

Fr. Norberto del Prado, OP (1852 - 1918)

Summary

In order to plumb the depths of the riches of St. Thomas, a lifetime is not enough. In our efforts to understand and appreciate St. Thomas, it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel every generation. Plumbing the depths of St. Thomas' teaching is the composite work of generations and generations along the centuries. Some in this great tradition of Thomists are unrepeatable and therefore perennially relevant. One such author is, without a doubt, Fr. Norberto Del Prado.

Fr. Del Prado is not known as much as he should be. In my limited sphere of influence, I would like to contribute, with this modest tribute to Fr. Del Prado, to his rediscovery. It is my sincere hope that our readers will be positively influenced by Del Prado's theological method of unconditional submission to GOD and absolute truth as well as by his loyalty to St. Thomas, even on points that are not commonly shared by Thomas' opponents (for example, the efficaciousness of grace and physical premotion). Particularly worthy of marvel is the way Del Prado sees these points as conclusions contained already in the fundamental and ever valid philosophical and theological principles of Thomism. Del Prado reaches the conclusions of St. Thomas, in a vision that comes from above, as it were. His is an angelic vision: seeing the most particular conclusions of Thomas as contained already virtually in Thomas' fundamental principles. I say it is an angelic vision because it is the angels, who, by their simple concepts, penetrate to the very depths of reality, even to the most minute details.

Resumo

Para explorar as profundezas das riquezas de Sto. Tomás, uma vida inteira não é suficiente. Em nossos esforços para entender e apreciar sua doutrina, não é necessário reinventar a roda a cada geração. Explorar as profundezas do ensinamento de Sto. Tomás é o trabalho composto de gerações e gerações ao longo dos

séculos. Alguns nessa grande tradição de tomistas são irrepetíveis e, portanto, perenemente relevantes. Um desses autores é, sem dúvida, o Pe. Norberto Del Prado.

O Pe. Del Prado não é tão conhecido quanto deveria ser. Em minha limitada esfera de influência, gostaria de contribuir, com este modesto tributo ao Pe. Del Prado, para sua redescoberta. É minha sincera esperança que nossos leitores sejam positivamente influenciados pelo método teológico do Pe. Del Prado de submissão incondicional a DEUS e à verdade absoluta, bem como por sua lealdade a Sto. Tomás, mesmo em pontos que não são comumente compartilhados pelos seus oponentes (por exemplo, a eficácia da graça e a premoção física). Particularmente digno de admiração é o modo como o Pe. Del Prado vê esses pontos como conclusões já contidas nos princípios filosóficos e teológicos fundamentais e sempre válidos do tomismo. O Pe. Del Prado chega às conclusões de Sto. Tomás numa visão que vem do alto, por assim dizer. Sua visão é angelical: ver as conclusões mais particulares como contidas já virtualmente nos princípios fundamentais de Sto. Tomás. Digo que é uma visão angelical porque são os anjos que, por meio de seus conceitos simples, penetram nas profundezas da realidade, até mesmo nos detalhes mais minuciosos.

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Biography¹

Events of His Life

Born in San Martín de Lorío (Asturias), Fr. Del Prado studied at the Dominican convent of Ocaña and finished his ecclesiastical studies at the convent of Santo Domingo in Manila, where he began to teach philosophy and theology. In 1875, he was named professor of humanities at the

¹ Cf. Laviana Town Hall website, “Fray Norberto Del Prado”, <http://www.ayto-laviana.es/detallePersonajes.php?id=5>, last accessed on 25-05-2015. See also Pedro Lumbreras, OP, *El P. Norberto del Prado de la Orden de Predicadores 1852-1918*, Consoc. S. Pauli, Friburgi Helv., 1919, pp. 6-8.

College of St. John the Lateran in the Philippines. In 1878, he became part of the teaching body of the university. The same year he received a master's² and a doctorate in philosophy. He received a master's³ in theology in 1886 from the University of St. Thomas (Manila) together with a chair in moral theology. He received a doctorate in theology from the same university in 1887⁴. In 1890 he was sent back to Spain (Cádiz) because of frail health, and from there was sent to the then recently founded University of Freiburg in Switzerland, where he was a professor of moral theology and later dogmatic theology from 1899 till he died in 1918. There he established himself as a philosopher, theologian and speaker.

What Was He Like Personally?

He was an extremely pious man, silent in demeanor. He celebrated Mass every day and attended a second Mass as a thanksgiving. He prayed the whole 15 decades of the rosary daily. He would make several visits to the Blessed Sacrament every day. He used to pray before giving his lectures⁵. In a discourse for an academic ceremony, Fr. Del Prado makes known his total consecration God with a principle (principles are a major part of his style, as we shall see): “*¡Dios! hé ahí el principio, y el medio y el término del verdadero y único progreso ... todo lo que nos conduzca á Dios, es bueno, es progresar; y todo lo que nos aleje de Él, es positivamente malo, es retroceder.*”⁶

For a long time, out of humility, he would not sign the articles he wrote for the magazine *El Ssmo. Rosario*⁷. He took his teaching duties very seriously and dedicated his full energy to them. For this reason, any articles and books he authored were written only during vacation time, never

² Thesis: I. *Principia substantiae corporeae sunt materia prima et forma substantialis*; II. *Dantur criteria veritatis seu motiva ex se infallibilia pro iudicio certo efformando*. The doctorate seems to have been a continuation of the same thesis chosen for the licentiate.

³ Thesis: I. *Deus est omnino immutabilis*; II. *Concilium Generale, confirmatum auctoritate Romani Pontificis, certam fidem facit catholicorum dogmatum*. Again, the doctorate seems to have been a continuation of the topic chosen for the licentiate.

⁴ LUMBRERAS, p. 7.

⁵ Cf. R. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *Grace*, Herder, St. Louis/London, 1952, p. 427. See also LUMBRERAS, p. 12 and 19.

⁶ *Discurso leído en la apertura anual de los estudios de la Real y Pontificia Universidad de Santo Tomás de Manila el día 3 de julio de 1882, imprenta del Real Colegio de Santo Tomás, Manila, p. 5.*

⁷ LUMBRERAS, p. 12

during the school year.⁸ Hear his extremely serious appraisal of what it means to be a teacher: “*Nada hay, señores, digno de mayores alabanzas que el aplicarse al estudio de la verdad para darla despues a conocer a los demas; así como tampoco nada es merecedor de más graves castigos que difundir el error, descarriando las inteligencias y pervirtiendo los corazones.*”⁹ (*Discurso*, p. 5)

His style was simple, yet had at the same time a linguistic beauty (especially when he communicated in Spanish). His manner of presentation was full of conviction, solemn, and magisterial; he avoided anything trivial. For example, he would begin his course on Mystical Theology not with theory, nor with organizational tips, much less with anything mundane, but like this: “*Apostolus Paulus, stans in medio Areopagi, dixit: Quaerere Deum si forte attrectent eum, aut inveniant, quamvis non longe sit ab uno quoque nostrum. In Ipso enim vivimus et movemur et sumus.*”¹⁰

He used many helpful comparisons in order to explain his thought. His personality and doctrine will come to life better as we go through some of his most important works.

Principles

“[Fr. Del Prado] was an eminent metaphysician who viewed the whole treatise on The One God in this single principle: ‘In God alone essence and existence are identical’”¹¹. The whole scope of his monumental work, *De Veritate Fundamentali Philosophiae Christianae*, was to expound this principle as the foundation of St. Thomas’ metaphysics, as one can see looking at the division of the work:

- I. *De reali substantiae et esse compositione in omnibus quae sub Primo Ente sunt*
- II. *De fundamento primae divisionis entis realis in Ens per essentiam et in ens per participationem*¹²

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹ *Discurso*, p. 5.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹¹ GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *ibid.*, footnote 45.

¹² This seems to be one of the first serious studies on participation in St. Thomas. The term *participation* appears throughout the work, as it is key in explaining Del Prado’s “fundamental principle”.

III. De Ente per essentiam, quod est Deus

IV. De ente per participationem, quod est creatura

V. De ipsa veritate fundamentali Philosophiae Christianae relate ad Sacram Doctrinam

One might dismiss his calling this principle (in God alone essence and existence are identical) the “*veritas **fundamentalis***” as rationalistic, *a priori* thinking. Fr. Del Prado refutes such an understanding by explaining that it is not the most basic truth epistemologically (*in via inventionis*: i.e., it is not the first judgment *in our knowledge [in the temporal sense]*) but rather in the order of exposition (*in ordine expositionis*: causal foundation for other judgments):

[Hoc principium est] veritas nimirum infinitarum fere veritatum semina suo veluti gremio concludens, ita quod, licet ***non sit prima in via inventionis***, ex illa tamen iam cognita[.] praecipue Philosophiae Christianae veritates enascuntur et profluunt; ***veritas porro prima in via iudicii***, eo quod inter causas altiores scientificae cognitionis summum videtur occupare locum.”¹³

The true notion of God, expressed synthetically in this principle, in its turn, not only illumines the treatise of natural theology, but, ultimately, all of philosophy. In the name of St. Thomas’ philosophy, Del Prado affirms that this true notion of God “*refulget quasi sol, omnes philosophiae*

¹³ Norberto DEL PRADO, *De Veritate Fundamentali Philosophiae Christianae*, Consoc. S. Pauli, Friburgi Helv., 1911, p. XLIV, emphasis ours. This fact prohibits one from taking the fundamental principle’s virtually-containing-the-whole-treatise-on-The One-God to mean that the science of natural theology would be contained in this principle as in a cause **sufficient of itself** to produce all the conclusions of this science. It is, in fact, *Scotus* who teaches such a report between the principles of a particular science (we note that each particular science, for Scotus, treats of a particular **species** of beings, not *genera*) and all the conclusions of that science (cf. Leo J. Elders, *La Metafisica del Essere in San Tommaso d’Aquino*, Libreria Ed. Vaticana, Roma, 1995, p. 179; cf. Cajetan, *In Primam Partem Summae Theologiae* I, q. 1, a. 7, Tommaso Zigliara, (ed.), ed. Leonina, vol. 4, Propaganda Fidei, Roma, 1888, p. 21). St. Thomas, however, teaches that an entire science is indeed contained in its principles, but **virtually** (cf. I, q. 1, a. 7), in such a way that the principles are causes, not of themselves sufficient, but sufficient **in their own order**. Cajetan, commenting on I, q. 1, a. 7, uses the example of the sun, as cause of the man Socrates. What Cajetan means is that the sun only together with *man* and never without man, begets a child from matter (cf. I, q. 91, a. 2, ad 2). That is, this fundamental principle of the science of natural theology, *once it is known*, together with a second, a third and a fourth principle, etc., causes the knowledge of all that is in this science, and gives particular clarity to the conclusions (Cajetan, *ibid.*), as a foundation in the order of **scientific** knowledge (cf. Reginaldus GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *De Deo Uno*, Bibliothèque de la Revue Thomiste Desclée de Brouwer et Cie, Paris, 1938, p. 25 et 130).

partes penetrans et illuminans”¹⁴. It is the profound root of the fact that all philosophical disciplines depend on metaphysics. “*Neque idea mundi et hominis habetur usquequaque perfecta nisi claritatem accipiat ex vera Dei idea, quae quasi sol refulget in altissimis Philosophiae Primae*”¹⁵.

A great error of Suarez can be traced back to his not accepting this fundamental principle. It leads to a denial that the principle of non-contradiction applies to the Trinity¹⁶. This denial invalidates all theologi-

¹⁴ DEL PRADO, *ibid.*, p. XXI.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. XXII, emphasis ours. As noted above, regarding Del Prado’s fundamental or first principle (*via iudicii*) of Christian philosophy (identification of essence and *esse* [when I use the latin *esse*, I mean the act of being or existence] in God alone), so also, in a similar way, the primacy of metaphysics over all other philosophical disciplines is a real primacy but is not a primacy of being discovered first or of being able to elaborate the other sciences from it alone by way of deductive reasoning.

¹⁶ In scholastic metaphysics, already in Albert the Great, there are two aspects of relation. The *esse in* aspect is the relation as it is related to the subject of the relation. In creatures, real relation inheres as an accident in the substance of the subject. The *esse ad* aspect of a relation is merely the reference to another (to the terminus of the relation) without taking into consideration any inherence in the substance of the subject. (Cf. STh I, q. 28, a. 2)

Now to speak about relation in God is more difficult than to speak about it in creatures. There are no accidents in God. In creatures, relation inheres in the subject accidentally. In God it will have to inhere substantially. Therefore, the *esse in* aspect of relation in God, must be the very Divine Essence.

For St. Thomas, the *esse ad* aspect of relation does not of itself imply being (*esse*), but prescinds from it. This is verifiable in creatures. (For even rational relations, which do not have *esse* [i.e., they are not real!] have an *esse ad* [the *esse ad* aspect is what makes a relation to be a relation (formal content), regardless of whether such a relation really exists or not in reality. Rational relations are constructed by the mind {for cases where this occurs, like the case of relations from GOD to creatures, see Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones De Potentia* q. 7, a. 11; STh I, q. 28, a. 4}). On the contrary, the *esse in* aspect of a relation is that to which *esse* formally pertains when the relation is real. That is to say, the *esse ad* of a relation will have *esse* only insofar as the *esse in* is real. This means that if the *esse in* of the opposing relations in God is only one for all three Persons, so also for each of the *esse ad* of these relations there is but one act of being, which is the Divine Essence itself. (Cf. STh I, q. 28, a. 2 and 3)

Thomas and Suarez differ here. The difference can be said to consist of two points: 1) Suarez did not admit the real distinction between *esse* and essence in creatures. Thomas, of course, did. 2) For Suarez, the *esse ad* of a relation does not prescind from *esse*. For example, in creatures, according to Suarez, a mere rational relation (*esse ad*) is no true relation at all (cf. *Disp. Metaph.*, Dist. X, 3, 14). For the *esse ad* to be a relation and to be real, it must have being (*esse*) on its own. Suarez makes no exception for the Trinity. This means that in the Trinity, each of the *esse ad* of the relations (for example, the

cal arguments because all such arguments are necessarily based on the principle of non-contradiction. If followed to its ultimate consequences, this is pure agnosticism. Garrigou-Lagrange, in dialogue with Suarianism, specifically cites Del Prado's words:

relation of the Father to the Son and the relation of the Son to the Father) has an essence of its own and so *ipso facto*, given the lack of a real distinction between *esse* and essence in creatures, it is assumed, by Suarez, that each relation in the Trinity also demands an individual act of being (*esse*) in order to be real. Thus we would have 3 acts of being in God: an *esse* that is multiplied according to the number of the *esse ad* of the relations. This gives rise to serious objections. One objection goes like this: the divine Persons are each equal to the same thing: the divine essence. Therefore, according to the principle of identity, they should also be the same as each other. For two things equal to a third are equal to each other. Why are they not in the case of God? Thomas would respond that their *esse* is numerically identical, and that the Persons themselves would be identical if oppositions of relation were not involved. Suarez merely says 'nothing like this is found in creatures' and so does not want to accept Thomas' response as convincing. He ends up saying that the principle of identity: "Two things equal to a third are equal among themselves" does not apply to God (Suarez, *De Trinitate*, IV, 3, 7). But this, of course implies that theologians have no business using this principle or any principle gleaned from the study of creatures, not even the principle of non-contradiction in theology (to speak about God). If that is the case, however, we end up in agnosticism.

The objection based on the principle of identity is insoluble to Suarez exactly because he multiplied a perfection (that of the *esse* of the relations *ad*) which, in God, is absolute (pertaining to the nature and not to the distinct persons as distinct).

The reason for the three acts of being for the three *esse ad* of the trinitarian relations in Suarez is because, for Suarez, the *esse ad* aspect of relations ("which is the essence of the relation") is supposedly not really distinct from the *esse* of these relations, which therefore must likewise be three.

Suarez does try to create clarity by affirming that the *esse* of the *esse ad* of the relations is virtually distinct from the divine essence. This is, of course true, but in the end, given that Suarez' point of departure is the principle that *esse* and essence are really the same in finite beings (a principle which carries over somehow to God in the case of the *esse* of the relations *ad* in relations of opposition), and given that Suarez will only accept the trinitarian relations as real if they have their own *esse*, Garrigou-Lagrange suggests that it is difficult to see how the virtual distinction between the *esse* of the *esse ad* of the relations and the divine essence, in Suarez' understanding, is not rather something like Scotus' formal distinction rather than a virtual one, even though Suarez would not want it to be formal and does not accept Scotus' formal distinction. A formal distinction (a distinction, not invented by Scotus, but employed by Scotus as something in between a real and a rational distinction) is a distinction between forms in a thing (for Scotus accepts the plurality of forms in a single being). Thus, such forms are supposedly already distinct even before the mind discovers them, though these forms are not separate and cannot be separated from each other. According to Thomists, the formal distinction, when applied to God puts the absolute unity of God at risk.

[The doctrine of St. Thomas] perfectly preserves the supreme simplicity of the divine being because in God there is but one being; the real relations on the one hand, do not make a composition [accidental union] with the essence, and on the other hand they really distinguish the persons. From this it follows that in the three divine persons there is one divinity, equal glory, co-eternal majesty, and the same absolute¹⁷ perfection. No perfection is found in one person that does not exist in the other. Those who, like Suarez, deny the real composition of being and essence in creatures are forced to place three beings in God, and they must place in one person a perfection that is not in another, nor can they solve the difficulty arising from the principle of identity.¹⁸

Principles in Theology

[Fr. Del Prado] understood that theology was ordained to the contemplation of mysteries...he realized that the spirit of theology is drawn from prayer, from psalmody, from meditation more than from a documentation which combines the texts of the masters without throwing upon them the light of the higher principles which those same masters have formulated.

He never wearied of repeating these *principles*; they were the themes of his teaching.

It was such a joy for him to explain the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas wherein he always found the most sublime, comprehensive, simple principles.¹⁹

We have seen how *metaphysical* knowledge of God, according to Del Prado, is the sun by which one has a clear philosophical idea of man and the world²⁰, so also is God the Sun illuminating all of theology:

Fons praecipuus Mysticae Theologiae, fons primus et ultimus, semper semperque frequentandus est Summa Theologica D. Thomae...Mystica enim Theologia nec recte capietur, nec vere explicabitur, nec perfecte intelligetur dum idea vera et[,] quantum possibile sit[,] clara non habeatur: 1° de Deo; 2° de motu creaturae rationalis in Deum; 3° de Christo, qui est

¹⁷ “Absolute” refers to that which is common to the Three Persons. Its counterpart is “relative”, which refers to what is proper to one of the Persons. See the previous footnote for details.

¹⁸ GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *ibid.*, p. 142, emphasis mine; see my footnote 16 for details.

¹⁹ GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *Grace, ibid.*

²⁰ Cf. DEL PRADO, *ibid.*, p. XXXVIII.

via...ad Deum...²¹. Auxilio Summae Theologicae omnia alia scripta PP. et DD.... possunt legi cum profectu, intelligi cum facilitate.²²

De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio²³

Garrigou-Lagrange tells us: Del Prado's *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* is "*fruto de toda una vida de meditación y de trabajo, es uno de los mejores, acaso el mejor tratado de la Gracia aparecido después de las grandes producciones tomistas de los siglos XVI y XVII*". A critic writing in *Ciencia Tomista* (March 1910) says: "*Esta obra nos convence de lo que muchas veces hemos oído en el extranjero: que el P. del Prado es hoy el primer comentarista de Sto. Tomás. Obras como esta aparecen una vez cada siglo*".²⁴

The division of this work is as follows:

- I. Pars I: In qua explicantur sex quaestiones de Gratia Dei ex D. Thomae Summa Theologica [I-II, 109-114]
- II. Pars II: Concordia Liberi Arbitrii cum Divina Motione iuxta S. Augustinum et D. Thomam
- III. Pars III: Concordia Liberi Arbitrii cum Divina Motione iuxta Doctrinam Molinae

Especially in Part II, Del Prado shows his great ability to work with and formulate guiding principles of Thomism. Regarding the controversy over the physical premotion (that GOD must move creatures to action whenever they act. He applies them to their act²⁵) of grace, he says "...iuxta Divum Thomam tota haec de divino influxu controversia veni[t] postremo resolvenda in veritatem fundamentalem philosophiae Christianae, nempe: "*Solus Deus est suum esse; in omnibus aliis differt essentia rei et esse ejus*"²⁶. In the introduction, regarding the same, he says, "*Omnes errors in hac controversia fugiendi ex eo praecise procedere videntur quod nec*

²¹ This is exactly the structure of St. Thomas' tripartite *Summa Theologica*.

²² LUMBRERAS, p. 20.

²³ DEL PRADO, *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, 3 volumes, Consoc. S. Pauli, Friburgi Helv., 1907.

²⁴ LUMBRERAS, p. 12, emphasis ours.

²⁵ STh I, q. 105, a. 5; cf. T.C. O'BRIEN, "Premotion, Physical", in: *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 11, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1967, p. 741.

²⁶ DEL PRADO, *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, Pars II, p. 402.

in Deo vera ratio causae efficientis primae, nec in rationali creatura vera ratio causae secundae liberae servatur".²⁷

In Part III, Del Prado has a most thorough confrontation with Molina. Del Prado made a heroic effort to understand the opponent. In fact, all 12 chapters of the third part bear Molina's name.

In the same third part, he shows that the term "Banezianism" for describing the Thomistic thesis of grace that is efficacious of itself is misplaced. He shows that the doctrine goes back directly to St. Thomas himself. Del Prado's humor comes out in the name of the chapter dedicated to this issue: "*De Comedia Banneziana*". He quotes a couple of theologians present at the Council of Trent to explain the mind of the council fathers in some aspects of the final documents²⁸.

It should be clear for any Thomist that even congruism²⁹, somehow does away with the full splendor of the gratuitousness of Divine Grace, but Fr. Del Prado was able to give, very briefly, in philosophical terms, the reason why. He says that congruism does not change the *species* of Molinism. It is reducible to Molinism, for there can be no middle ground between *scientia media*³⁰ and *premotio physica* (III, 362). Del Prado is

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Pars I, p. XXX.

²⁸ He cites both Dominic Soto, OP and Andreas de Vega, OFM. I suspect that the acts of the Council themselves were not readily available for research in Del Prado's day. That would have been interesting to include. It would have been helpful also to include the Denzinger numbers of the Council documents in question. It may be this kind of thing that Garrigou-Lagrange referred to saying: "Their [his lectures'] material documentation might not always be very complete—one did not go to him for that..." (*Grace, ibid.*).

²⁹ Congruism is a system to explain grace that is efficacious whereby man and GOD are causes of salutary acts, but in such a way that they are, as it were, two independent contributors. This explanation, depending on the author, may or may not involve the use of the *scientia media* (see below). Francisco Suarez and Robert Bellarmine were congruists. According to Molina, GOD, through *scientia media*, chooses one world order rather than another. In this world order, he foresees that certain men will consent to grace and perform the salutary acts necessary to be saved. A congruist, wanting to stress the gratuity of predestination more than Molina, might prefer to say that he gives such a congruent grace as he knows will become efficacious *exactly because* he knows it will be efficacious for the elect (who make it efficacious by their free consent). This was deemed more in conformity with the teaching of Thomas. (Cf. F. C. LEHNER, "Congruism", in: *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, McGraw-Hill, 1967, p. 177.)

³⁰ An idea Molina made famous in order to solve a problem raised by Molina's own theories on grace. Thomas says that GOD is the cause of all man's salutary actions by physical premotion of grace that is efficacious of itself. GOD himself knows from all eternity what *he causes* from all eternity. Otherwise, there would be no way to tell which

also able to show that already St. Augustine meant to teach premotion (if not with the same terms, surely as far as the *content* of his teaching is concerned), contrary to what some authors say. This last point shows the keen intuition of Fr. Del Prado's recognizing that formal content of a teaching shared by Aquinas and Augustine is much greater than and need not include material equality (terminology, etc.).

Immaculate Conception

After the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, there were not a few attacks on Thomism more or less along these lines: "Well, Thomism (and many meant thereby St. Thomas himself!), in one of its most controversial and staunchly defended points, was completely wrong! There are surely many other errors in St. Thomas and his system. Thomism should have no special claim to truth."

Del Prado vigorously opposes this unfounded position with staunch words of emphasis on the strict link between Thomas and the Church's magisterium itself³¹. Fr. Del Prado, who readily took on other more

of two future contingents will be freely chosen. But if, according to Molina, grace cannot be intrinsically efficacious, but is rendered efficacious by the consent of man, how is it that GOD knows what man will choose? Is man then the cause of knowledge in GOD (man consents and God is informed by man's consent)? This would be intolerable. So Molina posits a *scientia media* (between the *scientia simplicis intelligentiae* [whereby GOD knows all possible orders of things and "all possible free acts of all possible men in all possible world orders" without presupposing any decree of his own will] and the *scientia visionis* [whereby he knows the things that in fact will be]). According to Molina, GOD, by means of the *scientia media* chooses one order of things rather than another and wills its fulfillment. (F.L. SHEERIN, "Scientia Media" in: *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 12, McGraw-Hill, 1967, pp. 1224-1225 and A. G. PALLADINO, "Predestination", *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 11, McGraw-Hill, 1967, pp. 717-718.)

³¹ *Scimus equidem, docente nos ipsomet D. Thoma, quod, "maximam habet auctoritatem Ecclesiae consuetudo, quae semper est in omnibus aemulanda; quia et ipsa doctrina catholicorum Doctorum ab Ecclesia auctoritatem habet. Unde magis standum est auctoritati Ecclesiae, quam auctoritati vel Augustini, vel Hieronymi, vel cuiuscumque Doctoris". Doctrina autem Angelici Doctoris talem ac tantam ab Ecclesia habet auctoritatem, ut Ioannes a sancto Thoma scribere non dubitaverit: "Neque enim defensio D. Thomae, et vindictio eius ab erroribus, et ab improbabilitate sentiendi, est solius privatae personae vindictio, sed totius Ecclesiae iudicii et Apostolicae approbationis assertio. Quare maius aliquid in Sancto Thoma, quam Sanctus Thomas suscipitur et defenditur"; dum, videlicet, D. Thomae doctrina ab Ecclesia tot laudibus et approbationibus commendatur, commendatur profecto veritas in Doctoris Angelici scriptis, et veritas mira perspicuitate tradita*

controversial points of Thomism, decided to challenge this one too, in various articles and finally in his book *Divus Thomas et Bulla Dogmatica Ineffabilis Deus*. Garrigou-Lagrange outlines Del Prado's defense of St. Thomas.

Regarding the question of the exact moment at which Mary was sanctified in the womb of her mother, St. Thomas does not make any definite pronouncement. He states that it followed close on animation—*cito post* are his words in Quodl. VI, a.7: But he believes that nothing more precise can be said: “the time of her sanctification is unknown” (IIIa, q.27, a.2, ad 3). St. Thomas does not consider in the Summa if Mary was sanctified in the very instant of animation. **St. Bonaventure had put himself that question and had answered it in the negative.** It is possible that St. Thomas's silence was inspired by the reserved attitude of the Roman Church which, unlike so many other Churches, did not celebrate the Feast of the Conception (cf. *ibid.*, ad 3). This is the explanation proposed by Fr. N. del Prado, O.P.³²

sine ullo prorsus errore. Unde Innocentius VI : “Huius Doctoris, inquit, doctrina prae coeteris, excepta Canonica, habet proprietatem verborum, modum dicendorum, veritatem sententiarum ; ita ut qui eam tenuerit, nunquam inveniatur a veritatis tramite deviasse, et qui eam impugnaverit, semper fuerit de veritate suspectus.” (Del Prado, *Divus Thomas et Bulla Dogmatica Ineffabilis Deus*, Consoc. S. Pauli, Friburgi Helv., 1919, p. IX-X)

³² (GARRIGOU LAGRANGE, *The Mother of the Saviour*, Herder, St. Louis, 1949, p. 68, emphasis ours). Here are Del Prado's own words: *QUOAD SUAREZ.—1) D. Thomas, III, q. 27, a. 2, quaerit de ante et post animationem; sed nullam expresse facit mentionem de tempore per totum hunc secundum articulum. Momentum proinde ipsum, in quo animatio perficitur et in quo sita est difficultas quaestionis, proprie loquendo, non omittitur, quavis determinate non signetur; ideoque dici non potest quod in responsione transilit D. Thomas de tempore ante ad tempus post animationem posterius.—2) Planum est quod si illa particula post significaret solummodo naturae ordinem, nulla esset controversia; sed ex hoc quod etiam significare possit ordinem temporis, non sequitur quod necessario significet in praesenti quaestione solummodo temporis ordinem; ...—3) Utique: dabatur tunc temporis theologorum sententia quae asserebat Virginem fuisse conceptam in originali, et paulo post ipsam fuisse sanctificatam. Utrum autem D. Thomas hanc sententiam tenuerit hic III, q. 27, a. 2, et III Sent., dist. 3, hoc est praecise de quo nunc agitur, et quod oportet demonstrare antequam ita sententialiter affirmetur. Etenim Angelicus Doctor concludit quidem finaliter quod “sanctificatio Beatae Virginis fuerit post eius animationem”; **non tamen dicit paulo post** eius animationem. Post et paulo post non significant idem totaliter; omne namque quod est paulo post, est certe post; verum non omne quod est post, necessario est paulo post. Nam paulo post contrahit post ad posterioritatem temporis significandam; dum post, simpliciter dictum, valet quoque exprimere posterioritatem tantum naturae et ordinis.—4) **Neque rationabiliter dici potest, nisi antea vere demonstretur, quod D. Thomas in corpore articuli “manifeste intendat loqui de ordine temporis”** [ut dicunt nonnulli auctori]; quantumvis pro inconvenienti inferat quod alias*

Del Prado goes so far as boldly to say that Thomas paved the way for this dogma because of the principles he saw that sustain it³³. “*Principia doctrinalia D. Thomae, et a Caetano declarata, iuxta quae mens Angelici Doctoris apparet manifeste aperta in hac celebri controversia de prima Beatissimae Virginis sanctificatione...*”³⁴

Conclusion

Fr. Norberto Del Prado has left us many works related to his professorship and ministry³⁵. His theses, though polemic in nature, are extensively researched both in St. Thomas and in his commentators. Del Prado care-

*B. Virgo nunquam incurrisset maculam originalis culpae; quoniam huiusmodi inconveniens, videlicet nunquam incurrere maculam originalis culpae, idem significat ac esse sanctificatam ante animationem, ut in terminis asserit D. Thomas in ipso corpore articuli dicens: “Et si quocumque ante animationem Beata Virgo sanctificata fuisset, numquam incurrisset maculam originalis culpae, et ita non indiguisset redemptione et salute quae est per Christum”. Ecce inconveniens quod D. Thomas logice infert in Corpore articuli, ex quo minime sequitur quod Angelicus Doctor manifeste intendat de ordine temporis loqui.—5) **Quod autem D. Thomas manifeste intendit, est quidem demonstrare duplici ratione, quod sanctificatio B. Virginis non potest intelligi ante eius animationem, et ideo ante eiusdem Virginis personae constitutionem; at nihil tamen obstat quominus in ipso temporis momento, quo persona Virginis constituitur, per gratiam simul tempore sanctificetur; ac perinde a macula actualiter incurrenda praeservetur immunis.** (Divus Thomas et Bulla Dogmatica Ineffabilis Deus, p. XXXIV-XXXV, emphasis ours, [the emphasis of the original text has not been reproduced here]).*

³³ LUMBRERAS, p. 18.

³⁴ DEL PRADO, *Divus Thomas et Bulla Dogmatica Ineffabilis Deus*, p. LII, emphasis mine. It was not an immaculate conception strictly united to the incarnation before the prevision of sin (ibid. 16), but an immaculate conception whose subject (Maria) had the “debitum peccati”, as Cajetan terms it; that is, a certain inherent tendency toward the contracting of sin, without however having ever actually contracted it. While *Scotus* pushes a redemption of Mary as preservation, Thomists explain that “being redeemed”, in her, means that while she should have contracted original sin, due to the state of human nature after the fall, she did not contract it (cf. E.D. O’CONNOR, “Immaculate Conception”, in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, Mc Graw-Hill, New York, 1967, p. 381.) Here are Del Prado’s words: “...idcirco, vi conceptionis suae, “fuisset et ipsa aliquando, una e flebilibus filiabus Evae”; et ideo, vi conceptionis suae, non tantummodo caro seu corpus, verum etiam anima Beatissimae Virginis, ac perinde persona quae ex unione substantiali corporis et animae constituitur, fuisset et debebat esse contagio originalis peccati inquinata” (Del Prado, *ibid.*, p. XXXIX [emphasis ours, [the emphasis of the original text has not been reproduced here]).

³⁵ See my Appendix, taken from Lumbreras, pp. 23ff.

fully explains his insights with order, especially *philosophical* ordering, which marks him as a wise man indeed. “*Sapientem ordinare oportet*”!³⁶

Some of his works are recognized to be among the best of the time in every respect³⁷. We might argue that this widely holds true even for our own time.

Francisco De Angelis ORC

³⁶ ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysica*, I, 2; 982 a 18-19.

³⁷ See the praises accorded him on account of his *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, in this article.

Appendix

Published Works³⁸

1. *Discurso leído en la Apertura anual de los Estudios de la Real y Pontificia Universidad de Sto. Tomás de Manila*, el 3 de julio de 1882, Manila, 1883.
2. *Sermón panegirico de S. Francisco, predicado en la Iglesia de los PP. Franciscanos de Manila*, el 4 de octubre de 1883, Manila, 1883.
3. *Discurso predicado en la Iglesia de Sto. Domingo de Manila el 24 de enero de 1886, con motivo de la elección del nuevo Provincial*, Manila, 1886.
4. *Panegirico de S. Vicente de Paúl predicado en Manila el 22 de noviembre del 1885*, Manila, 1886.
5. *Discurso predicado ante el Claustro Universitario en la Iglesia de Sto. Domingo de Manila*, el 7 de marzo de 1889, Manila, 1889.
6. *Sermón predicado en la Iglesia de Sto. Tomas de Avila a la V Orden III de Sto. Domingo de la misma ciudad*, Madrid, 1892.
7. *Sermón de Nostra Señora de Covadonga*, 8 sept. 1895, Oviedo³⁹, 1895.
8. *El Sacramento de la Penitencia*, El Ssmo. Rosario⁴⁰, sept. del 1898.
9. *Zaragoza y Covadonga, o Dios y patria*, Oviedo, 1898.
10. *La Iglesia Catolica y el Dogma del purgatorio*, El Ssmo. Rosario, 1898.
11. *El glorioso San José*, El Ssmo. Rosario, 1899.
12. *La Bula de la Cruzada*, El Ssmo. Rosario, 1900.
13. *Lectiones de Gratia Dei*, Divus Thomas, 1899-1902.
14. *De scientia media*, Friburgi Helv., 1903.

³⁸ LUMBRERAS, pp. 23-25. Lumbreras notes that these are the works that he was able to find (together with a date of publication). Lumbreras suspects, however, that many other works (especially articles) were published in Manila, which he was unable to find. I have followed his notation almost exactly (except #33, as explained in footnote 47) in the list I provide. According to today's methodology, it is obsolete in a few ways.

³⁹ A city.

⁴⁰ A magazine.

15. *De concordia liberi arbitrii cum divina motione*, Divus Thomas, 1903-4.
16. *De Natura Physicae Praemotionis; De diversis perfectionis gradibus in physica praemotione; De concordia physicae praemotionis cum libero arbitrio; De concordia Molinae*, Jahrbuch f. Phil. Etc., 1902-5.
17. *Carta al Sr. Alcalde de Pola de Laviano...con motivo de la inauguración de las nuevas casas Consistoriales*, Rev. Laviana, agosto 1905.
18. *El Rosario y la Cuestion Social*, Vergara, 1913-14.
19. *De B. Virginis santificatione*, Jahrbuch f. Phil. Etc., 1906-7.
20. *A un académoco de la Española, sobre "El condenado por desconfiado"⁴¹* de Tirso de Molina, Vergara, 1907.
21. *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*⁴², Friburgi Helv., 1907.
22. *Santo Tomás y la Inmaculada*, Estrato de El Ssmo. Rosario, Vergara, 1908.
23. *A proposito de un folleto—Sto. Tomás de Aquino y la Inmaculada Concepción de la Virgen María, por Malujas*, Barcelona, 1909, El Ssmo. Rosario, 1909.
24. *A proposito de un libro—El sistema [científico] de [Raimundo] Lullio*⁴³, por D.S. Bové, Barcelona, 1908.
25. *An Deus Sit, Comentario a la Cuestion II de la Parte I de la Suma*, Jahrbuch f. Phil. etc., 1909-10.
26. *Sto. Tomás y la Inmaculada*, El Ssmo. Rosario, marzo, 1910.
27. [Jaime] *Balmes*⁴⁴ y *Sto. Tomás*, sept./nov. de 1910.
28. *Dos Páginas de un Libro—La Evolución Doctrinal del P. Arintero—* El Ssmo. Rosario, oct. del 1911.
29. *De Veritate Fundamentali Philosophiae Christianae*, Friburgi Helv., 1911.⁴⁵

⁴¹ This is a play designed to support Molinism.

⁴² A three volume set, which includes earlier works on grace that were published separately in magazines.

⁴³ I could not find the work or any other reference to it. I imagine it to be a critique of Bové's praise of Raymond Lull, whose philosophy does not seem compatible with that of St. Thomas on various points.

⁴⁴ He was an important figure for the renewal of Thomism in 19th century Spain.

⁴⁵ See also the many articles on this theme that are incorporated into this great work.

30. *Un Censor y tres criticos al rededor de un libro* (Respuesta al P. de Medio)⁴⁶, España y America, enero 1912.
31. *Escoto y Sto. Tomás, La Ciencia Tomista*, marzo/mayo/julio de 1914.
32. *Las espinas convertidas en rosas*, Rosas y Espinas, mayo de 1915.
33. *El problema ontologico* (van añadidos⁴⁷: *Carta a un joven teólogo sobre la predicación y la lectura de los clasicos*; *Carta a id. [idem] sobre la Premoción Física*; *La lengua española*; *Guadalete y Covadonga*; *Balmes, filosofo*; *La Filosofia de Sto. Tomás según León XIII y Pio X*, El Ssmo. Rosario, oct. 1914; *Estilo de Sto. Tomás*; *El P. Zeferino*⁴⁸, Vergara, 1915.)
34. *Enseñanzas del Rosario*, Vergara, 1916.⁴⁹
35. *S. Agustín, Doctor de la Iglesia*, 2ª ed., Vergara, 1916.
36. *María en los Misterios del Rosario*, El Ssmo. Rosario, oct./nov. 1916.
37. *Divus Thomas et Bulla "Ineffabilis Deus"*, Friburgi Helv., 1919.

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⁴⁶ I was not able to find out what the topic here might be.

⁴⁷ Where additional bibliographical data are given here, it is because these works have not been included above.

⁴⁸ Later made a Cardinal by Leo XIII, he was a highly esteemed Thomist of the 19th century whose works were translated into various languages and widespread in Europe. Del Prado himself studied philosophy (first cycle) under him.

⁴⁹ According to Lumbreras, this is a three-volume work of scientific discourses, ordinarily theological in nature, held at the Colegio Vergara.

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