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Bartolomé de las Casas

THE ONLY WAY

Edited by Helen Rand Parish,
Translated by Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J.

De unico vocationis modo. English



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Friedberg

Corpus Iuris Canonici. Ed. by Emil Friedberg. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1879-81.

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY:

We refer Las Casas' citations of Aristotle to McKeon's English version. We refer his citations of Thomas Aquinas to the Leonine edition—except for *Catena Aurea* which we cite from the Parma edition.

Aristotle

The Basic Works of Aristotle. Trans. by Richard P. McKeon. New York: Random House, 1941.

Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas. *Opera Omnia*. Ed. commissioned by Leo XIII. Rome: Tipografia Poliglota, S.C. de Propaganda Fide, 1882-1988-.

Thomas Aquinas. *Opera Omnia*. 2nd ed. Parma: Pietro Faccadori, 1852-1873.

PROLOGUE: HUMANITY OF THE INDIANS

It was due to the will and work of Christ, the head of the Church, that God's chosen should be called, should be culled from every race, every tribe, every language, every corner of the world. Thus, no race, no nation on this entire globe would be left totally untouched by the free gift of divine grace. Some among them, be they few or many, are to be taken into eternal life. We must hold this to be true also of our Indian nations. [They are as called as we.] . . .¹

The reason is, they are all human beings. Their minds are very quick, alive, capable, clear. This mind comes to them primarily from the will of God who wished to make them so. Then, secondarily, it comes from the fostering influence of the heavens, from the kind conditions of the places God gave them to live in, the fair and clement weather.² For most of the Indies have land that is dry, land that is open, spacious, level, pleasant, fertile, and in fine locations. The hills, valleys, mountains, plains are uncluttered; they are free of stagnant pools; they are blanketed with aromatic plants, medicinal herbs of all kinds, and commonplace charmers spread everywhere so all the fields are smiling. Every morning they breathe a scent which lasts until noonday, a scent that delights and strengthens a traveler's soul. They are a consolation. Both mountains and trees are lofty throughout the region, at least be-

NOTA BENE

The first four chapters are missing from the only known manuscript of *De unico modo*, probably cut off by Las Casas himself. They are reconstructed very briefly here from the fragmentary summary at the start of Chapter Five, and a contemporary summary—see App. II.A; also Chart at end of App. III.B, sect. 2. Ed.'s notes on reconstruction and proof-texts are in brackets. Nonbracketed notes are by Las Casas.

¹ [*De unico modo* (hereafter *DUM*) MS, par. 1.]

² [*Apologética historia sumaria*, cap. 263, from first half of par. 1. Corresponds to *DUM* MS, beginning of par. 2.]

tween the two tropics, the stretch of forty-five degrees to either side of the equator, to use nautical terms. They are huge, imposing. And it is a fact that often, for a man to be able to gauge their size, he has to throw his head back the way he must when he wants to look at the pitch of the sky. There is an experience which surely indicates the temperate nature of the region, its even, gentle, wholesome, delightful climate. When ships come from Spain and begin to raise the first islands or any of the coast of Tierra Firme, people aboard ship sense a marvelous fragrance, fresh smells coming offshore. It is as if rose flowers were right there present to them. . . .³

Next, this condition of mind comes to them from the fine state of their bodies and sense organs, the inward, the outward, from sound and healthy nourishment, from the excellent sanitary conditions of the land, the habitations, the air of each place, from the people's temperance and moderation in food and drink, from the state of their sensual passions—calm, quiet, controlled—from the lack of upset and anxiety—their habitual state—about those worldly affairs which elicit the passions of the soul—pleasure, love, anger, grief—and even after being disturbed, for the things that passions do and the effects they cause. . . .⁴

Then too there exist extraordinary kingdoms among our Indians who live in the regions west and south from us. There are large groupings of human beings who live according to a political and a social order. There are large cities, there are kings, judges, laws, all within civilizations where commerce occurs, buying and selling and lending and all the other dealings proper to the law of nations. That is to say, their republics are properly set up, they are seriously run according to a fine body of law, there is religion, there are institutions. And our Indians cultivate friendship and they live in lifegiving ways in large cities. They manage their affairs in them with goodness and equity, affairs of peace as well as war. They run their governments according to laws that are often superior to our own. . . .⁵

³ [*Apologética historia sumaria*, cap. 21, par. 6, except last sentence, joined to par. 10—corresponds to next fragment of *DUM MS*, par. 2. *N.B.* caps. 23, 24, and 29 of the *Apologética*, on the heavens and climate influencing Indian character and capacity answer Bernardo de Mesa's claim that Indians were servile by nature due to the climate and the islands. Cf. *Historia de las Indias*, lib. 3, beg. of cap. 9, Mesa's 2nd prop.; and beg. of cap. 11, Las Casas' indignant comment.]

⁴ [*Apologética historia sumaria*, cap. 263, remainder of par. 1. Corresponds to *DUM MS*, remainder of par. 2.]

⁵ [*Apologia vs. Sepulveda*, ff. 22v–23, omitting Sepúlveda's contempt. A preliminary par., for all that follows.]

The quality of their minds is seen finally in superb artifacts, finely, beautifully fashioned, fashioned by hand. They are so skilled in the practical arts that their reputation should place them well ahead of the rest of the known world, and rightly so. The practical things these people make are striking for their art and elegance, utensils that are charmingly done, feather work, lace work. Mind does this. The practical arts result from a basic power of mind—a power we define as knowledge of how to do things the right way, a planning power that guides the various decisions the artisan makes so he acts in an ordered and economical fashion and does not err as he thinks his way along. . . .

And in the liberal and allied arts, to date, these people offer no less an indication of sound intelligence. They make objects that are high art and with a genius that awes everyone. The genius of an artist shows in the art work. It is as the poet says: "The work applauds its maker." Prosper remarks in one of his *Epigrams*: "It must be so, that an author shows in the fine things he has written. They sing praise to their maker."

The Indians are highly skilled also in the arts we educate ourselves to, the Indians we have taught thus far: grammar, logic. And they charm the ear of an audience with every kind of music, remarkable beauty. Their handwriting is skillful and lovely, such that one cannot tell often if the letters are handwritten or printed. . . . I have seen all this with my own eyes, touched it with my own hands, heard it with my own ears, over the long time I passed among those peoples. . . .⁶

Due to all these influences—the broad/celestial, the narrow/terrestrial, the essential/accidental—the Indians come to be endowed, first by force of nature, next by force of personal achievement and experience, with the three kinds of self-rule required: (1) personal, by which one knows how to rule oneself, (2) domestic, by which one knows how to rule a household, and (3) political, knowledge of how to set up and rule a city.

Their political rule presupposes fully developed personal and domestic elements, i.e., farmers, artisans, soldiery, wealthy people; religion, temples, priests, sacrifices; judges and agents of justice; governors; customs; and throughout, everything touched by qualities of mind and will . . . their society is the equal of that of many nations in the world renowned for being politically astute. They surpass many another. They are inferior to none. Those they equal are the Greeks and Romans. And in a good many customs they outdo, they surpass

⁶ [Both pars. above open with sents. from *DUM MS*, par. 3. Rest is from *Apologia vs. S.* ff. 23v–24, minus Sepúlveda's contempt, and ff. 24–24v, minus bad historians.]

the Greeks and Romans. They surpass the English, the French, and some groups in our native Spain. In the possession of good customs, in the lack of bad ones, they are superior to so many other peoples that these latter do not merit comparison to our Indians.

All of this stands clearly proven and explained. Our comparisons show that in the entire world, in the old days of paganism, there were countless peoples who were much less rational in their use of mind than our Indians, peoples who had customs far more horrible, vices far more depraved. That conclusion is enough to confound those who have so rashly, perhaps unforgivably, defamed our Indians, to make those defamers ashamed in and for themselves, to make them admit their error. . . . And all those who know of them should consider them false witnesses. The more so because, as we have seen through comparison and contrast, the Indians are and were ahead of others—many, many others—more ordered in their use of mind, more ordered in their use of will, with less of the taint of malice and malignancy.

Since all these Indian peoples, excepting none in the vast world of that hemisphere, universally have good and natural intelligence, have ready wills, they thus can be drawn to and taught a complete and sound morality, and more so to our Christian belief, even though some peoples in some places have not yet developed political maturity, an ordered body politic, the kind we said many possessed. And some have certain corrupt customs. But these are curable finally with human effort, and more so, better so, with the preaching of the gospel.⁷

It is clear as clear can be that the nations of our Indies fall into [a special category of infidels]. They have and hold their realms, their lands, by natural law and by the law of nations. They owe allegiance to no one higher than themselves, outside themselves, neither de jure nor de facto. We find them in possession of their countries, with plenty of princes over plenty of principalities having great numbers of people, people who serve and obey their lords and masters, while the latter exercise full authority over their people without hindrance, exercise full power in large and in small, so no one would have the legitimate right to seize their power, or their realms, so distant from our own, so far from harming us or our Church or our Catholic faith or any member thereof. They are of the fourth kind of infidels [faraway non-hostile pagans], no one can doubt it.

⁷ [Apológica historia sumaria, cap. 263, pars. 2, 3, and first half of 4. This is Las Casas' own later summary of Indian capacity; but note that the final part of par. 4 forcefully repeats the basic doctrine of *The Only Way*. See App. I.B, sect. 1, penultimate par.]

Cajetan spoke of this fourth kind of infidel more clearly and distinctly than of the other three when commenting on Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Secunda Secundae, q. 66, art. 8, especially when he said as follows:

There are some pagans who . . . have never been under Christian rule, who live in lands never reached by the name of Christ. Their rulers, though they are pagans, are legitimate authorities, whether they govern in a monarchy or a republic. They are not to be deprived of their authority because of their pagan belonging. Such authority is a matter of positive law. Divine law deals with pagan belief. Divine law does not invalidate positive law. I know of no law abrogating their temporal possessions. No king, no emperor, not the Roman Church itself, can make war on them for the purpose of occupying their territory or subjecting them to temporal rule. There is no just cause for such a war. The reason: Jesus Christ, the King of Kings (to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth) did not send armed soldiery to take possession of the earth but holy men, preachers, sent sheep among wolves.

Further on [Cajetan] says:

So we would sin mortally if we sought to spread the faith of Christ by way of war. We would not be the legitimate rulers of the conquered, we would have committed a mighty theft, we would be held to restitution for being unjust aggressors in an unjust occupation.⁸

So let us turn now to explaining the way, the natural, overall, single and settled way of calling God's chosen, God's elect, to the faith of Christ, of inviting them into the Christian way of life.⁹

⁸ [*Doce dudas*, Second Principle, 3rd par. from end, here followed by 4th par. from the end, but minus the repetitious sent. after Cajetan's Latin passage—*Opúsculos*, i.e., BAE 110: 490ab, 490a. N.B. Although *Doce dudas* was put together in 1564, Las Casas wrote this Principle, on the 4 kinds of infidels (487b–490a), in 1539—c.f. *Las Casas en México*, note 39, also last par. of note 58. Both contemporary summaries of *The Only Way* include the 4 kinds of infidels—see below, Introductory Note to App. II.]

PART ONE: TRUE EVANGELIZATION

The Only Way: Winning the Mind and Will

One way, one way only, of teaching a living faith, to everyone, everywhere, always, was set by Divine Providence: the way that wins the mind with reasons, that wins the will with gentleness, with invitation. It has to fit all people on earth, no distinction made for sect, for error, even for evil.

Many proofs support this thesis: proofs from reason, from the practice of the patriarchs, from the once-and-for-all way of preaching willed by Christ, from the practice of the apostles and the procedures they ordered, from the teachings of Church Doctors, the ancient Church customs, the long list of Church decrees.

First from reason, a crucial proof. One, only one way is characteristic of Divine Wisdom in its care for creatures, in its leading of them to fulfill their natural purposes—a gentle, coaxing, gracious way. Among creatures, the rational one is the higher, of more worth than the rest. The rest are not made in the image of God. Divine Providence cares for the rational creature in a special way, for itself. It cares for others for the sake of the rational creature. So Divine Wisdom leads the rational creature, the human, to fulfill its natural purpose in a gentle, coaxing, gracious way. But it is a teaching of the faith that people be called to, be led to a living faith under the universal command as it is stated in Matthew 28:19-20: "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you." And Paul to the Romans (10:17): "Faith comes from hearing, hearing from the word of Christ." Therefore the way of teaching people has to be a gentle, coaxing, gracious way. It wins the mind with reasons, it wins the will with graciousness. So, one way, one way only, of teaching a living faith, to everyone, everywhere, always, was set by Divine Providence, a way that wins the mind with reasons, that wins the will with gentleness, with invitation.

The major premise is clear: Divine Wisdom cares for all its creatures, not just by leading them to fulfill their natural purposes, but also by endowing them with inner powers, with potentialities which are at the source of performance, so they would be able to act on their own initiative as well. Thus actions invited by God are actions native to creatures, consonant with them; they flow easily. Creatures possess the sources of response within themselves. For that reason their responses are natural and easy, the way gravity affects a stone, so it tends to fall naturally, easily.

In a certain sense, creatures are not just led to fulfill their purposes, they do so of themselves, as if the movement originates within. For this reason Wisdom 8:1 says that Divine Wisdom "reaches the whole of creation with its power." That is, it runs all things perfectly. As the gloss puts it: "It provides for everything smoothly."¹⁰

So each creature moves toward what Divine Wisdom wants for it by means of a nature divinity gives it, according to the leaning built into nature. It is the goodness in God from which all natures flow . . . so every creature has in it a power to want goodness due to the imprint of its Creator upon it.¹¹ Goodness means fulfillment because each thing's activity is normed by its goal, the activity being one perfection, the fulfillment being a second. We call something good and virtuous when it acts harmoniously with itself, and thus with the goal set for it by God, in God's own way. And so, in creation, there is a certain circularity: goodness going out, goodness coming back.¹²

BY THE WAY OF CHRIST

Divine Wisdom, Divine Providence are behind the way, the form Christ fashioned and prescribed in preaching and teaching His gospel, His belief, to all and sundry, everywhere, every time, from His ascension into heaven until the day of judgment. But that way, that form, wins the mind with reasons, wins the will with gentleness, with invita-

¹⁰ [Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla Super Totam Bibliam*, Strasburg, 1492, III:Rr-5a, s.n.]

¹¹ Cf. Dionysius, "De divinis nominibus," 4 [PL, 122:1128-1137, esp. 1131. The Latin text also contains a reference to Augustine, *De civitate dei*, lib. 21, cap. 22 (PL, 41:735) which is not apt and seems to be a copyist's error.]

¹² St. Thomas treats this subject quite extensively in *Summa Theologiae*. See Ia IIae: q. 6, art. 1, corp. [Opera, 6:55-56]; and q. 110, art. 2, corp. [Opera, 7:312]. Also IIa IIae: q. 23, art. 2 [Opera, 8:165.]; and q. 165, art. 1 [Opera, 10:339]; and many other places.

tion. So Divine Wisdom, Divine Providence are behind this way of teaching people a living faith, winning their minds, winning their wills, etc.

Both the conclusion and major premise are clear because Christ, the Son of God, is the Wisdom of His Father, is true God, one God with His Father and Holy Spirit. There is one Godhood in these three Persons, so there is one Wisdom, one Providence. When the Son is active, Father and Holy Spirit are active. The activity of the Son is the activity of God. Hilary says, in *On The Trinity*, bk. 7: Sound faith asserts that the actions of the Trinity that reach outward are of all three together, not separately.¹³ So Divine Providence fashioned and prescribed what Christ fashioned and prescribed when He was mortal in His flesh.

The minor is proven by the form Christ gave to His apostles and disciples the two times He sent them out preaching. First, Matthew 10 and Luke 9, the time He called the apostles together then sent them out to preach to the Jews. Likewise in Luke 10, He sent a separate seventy-two to the same people. They were to be preached to first. Christ was sent to them primarily, it was willed by God that way: "The word of God had to be preached to you first, . . ." (Acts 13:46). "So the Jews would have no excuse for not accepting Him, saying He had sent the apostles to the pagans," as [Jerome] comments on the text.¹⁴ Christ said to the apostles: "Go and preach, say that the Kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 10:7). For sinning makes us earthly; virtue makes us heavenly; God rules in the heavenly. For this we say, the Kingdom of God is within you, etc.

And Christ further said:

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without pay, give without pay. Take no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts, no bag for your journey . . . no staff. . . . In whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay with him until you depart. As you enter the house, salute it saying, Peace to this house! (Matthew 10:7-12 passim).

And in Luke 10:5 it says,

First say, Peace to this house. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.

¹³ [Here Las Casas is giving the gist of lib. 7—Cf. *PL*, 10:198-278, esp. 204.]

¹⁴ [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:130a. This was the basic compilation of patristic comments on the four Gospels, text by text.]

And in Matthew 10:13-16

If anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I say to you, it shall be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. Behold I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves [or as Luke says, as sheep among wolves, meaning the same]. So be wise as serpents and simple as doves. . . . People will deliver you up to councils and synagogues. . . .

We can add a germane saying from Matthew 11:29-30:

Come to me all you who labor and are sorely burdened and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls. My yoke is easy, my burden light.

It all means: learn from me that you also may be meek and humble of heart.

This is the way, the form of preaching Christ's law, of drawing people to a living faith, to Christianity. It is what Christ Himself, Son of God, Wisdom of the Father, fashioned and prescribed for His apostles, His disciples, and their successors, the method He first used and they kept to with consummate tact in their approach to everyone.

Now to see that this way, this form of preaching a living faith wins the mind with reasons, wins the will gently, by attraction, by graciousness. First off, because Christ, when He said preach that the kingdom of God is near, meant preach repentance for the remission of sins. That was the theme of His sermon in Matthew 4:17: "Jesus began to preach and say, Repent, the Kingdom of Heaven is near." Also in Mark 6:12 the description is of apostles setting out preaching that people should repent, so that by repentance they would be brought near to the kingdom of heaven.

It is clear that preaching the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God can mean several things: (a) Christ Himself was the kingdom of God, as in Matthew 12:28: "If by the power of God I exorcise demons, surely the Kingdom of God is among you"—i.e., Christ, the bringer of that kingdom. He proved He was the Christ by exorcising demons with the power of God. And so, accept Christ here, accept the kingdom here, according to Nicholas of Lyra.¹⁵ That was the preaching of the apostles

¹⁵ [Cf. Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla super totam Bibliam IV* Strasburg, 1492, fol. d 4-6, s.n.]

at the will of Christ for that time, announcing Christ's arrival to the Jews, again according to Nicholas.

Or (b): The kingdom of heaven—and this is the better opinion—was what Christ really commanded the apostles to announce, eternal happiness, eternal life, as stated in Matthew: “Unless your justice is more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven” (5:20). No one ever before heard this beatitude announced by any prophet. Chrysostom speaks of the Matthean passage in Homily 32:

You see the extraordinary role of the apostles—they are required to announce nothing crass, nothing our senses can control, nothing akin to what Moses and the Prophets taught, but something new, something unique no predecessor ever taught—they promised the goods of this earth! The apostles taught the Kingdom of Heaven and its total bliss.¹⁶

Or (c): The kingdom of heaven was the gospel, the era of the New Testament, as Matthew 13:52 says: “Every scribe learned in the Kingdom of Heaven is like the father of a family. . . .” A scribe, someone learned in the kingdom of heaven, equals someone learned in the gospel, in the New Testament, etc.

The apostles had to give reasons to explain the kingdom of heaven, whichever way it is to be understood. So their hearers could understand their words and grasp their teaching and be brought to repentance. [The apostles had to give reasons] so that people's minds could be brought to clarity, so they could judge that it was good and useful to yield to the words and teachings of the apostles.

It is not likely that they just uttered the bare words ‘kingdom’ and ‘repentance.’ It is more likely that as they preached eternal life they preached also the means to acquire it. So they said all sin must be surrendered, no sinner could locate in eternal life: “Do not sin. Those who do not fornicate, adore idols, commit adultery, . . . will possess the Kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9). So, since a sin-free time is acceptable to God and in it people can gain eternal life, then people should avoid all sin. Christ said as much in Luke 4:19, that the Spirit of God had sent Him to preach a holy year acceptable to God.

So the apostles preached it—Paul's preaching is proof: “Behold, now is an acceptable time, now is a time of grace. Offending no one in any way, . . .” (2 Corinthians 6:2-3). Avoid all sin was His teaching,

¹⁶ [PG, 57:381.]

because it was a time of grace. The other apostles preached the same, they all preached with the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12). They announced the kingdom of heaven to people, that people must reach it, so they preached that people must avoid all that could keep them from reaching it. And so Paul said: “Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable, . . .” (1 Corinthians 9:25). People had to give up a lot to gain that wreath. As Ephesians 4:22 says it: “Put aside your old behavior. . . . Let the thief no longer steal. . . .”

The passage shows that the apostles preached a program of good morals. They used reasons to win the minds of their hearers, to exercise those minds. It is useless to preach to people the kingdom of God, of heaven, to preach repentance and eternal life without giving people both map and directions to get there. The apostles preached a whole program, they offered persuasive explanations. It was true of Christ preaching, Matthew 4:17 speaks of Him saying: “Do penance!” as if it was His only message. Yet we know He said a great deal about moral conduct.

And Paul says, in 1 Corinthians 2:2: “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.” That means I preached only the death of Christ to you. Yet it is clear he preached on moral matters a great deal, on the source of death, on the profit of the moral life, etc.

So Christ used one expression with His apostles: the kingdom of God is near. When someone is required to do something, he is required to take all the steps necessary to accomplish the job. Christ ordered that the kingdom of heaven be proclaimed. So He ordered preached all that pertained to that kingdom. There is a clearer indication in Luke 9. Christ told his apostles to preach the kingdom of God.

We have listed above all the reasons for winning the mind. The point is self-evident. So the way, the form Christ gave His apostles and disciples for preaching His message, the way He willed, was to win the mind.

Next, that this way wins the will with gentleness, draws it, invites it, is clear also. It is so precious it makes people greet one another first, in the cities and towns and households they enter, before any other ritual. People are accustomed in their first words to each other, especially to strangers, to use a polite greeting, so that the start of speech between them is a good wish. If anyone does not greet others politely, people think him an ill-mannered clod. So a greeting is a necessity, almost, between people, the customary start of a relationship. It is why Christ ordered His apostles to be first in greeting others. It is more

generous to offer a respect before receiving one. Paul says in Romans 12:10: "Outdo one another in showing honor." He means people should try to show their respect before respect is shown to them. And Chrysostom comments on this passage of Matthew in Homily 32: "Because you are teachers, do not therefore think you should stay aloof until people pay their respects to you. Pay your respects to them first!"¹⁷

Christ commanded a special greeting, used the words, "Peace to this house!" It was a strong custom among Hebrews and Syrians to use this greeting, as Jerome implies, commenting on Matthew.¹⁸ The apostles worked among Hebrews and Syrians. Or it was that no other greeting seemed to embrace more blessings than wishing someone peace. All greetings are prayers for blessings, but more are enveloped in this particular one because peace is the tranquility of order, as Augustine says in *The City of God*, bk. 19, chap. 13.¹⁹ Where the tranquility of order prevails, blessings abound. Peace is a state of calm and quiet and of multiple friendships according to Isidore in his *Etymologies*. Everyone is made for happiness. Where the tranquility of order prevails, everyone is happy since nothing upsets the order. If tranquility exists, people want the quiet life; they work for it. Should something block it, they must pursue it. They will have it, and not a counterfeit. Peace is a supreme good, there is nothing more beautiful than it in society. Nothing more precious, nothing more enjoyable or useful has ever been heard of or hoped for or held. As it says in a certain *Extravagante* under the heading "On Burials In Common" [*sic*]²⁰: "We know from evidence we collected that only in a time of peace is there true worship of the Author of peace." There are some sayings about this: "Peace makes the word 'peace' also a sign of love. It is a gentle word that teaches all there is to love. Peace is pure salvation. Whoever despises peace will never possess the One for whom peace is the vision of heaven."

So, what Denys the Great says is plausible: "It is natural for everything to want peace. A peaceful king who acts peaceably produces subjects who will be chaste, controlled, civilized." So says the introduction to the *Decretals*.²¹

¹⁷ [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:132b.]

¹⁸ [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:132b.]

¹⁹ [Cf. *PL*, 41:640.]

²⁰ *Clementines*, lib. 3, tit. 7, cap. 2. [Friedberg, 2:1162. We have corrected Las Casas' citation from memory to the canon he is really quoting.]

²¹ [See Friedberg 2, page 2, Gregory's foreword, for the second sentence in Las Casas' citation. Las Casas is citing the original passage from memory.]

Remigius says,

The Lord taught His disciples to say peace when they arrived somewhere, to choose a house or a host by a greeting of peace, as if the Lord said in so many words: "Greet everyone with peace." So those who accepted would be worthy hosts, those who did not, unworthy. Though a host may be chosen by his public reputation, still he must be greeted with peace, so the preachers may be invited in because of their own dignity and not force themselves on him for another reason.²²

Christ ordered His apostles to find a worthy host for the sake of the apostles' good name. For if they stayed with suspect, criminal types, they would be suspected themselves of criminality. Because all creatures love their like and live with them (Ecclesiasticus 13, 19). Likeness is the source of love, says Aristotle in 8 *Ethics*, chapters 1–3. Those who live with good people are thought to be good. "With the pure, you will be pure" (Psalm 18:26). The preachers who are holy "must be well thought of by outsiders" (1 Timothy 3:7). Jerome says as much: "A host must be chosen on what people think of him i.e., his neighbors, so the reputation of the preacher is not sullied."²³

The Lord wanted His preachers to be good and to look good, lovers of peace, messengers of peace, to quote Isaiah 52:7: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings the good tidings of peace." The kind the Lord made, "peace by the blood of His cross, . . ." (Colossians 1:20). He broadcast peace, as Ephesians 2:17 says: "And He came and brought good tidings of peace to you who were far off, and good tidings to those who were near." No wonder He ordered good tidings to be preached.

The apostles preached peace first—a value so wanted, so palatable, so loved and lovable by those people who lived in city, town, and household that it's clear they could only attract such people! And render them gracious and kind enough to welcome the apostles and shelter them generously and warmly and listen to their teaching willingly.

It was very winning to see the apostles poor, humble, kind—not after gold, not after silver, not after coin, not after stuff of any kind, not the least thing earthly or passing, not even asking for the meal they needed unless from people willing to provide it.

²² [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:133a.]

²³ [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:132b.]

For St. Thomas, commenting on Matthew, the apostles were allowed not just any house for their room and board, but only that of someone found willing and worthy. The Lord expressly said: "Whatever city you enter, whatever town, ask who is a worthy person there, and stay with him until you leave" (Matthew 10:11). That means, do not hop from house to house.

Jerome [and other Fathers] give the reasons for this injunction: (1) So as not to embarrass the hosts—they might appear to be slighted. It is also unseemly, a sign of ingratitude, for guests to embarrass, to insult hosts, who have treated them with welcome and warmth. (2) So as not to seem superficial to people. It is not fitting for preachers of Christian persuasion. For Christ wanted them to be serious and steady men, so they could gain greater reverence and authority, and as a result their teaching would be worth more to their hearers, and result in a richer harvest. (3) To escape the reputation of being a voracious glutton. Some people might think the apostles changed lodgings so they could enjoy a richer fare with other hosts. That would be reminiscent of the Pharisees blaming Christ for eating with publicans, saying He did so out of voracity.²⁴

For the apostles to heal the sick at no cost, to raise the dead, to cleanse lepers, to rid tormented bodies of demons, was a winning way indeed; it gained the good will of people, it was influential on them. There is nothing more gratifying for people everywhere than to receive great favors or great gifts from others, but not if afterward they are made to render more than thanks and they are unwilling. It is apparent that the rare, the wonderful gifts the apostles gave, miraculous gifts, to their hosts, their hearers, created a climate of love and affection—gifts like infants, able to make a crowd willing, apt, and open to a teaching, to hear it, to accept, to believe it.

If people were forced to pay a price for miraculous cures, for gifts of life, they would be deeply depressed. But no price was asked. The opposite occurred. The people loved the apostles happily, they were quick and eager to hear with rapt attention what the apostles taught and to accept it.

Christ told His men to heal the sick in the various towns, so that the miracles would draw people to the message they preached. Remember what He said: "And say to the people, The Kingdom of God has touched you . . ." If you cure first, and preach after, your

²⁴ Commenting on Matthew 11 and Luke 17 [Las Casas is summarizing citations by Jerome, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Cyril, and Theophilact in *Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:132b, 12:100b, 12:370a.].

words will come easily. People will believe that the Kingdom has touched *you*. (Thus Theophilact on Luke 10.)²⁵

Their generosity proved the apostles to be holy men. They gave gratis their gifts of goodness to people oppressed by terrible conditions and incurable diseases. They could have amassed great wealth, have piled up riches if they wanted to. Instead they despised wealth as they would night-soil.

Conclusion: It was a winning way indeed to heal the sick, to raise the dead, etc.; a way to affect, to draw the will of the watcher without force to love the apostles, to listen gladly to what they taught, etc. So then the way, the form Christ fashioned for preaching the gospel not only wins the mind with reasons, but wins the will also, gently, attractively, with motives. It was a winning way indeed, and it worked well for getting good will and a hearing from people when the apostles preached the goods of eternal life, goods beyond nature, beyond expectation, beyond imagination. Nothing more charming or gratifying was ever concocted. It was the greatest good that could be preached to people, nothing more powerful than it for attracting them, so they would move as if by gravity to hear and heed the teachings of the apostles. They were to understand that after the work, the worries, the woes of this life in time, those who had faith would last in eternity forever in happiness and calm.

It is now clear that the way Christ wanted for preaching the gospel, and willed for His apostles and their successors, was to win the mind with reasons and win the will with motives, gently, graciously.

After the Lord taught His apostles and disciples the form and fashion for their behavior toward the city, the town, the household that took them in, willingly, even graciously, He then gave them a norm they should act on toward those who were resistant. "Whoever is unresponsive, who does not listen to your words, leave the house, the town, shake its dust off your feet. I tell you solemnly it will go easier for Sodom and Gomorrah on judgment day than for that town" (Matthew 10:14).

What is clear is that Christ gave His apostles permission and power to preach the gospel to those willing to hear it, and that only! Not power to punish the unwilling by any force, pressure, or harshness. He granted no power to apostle or preacher of the faith to force the unwilling to listen, no power to punish even those who drove the apostles out of town. He decreed punishment in eternity, not in time. "Whoever is

²⁵ [PG, 123:835. Also *Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 12:117.]

unreceptive, and does not listen to your words, leave the place." He did not say, "Confront them! Preach to them willy nilly! If they persist tenaciously in trying to drive you out, do not hesitate to use human punishment!" He said: "Shake the dust off your feet. I tell you solemnly it will go easier for Sodom and Gomorrah on judgment day than for that town." As if He said flatly: "I reserve the punishment for such rejection to myself. I do not grant it to you!"

Thus Christ set no earthly sentence on those in this world who refused to accept the faith, so their refusal would not be punished, at least not punished by human beings, for being unbelievers. Christ set an otherworldly sentence, as stated in Mark 16:16: "The non-believer shall be damned." And Matthew 11:21, and Luke 10:13: "He then began to reprove the towns in which so many wonders had been worked." They had had no change of heart—they had not believed.

A bad end to you Corozain, to you Bethsaida! If the wonders that have been worked in you had been worked in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have done penance in sackcloth and ashes. I must tell you, Tyre and Sidon will be forgiven on the day of judgment, not you. As for you Capharnaum . . . if in Sodom . . . I must tell you the land of Sodom will be forgiven on the day of judgment, not you.

So this is the pattern: Christ did not give human beings the power to inflict earthly punishment on those who refused to listen to the faith being preached or on those who refused to welcome or want the preachers of that faith—it was an eternal punishment payable in the life hereafter. He reserved to Himself the punishment of both types.

St. Thomas confirms this view in his tract *Against the Enemies of Religion*, ch. 15, 4th argument, explaining the command, "Shake the dust. . . ." He says

To objection four, we must say that the Lord ordered His apostles to shake the dust from their feet as a symbol for those who refused to accept them. And it says in Mark 6: "Shake the dust off your feet as a symbol against them." The gloss on the text of Luke 10: "Shake the dust. . ." says: "To symbolize the fruitlessness of the human effort undertaken on their behalf." And this symbol points to the divine judgment.²⁶

So Matthew 10 sums it up: "I must tell you, it will go easier for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on judgment day than for that town." From

²⁶ [S. Thomas, *Opera*, 41:145.]

these citations we learn that the Lord ordered us as disciples to leave a place if not welcome. Its people will be judged for their sinfulness at the last, the faithless people spoken of in 1 Corinthians 5:13: "God will judge those outside the faith. Those who are within the fold, the faithful, lie under the judgment of the Church." So if someone wants to be received into the company of the faithful, then injures that company unjustly, the man ought not to be left to God to judge, but ought to be submitted to the Church for judgment.

What could be clearer, what more cogent, I ask you, to prove Christ gave no power to any human being to bring force or punishment to bear on any pagan whatever or anyone unwilling to hear the faith preached or to welcome the preachers into their territory? The punishment for such rejection falls to the divine judgment after this life, not to the human one here. And so that no doubt of this will linger in anyone's mind, we should note here what Christ did to confirm this truth. On His way up to Jerusalem, when He had to stop at a Samaritan town, He sent James and John ahead to prepare a lodging and acquire the necessities there. The Samaritans refused the lodging. The apostles were enraged at the unfriendliness, at the rejection. They said: "Lord, do you want us to pray a fire down on them from heaven to destroy them?" The Lord turned to them with this reproach: "You do not know what Spirit you belong to. The Son of Man did not come to damn souls but to save them" (Luke 9:55–56). The Spirit of Christ is a gentle Spirit, as the passage from Isaiah 61:1 says: "The Spirit of God is upon me. Therefore he has consecrated me, he has sent me to preach the good news to gentle people." And chapter 42: "Behold my servant, I will cherish him." Next: "I sent my Spirit upon him." Next: "He will not break the half-broken reed, nor snuff out the smoking wick."

Christ wanted them to possess this Spirit, to be good disciples, in the likeness of a good master, which is why He added the words: "The Son of Man came to save souls, not damn them." It was not the arrival of justice but mercy, as John 3:17 says: "God did not send his Son to judge the world, God wanted to save the world through Him." For that purpose He accepted to be called Jesus, as Matthew 1:11 says: "You will call His name Jesus for He will save His people from their sins."

Theophilact says: "Christ, teaching a law more lofty than the life of Elias, reproached His disciples, led them away from violent ideas when He taught them to bear peaceably those who inflicted harm on them."²⁷ And Cyril:

²⁷ [PG, 123:830.]

Though the Lord with foreknowledge knew His disciples would not be welcomed by the Samaritans, even so he ordered them ahead because it was His way of doing all He could for their improvement. They were the future teachers of the world. They were to traverse city and town to preach the Gospel truth. They would sometime meet up with people reluctant to hear the holy word—i.e., offering Jesus no lodging. He taught the disciples that when preaching the Gospel they must be totally patient, totally gentle, not hostile or irritable by coming down harshly on those who sinned against them. The disciples were not there yet. They were not without zealotry. They wanted to bring fire from heaven down on the Samaritans.²⁸

There was a great gain in being so gentle. Some few days later the conversion of the Samaritans, worked by the Lord through the Samaritan woman, showed it clearly. Next in the story comes: "And they went to another town." He showed a behavior pattern to His disciples, according to Bonaventure on Luke. They should leave people rather than quarrel with them. Christ gave the pattern to His disciples in Matthew 10:14: "If they persecute you in one town, leave it for another. . . ."

The conclusion is clear from Christ's normative behavior. What Christ does teaches us, because the Father gave Him to us as a witness, a leader, a teacher, as the prophecy in Isaiah 55:4 puts it: "Look, he said, I gave Him as a witness to the people, as a leader, as a teacher to the Gentiles." And Matthew 13:17: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him." That means obey Him, imitate Him. He teaches not just by words but by deeds as well what one must do to imitate Him. There must be no evil inflicted in any way, no force, no punishment on pagans who have never had the faith, if they do not want to listen to it or to welcome its preachers. There is a consequence immediately evident: Those who do the opposite usurp divine judgment. They are forthwith in violation of divine law.

In my treatment of the preceding material you see forcibly confirmed in a thousand ways—excuse the hyperbole—the form Christ fixed for preaching the gospel truth, for inviting, for drawing people to a living faith, fixed for His apostles and for those called to fill their places. It is remarkably kind, gentle, peaceable, sensible, faultless, edifying, lovable. It is suffused with compassion, patience, forgiveness, charm, with charity abounding in benefits freely given to those who hear preached the name of Christ. We say this of the form Christ set the first time He sent His holy apostles and disciples out, as if into training,

²⁸ [Catena Aurea—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 12:111.]

so they could be schooled and readied slowly for the future struggle with the entire world by preaching first to the Jews.

After His resurrection He sent His disciples to win over the whole world, on a second, definitive mission. He added little about the form of preaching. He reiterated, reemphasized what He said at the first sending, what He had insisted on strongly. The second sending was as the first: "Go, He said, teach all people, baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teach them to keep all the commandments I gave you" (Matthew 28:19–20). Then Mark: "Go everywhere in the world, preach the Gospel to everyone [i.e., to people of every nation]. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. Whoever does not believe shall be condemned." Finally the Evangelist writes: "They went out and preached everywhere, with the Lord's help, with the Lord backing their preaching by miracles that followed" (16:15, 20).

Luke is briefer than the others when he writes about the form of preaching the gospel: "For so it was prophesied, so ought Christ to have died, to have risen from the dead on the third day, so ought repentance to be preached in His name, and forgiveness of sins, to everyone, beginning with Jerusalem. You are witnesses of what happened" (Luke 24:46–48). In Acts 10:42–43, Luke speaks again somewhat about form and tells us to preach and bear witness: "Because it is Christ Himself who is made judge by God of all living, all dead. Every prophet testified to this: All those who believe in Him gain forgiveness of sins in His name." He ordered baptism to accompany repentance. In baptism, repentance occurs through confession, the putting aside of old evils, of unbelief. Forgiveness of sin goes with all this, says Theophilact.²⁹ The margin gloss on the text says pardon had to be offered to those who crucified Christ, to help the ministers who were going to preach repentance and forgiveness beginning from Jerusalem.

Not because the words of God were entrusted to them and because theirs was the adoption as sons of God, the worth that went with it, the legacy, the law, but rather because people enmeshed in varieties of confusion and criminality would be spurred to a hope of forgiveness by this overwhelming sign of divine grace.³⁰

The interlinear gloss says: "What has to be preached has to be preached in more than the one people of Israel, than the one part of the world."

²⁹ [Catena Aurea—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 12:254a.]

³⁰ [Catena Aurea—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 12:254a. Citation is from Bede.]

The previous instruction was: Do not go among the Gentiles.³¹ So the preaching of the apostles was rejected first in Judea. The present instruction says, according to Theophilact: "Preach the Gospel to every one, believer, unbeliever alike!" And the interlinear gloss on the words, "They exorcised demons [Mark 6:13]," says: "by gracious encouragement removing malice from people's hearts." And Bede says: "The one who said before His passion, 'Do not go to other races!' after His resurrection said, 'Go, teach every race!'"³² Severus also says: "One and the same power which created every life redeems every life."³³

The Lord laid a triple duty on the apostles when He sent them to preach to the entire world. The first, to preach the faith. The second, nourishing believers with sacraments. The third, teaching believers nourished by sacraments to keep the commandments of God and live a good life. The first is found in: "Go, teach all races." The second in: "Baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The third in: "Teaching them to keep all I have commanded you."

And speaking of the triple duty, it is fairly clear from earlier statements what an effort the apostles and disciples of Christ exerted on the first and second missions, what care, what concern, what burning zeal, what charity. Fairly clear what the preachers also were required to do, who took their places out of a duty given them to fulfill. It is quite clear in Mark 6:12-13: "[The apostles] went out preaching that people should do penance. They exorcised many demons, they anointed many sick people and cured them." And in Luke 9:6: "They set out and went through the towns preaching and healing everywhere." And in Mark 16:20: "They went and preached everywhere, the Lord helping them, backing their words with miracles later." Finally, it is quite clear in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke's testimony, in what Paul writes in his Epistles, and in what Chrysostom says in a signal and striking way commenting on Matthew in Homilies 33 and 34, and further in Homily 7 on 1 Corinthians, chapter 2, in these and in many other places in his works.³⁴

The evidence shows that Christ set a form for preaching the gospel that was one and the same—before His resurrection and after it—to win the mind with reasons, to win the will with motives, to attract it, because the form is peaceful, gentle, kind, full of the taste of charity. To

teach, we concluded broadly earlier, means treating the mind quietly, tactfully, smoothly, logically, with precision, step by step, at a pace allowing intervals of time. To teach also means that the will of the learner is drawn by things with charm to them, gentle, tasteful things. So the form Christ set for preaching the gospel wins the mind with reason, wins the will with motive.

In sum: (a) Preach penitence and forgiveness of sins in the name of Christ. (b) Testify that He was appointed judge of the living and dead by God. (c) All the prophets prophesied that people would have forgiveness of their sins, all who believed in Him. (d) Those caught in various confusions and criminalities would be encouraged, emboldened to hope for forgiveness of past sins by the miracle of divine mercy. (e) Pardon was promised even to the Jews who crucified the Son of God, so they could be prompted to hope that their former sins would be wiped clean. To preach this way such declarations, promises, proposals, clearly implied that the mind be won over by reasons and the will won by attractive, compelling motives. The gloss cited earlier confirms this: "By gracious encouragement removing malice from people's hearts."

Conclusion: The form Christ, the Son of God, set His apostles for preaching His gospel everywhere, before His death, after His resurrection, was one and the same, to win the mind with reasons, to win the will with attractive, compelling motives.

And it is clear enough not to demand further proof, the conclusion that this way, this form of preaching the gospel holds good for all people, all races, no distinctions made. For Christ commanded: "Go everywhere, teach everyone." No one, no place privileged. So we are not to discriminate between place and person, not to choose.

It is further clear that Christ's way was to last into the future, after Christ's ascension, until judgment day, because the gospel is the law of Christ's kingdom. Compare Matthew 24:14: "This Gospel of the Kingdom is to be preached." But the kingdom of Christ is to last, so the gospel of Christ, the new law, is to last to the end of the world. As Matthew 24:34 puts it: "I tell you, this generation will not pass away before everything comes about." Chrysostom explains this as the generation of the Church, i.e., the kingdom of Christ.

St. Thomas gives the reason:

Since the new law supplants the old law as something more perfect supplants something less perfect, our present life can have nothing more perfect than the new law. For nothing can be closer to our ultimate good than that which puts us in immediate touch with it.

³¹ [Nicholas of Lyra, *Postilla IV*, Strasburg, 1492, h 10b]

³² [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:333b.]

³³ [*Catena Aurea*—S. Thomas, *Opera*, Parma, 11:334a.]

³⁴ [Cf. *PG*: 57:587-604; and 61:54-68.]

The new law does just this. Hence Hebrews 10:19 says: "So brethren, with trust that in the blood of Christ, the new way He initiated, we can enter the Holy of Holies," we approach God. Life lived in the new law is more perfect than any other now lived, because the most perfect life is the one closest to its fulfillment.³⁵

Therefore we will keep to the same form and fashion of preaching the gospel, we must, while time lasts, i.e., until the day of judgment, with every people in every place. The conclusion stands. Just as Christ did not pick and choose between peoples or places, He did not between age and age. Given that the kingdom of Christ, the generation of believers, that is to say the Church of Christ, or the life of the new law, is going to last until judgment day, it follows that the law itself, the gospel of Christ, is to last as well until the crack of doom. Since, at Christ's bidding, we must preach, we must likewise keep to the same way in preaching, to the same form.

Let this be enough for the ninth argument we chose for proving part one of our conclusion, i.e., we preach at Christ's bidding in the way He set.

BY THE EXAMPLE OF THE APOSTLES

From Christ's bidding, from the fulfillment of it by the apostles in the way they preached the faith, we draw the next argument. It is quite sufficient a proof to lay out what the evangelist Mark says in the last chapter by way of brief summary: "The apostles set out and preached everywhere, the Lord helping them, backing their preaching by miracles that followed" (Mark 16:16).

Note here that they kept to Christ's way and form as they preached. They were true keepers of the works of Christ, and firm followers of His words. As in 1 Corinthians 4 and 11:1: "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ." John 13:15 shows we need not prove that this was also a bidding of Christ: "I have given you my example—as I have done, you should also do." We are sure that they kept perfectly to all Christ bade them, and to the form Christ set for them to preach the gospel. They changed not the slightest detail. Otherwise we could not say they were true keepers of Christ's word and works.

And this makes natural sense. In the natural order of things, lower

creatures imitate higher ones insofar as they can. Something by nature active, superior, makes something by nature passive a look-alike. The Son of God is the exemplar at the origin of all created things, as John 1 puts it: "Through Him all things were made." So He is the primordial model every creature resembles, "the true and perfect image of the invisible God, the eldest of all created things, on whom all creation is based." In a unique way He is the source of those spiritual graces which illumine creatures endowed with soul. The phrase is from Psalm 109:3, which says of the Son: "In the glow of holiness, before dawn, in the womb I conceived you."

This image of God was far from us at first. Listen to Ecclesiastes 2:12: "What can a creature do to approach the Lord who made him?" So the Lord willed to be human, to give a human norm to humankind. This is the reason Augustine says in his *On the Christian Struggle*: "What soundness there is in someone who spots the words, the deeds of that man, who loves and follows Him, the Son of God, who gave himself as a norm for your lives."³⁶ The angels are modeled on divinity directly, the rest of creation indirectly, as Denys says in *On the Angelic Hierarchy*, bk. 10.³⁷ So the apostles are given the model of humanity to imitate directly, as befits leaders, the subsequent leaders of the Church. That is why they were told: "I gave you my example. . . ." Next, the apostles, the leaders of the Church, fashioned on the model of Christ, become models for the life of their charges. In the words of 1 Peter 5:4: ". . . made the norm for the flock from your soul . . ." and of 2 Thessalonians 3:9: ". . . to give you in our conduct an example to imitate."

Given that Christ, the model of all graces of the soul, taught, set the form of preaching His law, worldwide—not just by word, but also by deed, winning people over gently, persuasively, attracting them—then clearly the apostles kept to that form unswervingly. They were the first leaders of the Church, they were placed over all the faithful, they were keepers of His words, His bidding. They were true followers of His deeds, they were set up as models to everyone else in preaching and portraying the law of Christ.

Every evangelist shows that Christ taught, that Christ set the peaceful way not just by His words but also by His deeds. He was humble and meek. He would teach others meekness and humility. From the outset of His preaching therefore, He dealt humbly and meekly with people so he could draw people to Himself with peaceful behavior, could get

³⁶ [PL, 40:298.]

³⁷ [PG, 3:271-74.]

³⁵ Cf. S. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae*, Ia IIae, q. 106, art. 4 [*Opera*, 7:276].

So let us draw pagans by the good life we lead, let us build the church through their conversion, let us grow rich this way. There is nothing to equal soul-worth, not the whole material world. You could shell out huge sums to the poor, you do more if you convert but one soul: "If you draw worth from the worthless, you will be a messenger from me" (Jeremiah 15:19). It is a high and holy thing to help the poor; higher, holier to fetch back a soul lost in error. Whoever does so is a Peter, a Paul. We can accept their counsel, not to endanger ourselves as they did, putting up with famine, disease and the rest—our time is a time of peace—but to intensify our apostolic desire. This way, even housebound, we can fish for souls. For a friend, a relative, a neighbor. Whoever does, acts as the disciple of Peter and Paul.

Why do I remind you of them? The answer will be Christ's: "If you draw worth from the worthless, you will be a messenger from me." If today you win no one, you will tomorrow; if you win just one, yet your reward will be full. You will not win all, yet some from all. Not even the apostles won the world. But they broached the question universally, and they gained their reward for each one. For God rewards what we purpose to do, not the profit we gain from good works. Though you as teachers give a pittance, God will reward you as the widow was. Though you cannot save the globe, do not think less of small efforts, do not let global desires distract you from local ones. If you cannot carry a hundred, take care of ten; if not ten, then look to five; if five are too much of a demand, look to one; if you cannot care for one, keep hope, keep trying.

You know, do you not, that merchants use silver as well as gold in their transactions? If we grasp the small we will grasp the large; if we ignore the small, the large will be hard to grasp. Those who grasp small and large come out enriched. It is the way we also must proceed, so that enriched by small and large we may enjoy the kingdom of heaven given by the grace and kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus Chrysostom.⁷⁸

PAPAL ENDORSEMENT OF PEACEFUL CONVERSION

Finally, to close the first part of our argument, we have but to support it by reference to many church decrees. There are truly many.

"Whoever sincerely intends to bring non-Christians to the Christian faith must bring them to it by kindness, not by cruelty." This is found in Gratian. And further on: "We must so act that they want to

⁷⁸ [PG, 61:29-30.]

follow us, moved by meaning and mercy, not to flee us. . . ." And in the subsequent chapter: "When priests do blameable things, kindness does more to correct them than harshness, bolstering more than bullying, charity more than force. . . ." ⁷⁹

And from the Fourth Council of Toledo, the chapter "De Judaeis":

From this point on no one is to be forced into the faith, so the Synod decrees. God forgives whom He wishes, He leaves in sin whom He wishes. The willing, not the unwilling, are saved; that way justice is kept intact. We perished as people obeying the serpent of our own free will. We are saved through belief, called by the grace of God to the conversion of our own minds. So people are to be persuaded to conversion by the power of their free choice, not by force, not by compulsion.⁸⁰

Pope Leo is quoted in the following chapter:

Kindness does more to correct than harshness, bolstering more than bullying, charity more than force. And those who choose themselves and not Christ are quickly spotted by this law, they want to dictate to subjects, not care for them. Honor flatters them, inflates their pride; the sources of harmony turn noxious.⁸¹

There is a remarkable text from Pope Nicholas:

What someone does not choose, not opt for, he loves not. What he loves not, he scoffs at. No good not chosen. So the Lord said take no staff for the road in order not to do violence to anyone. You would do wiser to light in them a celestial love by preaching in gentle terms a contempt for worldliness and a love for God than by unleashing violence on people.⁸²

The true agrees with the true. The truths of mission all agree that the way of teaching, of drawing people best to God and the knowledge

⁷⁹ Gratian, dist. 45, cap. 3 and cap. 4 [Friedberg, 1:160, 161. See also *PL*, 77:1267-68, for the quotation from Gregory].

⁸⁰ Again Gratian, dist. 45, cap. 5 [Friedberg, 1:161].

⁸¹ Once again, Gratian, dist. 45, cap. 6 [Friedberg, 1:162]. Also relevant are Gratian, dist. 43, cap. 1 [Friedberg, 1:153-55] and causa 8, q. 1, cap. 12 [Friedberg, 1:594].

⁸² Gratian, causa 20, q. 3, cap. 4 [Friedberg, 1:849-50, esp. 850, the passage beginning "Quod enim quis"].

of the truth has to win the mind with reasons and win the will with motives that are compelling and attractive.

The last decree left to cite is a new one. Pope Paul III issued it, in the year 1537, as a specific and general policy, occasioned by the following situation.

Corrupt men wanted riches, in this world, whose litter they are, and pleasures, in this world, not in a future life with God's elect enjoying the delights of paradise, seeing God, enjoying God to overflowing. They wanted to be freer, to be unchecked in getting what they wanted as their paradise, gold and silver, their object of faith. They wanted to extract these riches from the sweat, the hard labor, the durance vile and death, death replete with torment and torture and wide-scale injury, the brutal burdening of masses of human beings, practically everyone around. So they concocted a novel way of masking their injustice, their tyranny, and giving credence to their decision.

[It was this: They put the lie on the Indian peoples that they were so lacking in the common traits of humankind that they could not govern themselves, that they needed overseers. And this is how far their mad, their damnable impudence went: They said flatly that the natives were brute beasts or next to being so. They flatly defamed them, so it was right to conquer such beasts in war, to hunt them down, to break them for service, then have them for use at will.

The truth is that many a native could rule us, in a domestic, or a mercantile, or a political life, could educate us to the moral life, could surpass us in natural reasoning, as Aristotle said about Greeks and barbarians in 1 *Politics*.

When this posture was denounced to the pope by a member of the Order of Preachers, the pope was shocked, naturally enough, at the sacrilege, the rashness of these disgraceful men. He knew at once how human nature was maligned by this posture, the nature the Son of God did so much for, suffered so much for. He knew the stoppage put to the propagation of the faith by satanic representatives. By a decree sealed in lead, he renewed former decrees: and he declared the posture just presented erroneous, something detestable, something the hearts of the faithful should utterly reject. These are his words:

Paul, Bishop, Servant of God's servants, to all Christ's faithful who will read these words, health to you and my apostolic blessing. God, though beyond us, so loved humankind that He made us able to share in reachable, visible goodness with the rest of creation—but further than that to share in the highest goodness, unreachable, invisible, and see Him face to face. Sacred Scripture also testifies that we

were created to attain eternal life and eternal bliss. And no one is able to reach life and bliss in eternity except through faith in Jesus Christ. So we have perforce to admit that we humans are of such nature and condition that we can receive the faith of Christ. Anyone who is a human being is capable of receiving that faith. No one but a fool would think he could attain a goal, and not use the means absolutely necessary to attain it. So Truth Incarnate, Who is never deceived or deceiving, said, as we know, when He sent preachers out to preach the faith: "Go, and teach everyone." All, He said, without exception, since all are capable of learning the faith. Satan saw and was jealous of humankind. He fights goodness always to destroy it. He concocted a novel way to prevent the word of God being preached to people for their salvation. He got certain of his lackeys, who wanted to satisfy their lust for riches, to affirm rashly that East and West Indians—and others like them who came into our ken recently, and therefore lacked a knowledge of our Catholic faith—were brute beasts, were to be subjected to our control wherever they were. These lackeys reduce them to slavery, they load them with afflictions they would never load on any beast of burden.

We are the unworthy Vicegerent on earth of the Lord. We try with all our might to lead into the flock of Christ committed to our care, those who are outside the sheepfold. We are aware through what we have been told that those Indians, as true human beings, have not only the capacity for Christian faith, but the willingness to flock to it. We wish to provide apt solutions for the situation. The Indians we speak of, and all other peoples who later come to the knowledge of Christians, outside the faith though they be, are not to be deprived of their liberty or the right to their property. They are to have, to hold, to enjoy both liberty and dominion, freely, lawfully. They must not be enslaved. Should anything different be done, it is void, invalid, of no force, no worth. And those Indians and other peoples are to be invited into the faith of Christ by the preaching of God's word and the example of a good life.

The same credence is to be granted copies of this present decree as is granted to the original—copies notarized by a notary public or by the seal of any person empowered by ecclesiastical office. This we declare through the present decree, notwithstanding earlier ones or whatever else to the contrary. Given at Rome, St. Peter's, in the year of the Lord's birth 1537, the 2nd of June, the year 3 of our pontificate.⁸³

⁸³ [For a critical edition of *Sublimis Deus*, see *Las Casas en México*, Apéndice 14, which details the copyist's error in the original bull and the errors in most printed copies.]

What is pertinent to our purpose in the document is the following:

(1) The Indians and others are to be invited to the faith of Christ, (2) by the preaching of God's word and by the example of a good life. In these two principles everything we argued earlier is included: People are to be drawn to Christ through a way that wins the mind with reasons and wins the will with motives. An amply proven argument.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this past chapter was to lay out fully, text by text, what God wanted as the natural way of teaching the world true belief, true Christianity. It was to serve for all, in one and the same fashion; it was not optional. We were to invite people to a wedding feast, that of Christ, the Son of God. We were to invite them to recognize that this world Savior, this Savior of humankind, was God, was truly God, one with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Anyone who knows this, who then accepts and keeps the laws of God, opts for eternal life. "It is eternal life," John said, "to know you, true God, only God, and Jesus Christ whom You sent to us" (John 17:3). "Go teach people everywhere to keep the commandments I gave you." The texts require of us both faith and works. They give the lie to the strange heresy abroad which holds as dogma that faith alone can save us.

I am speaking about the way Divine Providence proposed to draw people toward Christ. It was to be attuned to the souls of those approached. It was to breathe peace and love and kindness. It was the fittest means for God's purpose, the conversion, the salvation of humankind, a means steeped in love, grace, charm, humanity, joy, a means worthy of anyone's choice.

PART TWO: FALSE EVANGELIZATION

The Opposite Way: Violating the Mind and Will

The opposite way would clearly be this: If a group whose duty it was to preach the gospel to pagans, or to send them preachers, decided it would be quicker and better done if they subjected pagans willy-nilly to Christian political power. Once the pagans were beaten, they could be preached to without trouble. And they would not be coerced into belief. The preaching would appeal to their minds and draw them gently once the conquest had removed their political defenses.

No pagan in his right mind, especially a pagan prince, would surrender to political control by a Christian people or a Christian prince. There would have to be war.

War brings with it cannon fire, surprise attacks, shore raids that are lawless and blind, violence, riots, scandals, corpses, carnage, butchery, robbery, looting, parent split from child, child from parent, slavery, the ruin of states and kingdoms, of lords and local rulers, the devastation of cities and towns and people without number. War fills here and there and everywhere with tears, with sobs, with keening over every pitiful spectacle possible.

People the world over know too well the evil effects war causes or brings to birth. Let me name a few of the many listed by jurists: War, like a tornado, like a tidal wave of evils, runs amok destroying everything, whole cities, whole regions.⁸⁴ War paves the way for atrocities, it causes bitter hatreds, it makes people boldly vicious.⁸⁵ It beggars a people, it torments them, etc.⁸⁶ In war cattle are raided, crops ruined,

⁸⁴ *Sext*, tit. 14, cap. 2 [Friedberg, 2:1008-11]; *Decretals*, lib. 2, tit. 13, cap. 19 [Friedberg, 2:290-1]. Also *Digest*, lib. 49, tit. 15, lex 21, #1 and lib. 47, tit. 10, lex 1 [Krueger, 1:887a and 830a].

⁸⁵ *Clementines*, lib. 3, tit. 7, cap. 2 [Friedberg, 2:1162].

⁸⁶ Authentica "De armis," beg., coll. 6 [Novella 85/i.e., Authent. 86, coll./6, tit. 13—Krueger, 3:414b et seq.].

alive!) Who see blood dripping off everything? Who see those still breathing dragged off to a filthy slavery, a slavery without end?

And what about the deposition of authorities, kings, princes, judges, driven from power, from position, from place, from region and realm given them by the law of nature? Is this the kind of thing, attractive, appealing, charming thing in and of itself which can (I repeat) intrigue, excite, draw the human will so it steers the mind because of its own freedom to consider freely, to accept freely the doctrines of faith it hears preached? And what will they do afterward, those who are treated to the horrors of war, so they can think freely about the heaven-sent gift preached to them by pawns of their tormentors? Yes! Consign it to oblivion! And which way will those sufferings lead them? Yes! To hate the faith, to think of it as raving madness and damnable lies!

Name a people that does not appreciate friendship, kindness, civility and civilized ways! Name one that does not detest people who are arrogant or criminal or cruel or brutal or bestial!

Conclusion: The practice of subjecting pagans to Christian political power by the awful engines of war and thus to make them willing to hear the gospel and to become Christians, is the utter opposite of the natural, normal, pre-established way.

Third. I explained how the human mind is the root source of freedom in what humans do. Freedom is intrinsically linked to knowledge, to a mind not clouded by prejudices born of the passions. Once prejudice rules, the power to think things through, the power to draw conclusions, the power to choose what is good, all three powers are blinded and baffled. The thinking mind must have calm and quiet and enough time if it is to do what it does freely. It must be free as well of fits of passion. Then the will is safe from all coercion, from all harassment.

War breeds traumatic, evil effects. These in turn breed rage, hatred, vengefulness, depression, sorrow, fear, horror, despair, and a thousand more passions in the mind. Is such a mind supposed to think through what it hears told it about religious faith? Is it supposed to judge that faith sound and worthwhile choosing? Take the man who rages against another man, who festers with a mortal hatred against that other because of all the suffering he has seen that other cause: injuries, irreparable losses, brutal hardships, humiliations, beatings, rapes, tortures, murders, jailings. If his mind is filled with grief, with loss, with fear, with horror, with desperation, will he listen peaceably, will he reason calmly, will he conclude, will he choose with ease? Will he admit as true what he hears of religious faith? Will the truths touch him? Will he want them, want them as precious to him? Will he take the plunge and believe them? Will not the contradictory occur?

Conclusion. The practice of subjecting pagans to Christian political power by means of war to make them hear the gospel preached, is the dead opposite of the natural, normal, pre-established way.

And earlier I argued that whoever wants to convince people to accept what he proposes must set their souls at ease right away. Then he has their attention, their willingness to listen and to learn. He sets them at ease by a calm voice, a kind face, a modest bearing, a peaceable language. Only then does he teach them, attract them, convince them.

The same approach must be used, it must, to preach the faith, to lead people to the right religion. The truths of the faith, the truths of the Christian religion are beyond our natural grasp. They are so difficult that they are not really understood. They are believed, and only by an act of the will. I said already how hard they were to live, how otherworldly for our hopes.

WARS FOR CONVERSION CONTRADICT THE HUMAN WAY

What pagan soul would want to hear about our faith and Church if he or she is horribly harmed by the cruel weight of war, the brutal, unbearable waste of war? The voice of war is not calm; its face is not kind; it has no modest bearing, no peaceable language; it does not attract, does not convince with charm. War is a frightful chorus of yells. Its face is a gruesome glare, as fierce as hell; its angers like those of men gone mad, crazed like beasts, bitter, bitter men. War is all curse and catcall; it is the grating, fearsome screech of weapon on weapon left and right and dead men falling. War is hardness and harshness and hurt. It lashes everything, it panics everyone, mainly through fear, then pain, then sorrow, then bitterness, the whole gamut panics people. War is weeping and wailing everywhere. What balm or blessing will it take to make victims of war willing and able to learn religious belief?

The human mind is shattered by terror, by bedlam, by fear, by violent language. Torture shatters it even more, depresses it, crucifies it. So it blocks its ears and eyes. Sense experience is distorted, outer, inner, its synthesis in imagination distorted. Result: Reasoning is in the dark, the mind cannot see in the imagination something it can understand and love and want. It can only see something painful and odious. It sees things as they are, and these things are wicked and hateful. It is useless for anyone to try and placate souls who have suffered the effects of war, to calm them, then win their good will, then gain their attention, then teach them.

It makes perfect sense for them to be forever implacable, unyield-

ing, to be hostile, unteachable, dead set against hearing anything called Christian, to be future enemies of that name.

Is there anyone stupid enough as to think that he can savage his audience before he instructs them? They will hear him with disgust, they will never open their minds, they will believe nothing!

Conclusion: The practice of preparing pagans to hear the gospel preached and to accept the Christian church by subjecting them to the deadly force of war is the utter opposite of the normal, the natural, the gentle way.

Fifth. I made the argument earlier that the way one draws people to faith and to the Christian religion is like unto the way one draws pupils to knowledge. A pupil has to concentrate intensely, he has to focus his attention constantly on what the teacher says and does. A pupil must have quiet, leisure—a soul free of emotional upset born of fear, depression, sorrow, fury, outrage, despair, humiliation. Any of these can ruin concentration, partially or wholly. The different powers of the soul have a common root in the essence of the soul itself. The focus of the whole soul is affected by violence from outside it. People likewise who are lashed by the violence of wars, by the damages, the crises caused by wars, harried, beaten people who live as a result in sorrow, fear, pain, rage, resentment, people who abhor the savagery of Christians, clearly focus their whole outward and inward selves, their whole attention on thinking about, on deploring the evils they undergo, the sufferings and loss through no fault of their own. The life that is left them they live for revenge on their enemies. So whenever they hear teachings on faith and church they take little or no notice, make little or no effort to learn. They are not about to fix on what their teachers say or do. Just the opposite: what they hear they ridicule as nonsense, as make-believe, the stuff of fools. The unforgettable evils they have suffered command their whole attention and all the strength they have left.

Conclusion: The practice of subjecting pagan peoples by war, and so to make them hear the gospel preached, then accept the faith, is totally unlike the true way, a contradiction of it.

Sixth. There is an art one must use in drawing people, however barbaric they are, to a moral life, to any goodness at all. It is the way of nature. The best philosophers used this art. Each sets out his theme often. He explains it, breaks it down, recasts it, reasons to it, wins assent, asks questions, exhorts, invites, charms, even spoonfeeds his pupils. Most of the time it is done with a soft voice, an eager look, graciously, with quiet argument and suitable language, with lively and

lovely benevolence. This is in order to create comfort and familiarity in the souls of his hearers, so he or she is then comfortable and familiar with the doctrine they hear, that it is on their level, that it is easy to hear, easy to approve, easy to perform. But that art would be useless to any missionary if pagan peoples had first been ravaged and ruined and beaten and bruised by the wave of hideous effects that follow in the wake of war. They would not want to hear, nor trust anything of what they did hear. The one thing they would do is deplore their awful state, their awful lot. They would use violence on them to make them listen, pile an evil on an evil, and they would not offer you one iota of interest or effort or concentration. That is so clear from previous proofs. Violence only intensifies conditions of sorrow and sadness and deprivation. Violence creates nothing able to last. This is Aristotle's view in *5 Metaphysics*. He speaks of violence there and what brings violence of itself. They are both deplorable. His proof is from the line of a poet who says that every fated thing, every violent thing is deplorable. "Fate is a kind of violence, as a certain poet states: I was forced to act"—i.e., fated.

St. Thomas says on that very point that violence, as something alien to the normal tendency of a nature, either puts a brake on the will when it is already moving toward some purpose, or never lets it start. So violence is a force on the attack. It is a deplorable thing, nothing else. So it is clear that if violence is used to make people listen, it is evil added to evil, and fruitless for anyone to try. Thus this method is the utter opposite of the normal, the natural, the gentle way.

Seventh. The practice of subjecting pagan peoples by war first, so they will listen later to the faith preached and accept the Christian religion, contradicts the method the holy patriarchs used from the dawn of time and in every age since, up to the coming of Christ. The patriarchal method appealed to the mind; it was kith and kin to human nature everywhere, a method made by Divine Wisdom for shaping and teaching religious truth to all people, for drawing them persuasively toward truth and virtue. We made this clear before. So the method of subjecting pagan peoples by war first, etc., is a new method. It is mindless, unnatural, inimical to human nature, without precedent, and therefore dubious, against the way Divine Wisdom intended. So, as a result, a contradiction of the normal, natural, peaceable way.

I showed above that it was a contradiction to conquer pagan peoples first so as later to evangelize them and bring them into the true faith. I showed it was a contradiction of the normal, intelligent, peaceable way—the way suited to human history and human nature—

through proof from philosophical reasoning, from the practice of the best teachers and the ancient patriarchs, century after century, up to the time of Christ.

WARS CONTRADICT THE WAY OF CHRIST

I must further the argument and prove how the war/conversion approach is a flat and absolute contradiction of what Christ wanted and willed.

The first proof is easy enough. Christ willed it, through the way He did His own preaching, that the preachers of His law, before they said or did anything else, should offer peace to the pagan people of whatever place they entered, fort or farm or city, even before peace was offered them. And Christ forbade His preachers to carry even a staff, so that they could be seen as peaceful men right from the start. But the method we contradict says we should conquer pagan peoples, should call down on their heads a welter of suffering and death. This way pagans are not only shamed and cursed by the words we bring; but also they are beaten, bruised, wounded and killed, by our deadly deeds. Conclusion: The way of war contradicts the way Christ willed, the one He taught when He preached His gospel.

Second. Through His own way of preaching the gospel, Christ commanded His apostles and those who later carried on their missionary role, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to cleanse the lepers, to expel the demons. War says and does the opposite in fact. It makes pagans who have done Christians no harm—to my knowledge—undergo a living death first, then die. It makes sound and healthy people sick unto death through the horrors they are forced to accept. It makes those who were leprosy-free suffer worse leprosies, those caused by the plagues the warrior brings. There is no doubt of it.

The way of war provides a shortcut for demons to pour into people's souls, whose bodily health prevented it before then. The victims will surely hate, with an implacable hatred, those who wage war against them, hate them as enemies. The next thing is that the victims who are killed are damned eternally since they die in unbelief. And the killers, no doubt of it either, they are possessed by demons in the waging of war. They will burn in the same eternal flames along with their victims, if they do not repent. And so this new, this bizarre way of conversion contradicts the way Christ wanted and willed it to be when He Himself preached the gospel.

Third. Again, by the way He preached the gospel, Christ willed

that His missionaries should be meek as lambs, simple as doves. His words were: "I send you like sheep among wolves" (Luke 10:3). And: "Be simple, like doves" (Matthew 10:16). He further willed that they should learn from Him to be meek and humble of heart, both in word and deed. But the way of first conquering pagans in war does not smack of the meekness of lambs nor the simplicity of doves. It is all a roar of lions, bears, tigers, all a howling of wolves, a howling of horrible monsters, it is crafty as a fox at maliciousness. It almost outdoes the devil himself in pride and ferocity of thought and word and deed. Warrior preachers are—or are sent as—ravens among flocks of sheep, not flocks of sheep among ravens. And that is an utter contradiction of the true way.

Fourth. Christ also forbade His gospel preachers to have gold, silver, money; forbade them, and forcefully, to exact money even peaceably from those they were to evangelize or those who might be tightfisted, or even to take money from those eager to give it. On the contrary they, the missionaries, should give freely of the goods they received from God—goods given for the sake of other people. But war, the new, bizarre way of preaching the faith, it teaches people not just how to rob the tightfisted—violently, cruelly—of gold, silver, money, the essential support of people's lives, and of all kinds of stuff of little value. It teaches people also how to rob kings and legitimate rulers of the dignity of office, of title, of respect; rob them of right and rule, then pitch them down to a wretched, debased level of life, one of total misery, more bitter than death by far. Because, to quote Boethius' work *De Consolatione*, "It is bitterest to have been happy once but now sad."⁸⁹ And so the way of war is a contradiction to the normal, peaceable, natural way Divine Wisdom began with, the way Jesus Christ reaffirmed.

Fifth. Christ also wanted His missionaries to be careful of their good name, their reputation, and careful to be held in high esteem by everyone. So they would be thought of as holy and sincere men by the pagan, as sober and sound, without the print of narrowness and passion on them, so the pagan would love them and respect their teaching more. Therefore He ordered them to look for the right host wherever they stayed, then opt to stay with him and not to leave lightly, so the host is not embarrassed, not made suspicious, not scandalized. Missionaries coming in to convert pagans on the heels of warriors who have conquered them—even if the missionaries are not personally re-

⁸⁹ [PL, 63:677.]