

THE WAY OF OUR LORD JESUS
A SUMMARY OF CATHOLIC MORAL THEOLOGY

VOLUME ONE
CHRISTIAN MORAL PRINCIPLES

by

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- L. How is the sacrament of orders related to confirmation?

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR: PENANCE, ANOINTING OF THE SICK, AND THE LIFE OF SELF-DENIAL

- A. Christian life as pilgrimage
- B. The necessity of penance in addition to baptism
- C. What is the essential fruit of the sacrament of reconciliation?
- D. What does contrition contribute to reconciliation?
- E. The confession of sins
- F. How does penance organize the entire life of a Christian?
- G. Likeness to Jesus in the penitential life
- H. What are the primary forms of penance suited to us today?
- I. On the Christian use of mass media
- J. How is restitution different from penance?
- K. At what age should Catholics begin to receive the sacrament of reconciliation?
- L. How does the sacrament of the anointing of the sick complete penance?
- M. The sacrament of anointing and death
- N. How are purgatory and indulgences related to penance?
- O. Prayers and devotional practices appropriate to Christian life as penitential
- P. The penitential dimension of priestly life

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE: EUCHARISTIC LIFE AS COMPLETION IN CHRIST

- A. The complexity and simplicity of the Eucharist
- B. How is sharing in the Eucharist sharing in the sacrifice of Christ?
- C. How does the Eucharist nourish spiritually those who live with Jesus' life?
- D. Some theological errors concerning the Eucharist
- E. How does the Eucharist transform Christian moral life?
- F. How is the Eucharist a pledge of glory?
- G. How does the Eucharist constitute the Church?
- H. How the Eucharist transforms culture and history
- I. How does the sacrament of marriage relate to the Eucharistic life?
- J. How does the Liturgy of the Hours extend the Eucharist throughout one's life?
- K. What is required of the priest by his special role in the Eucharist?
- L. Prayer and devotion especially appropriate to the Eucharistic life
- M. Adoro Te devote

END OF VOLUME ONE

*O Lord, you mete out peace to us,
for it is you who have accomplished all we have done (Is 26.12).*

Mount Saint Mary's College

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PREFACE

This volume is being prepared as the content for a course being taught during 1979-1980 at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland. I prepared extensive outlines of the work in 1977 and 1978; many persons read and commented on them. They will note much change in the present draft, due in great part to their many helpful suggestions and criticisms. I am especially indebted to Dr. Joseph M. Boyle, Jr.; to his acute mind credit is due for whatever logical precision the present work has.

This manuscript is the first draft of a work whose publication is projected only after three additional drafts. In the second and later drafts, I hope to correct any mistakes which are discovered and to enrich the treatment with many more references to relevant materials: the witnesses of faith, the writings of the doctors of the Church, and current theological literature. In the third and fourth drafts I hope to simplify the presentation by separating at least two levels of discussion; the basic level will present the most essential points as briefly and clearly as possible. In the fourth draft I hope to refine the style and form of the work, to make it as readable and usable as possible. Thus my plan is that this work will be sent to a publisher at about the same time the students who use this draft are being ordained.

Moreover, this volume is only the first stage of a larger project. In the present volume I consider only the first part of moral theology: Christian moral principles. In subsequent volumes I hope to consider the specific responsibilities of Christians and to clarify these responsibilities in the light of the principles. Three subsequent volumes are planned: II. Responsibilities Arising from the Common Christian Vocation; III. Responsibilities Proper to Christians in Various Roles; IV. Responsibilities of Members of the Church to One Another. God willing, the project will be completed by the year 2000.

The treatise on Christian moral principles, articulated in the present volume, has seven parts: I. Introduction; II. Completion in Christ and Human Fulfillment; III. Christ's Redemptive Act and Christian Life; IV. The Church of Christ as Moral Teacher; V. Forming a Christlike Character; VI. Obstacles to Full Life in Christ; VII. Christ's Way to Completion in Him. I will explain the reasons for this structure in chapter three of the Introduction; I will summarize parts II-VII in chapter three, section G.

I conceived this project in 1976-1977 as an attempt to respond to the call of Vatican Council II for a thorough renewal in moral theology. (More will be said about the Council's challenge in chapter three, section F.) With the vision of faith and the enthusiasm of hope, Most Rev. John B. McDowell, Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh, encouraged me to undertake the work; he obtained the support of about thirty other bishops for the project, and also the backing of the Knights of Columbus, and other Catholic organizations and individuals. The contributors established a Trust for Theological Studies. Dr. Robert J. Wickenheiser, President of Mount Saint Mary's College, recognized the possibility of this project as one way in which the College, which has served the Catholic Church in America for nearly 175 years, can continue to fulfill its purposes as it completes its second century. With the approval of the College's Board of Directors, Dr. Wickenheiser established a new position, dedicated to the execution of this project and to similar work as long as the College exists. Thus the Trust for Theological Studies and Mount Saint Mary's College are cooperating in sponsoring this work. I thank all who are contributing for their generosity and their confidence in me.

With grateful memory, I especially thank the late John Cardinal Wright for his encouragement and support over many years. One of his final acts before leaving Rome to return to America for the last time was to respond generously to an urgent request from me for a special grant to defray some of the costs of setting up shop at Mount Saint Mary's. May he rejoice in the glory which belittles the sufferings of the present life.

Mount Saint Mary's College has named my position: "The Reverend Harry J. Flynn Chair in Christian Ethics." Father Flynn returned to pastoral work in 1979 after many years of devoted service to Mount Saint Mary's Seminary, including almost a decade as its distinguished Rector. I am honored to work under the patronage of Father Flynn's name and pray that my work will duly honor him.

Why should so extensive a project be conducted in one area--that of moral theology? And why should seminary students devote so much of their time to this one subject? The answer is that morality is a characteristic of human actions. Human actions are not what is most fundamental in reality or in Christian life. More basic is the reality of God and the work of God. Yet God has chosen to create persons who can be like Him in acting intelligently and freely. God ennobles His creatures by making them able and effective cooperators with Him. For this reason, the moral quality of Christian life is very important. The reality of God and the quality of His other works do not depend on what we think. But the quality of our Christian lives, which also are the work of God, does depend in part on what we think. Moral theology serves to improve this thinking. Therefore, moral theology is one of the most important parts of theology and of the seminarian's education. In a unique way, the study of this discipline contributes to the work of God.

In this book I assume that the reader accepts all that the Catholic Church believes and teaches. This work is not one of apologetics aimed at nonbelievers nor is it an attempt to rescue the faith of those who have serious doubts.

However, anyone who thinks has many difficulties in respect to the Church's teaching, and I will try to help resolve some of these difficulties. Moreover, here and there notes will be supplied to suggest how arguments based upon common human experience can help prepare the way for acceptance in faith of the Church's teaching. These indications are intended, not as proofs in any strict sense, but as helps to understand what the Church believes and proposes for belief.

For the most part I shall proceed in this book in a constructive way, with minimal attention to alternative theological positions. However, in some cases I shall not be able to ignore recent proposals which bear directly upon the subject matter. Such ideas will be expounded and evaluated critically, using as the standard the constant and very

firm teaching of the Church. My attitude toward much of what has gone on in Catholic moral theology since Vatican II is negative. The Council called for a Christ-centered treatment of moral theology. Too much of what has been written in recent years, far from being Christ-centered, is merely repackaged secular humanism, lacking even the relationship to Christ which Catholic moral theology always previously maintained, namely, fidelity to the teaching of the Church of Christ.

My attitude toward many recent works in moral theology ought not to be misunderstood as a judgment upon any person. It is one thing to criticize what someone says--or even what someone does--and quite another to judge the person himself or herself. When one is convinced that what others are saying is erroneous and that what they are doing is wrong, one hopes that they are sincere and that God, who reads hearts, will find their hearts pure or, if He does not, will make them so.

The critical reader of this work, whether student or other, is asked to keep in mind the great difficulty of what is undertaken here, and so in charity to help the author bear the burden of the work by offering suggestions for its improvement. Without such help already given by many, the draft would be much poorer than it is.

Since this work is an effort to respond to Vatican II's very great challenge and since it will contain much which is new, it is likely to include many errors. I hope that none will be contrary to faith and that none will seriously harm anyone. I ask that those who are more able call my attention to errors they find here. In what I write here, as in everything I write--everything I think--I submit gladly and wholeheartedly to the better judgment of the Church.

Many persons have supported this work by their prayers. I thank them for their support and hope that they will continue and that others will join them in it.

This preface and the first three chapters, which constitute the Introduction, are being completed on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption. Mary is blessed not so much because her womb bore our Lord Jesus and her breasts nourished Him as because she heard the word of God and kept it. She kept it in her heart, not as an inert but as a living word, and in this way she perfectly conformed her immaculate heart to the sacred heart of her Son. Mary shares today in the heavenly glory of Christ because she lived her earthly life in such perfect communion with Him.

My only hope in presenting this work to its readers is that it will help those who study it and through them all whom they will serve--and that the labor of preparing it will help me and those who assist me in the work, especially my wife, Jeannette--to follow the way, Jesus, as Mary did and does.

KEY FOR THE REFERENCES WHICH APPEAR WITHIN THE TEXT

Direct quotations from the Bible (except those within other quotations) are taken, unless otherwise noted, from The New American Bible (Cleveland and New York: The Catholic Press, 1970). References make use of abbreviations given in this translation:

Acts...Acts of the Apostles	Jb....Job	Nm...Numbers
Am....Amos	Jdt...Judith	Ob...Obadiah
Bar...Baruch	Jer...Jeremiah	Phil.Philippians
1 Chr.1 Chronicles	Jgs...Judges	Phlm.Philemon
2 Chr.2 Chronicles	Jl....Joel	Prv...Proverbs
Col...Colossians	Jn....John (Gospel)	Ps...Psalms
1 Cor.1 Corinthians	1 Jn..1 John (Epistle)	1 Pt.1 Peter
2 Cor.2 Corinthians	2 Jn..2 John	2 Pt.2 Peter
Dn....Daniel	3 Jn..3 John	Rom..Rpmans
Dt....Deuteronomy	Jon...Jonah	Ru...Ruth
Eccl..Ecclesiastes	Jos...Joshua	Rv...Revelation (Apocalypse)
Eph...Ephesians	Jude..Jude	Sg...Song of Songs
Est...Esther	1 Kgs.1 Kings	Sir..Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
Ex....Exodus	2 Kgs.2 Kings	1 Sm.1 Samuel
Ez....Ezekiel	Lam...Lamentations	2 Sm.2 Samuel
Ezr...Ezra	Lk....Luke	Tb...Tobit
Gal...Galatians	Lv....Leviticus	1 Th.1 Thessalonians
Gn....Genesis	Mal...Malachi	2 Th.2 Thessalonians
Hb....Habakkuk	1 Mc..1 Maccabees	Ti...Titus
Heb...Hebrews	2 Mc..2 Maccabees	1 Tm.1 Timothy
Hg...Haggai	Mi....Micah	2 Tm.2 Timothy
Hos...Hosea	Mk....Mark	Wis..Wisdom
Is....Isaiah	Mt....Matthew	Zec..Zechariah
Jas...James	Na....Nahum	Zep..Zephaniah
	Neh...Nehemiah	

Direct quotations from Vatican II are taken, unless otherwise noted, from The Documents of Vatican II, Walter M. Abbott, S.J., and Joseph Gallagher, eds. (New York: Guild Press, America Press, Association Press; 1966). References are to the numbered articles, found in any edition of the documents. References make use of the abbreviations derived from the initial letters of the Latin text of each document:

AA Apostolicam Actuositatem, Laity	LG Lumen Gentium, On the Church
AG Ad Gentes, Missions	NA Nostra Aetate, Non-Christian Religions
CD Christus Dominus, Bishops	OE Orientalium Ecclesiarum, Eastern Churches
DH Dignitatis Humanae, Religious Liberty	OT Optatam Totius, Priestly Formation
DV Dei Verbum, Divine Revelation	PC Perfectae Caritatis, Religious Life
GE Gravissimum Educationis, Education	PO Presbyterorum Ordinis, Priestly Life
GS Gaudium et Spes, Church in the World	SC Sacrosanctum Concilium, Liturgy
IM Inter Mirifica, Communications	UR Unitatis Redintegratio, Ecumenism

If the Abbott edition is used, note that only the *italicized footnotes are part of the Council documents*. The notes in Roman type were added by the commentator on each document, whose name appears at the end of the essay introducing the document. Because of the added notes, the official notes are not numbered in the Abbott edition as they are in the documents themselves.

"DS" refers to: H. Denzinger-A. Schönmetzer, S.I., Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum, ed. 34 em. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1965). This volume, as the title indicates, is a handbook which collects "creeds, definitions, and declarations on matters of faith and morals." Texts are in the original languages and in chronological order. Two sequences of numbers appear in the margins; both are indicated in references in the present text. The lower numbers are found in earlier editions of the handbook and in many publications which used it. Direct quotations from this collection are taken, unless otherwise noted, from: The Church Teaches: Documents of the Church in English Translation, trans. J. F. Clarkson, S.J., J. H. Edwards, S.J., W. J. Kelly, S.J., and J. J. Welch, S.J. (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books, 1973). Texts in the translation are arranged topically rather than chronologically; a table on pp. 370-375 correlates with DS. A direct quotation with the reference "DSnr" refers to: The Teaching of the Catholic Church as Contained in Her Documents, compiled by J. Neuner, S.J., and H. Roos, S.J., ed. Karl Rahner, S.J. (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1967). Texts in this translation also are arranged topically; a key to numbering is on p. 16 and a table for correlation with DS on pp. 457 ff.

"FEF" refers to: The Faith of the Early Fathers, 3 volumes, selected and trans. W. A. Jurgens (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1970-1979). This work is a sourcebook of theological and historical passages from the Christian writings of the patristic period, ending in the West in the mid-seventh century and in the East in the mid-eighth century. Passages 1-910a are in volume 1; 911-1416 in volume 2; 1417-2390 in volume 3. One using this work should study the introduction in volume 1.

"CCE" refers to: The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, The Theological Formation of Future Priests (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1976). Reference is to numbered articles, not to the pages.

"JBC" refers to: Raymond E. Brown, S.S., Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., and Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm., eds., The Jerome Biblical Commentary (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968). References are to articles and their paragraphs, not to the pages.

"NCC" refers to: Reginald C. Fuller, Leonard Johnston, and Conleth Kearns, O.P., eds., A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture (London: Nelson, 1969). References are to page numbers.

The numerals [in square brackets] indicate footnotes which appear at the end of the text material in each chapter.