that act all things arise. Simply, then, God sustains our every action or concurs with us when and where we do act.

As has been shown, nothing can act except insofar as it is in act or is actual; it cannot operate unless it be equipped to operate, determined in its operation.<sup>22</sup> This brings out the dependence of things on God, the First and Necessary Being, because creatures are secondary and thereby contingent. If these secondary beings depend so intimately upon God, can we say that God moves them in all their actions? Sacred Scripture seems to favor the view that He does for Saint Paul is quoted as saying: "He worketh all in all".<sup>23</sup> In another passage he states: "For in Him we move and live and have our being".<sup>24</sup> Isaias is quoted as saying: "Thou hast wrought all our works in us".<sup>25</sup> Among the various theorists, we find the Occasionalists, who hold the view that God acts in all things; hence, even God gives heat, fire being only the occasion. But to our minds secondary causes would no longer be said to be real causes if this were true, and they could not act. This powerlessness would prove that God was unable to communicate action and life to them-- which implies lack of power in the Creator. The Occasionalists' reply to the question concerning what the secondary causes do is that they are not properly the cause of anything. But, we see that they are indeed the proper cause of the becoming and consequently of the individuality

of their effect. Then, there are the Pantheists, who maintain that there is only one operation (the divine). Since operation follows being and the mode of operation the mode of being, there would be only one being. Creatures would be absorbed in God, according to this theory. The Molinist tenet is that secondary causes can act without Divine Premotion. God knows just how man will act in given circumstances, and according to this knowledge He concurs by an efficacious and determinate concurrence which comes into actuality simultaneously with man's free action to support it and to give it being. God premoves all creatures insofar as He has created the will of man for good in general, has impelled it infallibly (not necessarily) in the direction of such good, and in every exercise of human choice He allures it by moral influence toward the actual good. Man's actions are determined by man himself insofar as he chooses the means towards the general and pre-determined end or universal good. In regard to what the secondary causes do, the Molinists insist that these causes exert their causality without the need of being premoved by the Primary Cause. But, this is refuted by the evidence that the secondary causes exert their causality only under the influence of the First Cause, which applies them to their act. And this is so because of itself the secondary cause cannot reduce itself from potency to act. It must be moved or applied to act.

The Thomistic answer to the question whether God moves all secondary causes in their actions can be found within the basic principles of moderate realism and analogy of being. God alone is Being itself; the creature a composite of essence and existence. But, operation follows being; the mode of operation the mode of being. Therefore, only God is self-active; the creature acts as it exists, but only by God's help.<sup>26</sup>

And so, from the foregoing can the following be concluded:

GOD CREATES AND SUSTAINS THE SECONDARY CAUSES.

BUT, SECONDARY CAUSES CAN PRODUCE TRUE EFFECTS.

Saint Thomas outlines three ways by which God works in every agent.<sup>27</sup>

First, as an end. For every operation is for the sake of some good and every good participates in the likeness to the Supreme Good. Whatever is made by God is made for the highest good. But God is the highest good. Therefore, whatever God makes is made for God. Secondly, as the First Cause of every agent. No agent can act unless it be given existence from the first agent. Nothing is moved except by something other than itself. But God is the unmoved Prime Mover. Therefore, God moves all things. And thirdly, God not only moves all things to operate but He gives to each creature its nature to act and preserves this in each creature. All effects have existence. God is existence and thereby gives existence to other things that are. Therefore, God is the root of existence in creatures. Thus, God works intimately in all things. Concerning the question what the secondary causes do, the Thomists teach that they are the cause of some action inasmuch as this latter is this individual action. To quote the Angelic Doctor: "Of two things in the same species one cannot directly cause the other's form as such (of such a species), since it would then be the cause of its own form, since both forms have the same nature; but it cannot be the cause of this form inasmuch as it is in matter. In other words, it may be the cause that this matter receives this form. And this is to be the cause of becoming, as when man begets man and fire causes fire. Thus it is the cause of the becoming of the effect and not directly of its being".<sup>28</sup> The secondary

cause is therefore the instrumental cause of the being precisely as being of its effect, which under this aspect depends directly on God. Can we say, then, as do the Occasionalists, that the secondary cause is not properly the cause of anything? Not at all, for it is the proper cause of the becoming and consequently of the individuality of its effect.

Must we admit that the Molinists are correct in saying that the secondary cause exerts its own causality without the need of its being premoved by the first cause? No, for that is impossible. The secondary cause exerts its own causality only under the influence of the first cause, which applies it to act. To clarify: the instrument produces its proper effect only because it is applied to produce this, and it produces its instrumental or higher effect only because it is ennobled by the principal agent. The pen leaves its imprint on the paper only because it is moved by the hand, and it leaves an artistic imprint because it is manipulated by an artist, who alone knows how to move it with artistic effect. Since of itself the secondary cause cannot reduce itself from potency to act, it must be moved or applied to act and for this reason it depends upon the First Cause.<sup>29</sup>

And now, in answering the question whether God is the cause of every created action, we say that He is and that He consequently concurs with the actions of creatures. Again, Saint Thomas offers the manner whereby God does concur.<sup>30</sup> First, He has created the creatures or the secondary causes, thereby giving them the power or faculty to act. Secondly, He preserves this power in the creatures by sustaining the creatures in being. Thirdly, applies this power to action: He moves it to act. This is not a bestowal or preservation of the actual power but rather the application of the faculty to action. And, fourthly, He moves it as

the principal agent moves its instrument so as to produce in the effect what is beyond the proper power of the instrument to produce--or the being itself of the action. Being is that which in all things is most profound and most universal--the effect which belongs properly to God. Being is the most common of all effects--the first effect and more intimate than all other effects. Hence, nothing acts to produce being except by God's power. Every participated absolute perfection (absolutely simple), such as liberty or intellect, requires for its actualization God's intervention.<sup>31</sup> The reason is, as Saint Thomas has it: "a more perfect order prevails in spiritual beings than in corporeal beings. But, in corporeal beings all motion is caused by the Prime Mover. Therefore, in spiritual things, it needs be that every movement of the intellect or will be caused by the first will or the Will of God, which follows His Divine Intellect."<sup>32</sup>

By way of summary, then, we look to the order of effects. These manifest the order of the causes which produced them. In an effect from a secondary cause one discerns an effect proper to the First Cause.<sup>33</sup> The reason is that God exists of Himself; gives existence where it is not of itself. Every effect of a secondary cause has existence, not of itself but given by what is or has existence. The secondary cause produces the effect as this or that sort of thing (tale ens) while the First Cause produces it as existence (ens). Man touches a thing primarily by touching it as tale ens; God primarily touches it as ens and secondarily (through the action of the secondary cause) as tale ens. Hence, every effect of a secondary cause is also an effect of the First Cause and both causes are said to be total: God as the total First Cause; creatures as the total secondary cause. Occasionalism suppresses created causality. Molinism



destroys the universality of the primary agent. It views the first and secondary causes as two partial causes, being co-ordinated by their effect. But, Thomism affirms both created and universal causality--the first and secondary causes are both total causes, one being subordinate to the other.<sup>34</sup> And so, from what has been established in the preceding pages can the following argument be formulated:

GOD CREATES AND SUSTAINS THE SECONDARY CAUSES.

BUT, SECONDARY CAUSES CAN PRODUCE TRUE EFFECTS.

THEREFORE, GOD, BY SUSTAINING THE ACTIONS OF THE SECONDARY CAUSES, CONCURS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH CREATURES.

But, is one to conclude that this subordination of secondary causes to the First Cause does not allow freedom on the part of the secondary cause? On the contrary, experience teaches that creatures are free to act, thus are said to have certain liberty. The free mode of our human acts not only is safeguarded but is communicated to us by God as the First Cause of it in us. By this causality of the free action in the secondary cause, the First Cause does not take away the causality but rather gives to the secondary cause that mode by which it acts freely. Since the very act of free will is traced to God as to cause, it necessarily follows that everything happening from exercise of free will must be subject to divine providence. This is made evident from Thomas Aquinas's reasoning: "Since every agent acts for an end, the ordering of effects toward that end extends as far as the causality of the first agent extends. Wherefore it happens that in the effects of an agent something takes place which has no reference to the end, because the effect comes from a cause other than and outside of the intention of the agent. But the causality of God, Who is the first agent, extends to all being, not

only as constituent principles of species, but also to the individualizing principles; not only of things corruptible but also of things incorruptible. Hence, all things that exist in whatsoever a manner are necessarily directed by God towards some end."<sup>35</sup> God, by moving free causes, does not deprive their actions of liberty but He is the cause of their freedom to act as causes.

Now, "what is free is cause of itself", as Aristotle says.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it seems that what is moved by another is not free. But, God moves the will, for Sacred Scripture itself states: "It is God who works in you both to will and to accomplish".<sup>37</sup> And so, man seems not to have free-will. But, Saint Thomas clearly shows how God cooperates with man without destroying his free-will. He says: "Free-will is the cause of its own movement, because by his free-will man moves himself to act. But it does not necessarily belong to liberty that what is free should be the first cause of itself, as neither for one thing to be the cause of another need it be the first cause. God, therefore, is the First Cause, Who moves causes both natural and voluntary. And just as by moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so by moving voluntary causes He does not deprive their actions of being voluntary: but rather He is the cause of this very thing in them; for He operates in each according to its own nature."<sup>38</sup>

It is evident that secondary causes have motio ab intrinseco for acting outside themselves and yet not perfectly clear how it is that God moves them. Saint Thomas says that when anything moves itself, this does not exclude its being moved by another, from which it has this power to move itself. Thus, it is not repugnant to liberty that God is the cause of the free act of the will.<sup>39</sup> Liberty is not destroyed

because the divine causality produces in us and with us the free mode of our act, so that our will, under the influence of the Divine Motion and the indifference of our judgement, at the end of deliberation, retains the power of not willing, for its own scope extends beyond the finite good which it chooses. "The Divine Will extends not only to the doing of something by the thing which it moves, but also to its being done in a way which is fitting to the nature of that thing. And therefore, it would be more repugnant to the Divine Motion for the will to be moved of necessity (that is, without being in potentiality for its opposite), which is not fitting to its nature, than for it to be moved freely, which is becoming to its nature."<sup>40</sup> In willing, the free human agent cooperates with the divine action and determines itself as secondary cause although it is moved to determine itself by the First Cause.<sup>41</sup>

There remains a final objection. If the Divine Motion is required for man to determine himself, and it is infallibly although freely followed by its effect, the sinner who actually does not will what is good seems to be determined by God Himself to will what is evil. Aside from treating what part God's grace plays in directing man to the choice of good, Saint Thomas answers the objection. "The act of sin is both a being and an act; and in both respects it is from God. Every being, whatever the mode of its being, must be derived from the First Being. Every action is caused by something existing in act, since nothing produces an action save insofar as it is in act; and every being in act is reduced to the First Act (God) as to its cause, Who is act by His essence. Therefore, God is the cause of every action insofar as it is an action. But sin denotes a being and an action with a defect. This defect is from a created defectible cause (free-will), as falling away from the

order of the First Agent (God). This defect is not attributed to God as its cause, but to free-will: even as the defect of limping is attributed to a crooked leg as its cause, but not to the motive power which nevertheless causes whatever movement there is in the limping. Accordingly, God is the cause of the act of sin, but He is not the cause of the sin, because He does not cause the act to have a defect."<sup>42</sup>

The Divine Motion does not surprise the innocent man, who would find himself posed between good and evil, so as to incline him to evil. God never determines the material act of sin unless the creature has already inclined itself to what formally constitutes sin. He moves the wills according to their dispositions; consequently, He moves to the physical act of sin only when the will is already badly disposed and demanding, so to speak, to be thus moved.

This becomes even clearer when hearing Thomas's reply to the objection that "God cannot be the cause of sin since sin is a negation". The response is in part as follows: "Not only the act, but also the defect, is reduced to man as its cause, which defect consists in man not being subject to Whom he ought to be, although he does not intend this principally. Wherefore man is the cause of the sin; while God is cause of the act, in such a way, that nowise is He the cause of the defect accompanying the act, so that He is not the cause of the sin".<sup>43</sup> Let us take a sin in which the responsibility is quite evident, a sin of malice, such as that of Judas. He disposes himself for it and takes pleasure in it beforehand. The Lord says to him: "That which thou dost, do quickly".<sup>44</sup>

The Lord neither ordains, nor advises, but permits the accomplishment of the predetermined crime, although He must permit this evil while disapproving of it. Before sinning, the sinner himself refuses the light

and grace coming to him from God. "They have said to God: Depart from us. We desire not the knowledge of the ways."<sup>45</sup> "They have been rebellious to the light."<sup>46</sup> It is also said of the sinner in the Psalms: "He would not understand that he might do well."<sup>47</sup> Thus, the material element of the evil action which is itself good, is indeed ascribable to the Premotion of God; the formal element of the evil action (that is, that which makes an action evil) is ascribable solely to the bad will of man, so that God is not even its accidental cause. The same sunlight which makes damp earth hard, makes hard wax soft. The same object is reflected in a clear mirror as beautiful, and in a faulty mirror as distorted and ugly. In a somewhat analogous manner, the same Divine Movement, and the one action to which it infallibly moves the free-will, is morally good or evil according as the free-will is well or poorly disposed, that is, according as the free-will which is moved to the action measures up or falls short. Inasmuch as the free-will measures up to the possibilities of reflecting and expressing the force of the Divine Premotion, the result is good, and finds its true and total cause in God, even as it finds its true and total secondary cause in the will itself. Inasmuch as the free-will freely falls short of reflecting and expressing the true force of Divine Premotion, the result is moral evil, and its only cause is the bad disposition of the free-will itself.

Although the topic of Divine Motion is a somewhat controversial question, it will be good to remember that all the disputes agree upon the fact and the necessity of Concurrence in human acts; all teach the requisite efficacy of God in every creatural operation; all admit the true freedom of choice with which the human will is endowed. The question is not whether

God does or does not concur in the free operations of man, but rather how God concurs. It is connatural that there should be a concurring force in man's activities as well as in the activities of all other creatures, but just how this Divine Motion affects the action cannot be properly demonstrated. Rather, it is one of the natural mysteries. However, an expression of this natural explanation can be found in the oration at the end of Psalm 150 in the Gratiarum Actio Post Missam:

Direct, O Lord, our actions by Thy holy inspiration,  
and carry them on by Thy gracious assistance that  
every prayer and work of ours may begin with Thee  
and by Thee be happily ended, through Christ our  
Lord. Amen.<sup>48</sup>

## NOTES

1 - To act supposes existence and in order to receive existence a being must be potentially capable to act. Action supposes motion, which is passage from one state to another, a reduction from potency to act. And nothing can be reduced from potency to act unless by something that is in act. Hence, the principle: "Quidquid movetur, ab alio movetur".

2 - Paul J. Glenn, Theodicy, pp. 61-62.

3 - Aristotle, Metaphysica, Book IX, chap. 1, 1046 a; chap. 3, 1047 b; and chap. 8, 1050 b.

4 - Celestine N. Bittle, O.M.Cap., The Domain of Being, p. 60.

5 - Joseph Gredt, O.S.B., Elementa Philosophiae, vol. 2, p. 194; and St. Thomas, Summa Theologica, I, q. 2, a. 3. By "First Cause" is meant one whose causality is absolutely independent of any other cause or being, and on which all other causality depends. This is God because God is the uncaused Cause of all things. Since He is the source of all being, He must be independent of all beings in all His attributes. And since all beings owe their essence and existence to Him, their causality is ultimately dependent on Him.

6 - Joseph Gredt, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 240.

7 - Idem, p. 243.

8 - Summa Theol., I, q. 103, a. 5.

9 - F.P. Siegfried, "Creation", The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 4, p. 470.

10 - Summa Theol., I, q. 104, a. 1.

11 - John F. McCormick, S.J., Scholastic Metaphysics, p. 215.

12 - Idem, p. 218.

- 13 - P.J. Toner, "God", The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 6, p. 615.
- 14 - Paul J. Glenn, op. cit., p. 266.
- 15 - Joseph Gredt, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 246.
- 16 - John F. McCormick, S.J., op. cit., p. 221.
- 17 - St. Thomas, Q.Q. Disp. de Potentia, q. 3, a. 7.
- 18 - This is the substance of the tenet of physical premotion as distinct from Divine Premotion.
- 19 - Joseph Gredt, O.S.B., op. cit., p. 247.
- 20 - Joseph Gredt, O.S.B., loc. cit.
- 21 - Paul J. Glenn, op. cit., p. 267.
- 22 - "Nihil agit nisi secundum quae est in actu, patitur vero secundum quod est in potentia".
- 23 - I Cor. 12:6.
- 24 - Acts 17:28.
- 25 - Is. 26:12.
- 26 - Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., God: His Existence and His Nature, vol. 2, pp. 144-152.
- 27 - Summa Theol., I, q. 105, a.5.
- 28 - Idem, I, q. 104, a. 1.
- 29 - R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., loc. cit.
- 30 - Q.Q. Disp. de Potentia, loc. cit.
- 31 - R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., loc. cit.
- 32 - Summa Contra Gentes, III, cap. 89.
- 33 - Paul J. Glenn, op. cit., p. 269.
- 34 - R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., op. cit., vol. 2, p. 150.
- 35 - Summa Theol., I, q. 22, a. 2.
- 36 - Aristotle, Metaphysica, Book I, chap. 2, 982 b.



37 - Philip. 2:13.

38 - Summa Theol., I, q. 83, a. 1 ad 3um.

39 - St. Thomas, De Malo, q. 6, a. 1 ad 3um.

40 - Summa Theol., I, II, q. 10, a. 4 ad 1um.

41 - R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., op. cit., vol. 2, p. 359.

42 - Summa Theol., I, II, q. 79, a. 2.

43 - Idem, ad 2um.

44 - Jn. 13:27.

45 - Job 21:14.

46 - Job 24:13.

47 - Ps. 35:4.

48 - Actiones nostras, quaesumus, Domine, aspirando praeveni et  
adjuvando proseguere: ut cuncta nostra oratio et operatio a te semper  
incipiat, et per te coepta finiatur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

## SUMMARY

The act of creation is needed not only to give origin to creatures, but also to continue their existence. As continuing the existence of creatures it is called "conservation". The effect of conservation may be had either by removing what would interfere with continued existence, or by continuing the act on which the existence of the creature depends. In the first case the conservation is called indirect; in the second direct. God's conservation must be both, but especially it must be direct, for no creature can continue to exist without the constant influence of God's power exerted in its favor. Co-operation or concurrence is the working together of two causes in the production of an effect. As the creature cannot exist or continue to exist without the influence of God's power, so it cannot act without the same influence. But the activity of the first cause in nature does not make second causes superfluous, for through their activity the order of the universe is established. The free will requires to be moved by God and cannot act without His co-operation; but this does not destroy freedom, because the premotion is not predetermining. God's co-operation must be had even for actions in which moral evil is found; but this does not make God the author of evil. The action insofar as it is a positive reality is good, and this is what has God's co-operation. Insofar as the action is evil, this is a privation of reality in the action and is due to the failure of the second cause. God's co-operation with actions in which there is moral evil means that He provides the conditions that make such actions possible, that is, He permits them.

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