

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: NORMATIVE PRINCIPLES, VIRTUES, VICES, AND BEATITUDES--PART II

A. What is the fifth mode of responsibility?

5 The fifth beatitude is that which promises mercy to the merciful. The fifth mode of responsibility is the one which corresponds to this.

The fifth mode is: Do not be moved to act or deterred from acting by differences in feelings toward various persons in a way other than is in accord with a deliberate choice among intelligible goods. One violates this mode of responsibility when one ad-  
10 justs one's actions in accord with feelings of partiality, and thus does not act altogether in accord with the possibilities for realizing intelligible goods. Such action at least sacrifices some realization of human good to a distribution which is subjectively more pleasing to the one acting; moreover, acting in this way blocks the forming and working of community, without which integral human fulfillment is impossible. For  
15 this reason, one who acts in this way does not proceed consistently with integral human fulfillment, but settles instead for an unnecessarily limited fulfillment of certain people.

At times one is aware--or, at least, could and should be aware--that one's actions or omissions are affecting others in various ways, and that if the positions of certain  
20 of those affected (perhaps including one's own position) were exchanged, one would consider what one is doing unreasonable. Still, one is moved or deterred from acting by self-interest or by feelings of sympathy (for example, toward those near and dear) or of antipathy (for example, toward people who are different in some way from one's own). Simple egoism is one form of such partiality; perhaps even more common, but certainly no  
25 more reasonable, is to allow one's life to be shaped in nonrational ways by personal likes and dislikes, fashions, group biases, culturally established patterns of discrimination, and so forth.

The relevant situation must be distinguished from that in which one makes distinctions among persons on some basis which has an intelligible relationship to the action  
30 in which one is engaged. It also must be distinguished from differences which are determined by one's social responsibilities. In other words, this mode of responsibility does not dictate egalitarianism nor detract from the primacy of responsibility of each person for himself or herself and for close dependents.

Examples of the violation of this mode of responsibility are the following. A per-  
35 son regularly asks others for various favors and borrows things from them, yet consistently finds excuses for not doing favors for others and lending them things they need. People resent false statements made about them by members of some other group, but they are careless about whether statements they make about members of the other group are true. A professional person, such as a priest or a physician, gives more time and energy  
40 to pleasant and polite clients than to those who are rough and ill-mannered. Lawmakers adopt a policy of reverse discrimination with a major impact upon the poorest and weakest members of the group to which a disadvantageous status is assigned.

The virtuous disposition which corresponds to this mode of responsibility most appropriately is called "fairness," for a person who violates it is acting unfairly or  
45 with partiality. Fairness is an important aspect of justice, although the notion of justice includes other modes of morally right action toward others. Those who act fairly often are said to be "disinterested," not as if they lacked interests, but since they judge equitably, putting themselves above the particular interests which are based on feelings of partiality. The vice opposed to fairness is variously called "unfairness,"  
50 "bias," "partiality," "selfishness," "favoritism," "prejudice," and so forth.

Philosophical moral theorists attempt to clarify the concept of fairness by the investigation of the principle of fair rule-making. This principle is called "the principle of universalizability," since a fair rule would omit proper names and apply equally  
55 well to any group of persons who fulfilled its intelligible conditions.

Even apart from Christian revelation, divine revelation deepens the foundation for this human mode of responsibility by making clear that human persons all stand in a similar relationship to God, who acts fairly toward all. The Jewish law rectifies many aspects of unfairness generally accepted by other conventional moralities. Moreover, revelation makes clear that the human condition is universally one of weakness, helplessness,  
60 and debt; God acts with faithfulness and loving-kindness. One desires mercy for oneself and one's dear ones from God and from those with power. Hence, fairness under the covenant tends to develop into mercy, and no clear line can be drawn between the two.

B. Some Scriptural indications of this mode of responsibility

65 God has no favorites and accepts no bribes; His people must act in a similar manner (cf. Dt 10.17-19). The judges especially are enjoined to imitate God in this respect (cf. 2 Chr 19.7). Jesus is complimented on the same quality (cf. Mk 12.14; Mt 22.16; Lk 20.21). God does not engage in reverse discrimination (cf. Sir 35.13). St. Paul repeats the teaching that God plays no favorites (cf. Rom 2.11; Gal 2.6; Eph 6.9; Col 3.25). James insists on the necessity of fairness, nondiscrimination, and social justice (cf. Jas 2.1-6; 5.1-6). The prophets often denounce injustice and oppression (cf. Am 5.7; 6.12; Is 5.7, 23; Jer 22.13, 15); James seems to be in this tradition.

Frequently in Scripture, "justice" means the rightness of the action of one who  
75 fulfills the law. This concept is one common to all conventional moralities; people think someone is just if he or she commits no crimes and fulfills all legal obligations. The difference in the Biblical context is that one who fulfills the law is being faithful to the covenant, and so is fulfilling God's will and can hope for God's reciprocal faithfulness in keeping His promises. "Justice" used in this sense does not specifically  
80 characterize the disposition proper to the fifth mode of responsibility, since law-abidingness can extend to all sorts of responsibilities, and good law presupposes a generally sound moral foundation. However, as I will explain in a later chapter, justice as fairness (the mode of responsibility under consideration here) does in a special way provide a foundation for community and its reasonable norms.

One formulation of the Golden Rule, which undertakes to formulate this mode of responsibility in an explicit way, is found in the Old Testament: "Do to no one what you yourself dislike" (Tb 4.15). An affirmative formulation is found in the Sermon on the Mount: "Treat others the way you would have them treat you; this sums up the law and the prophets" (Mt 7.12; cf. Lk 6.31). It sometimes is argued that the affirmative formulation substantially extends the negative one, but whether it does depends upon the precise interpretation one gives the various formulae. As they stand, both can be taken to express the requirement of impartiality, which extends to all actions and omissions.

In the establishment of the covenant, God acts freely and generously, with no obligation to do so, but rather out of pure generosity and mercy (cf. Ex 33.19; 34.6-7). Within the context of the covenant, God has as it were assumed obligations which He fulfills out of faithfulness. Yet, the people are unfaithful and God still continues in mercy (cf. Mi 7.18-19). Eventually it is recognized that only the sinner's refusal of pardon blocks God's tender compassion (cf. Is 9.16; Jer 16.5, 13). Mercy extends even to those altogether outside the covenant (cf. Hos 11.9; Jon 4.2; Sir 18.13; Ps 103).

This extension of mercy as it were stretches the terms of the covenant and by fairness itself demands that those who experience God's mercy show mercy also to others (cf. Mi 6.8; Is 58.6-11; Job 31.16-23). The sage, Sirach, teaches:

Forgive your neighbor's injustice;  
then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.  
Should a man nourish anger against his fellows  
and expect healing from the Lord?  
Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows,  
yet seek pardon for his own sins? (Sir 28.2-4).

One who has become a recipient of mercy and who wishes mercy in the future for his or her own self and friends also must forgive others.

Jesus demands of His followers perfection precisely in this: that they be merciful as the Father in heaven is merciful (cf. Mt 5.48; Lk 6.36). The parable of the prodigal son drives home the lesson and justifies Jesus' own association with sinners (cf. Lk 15.11-32). The parable of the unmerciful servant--who refuses to forgive a small debt after having been forgiven a great one--makes the same point as that formulated by Sirach (cf. Mt 18.23-35).

#### C. What is the fifth mode of Christian response?

In the fallen human condition, the prevalence of unfairness and the harshness of living conditions are important obstacles to the fulfillment of the fifth mode of responsibility. To survive in a situation of struggle and scarcity one needs some reliable companions, and one must meet some standard of fairness in dealing with them. Beyond the circle of one's own group, one is hardly likely to be treated impartially and one can hardly afford to treat others impartially. For practical purposes, people must be divided into friends and enemies; one is virtually compelled to do good to one's friends and to treat one's enemies as they seem to deserve. As I have been explaining, even apart from the New Testament, divine revelation greatly deepens the mode of responsibility, by making clear the universal need for mercy, God's universal granting of it, and the general obligation to imitate His example.

However, many people who do not believe seem to be very conscientious in matters of fairness. What is the basis of this disposition? The answer generally is that people are careful about rights and duties within an established framework of conventional morality, but set some very arbitrary limits. For example, many secular humanists who are very careful to be fair in many matters establish arbitrary criteria of quality of life, by which they are willing to kill certain groups of persons. If one can impose upon others one's ideology according to which their destruction is a benefit to them, one can afford to be fair within the framework of this ideology. Those who make up the rules normally wish to have the game played in accord with them.

Christian revelation, accepted with living faith, transforms one's understanding of human goods and human community. Human goods can and will be realized in the fulfillment of everything in Christ; there, too, everyone willing to accept a place has one. All of the boundaries of existing societies therefore dissolve; moreover, the fulfillment which consists in commitment to goods and the handing on of redemption to other persons becomes far more important than the actual share in a good which one receives. Thus the Christian mode of response is: Be merciful according to the universal and perfect measure of mercy which God has revealed in Christ.

The virtuous disposition present in this mode of Christian response is Christ-like mercy, generosity, compassion, and service to others. One must be disposed to require of others not even that to which one is entitled by fairness and to be totally available to others without any consideration of what is fair. A legalistic attitude toward others is the vice opposed to this virtue; by such an attitude, one tries to protect one's interests by taking refuge in some framework of fairness to establish rights and limit responsibilities.

The fifth beatitude is: "'Blest are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs'" (Mt 5.7). "Mercy" here not only means forgiveness; it also extends to generous doing of good to others without counting the cost to oneself.[] The new law of retaliation is to turn the other cheek; the new law for settling disputes is to give more than is demanded; the new law for service is to double what is asked; the new law for lending is to give without reservation; the new law for forgiveness is to love enemies and treat them as friends thus to seek the redemption of persecutors (cf. Mt 5.38-48). The Christian must protect what is essential to fulfill his or her personal vocation, but self-interest is entirely excluded.

In His excoriation of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus points out: "'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, you frauds! You pay tithes on mint and herbs and seeds while neglecting the weightier matters of the law, justice and mercy and good faith'" (Mt 23.23). The justice of the Christian must go beyond such narrow legalism or entry into the kingdom is impossible (cf. Mt 5.20).

One whose primary love is charity is disposed to divine goodness before all else. God is just in this sense: He practices no partiality and He is utterly and absolutely faithful. He is totally unconcerned with justice to Himself, for His own goodness is absolute. If one is identified by charity with the universal good, one can and will

5 take the same totally disinterested and selfless attitude.

According to St. Augustine, the gift of the Holy Spirit which corresponds to the fifth beatitude is counsel. He takes it that the gift makes us realize that mercy is advisable for us--that it is, indeed, in our own best interests. For St. Thomas, the gift has a higher meaning; it is a divine practicality which directs the Christian in a

10 life of mercy which transcends ordinary human standards.[3]

#### D. What is most proper to Christian mercy

What is most proper to Christian mercy is its universality and its perfection.

15 The Christian has obligations to everyone and claims on no one. This flows from the fact that Christian life is a participation in God's own life and love, and also from the fact that the Christian is called to communicate Christ's redemptive love to others.

The tremendous surprise to the apostles themselves was that God was so impartial that He was making His new family wholly universal. Peter remarks on this with wonder; forgiveness is universally extended to "the man of any nation who fears God and acts up-

20 rightly" (Acts 10.35). Paul likewise: "God has imprisoned all in disobedience that he might have mercy on all" (Rom 11.32; cf. Eph 2). The perfection of God's mercy in Christ is that He gave His own Son that we might become adopted children (cf. Rom 8.14-

34). Having given us the Spirit, His very own life, is it possible He will withhold

25 anything less?  
The Word incarnate is filled with enduring love, and of His fullness the Christian shares (cf. Jn 1.14, 16). Christian mercy must share in His life:  
Give no offense to Jew or Greek or to the Church of God,  
just as I try to please all in any way I can by seeking, not my

30 own advantage, but that of the many, that they may be saved.

Imitate me as I imitate Christ (1 Cor 10.32-11.1).

Having been redeemed, sharing in God's own justice, the Christian must be altogether im-

35 partial in sharing redemption with others. Only so is the requirement of impartiality fulfilled by one who knows himself or herself to be a child of God.

Hence, the example of Jesus who forgives His enemies who are killing Him even as He dies in agony on the cross (cf. Lk 23.34) is followed by the first martyr, Stephen. Stephen commends His spirit to Jesus, as Jesus to the Father, prays for his persecutors, and gives bold testimony, for he is filled with the Holy Spirit and clearly sees Jesus

40 standing at the right hand of God (cf. Acts 7.51-60). Similarly, in catechetical in-

struction the doctrinal point that Christians are saved by God's mercy is followed by an injunction to live blamelessly among the pagans, despite their mistreatment, so to lead to their conversion (cf. 1 Pt 2.9-12).  
It is worth noting that in the work of social justice, nothing truly can be achieved without such mercy. In any society, there will be a large body of persons unwilling to

45 act fairly or in error about what fairness demands; hence, a general balance can be achieved only if some substantial group of persons is willing to make voluntary compensa-

tion to rectify unfairness. Force and violence can achieve nothing, and no legal system can begin to cut fine enough to attain justice. Traditionally, those who especially de-

50 voted themselves to the works of mercy undertook to fulfill this Christian responsibility.

Because of the scale of modern social structures, Christians today can fulfill it as we should only by cooperation organized on a larger scale.

#### E. What is the sixth mode of responsibility?

55 The sixth beatitude is that which promises the pure of heart (that is, the single-

hearted) that they shall see God. The sixth mode of responsibility is the one which cor-

responds to this.

The sixth mode is: Do not be moved to act or deterred from acting by emotions

60 which bear upon empirical aspects of intelligible goods (or evils) in a way which inter-

feres with participation in the complete good or avoidance of the complete evil. One

violates this mode of responsibility when one is more interested in the experience of

65 participating in a good or avoiding an evil than in the reality of doing so, and for this

motive sacrifices the appearance to the reality. Such action blocks some genuine reali-

zation of intelligible human goods; it also involves an element of self-deception which

distorts one's appreciation of goods. For this reason, one who acts in this way does

not proceed consistently with integral human fulfillment, but settles for experiences

70 which block the way toward it.

At times one is aware--or, at least, could and should be aware--that one's actions

are not bringing about the whole reality of the intelligible good in which one is inter-

75 ested (or avoiding the reality of the evil one is concerned to avoid), and also is aware

that these actions in some way interfere with other possible actions which would be more

effective in the pursuit of the good or avoidance of the evil. The interference is at

least this: By doing the action one does, one does not do the other action which one

80 knows would be appropriate. Still, one is moved to act by eagerness to experience some

satisfaction or to enjoy a felt improvement in a bad situation. Such action substitutes

for what one should be doing. The apparent good can be sought for others as well as for

oneself.

The relevant situation must be distinguished from one in which the motive of ac-

85 tion is a partial aspect of an intelligible good, but the action in no way interferes

with a possible alternative. In other words, this mode of responsibility does not ex-

clude the experienced aspects of goods from their wholeness, and does not rule out action

for these aspects as part of action for the whole good, or even action for these aspects

by themselves when one cannot do more.

Examples of the violation of this mode of responsibility are the following.

Students who have a choice among elective courses choose a course which superficially covers much interesting material, thus to gain a sense of learning, in preference to a course which would be more challenging and would promote lasting intellectual development. A sick person refuses treatment which would temporarily make him or her feel sicker but which really holds out solid promise of curing the disease. A girl preparing for marriage spends all her time and energy planning the events surrounding the wedding and the wedding day itself, and so fails to spend time on appropriate catechesis and spiritual preparation for marriage. A bishop holds penitential services to which he encourages persons to come who are not willing to meet the conditions for absolution, and gives general absolution without individual confession at these services; in this way he makes available some experience of forgiveness, but the experience encourages those who enjoy it to continue unrepentant.

The virtuous disposition which corresponds to this mode of responsibility lacks a single, very appropriate name. At least some uses of expressions such as the following signify it: "having a sound sense of values," "sincerity," "seriousness," "clearheadedness," and "practical wisdom." "Self-deception," "superficiality," "insincerity," "lacking a sense of values," "frivolity," and "childishness" are sometimes used to signify the opposed vice.

Even apart from Christian revelation, divine revelation deepens the foundation of this mode of responsibility by establishing the primacy of reality (divine reality) which transcends experience, and by offering a hope which draws interest from the immediate to the more profound aspects of human goods. The living out of the covenant requires sincerity, for it is more a matter of doing than of feeling.

#### 25 F. Some Scriptural indications of this mode of responsibility

The primary expression of this mode of responsibility in the Old Testament is in the criticism of idolatry as a kind of foolishness, since idols are vain. Yahweh alone is great, "For all the gods of the nations are things of nought, but the Lord made the heavens" (1 Chr 26; cf. Ps 31.7). Elijah provides a proof by experiment that Baal is a nondeity, incapable of acting (cf. 1 Kgs 18.18-40). Since idols are nonentities, they can neither help one nor save one (cf. 1 Sm 12.21).

Detailed descriptions of the making and use of idols help to drive home the point that they are powerless: "The idols have neither knowledge nor reason; their eyes are coated so that they cannot see, and their hearts so that they cannot understand" (Is 44.18; cf. Wis 13.11-14). As a last blow in this line of criticism, a very plausible anthropological explanation of idolatry is provided; it is a practice which originates in an effort to maintain the illusion that the dead still are present (cf. Wis 14.12-15). Once begun, the illusory practice is extended (cf. Wis 14.12-21; 15.7-15).

The critique of idols is broadened to include wrong ways of worshipping the true God. If the use of dreams, divination, and omens is as useless as the worship of idols, so is the sacrifice to God of ill-gotten goods; to be worthwhile worship must be based on true repentance (cf. Sir 35). The prophets insist on the primacy of interior sacrifice; this offering is not merely a substitute for ritual sacrifice, but is what is essential in all sacrifice (cf. Am 4.4, 5.24; Hos 6.6; Is 1.11-16; Mi 6.8; Jer 7.22-23). None of the prophets rejects the rite as such; what is rejected always is the tendency to substitute apparent religiosity for true religion. This point is expressed with clarity in Psalm 51 (cf. Ps 40.7-11).

St. Paul summarizes both lines of criticism in his argument that prior to redemption in Christ no one is justified (cf. Rom 3.10-12). All religion is vain, until Jesus makes possible a real communion with God. Likewise, Greek philosophy is a sham, and the eloquence of rhetoric is useless, for neither provides anything but an appearance of wisdom (cf. 1 Cor 1.18-2.5).

Apart from instances in which the appearance of religion becomes a substitute for its reality, there are few instances in Scripture where it is clear that this mode of responsibility is at work, for it easily blends in with others. For example, when wealth and status-seeking are condemned (cf. Ps 62.10-11), one cannot be sure that anything more than the need for detachment and fairness is in view. To the extent that the whole of human life in the fallen condition is unsatisfactory, everything can be reduced to vanity, as it is in Ecclesiastes. However, such a reduction does not show that every action is a pursuit of apparent goods in violation of this mode of responsibility, since it is violated only in case one's chosen action somehow blocks an alternative which would lead to participation in a true good.

#### 65 G. What is the sixth mode of Christian response?

In the fallen human condition, the prevalence of misery and of disappointment, especially disappointment with other people, breeds hopelessness. If everything is vanity, if life is a story full of sound and fury but without ultimate meaning, then there is no more absurdity in pursuing immediate satisfactions, which one can experience, than in pursuing true goods, for even if the former pursuit blocks the latter, the latter is pointless anyway. Furthermore, the lack of self-control is very common, and those who act irrationally in violation of the third mode of responsibility are very likely to find it difficult to take seriously the reality of anything beyond experience. Thus they are predisposed to violate this mode as well. As I explained in section E, even apart from the New Testament, divine revelation deepens this mode of responsibility. The struggle against pseudo-religion provided a paradigm for a sharp distinction between true goods and the merely empirical aspects of goods pursued by themselves.

However, many people who do not believe seem to avoid substituting apparent for true goods; they seem to have a serious, realistic, and clearheaded grasp on human goods. How do they manage to have such a disposition? To some extent it is a matter of ideology. One can develop a view of reality which virtually negates the value of human experience; one finds such views not only in idealistic philosophies, but also in the grim practicality of the marxist. More generally, many people settle for the apparent good

with self-deception only in one area of life (for example, in the sphere of intimate, personal relationships) but live quite realistically in other areas, which they put in the service of the satisfaction they seek (for example, in experiences of superficial and unreal love or friendship).

5 Christian revelation, accepted with living faith, transforms one's understanding of the attainability of true human goods. All of them can be realized in fulfillment in Christ. Hence, one need not settle for mere appearances. But, at the same time, any way of acting which does not contribute to one's Christian life--that is, any commitment or choice which is not positively integrated with faith--leads toward some experience of  
10 good which is less than one could be pursuing. In other words, for the Christian, any act which is not formed by living faith is an unreasonable pursuit of a merely apparent good. Moreover, to the extent that one falls short of the perfection of charity--which all of us do--one's life is not wholly integrated with living faith. The reality of this situation must be admitted, since only by admitting it can one strive for perfec-  
15 tion. To delude oneself that one's present level of charity is adequate is to settle for a merely apparent good. Therefore, the sixth mode of Christian response is: Strive to do nothing but what is formed by living faith, and always recognize and strive to turn from acts which do not meet this standard.

The virtuous disposition inherent in this mode of Christian response is single-  
20 minded devotion to God, which essentially includes a sense of sin and continuing conversion. The devout life consists in having no commitment which does not constitute part of one's personal vocation, seeking in every act only to fulfill one's commitments, recognizing one's failures in meeting this ideal, turning away from whatever underlies these failures, and thus more and more completely living in the light and by the power  
25 of living faith. The vicious disposition opposed to this virtue is mediocrity and hypocrisy, the foundation of which is the desire to be a Christian together with the unwillingness to surrender totally to Christ, although this surrender is an inherent requirement of Christian life.

The sixth beatitude is: "'Blest are the single-hearted for they shall see God'"  
30 (Mt 5.8).[4] Initially, purity of a ritual sort was required for one to come in the liturgy into God's presence (cf. Lev 11-16). Jesus declares that true purity is interior (cf. Mk 7.14-23). Ultimately, purity comes from the word of truth (cf. Jn 15.3) and the holiness of life in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 5.8; 2 Cor 7.1; Jas 4.8). The perfection of charity "springs from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith" (1 Tm 1.5). Thus  
35 the Christian must strive to love God with every part of his or her self, and such striving is the effort of the single-hearted (cf. Mk 12.30; Mt 22.37; Lk 10.27).

In His excoriation of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus stresses their hypocrisy with special emphasis (cf. Mt 23.27-28; Lk 11.44, 12.1-3). The Pharisees are not irre-  
40 ligious; indeed, they are devout. Jesus' quarrel with them is that their devotion is not, and does not even try to be, total devotion to God. It is primarily self-serving, and it involves grave self-deception concerning their own uprightness, since the Pharisees claim perfection by a standard which is false and which they ought to be aware is false (cf. Jn 9.40; Lk 18.9-14; Mt 12.22-45; 15.1-14; 21.33-46).

One whose primary love is charity is disposed to divine goodness above all else.  
45 Since this goodness includes every other good in its true measure and worth, one will fail to be integrated with one's love of God to the extent that one loves as one ought not. But love of God itself draws one to love as one should. Therefore, one whose primary love is charity will constantly turn toward God and grow toward perfection. In this life, love leads to continuous conversion; if one loves God, one always has to say  
50 one is sorry.

According to St. Augustine, the gift of understanding corresponds to the sixth beatitude.[5] St. Thomas explains that by understanding one is freed from picture-  
thinking and from a limited and erroneous understanding of Christian life, and so helped toward perfection.[6]

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#### H. What is most proper to Christian devotion

What is most central to Christian devotion is a twofold attitude which is expressed clearly in the First Epistle of John. On the one hand, one can avoid hypocrisy only if  
60 one admits sin; one who does not admit it is a liar, self-deceived, and empty of truth. The admission of sin is essential for forgiveness (cf. 1 Jn 1.8-10). On the other hand, no one who has been begotten of God acts sinfully; sin belongs exclusively to the devil, and God's children are altogether immune from it (cf. 1 Jn 3.7-9). Thus, the Christian recognizes the reality of sin in his or her life, and with this reality the constant  
65 need for forgiveness and conversion, but also recognizes the reality of divine life at the center of his or her life, and with this reality the real power of perfect holiness.

Jesus taught a standard of honesty which would make oaths unnecessary (cf. Mt 5.33-  
37). Lying is a function of life in apparent but unreal relationships of cooperation. Likewise, He condemned the hypocrisy of religious acts done out of human respect (cf.  
70 Mt 6.5, 16). One cannot serve two masters (cf. Mt 6.24; Lk 16.13). One must follow Jesus without putting family duties, such as burying the dead, first (cf. Mt 8.21-22; Lk 9.59-62). Yet Jesus does not take His own out of the world; rather, He wishes them to live in the world lives consecrated to divine truth alone (cf. Jn 17.15-19). The invitation to the heavenly banquet is freely given to all, but those are excluded who  
75 would rather fulfill any incompatible commitment (cf. Mt 22.1-10; Lk 14.15-24).

The passage on the coin of the tax makes clear that Christian life does not preclude the fulfilling of secular commitments and responsibilities. However, these are of an order altogether different from that of one's commitment of Christian faith. Hence, one gives to earthly authority only what is due to it--material goods and services. De-  
80 votion is reserved to God alone (cf. Mk 12.13-17; Mt 22.15-22; Lk 20.20-26; Jn 18.36-38, 19.11; Rom 13.1-7).

Christian life is founded upon Christ who is not wishy-washy, not 'yes' and 'no,' but only 'yes'; He demands total dedication and gives the Spirit as the pledge of fulfillment (cf. 2 Cor 1.17-22). Sincere love is now a real possibility, since the Holy

Spirit has been given to stay (cf. 2 Cor 6.6-18). Still, we are not yet perfect (cf. Phil 3.12-16). The danger to the Christian is falling away from sincere and total devotion to Christ (2 Cor 11.3). The Spirit is jealous and demands continuous conversion (cf. Jas 4.4-8).

5 Paul writes that as a Christian he has a new sense of values. Christ is wealth, and nothing else really matters. To be in Christ with the rightness which comes from faith in Him is all-important. One must experience the power which flows from His resurrection and be shaped in the form of His death (cf. Phil 3.7-11). Then Paul adds thoughts distinctively Christian, which contrast with even the best of the Old Testament:

10 It is not that I have reached it yet, or have already finished my course; but I am racing to grasp the prize if possible, since I have been grasped by Christ. Brothers, I do not think of myself as having reached the finish line. I give no thought to what lies behind but push on to what is ahead. My entire attention is on the finish line as I run toward the prize to which God calls me--life on high in Christ Jesus. All of us who are spiritually mature must have this attitude. If you see it another way, God will clarify the difficulty for you. It is important that we continue on our course, no matter what stage we have reached (Phil 3.12-16).

20 Those whose hearts are set upon worldly things will end in disaster. Our citizenship already is in heaven (cf. Phil 3.17-21). Thus mature Christian spirituality is a progress toward perfection. One's whole heart is on the heavenly goal, and the share one has in Christ by living faith draws one straight to this goal.

#### 25 I. What is the seventh mode of responsibility?

The seventh mode of responsibility is the one which corresponds to the seventh beatitude, which concerns peacemakers.

30 The seventh mode is: Do not be moved by hostility to choose to destroy, damage, or impede any intelligible human good. One violates this mode of responsibility when one deliberately acts out of anger or hatred (or milder feelings such as distaste or resentment) to destroy or damage or impede the realization of some instance of any of the basic human goods. To act out of such emotions is to reduce human fulfillment without reason. Therefore, one who acts on such motives does not proceed consistently with integral human fulfillment, but actually rejects such fulfillment.

35 At times one is aware that acting in a certain way will not be conducive to any intelligible human good--that nothing positive will be achieved by the action. Still, one is moved to act by negative, hostile feelings in a destructive (sometimes in a self-destructive) way.

40 The relevant situation must be distinguished from one in which a person is stirred by hatred of evil to act in a way which protects a threatened good or which limits damage which otherwise would be done. It also must be distinguished from cases in which a person chooses to vent hostile feelings by actions which otherwise are useless but which do not involve any hostile element--for example, for an angry person to tear up old newspapers.

45 Examples of the violation of this mode of responsibility are the following. A nation at war undergoes severe damage, becomes certain that defeat is inevitable, and determines to fight to the last man to make victory as costly as possible for the enemy. A man whose proposal of marriage is refused in favor of another suitor spitefully reveals the other suitor's past affairs with another woman, thus to damage the relationship between the rival and the woman who spurned the proposal. Students whose proposed plans for a celebration are outvoted decide not to participate in the celebration in order to detract from its joy.

50 The virtuous disposition which corresponds to this mode of responsibility is signified by at least some uses of "forbearing," "patient," "longsuffering," "forgiving," "easy-going," "gentle," and so on. The opposed vice is vengefulness, vindictiveness, spitefulness, impatience, being resentful, and being grudging and unforgiving.

60 Even apart from Christian revelation, divine revelation deepens the foundation for this mode of responsibility to the extent that it reveals God to be merciful and longsuffering. It also makes clear that no one is in a position of security, that everyone needs forgiveness. Finally, it teaches that God will rectify all evil; hence, human revenge is uncalled for (cf. Dt 32.30-43).

#### J. Some Scriptural indications of this mode of responsibility

65 The first crime against another described in the Bible, Cain's murder of Abel, is an act of resentment (cf. Gn 4.5). As part of the Old Testament law of love, hatred in one's heart toward a brother is excluded: "Take no revenge and cherish no grudge against your fellow countrymen" (Lv 19.18). The control of anger is taught in the wisdom literature (cf. Prv 15.18, 16.32, 17.27). The destructive act is to be replaced with an act of kindness, which will open the way to divine justice (cf. Prv 25.21-22). St. Paul takes up this thought in a famous and difficult passage, whose precise meaning is in dispute:

75 Never repay injury with injury. See that your conduct is honorable in the eyes of all. If possible, live peaceably with everyone. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves; leave that to God's wrath, for it is written: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says the Lord." But "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; by doing this you will heap burning coals upon his head." Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good (Rom 12.17-21).

80 Apart from the last sentence, which expresses a Christian attitude which transforms the human mode of responsibility, this passage seems to be an expression of the Old Testament view that human revenge is uncalled for, and that self-restraint disposes to the rectification of injustice by God. Precisely how this works is unclear, for there is no agreement about what it means to "heap burning coals" upon the head of one's enemy. Are the "coals" in the last analysis a benefit or a harm to the enemy?

Paul teaches that it is characteristic of love not to be angry and not to brood over injuries; to be forbearing, patient, kind, and not jealous; to rejoice with the truth, not with what is wrong (cf. 1 Cor 13.4-7). The quarrel among the Corinthians he was attempting to settle apparently involved a good deal of petty spitefulness and resentment. Anger and quick temper, malice, insults, and foul language are among the pagan ways Christians must put aside (cf. Col 3.8).

It is important to recognize that if the Old Testament depicts God as capable of anger, it always presupposes a distinction between mere vindictiveness and divine vindication. God's vengeance is not destruction for its own sake, but is a rectification of justice, required by sin (cf. Ex 32; Ps 51.6; Ho 5.10; Is 9.11; Ez 5.13; and so on). The nations are punished in proportion to their guilt (cf. Is 10.5-15; Ez 25.15-32.32).

The threat of God's anger leads sinners to repent (cf. Mi 7.9, Ps 90.7-8). With a view to repentance, God is longsuffering, slow to anger and quick to forgive (cf. Ex 34.6). He uses a strategy of gradual punishment, to induce sinners to repent and to provide them with a real opportunity to do so (cf. Wis 11.26-12.2, 15.1-2). Thus, God's wrath and His patience are balanced with one another (cf. Na 1.2-3). And His longsuffering extends, to the dismay of some, even to alien peoples who are the enemies of Israel (cf. Jon 4.1-2, 11). God understands the misery of the human condition, and so He is patient and merciful, "Reproving, admonishing, teaching, as a shepherd guides his flock" (Sir 18.12).

#### K. What is the seventh mode of Christian response?

In the fallen human condition, injustice is common. The prevalence and ineluctability of evil breed frustration, and frustration leads to resentment. The sense of vindication is part of the experience of justice and so it can be sought as an apparent good. Emotionally, the relief of pent-up negative feelings in destructive behavior bears some semblance to the sense of vindication, even when this relief is itself not experienced as the appearance of justice--for example, even when it is felt to be a wrong balancing another wrong. As I explained in section I, even apart from the New Testament, divine revelation provides some relief for this frustration by promising divine rectification: "Vengeance is mine!"

However, many people who do not believe seem to avoid acting irrationally out of hostile feeling. How do they manage to develop a disposition of self-restraint? The answer is that most people restrain themselves out of self-interest. Revenge is unprofitable, and since the tendency to it is so common, there is a general interest in making it costly. To do so is an important part, perhaps even the major part, of the function of criminal law and of many less formal devices of social control. Unfortunately, however, there are limits to that self-restraint which is imposed by self-interest. Hence, in most people the tendency to irrationally destructive action is not eliminated; rather, it is displaced. Petty spitefulness, the taking out of resentments upon the weak and those in subordinate positions, purposeful injury by omission (which is not so easily recognized as malicious), and gross revenge when operating beyond the limits of ordinary controls (as in warfare) are all extremely common.

Christian revelation, accepted with living faith, transforms one's understanding of evil and of the possibility for coping with it. Evil is not necessarily ineluctable. The victory over it is won, redemption is accomplished in principle in Christ. The full implication of the character of evil as privation is that zealotry is no more able than pharisaism to deal with it. The privation as such cannot be confronted; resistance to evil is useless and an effort to destroy it worse than useless, since such an effort only succeeds in making matters worse by destroying the residual good. Hence, the Christian mode of response is: Do not respond to evil with resistance, much less with destructive action, but respond to it with good (cf. Mt 5.38-41; Rom 12.29).

The virtuous disposition present in this mode of Christian response is the conciliatoriness which seeks the redemption of enemies (cf. Mt 5.43-44). An essential aspect of such conciliatoriness is that patient endurance which is a fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal 5.22). This virtue also includes certain aspects of mildness. The opposite disposition is one of defensiveness and aloofness--a tendency to try to avoid evil instead of carrying on a redemptive ministry to those engaged in it.

The seventh beatitude is: "Blest too are the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God" (Mt 5.9).[7] Jesus explains: "Love your enemies, pray for your persecutors. This will prove that you are sons of your heavenly Father, for his sun rises on the bad and the good, he rains on the just and the unjust" (Mt 5.44-45). Jesus Himself fulfilled this command (cf. Lk 23.34) and so made peace through the blood of His cross (cf. Col 1.20).

In His denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus castigates them as blind guides who lead the blind; they make use of a false casuistry in their effort to gain salvation (cf. Mt 23.16-22). Jesus Himself, by contrast, is the sun of justification, who really dissolves darkness and guides the feet of humankind on the way of peace (cf. Lk 1.78-79).

One whose primary love is that of charity loves divine goodness above all else. In this goodness is no evil, and so no principle of opposition and conflict, since conflict arises solely from evil and its distorting consequences. Hence, one's effort to live according to divine love will be universally conciliatory.

According to St. Augustine, the gift of the Holy Spirit which corresponds to the seventh beatitude is wisdom: "Wisdom corresponds to the peacemakers in whom everything is in order and there is no emotion to rebel against reason, but all things obey the spirit of man just as it obeys God." [8] St. Thomas points out that wisdom is the power of putting in order, and that this power is what is necessary for peacemaking, which is a matter of restoring right order. Also, wisdom is appropriated to Christ, the eternally begotten Word and wisdom of the Father. [9]

L. What is most proper to Christian conciliatoriness

The prophets declared that only the conquest of sin could bring true peace on earth (cf. Mi 3.5; 1 Kgs 22.13-28; Jer 6.14, 14.13, 23.9-40, 29.11; Ez 13.15-16). They looked forward to peace in the time of redemption (cf. Is 9.5-6, 32.17, 54.10; Hos 2.20; Am 9.13). This promise is fulfilled with Jesus (cf. Mt 28.9; Lk 1.79, 2.14, 10.5-6, 24.36; Jn 14.17). This peace is the forgiveness of sins for which the prophets hoped (cf. Jn 20.19-23). The infant Church spreads this peace in its mission (cf. Acts 7.26, 9.31). The peace of Christ is universal and all-embracing; it overcomes hitherto insuperable obstacles (cf. Eph 2.13-18).

It might be suggested that Christian conciliatoriness excludes altogether the expectation of ultimate punishment. But this view is surely mistaken. Throughout the New Testament, there remains the awful fact that God's repugnance for evil cannot tolerate it forever; the day of wrath still is certain to come (cf. Mt 11.20-24, 18.35, 22.13, 25.46; Jn 3.36; Eph 5.6; Col 3.6; Heb 12.25-29; 1 Jn 5.16, and so on). However, those who are united to Jesus are safe.

One aspect of the Christian attitude toward peacemaking is the conviction of the utter powerlessness of evil. This conviction is represented in a symbolic way in the book of Revelation, which comes to a climax when Christ comes forth to do battle with evil. As soon as He appears, evil is vanquished; no battle is necessary (cf. Rev 19.11-21). The victory over evil already has been won. Hence Christians can be peaceable; no one can harm them (cf. 1 Pt 3.8-13).

What is most proper to Christian conciliatoriness is the acceptance of a responsibility for spreading peace, not by any other means, but by communicating the peace of Christ to others (cf. 2 Cor 5.16-21). Reverence and love for enemies, the refusal to judge their ultimate state of soul, is a foundation for peacemaking (cf. GS 28). Ultimately, however, peace can be attained only by the universalization of love. Therefore, the Christian not only must seek to live in love, but to bring others to share in it (cf. GS 78).

M. What is the eighth mode of responsibility?

The eighth mode of responsibility is the one which corresponds to the eighth beatitude, which concerns those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice--that is, for the sake of Christ.

The eighth mode is: Do not be moved by a stronger desire for one intelligible good to act for it by choosing to destroy, damage, or impede some other intelligible good. One violates this mode of responsibility when one deliberately brings about human evil that one might prevent another human evil or attain another human good; one is moved so to act by the comparative strength of one's nonrational desires, by which the evil one brings about seems lesser than the evil one hopes to prevent or the good one hopes to attain seems greater than the good one chooses to destroy, damage, or impede. To act in such a way is to detract from some possible elements in integral human fulfillment in favor of others. Therefore, one who acts on such a motive does not proceed consistently with integral human fulfillment, but instead places a nonrational limit upon such fulfillment.

At times one is aware that acting in a certain way is doing evil that good might come of it or that another evil might be prevented by it, and one also is aware that the rational basis (in principles of practical reason) for respecting the good against which one acts is none other than the rational basis for the pursuit of the good or the avoidance of the evil toward which one acts. Still, one is moved to act by one's stronger desire--that is, by emotion, which is drawn more to one imagined outcome than to another. (The experience of this emotion is the intuition by which the consequentialist claims to know that there is a proportionate reason which "justifies" the act.)

The relevant situation must be distinguished from one in which a person chooses to act for a good, foreseeing that the execution of the choice will entail unwanted human evils, which are acceptable without the violation of any of the first seven modes of responsibility. It also must be distinguished from cases in which a person uses (consumes or destroys) goods which are not human goods for the sake of attaining human goods or avoiding human evils--for example, kills animals for food, destroys a building to prevent the spread of fire, or violates legal rights for the sake of the fairness to which the law is only a means.

Examples of the violation of this mode of responsibility are the following. A scientist who is preparing an application for a research grant publishes a paper claiming he has attained results which he only hopes for; he considers this lie necessary to obtain the funding to continue his important work, which has a good prospect of leading to a cure for some common forms of cancer. A military commander orders that some children be tortured to death to obtain vital intelligence; he considers this action necessary to win a battle with minimal loss of life on both sides. A theologian encourages members of his church to do something which they believe to be morally wrong; he justifies this scandal by his belief that the teaching of the church and the moral conviction of these persons is erroneous, and that by encouraging contrary practice he will help obtain a reversal of the teaching and the eventual elimination of an unnecessary burden of conscience.

The virtuous disposition which corresponds to this mode of responsibility is signified by "reverence" used in expressions such as "Out of reverence for life, she refused to have the abortion, although the diagnosis was that the child would be severely defective" and "Out of reverence for the consciences of those who thought eating idol-meat wrong, St. Paul chose not to use a more effective means of correcting their false view." The opposed vice perhaps is most appropriately called "craftiness," although those who deny the validity of this mode of responsibility call it "prudence" or "common sense realism." In public affairs, the vice sometimes is called "pragmatism" or, when it is criticized, "machievellianism" or "amoral expedientialism."

Certain aspects of divine revelation apart from Christian revelation tend to deepen

the foundation for this mode of responsibility. For instance, the realization that human persons have the dignity of beings made in God's image enhances reverence for the goods which fulfill persons, and the sense of mystery engendered by revelation itself together with a deep awareness of human sinfulness tends to lessen the presumption that human feelings can be trusted as an ultimate measure of good and evil.

However, prior to Christian revelation other aspects of divine revelation tended, as a side effect, to block understanding of this mode of responsibility. For the revelation of the Old Testament presupposes and works within the framework of a conventional morality, which it thereby seems to validate with a divine sanction. Within this framework, certain specific, promised goods are considered all-important. What is necessary in the pursuit of these goods therefore seems justifiable, even though it involves a violation of this mode of responsibility.

#### N. Some Scriptural indications of this mode of responsibility--Old Testament

There are a few passages in the Old Testament which condemn cunning or craftiness, but usually there is no clear indication that the reason for the condemnation is the violation of this mode of responsibility (cf. Gn 3.1; Job 5.12, 15.5; Ps 83.4). Perhaps nearest to the point are a few passages in Sirach, for example:

There is a shrewdness that is detestable,  
while the simple man may be free from sin.  
There are those with little understanding who fear God,  
and those of great intelligence who violate the law.

There is a shrewdness keen but dishonest,  
which by duplicity wins a judgment (Sir 19.19-21; cf. 21.12).

Again, Sirach suggests: "A man may be wise and benefit many, yet be of no use to himself" (Sir 37.19). These passages could refer to the craftiness of the person who uses bad means to good ends, but the point is not clear, because there is no context or application to help one grasp the meaning.

If there are indications of other modes of responsibility in the Old Testament, why is the eighth mode not commended? I think the answer is that the moral framework of the Old Testament remains that of a conventional morality. The norms are not so much considered as guides toward human fulfillment as such, as they are considered as guides toward the fulfillment of the specific hopes of Israel. In the pursuit of this fulfillment, whatever is necessary is considered justified. In other words, an underlying but not asserted assumption of Old Testament morality is that the end does justify the means, provided that the end in question is the true good of Israel. It is this assumption which makes possible the unquestioning justification of a variety of brutalities in the constant wars Israel fights against her enemies.

The difference between the conventional morality of Israel and that of other nations is that Israel's social life and hopes are centered around her covenant relationship with God. Hence, one thing is absolutely necessary: that the relationship with God be protected at all costs. For this reason, the law of God takes on absoluteness; moral norms have absolute sanctity insofar as they are thought to express God's will and to set down the necessary conditions for keeping the covenant, on the keeping of which everything depends.

In other words, in the Old Testament one has a morality in which only one good is absolutely sacred: friendship with God. Other human goods are completely subordinated to this one, since in fact all blessings depend on this one and all curses will follow if this friendship is lost (cf. Dt 28). The covenant relationship (although in reality it is only one human good among others) takes on the sanctity of God Himself, and so the law is holy. The consequence is that other human goods demand respect only insofar as they are protected by the law.

Still, within the limits of this defective perspective, human goods are more deeply appreciated to the extent that man is made in the image of God, and human goods somehow share in the creator's holiness. Thus, the eighth mode of responsibility is accepted with a condition: Unless God commands or authorizes otherwise, then the end does not justify the means. The point can be illustrated with reference to human life itself.

When Cain kills Abel, he is afraid that he will be killed by someone else, since he is banished and made to become a nomad. But God protects Cain, although he is a murderer, by providing him with a divine sign (cf. Gn 4.13-15). After the flood, a clear distinction is made between animal life, which people now destroy for food, and human life, which is held sacred: "If anyone sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; For in the image of God has man been made" (Gn 9.6). The ground for respecting human life is an intrinsic one. However, capital punishment is here authorized in the case of murder, since God declares His own lordship over life (cf. Gn 9.5). Subsequently, there is reluctance even on the part of the wicked to take life (cf. Gn 37.21-24), but God freely takes life (cf. Gn 38.7, 10). God is the absolute lord of life (cf. Lev 17.11-12; Dt 12.23-27; JBC 2.43).

Thus in the law of Israel, the death penalty was mandatory for murder, for offenses having a specifically religious character, and for bearing false witness in a capital case (cf. Ex 21.12-14, 31.14; Nm 35.31-33; Lev 20.2-5, 24.14-16; Dt 13.7-8, 17.2-7, 19.11-13, 21). But also subject to the death penalty were kidnapping in certain cases (cf. Ex 21.16; Dt 24.7), bestiality (cf. Ex 22.18; Lv 20.15-16), male homosexuality (cf. Lev 20.13), various incestuous relationships (cf. Lev 20.11-19), and adultery involving a married woman (cf. Lev 20.10; Dt 22.22). Both parties involved in these sexual offenses, including the animal in cases of bestiality, were subject to the death penalty.

A man who raped a betrothed girl could be punished by death (cf. Dt 22.23-27), and so could the victim of such a rape if it occurred in the city and she was not heard to cry out for help (cf. Dt 22.23-24). A bride who was accused by her husband of not being a virgin and who could not provide evidence that she was a virgin might be punished by death (cf. Dt 22.20-21). The death penalty also was prescribed for striking a parent (cf. Ex 21.15) or cursing a parent (cf. Ex 21.17; Lev 20.9). A stubborn and rebellious

son, if incorrigible, could be denounced by his parents to the elders of the city and punished by being stoned to death by the populace (cf. Dt 21.18-21).

In war, the enemies of Israel were regarded as enemies of God. Hence killing in any such war was taken for granted as justified: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Sm 18.7). A family or a city as a whole was to be destroyed utterly under the penalty of the ban for certain serious religious crimes (cf. Ex 22.10-20; Lev 20.2-5; Dt 13.13-18; Jos 7.10-26).

Finally, the absolute subordination of human life to divine friendship is expressed in the story of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. Within the context of the covenant relationship, the killing of the child to fulfill what is taken to be a divine command is not seen to present any moral problem, although Isaac clearly is innocent. The difficulty is that Isaac is the medium of the fulfillment of the promise, and so Abraham must trust God sufficiently to hope against hope that the promise will be fulfilled despite the destruction of the necessary means to fulfill it (cf. Gn 22.1-19; Heb 11.17-19).

Thus the law of Israel recognizes human life as sacred and establishes protection for it, but the sacredness of life is conditioned by the presumed will of God to authorize killing in some cases. Even innocent human life, in the last analysis, is subordinated to the covenant relationship.

The carrying over of this mentality into Christian thinking has led to justifications of killing, in violation of the eighth mode of responsibility, in capital punishment and in just wars. I hold that killing in violation of the eighth mode of responsibility never is morally justifiable.[10] Someone might object that in this position I am dissenting from Catholic teaching, which is based upon divine revelation.

My reply is that Christian teaching has not enjoined capital punishment, but rather has defended the licitness of such killing.[11] This defense itself, I believe, does not constitute teaching infallibly proposed by the ordinary magisterium.[12] The passages in Scripture which seem to authorize capital punishment prove too much if they prove anything, for all of them are in the Old Testament, and (as indicated above) capital punishment is authorized far more widely in the Old Testament than Christians would wish to defend. As I explained in chapter fifteen, section F, moral norms articulated in the Old Testament cannot be assumed at once to be asserted as truths divinely revealed. As for war, although very restricted, it still can be justified if the war is defensive and the killing done in it is incidental to just self-defense, not chosen for its utility as a means to an end.[13]

I believe that a development of Christian understanding concerning the morality of killing in capital punishment and in nondefensive war is occurring, much like the development which Jesus carried out with respect to divorce and the development which the Church has carried out with respect to slavery. Divorce seems to be authorized in the Old Testament (cf. Dt 24.1), but Jesus corrects this view (cf. Mk 10.1-12; Mt 19.1-9). In many places, the New Testament, by taking slavery for granted and regulating the moral relationships of masters and slaves, seems to authorize slavery (cf. Eph 6.5-9; Phlm; Col 3.22-4.1; Ti 2.9-10; 1 Pt 2.18-25; 1 Cor 7.21-24), but the Church's teaching firmly excludes this view (cf. GS 27).

This latter teaching is based on human dignity, and is closely joined with the exclusion of what is opposed to human life itself (cf. GS 27). I think the full implications of this principle for all killing which violates the eighth mode of responsibility are going to be drawn by the Church, in a legitimate development of doctrine, along the lines I described in chapter sixteen, section Q. True, Leo X condemned Martin Luther's proposition that the burning of heretics is against the will of the Holy Spirit (cf. DS 1483/783), but Vatican II has clearly excluded this practice (cf. DH 6).

#### 0. Some Scriptural indications of this mode of responsibility--New Testament

It is worth noting that although the Gospel contains a reaffirmation of the ancient protection of the sanctity of life (cf. Mt 5.21-26, 19.18), the New Testament does not authorize capital punishment. St. Paul's teaching on the moral obligation to obey civil authority is not to be read as doing so (cf. Rom 13.4)[14]

Jesus undermines the traditional understanding of the subordination of other human goods to the good of religion. Of course, He does not deny that friendship with God is the supreme good, but He refuses to accept the reduction of friendship with God to the keeping of the law of Israel and the reduction of all other human goods to the fulfillment of the quite determinate, this-worldly hopes of Israel. This refusal is shown in His relationships both with the Pharisees and with the zealot inclinations among His own followers.

Jesus declares Himself as Son of Man to be Lord even of the Sabbath, and asserts the subordination of the Sabbath to human fulfillment (cf. Mk 2.23-28; Mt 12.1-8; Lk 6.1-5). The absoluteness of the prescriptions of the law is undercut; a human good, such as saving life, takes priority and is wholly in accord with the forgiveness of sin and integral friendship with God (cf. Mk 2.1-12, 2.1-5; Mt 9.1-8, 12.9-13; Lk 5.17-26, 6.6-10).

At the same time, while Jesus consigns to human authority the keys to God's kingdom, he refuses to accept His followers' tendency to reduce this kingdom to earthly fulfillment (cf. Mt 16.13-23). Not having come to destroy human lives but to save them, He will not destroy enemies (cf. Lk 9.52-56). Swords are not to be used even in His defense (cf. Lk 22.38, 49-51). Who lives by the sword will perish by it (cf. Mt 26.51-54). The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world (cf. Jn 18.36). His closest followers could not understand this point, even after His resurrection (cf. Acts 1.6).

In place of the perspective of the Old Testament, Jesus puts Himself. In Him divine life is present and available to humankind; by this life, men and women really do share in a new and everlasting covenant. This good is not a limited set of human goods, such as Israel hoped for. Hence, the relationship with God no longer demands the restrictions upon human fulfillment which were taken for granted as acceptable both by the Pharisees and the zealots. For Jesus, the criterion of entry into or exclusion from the kingdom is how one treats one's human brothers and sisters, for the Son of Man is in solidarity with them (cf. Mt 25.31-46).

What is at stake here is the Christian humanism which I articulated in part two, especially in chapter seven. Once this Christian perspective is fully unfolded and accepted, it becomes clear that God cannot will that human persons choose to destroy, damage, or impede any of their other proper goods, even for the ulterior good of religion itself. The love of God is not itself the medium to the fulfillment of a promise of some limited set of human goods, and the love of God does not require the negation, but requires rather the fulfillment, of all the basic human goods. [15]

Jesus is both the image of the invisible God and the perfect man (cf. Col 1.5; 2 Cor 4.4; GS 22). "Since human nature as He assumed it was not annulled, by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect to" (GS 22). From the moment of the incarnation of the Word, it became impossible to fulfill the law of God except by the fulfillment of human persons. The divinization of human persons--their sharing in the law of the Spirit--demands reverence for the basic goods of persons. To these goods now belongs the sanctity which under the old covenant was attributed to the precepts of the law.

The mentality of the Old Testament is given its ultimate expression and condemnation in the very drama of the killing of Jesus. His activities threaten the safety of Israel and of the temple. For the sake of the worship of God and the protection of the people, the high priest Caiphas urges and justifies the killing of Jesus: "'You have no understanding whatever! Can you not see that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed?'" (Jn 11.49-50). Caiphas, of course, was correct; the death of Jesus was the salvation of His people (cf. Jn 11.51). However, although human evil-doing cannot frustrate--and in the end even promotes--the divine plan (cf. Rom 11.25-36), this fact does not justify the craftiness of a Caiphas.

Subsequently, the eighth mode of responsibility is explicitly formulated in the teaching of St. Paul. Paul applies it only in contexts where it serves to exclude rationalizations of evil-doing for the sake of religion.

The primary text is one in which the question is why there is anything wrong in falsehood if it is useful to promote God's glory. Paul states that some accuse him of teaching that we may do evil that good might come of it; he firmly rejects this accusation (cf. Rom 3.7-8). The clear implication of this text is that the suggested justification of doing evil to promote good, even the supreme good of God's glory, must be rejected. Not merely the end, but also the means, must be good.

This holds true of missionary practice; one might be tempted by discouragement to cut corners. But Paul rejects this temptation:

Rather, we repudiate shameful, underhanded practices. We do not resort to trickery or falsify the word of God. We proclaim the truth openly and commend ourselves to every man's conscience before God (2 Cor 4.2).

Heresy springs from the desire to accommodate, to make the Christian message more acceptable. Such a technique is excluded; Christians rather should stick to the truth and propose it with charity (cf. Eph 4.14-15). Worldly wisdom is wholly unprofitable with God; He catches the wise in their own craftiness. Hence, human persons must be respected and must respect themselves, because to act against the Christian is to act against the temple of God (cf. 1 Cor 3.16-20).

Had this teaching been understood, there never would have been any burning of heretics, nor would there have been any holy wars.

#### P. What is the eighth mode of Christian response?

In the fallen human condition, compromises seem essential if one is going to be at all effective in pursuing human goods and avoiding evils. If one refuses to do evil--for example, to kill--one seems to surrender not only oneself but everyone who depends upon oneself to the fate of being victims of those who will not hesitate to do evil. As I explained in section M, the law of Israel had ambiguous implications for this dilemma. On the one hand, it deepened a sense of the dignity of human persons and their goods, and it called in question confidence about human value judgments. But, on the other hand, it seemed to validate a conventional morality which allowed evil to be done in the interests of God's people.

However, some people who do not believe condemn pragmatic craftiness and maintain that there are absolute standards of morality. How do they manage to develop such moral reverence? In some cases the answer simply is that they condemn the craftiness of others, or the doing of evil for the sake of goods they consider inadequate. Thus diplomats of the liberal democracies reject the machiavellianism of the communists--and vice versa. Many people reject the use of craft in private affairs, but consider it justified in any sort of public or official matter. This position makes sense for those who are in power or who in one or another way share in power.

There are certain other instances in which morality itself has been absolutized. The norms are conceived of as having an absoluteness of their own, and the observation of them is thought of as being the sole human good. A position of this sort can demand that moral norms be obeyed regardless of consequences: Let right be done though the heavens fall! The trouble with this position is that it absolutizes morality itself, as if the substantive goods of human persons were of no ultimate consequence. Some stoics, for example, held both the absoluteness of moral requirements and the acceptability of suicide. A position of this sort is a form of fanaticism; lacking humane concern for the consequences of human acts, it violates authentic morality despite its noble moralism.

Christian revelation, accepted with living faith, transforms one's understanding of human goods and of the possibility of realizing them. For faith teaches that integral human fulfillment can be realized, despite evil, in the fulfillment of all things in Christ. One must respond to evil with good; in doing so, one can live consistently with integral human fulfillment. Such a life will inevitably involve the suffering of evil, and one will have to forego the immediate attainment of those goods and avoidance of those evils which cannot be attained or avoided without the adoption of bad means to good ends. However, one will accept the suffering of evil precisely in order to overcome it. The death and resurrection of Jesus shows that this strategy is effective.

Hence, the Christian mode of response is: Do no evil that good might come of it, but suffer evil together with Christ in cooperation with God's redeeming love. By this love all evil will be overcome and integral human fulfillment will be achieved in the fulfillment of all things in Christ.

5 The virtuous disposition present in this mode of Christian response is Christian self-oblation, by which one offers oneself to God as a living sacrifice. The opposite disposition is that decency of the ordinary person who pursues fulfillment (not only for himself or herself, but for others as well) in this world. Such a person can consistently respect all the other modes of responsibility, but will not always respect the  
10 eighth one.

The eighth beatitude is: "'Blest are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs'" (Mt 5.10). [16] Jesus expands this blessing and makes clear that persecution for the sake of holiness is identical with persecution for His sake-- in other words, Jesus Himself is holiness:

15 "Blest are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven; they persecuted the prophets before you in the very same way" (Mt 5.11-12).

"Anyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus can expect to be persecuted" (2 Tm 3.12). Anyone who responds to evil with good and who refuses to do evil for the sake of good does not belong to this world; hence, the world will hate and persecute every true Christian because of Christ (cf. Jn 15.18-21; Wis 2.10-20; Phil 1.27-28; Rev 13.10; 1 Pt 3.13-22; 1 Jn 3.16).

25 In Jesus' excoriation of the scribes and Pharisees, the last and longest woe is a condemnation of them for the murder they are about to do of Himself, a murder which puts them at the end of the line of those who murdered the prophets. This murder will not succeed in saving Judaism as the Pharisees conceive it; they will find their temple empty, and Christ will not return until He comes in judgment (cf. Mt 23.29-39).

30 One whose primary love is that of charity loves divine goodness above all else. Since divine goodness is incompatible with the destruction of anything, one who loves this goodness will not be willing to destroy, damage, or impede any good, even for the sake of overcoming evil, but will be prepared to undergo evil in order to bring the evildoer into touch with goodness without defect.

35 Because there are only seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, St. Augustine does not assign a gift corresponding to Christian self-oblation. In his view, this last beatitude returns to the first, to form a kind of circle; at the same time, the eighth beatitude illuminates the perfection of Christian life and shows in what it consists. [17] Perhaps we could say that there is a gift of the Spirit which corresponds to this beatitude, but it is not a gift with a common name, such as "wisdom" or "fear of the Lord." Rather,  
40 the gift is one proper to each Christian, by which he or she is disposed to share creatively and in a uniquely personal way in the redemptive life of Christ. To offer God that unique gift which is oneself, each Christian requires an impetus of divine love which is his or her own gift of the Spirit.

#### 45 Q. What is most proper to Christian self-oblation

The readiness to suffer death for the sake of God is a great virtue. But, as Jesus points out, it is a virtue which existed throughout the Old Testament. The prophets also were martyrs. Faithful until death, they died out of loyalty to God and to the  
50 truth of God which it was their mission to communicate. There are three characteristics which are proper to Christian self-oblation.

First, it is not something exceptional, required only of some persons, when they must either die for their faith or renounce it. The demands of Christian morality extend to all the human goods. Hence, the possibility of martyrdom is not limited to the  
55 case in which one might be forced to choose between suffering evil and violating a specifically religious good. Anyone who tries to live a Christian life will suffer evil (cf. 2 Tm 3.12). As Peter tells slaves:

60 When a man can suffer injustice and endure hardship through his awareness of God's presence, this is the work of grace in him. If you do wrong and get beaten for it, what credit can you claim? But if you put up with suffering for doing what is right, this is acceptable in God's eyes. It was for this you were called, since Christ suffered for you in just this way and left you an example, to have you follow in his footsteps. He did no wrong; no deceit was found in his mouth. When he  
65 was insulted, he returned no insult. When he was made to suffer, he did not counter with threats. Instead, he delivered himself up to the One who judges justly. In his own body he brought your sins to the cross, so that all of us, dead to sin, could live in accord with God's will. By his wounds you were healed. At one time you were straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd, the guardian of your souls (1 Pt 2.19-25).

70 To be a Christian is to have a vocation to suffer, because suffering is inevitable as a consequence of doing what is right. Accepted out of love--in awareness of God's "presence"--such suffering becomes an acceptable gift to God. Hence, Christian self-oblation is the offering of one's whole life, united with Christ in suffering, as a gift to God. [18]

75 From the Christian perspective, such suffering is not accepted out of faithfulness to God by a choice which disregards human goods. Christians must be ready to die for Christ but they may not kill for Him. Even the readiness to die out of love of God would be meaningless were it not also a readiness to die for the redemption of others. The passage from Peter quoted above makes clear that the offering of Jesus had its humanly intelligible purpose. He gave His life as a ransom for the many, and Christians self-sacrifice also must be directed to the true fulfillment of others (cf. Mk 10.41-45; Mt  
80 20.24-28; Lk 22.24-27).

The greatest love is not a love for God which cares nothing for human goods; the greatest love is a love for God which is fulfilled by one's laying down one's life for one's friends (cf. Jn 15.13). "The way we came to understand love was that he laid down

his life for us; we too must lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 Jn 3.16). The friends for whom Jesus laid down His life included His followers, who also were enemies in need of redemption, and His opponents, who also were called to be His friends. Paul's wonder that Christ died for godless men (cf. Rom 5.6-10) is a personal wonder, since he persecuted Christ (cf. 1 Cor 15.9; Acts 9.4). Christian self-oblation is aimed at the redemption of others--one's inimical friends and potentially friendly enemies.

Finally, Christian self-oblation aims at true human self-fulfillment. "Whoever would preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will preserve it" (Mk 8.35; cf. Mt 16.25; Lk 9.24, 17.33; Jn 12.25). Jesus no sooner reveals the awful mystery of the cross than He reveals the wonderful mystery of the resurrection. In the world fallen and redeemed, there is no other way to human fulfillment than to share in the fulfillment of the risen Lord Jesus. If we but die with Him, we shall rise with Him (cf. Rom 6.5). As He still has His wounds and pierced heart as badges of glory, so shall we rejoice forever in the fulfillment of our present sufferings.

#### Notes to chapter twenty-one

1. See Jacques Dupont, Les Béatitudes, tome III, Les Évangélistes, 2nd ed. (Paris: J. Gabalda et Cie., ed., 1973), pp. 604-632.
2. St. Augustine, The Lord's Sermon on the Mount, trans. John J. Jepson, S.S. (New York and Ramsey: Newman Press, 1948), pp. 19-20.
3. St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae, 2-2, qu. 52, art. 4.
4. See Dupont, op. cit., pp. 557-603.
5. St. Augustine, op. cit., p. 20.
6. St. Thomas Aquinas, op. cit., qu. 8, art. 7.
7. See Dupont, op. cit., pp. 633-664.
8. St. Augustine, loc. cit.
9. St. Thomas Aquinas, op. cit., qu. 45, art. 6.
10. See Germain Grisez and Joseph M. Boyle, Jr., Life and Death with Liberty and Justice: A Contribution to the Euthanasia Debate (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), pp. 396-401, also pp. 191-199, together with accompanying notes and other works cited.
11. See, for example, St. Augustine, City of God, I, 21; XIX, 6; St. Thomas Aquinas, op. cit., qu. 64, art. 2; Summa contra gentiles, III, 146; Collegii Salmanticensis, Cursus theologiae moralis, vol. 3 (Venice: 1728), tr. 3, cap. 2, pp. 157-158. Augustine thinks the judge would show greater refinement if he shrank from involvement (XIX, 6, at the end). Thomas obviously has in mind real opponents who argue from New Testament texts. The Salamancans mention only one Doctor who maintains an unusual position--Scotus, I, dist. 15, qu. 3, sec. 2, who treats all Old Testament legislation on the death penalty as divine positive law, thus to restrict the use of the death penalty to crimes specifically mentioned in Scripture. Thomas qu. 64, art. 4, says that clerics ought not to serve as executioners, since they are ordained to serve in the commemoration of the passion of Christ, who did not strike back, and since the service of the New Law, which does not prescribe any penalty of mutilation or death, is their assigned work. Canon Law (C.J.C. 984.6-7) still provides that clerics involved in the death penalty are irregular. I think it might be argued that the relevant priesthood incompatible with intentional killing is that not only of the ordained, nor even only of all Christians, but of all human persons made in God's image to reverence God in Himself and His images.
12. In 1210 Innocent III prescribed a declaration of faith for some who had accepted the Waldensian heresy, which included: "We assert concerning the secular power that it can carry out the death penalty without mortal sin, so long as it proceeds in imposing the penalty not from hatred but from judgment, not carelessly but prudently" (DS 795/425). This statement seems to be the most formal teaching in defense of the death penalty. It might be argued that it is definitive. If so, one must note that it concerns the subjective morality of the act. No doubt, at the time a Christian ruler of the most conscientious sort could carry out the death penalty with a good conscience--and this is all the proposition says.
13. It is worth noting that the statements of recent pontiffs on war have sounded an increasingly negative note, and that Vatican II allows for justifiable war only when it is a defensive last resort (cf. GS 79). My position does not conflict with this, although I would severely limit the means of defense. It also is worth noting that the American bishops--National Conference of Catholic Bishops, To Live in Christ Jesus: A Pastoral Reflection on the Moral Life (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1976), p. 34--have taught: "As possessors of a vast nuclear arsenal, we must also be aware that not only is it wrong to attack civilian populations but it is also wrong to threaten to attack them as part of a strategy of deterrence." The United States strategy of deterrence precisely consists in the threat the bishops here condemn; it is a countervalue (that is, people destroying) not a counterforce threat at the last stage which constitutes the deterrent to all stages prior thereto.
14. Pius XII, while he insists on the legitimacy of vindictive punishment imposed by public authority, states: ". . .the words of the sources and of the living teaching power do not refer to the specific content of the individual juridical prescriptions or rules of action (cf. particularly, Rom 13.4), but rather to the essential foundation itself of penal power and of its immanent finality." AAS 47 (1955) 81. Thus the text usually cited in defense of the death penalty is used precisely to exclude specific reference. This reference is understandable, perhaps, if one notes that the address was to Italian jurists; Italy renounced the death penalty in 1889, reintroduced it in 1928, and again abolished it in 1944.
15. While I cannot repeat here what was said in chapter seven and do not wish to limit the basis for that treatment to a single source, I refer here to Vatican II, especially GS 22-39, to substantiate this point.

16. See Dupont, op. cit., pp. 329-355.
17. St. Augustine, The Lord's Sermon on the Mount, pp. 16, 18, and 21-24.
18. See Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship, rev. and unabridged ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1959), pp. 76-83. Much of the content of this excellent book is relevant to the topics I treat in chapters twenty and twenty-one. Bonhoeffer is a Lutheran, and the Catholic reader must bear this fact in mind.