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The Integrity of Nature in the Grace–Freedom Dynamic: Lonergan's Critique of Bañezian Thomism

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Abstract

Lonergan makes unique, balanced contributions to the debates on the relationship between the natural and supernatural and on the grace–freedom dynamic (the *de auxiliis* controversy), particularly in his critique of Bañezianism. His understanding of the human intellect in relation to the supernatural order and his defense of the natural integrity of created freedom are remarkably cogent and compelling. His theorem of the supernatural, principle of vertical finality, and notion of obediential potency are keys to his treatment.

Keywords

Bañez, Molina, Lonergan, *de auxiliis* controversy, Feingold, Stebbins, natural desire, nature–grace debate, obediential potency, physical premotion, *praedeterminatio physica*, Garrigou-Lagrange, supernatural order

Two of the hottest debates in theological anthropology today concern the precise nature of the relationship between the orders of grace and nature as exhibited in the "natural desire to see God," and the dynamic between the "helps of divine grace" and created freedom. But no one, to my knowledge, has spelled out

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the connection between these two issues. Henri de Lubac is famous for igniting the firestorm that is the first debate, and his primary target was the Scholastic commentator tradition, whose leading figures were Tommaso de Vio Cajetan, Domingo Bañez, and Francisco Suárez. Lawrence Feingold's recent study on de Lubac's misinterpretations of Thomas Aquinas's thought and that of the commentators has received a hearty welcome from many.[1] Along with Feingold a host of so-called "neo-Thomists" have rushed to rescue the integrity of the natural order in the debate on the relationship between grace and nature.[2] More balanced approaches have also entered the debate,[3] which in any case runs deeper than what the great Doctor intended to convey on the matter (the natural desire to see God). Bernard Lonergan stands out not only as a premier interpreter of Aquinas but also as a somewhat neglected figure in this debate.[4]

On the question of how the intrinsic efficacy of grace plays out in the free enterprise of human moral action, few scholars have taken a stand against the Bañezian neglect of the natural element in the dynamic, namely, created freedom.[5] The debate

1. Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God according to St. Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia, 2010).
2. Reinhard Hütter, "*Desiderium Naturale Visionis Dei—Est autem duplex hominis beatitude sive felicitas*: Some Observations about Lawrence Feingold's and John Milbank's Recent Interventions in the Debate over the Natural Desire to See God," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 5 (2007) 81–131; Hütter, "Aquinas on the Natural Desire for the Vision of God: A Relecture of Summa Contra Gentiles III, c. 25 apres Henri de Lubac," *Thomist* 73 (2009) 523–91; Steven A. Long, "On the Loss, and the Recovery, of Nature as a Theonomic Principle: Reflections on the Nature/Grace Controversy," *Nova et Vetera* (*English*) 5 (2007) 133–84; Long, *Natura Pura: On the Recovery of Nature in the Doctrine of Grace* (New York: Fordham University, 2010); Thomas M. Osborne Jr., "*Natura Pura*: Two Recent Works," *Nova et Vetera (English)*11 (2013) 265–79; and Guy Mansini, O.S.B., "Lonergan on the Natural Desire in the Light of Feingold," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 5 (2007) 185–98.
3. See the compilation of essays by diverse authors in *Surnaturel: A Controversy at the Heart of Twentieth-Century Thomistic Thought*, ed. Serge-Thomas Bonino, O.P. (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia, 2009); "The Abiding Theological Significance of Henri de Lubac's *Surnaturel," Thomist* 73 (2009) 593–619; Harm Goris, "Steering Clear of Charybdis: Some Directions for Avoiding 'Grace Extrinsicism' in Aquinas," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 5 (2007) 67–80; David Braine, "The Debate between Henri de Lubac and His Critics," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 6 (2008) 543–90. Braine's article is an excellent appropriation of de Lubac, particularly the latter's inconsistent use of the term "natural," which is particularly relevant to my article because it calls to mind Lonergan's assessment of de Lubac's position, which is in need of Lonergan's notion of "vertical finality." See also the superb defense of de Lubac by Nicholas Healy, "Henri de Lubac on Nature and Grace: A Note on Some Recent Contributions to the Debate," *Communio* 35 (2008) 535–64.
4. Mansini's "Lonergan on the Natural Desire in the Light of Feingold" is a notable exception. I engage this article below. Lonergan's voluminous presentations of Aquinas's thought published by the Gregorian University Press are well known.
5. In fact, Long has come down strongly on the side of Bañez: Steven A. Long, "Providence, Freedom, and Natural Law," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 4 (2006) 557–606 (originally, "Providence, liberté, et loi naturelle," *Revue Thomiste* 102 [2002]: 355–406). But Thomas

concerning grace and freedom is not quite as fierce now as it was in the early 20th and especially the 17th century (when Pope Clement VIII convened the *congregatio de auxiliis divinae gratiae*), but there is a steady return to the question.[6] The most prominent modern proponent of the (neo-)Bañezian position, particularly on this second issue, is certainly "the sacred monster of Thomism," Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange.[7] Francisco Suárez is probably still the most notable adherent of the Molinist position, which he revised amid his massive—many would say, disastrous—attempt to synthesize Thomistic thought with the Scotist school that dominated the Franciscan Order at the time.

Lonergan stands almost alone in defending the integrity of human nature in both debates.[8] Since "grace builds upon nature," not only does the agent intellect constitute

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Joseph White, O.P., has indicated that he sides with Jacques Maritain, Charles Journet, and Bernard Lonergan against Long: White, "Von Balthasar and Journet on the Universal Possibility of Salvation and the Twofold Will of God," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 4 (2006) 633–66, at 663 n. 70; for White's references to Lonergan's dissertation, see 640 n. 14, 642 n. 21, 654 n. 49, 661 n. 68, 663 n. 70. Long does not mention Lonergan, but he indicates the fundamental agreement between Jacques Maritain and William Most (see "Providence, Freedom, and Natural Law" 578) as well as Maritain's indebtedness to Francisco Marin-Sola (578 n. 22); see William G. Most, *Grace, Predestination, and the Salvific Will of God* (Front Royal: Christendom, 1997) and Michael Torre, "Francisco Marin-Sola, O.P., and the Origin of Jacques Maritain's Doctrine on God's Permission of Evil," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 4 (2006) 55–94.

6. In addition to Long's defense of the Bañezian position of Garrigou-Lagrange, John Salza has written a book adhering even more strictly to that tradition: *The Mystery of Predestination according to Scripture, the Church, and St. Thomas Aquinas* (Charlotte: TAN, 2010). See also Thomas M. Osborne Jr., "Thomist Premotion and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 4 (2006) 607–31. Matthew Levering, not completely satisfied with any theological formulation of the matter, treats the question in a scholarly and detached manner: *Predestination: Biblical and Theological Paths* (New York: Oxford University, 2011).
7. See Richard Peddicord, O.P., *Sacred Monster of Thomism: An Introduction to the Life and Legacy of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine, 2004). For Garrigou-Lagrange's doctrine of grace and predestination, see especially his *Grace: Commentary on the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas, Ia IIae, q. 109–14*, trans. Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi Monastery (St. Louis: Herder, 1952); *Predestination: The Meaning of Predestination in Scripture and the Church*, trans. Dom Bede Rose, reprint ed. (1939; Rockford, IL: TAN, 1998); and *The One God: A Commentary on the First Part of St. Thomas' Theological Summa*, trans. Dom Bede Rose (St. Louis: Herder, 1954) chaps. 19, 22–23.
8. Maritain may be the only other Thomist who maintains the integrity of nature in both ambits. For his critiques of the Bañezian revision of Aquinas on the grace–freedom dynamic, see his *St. Thomas and the Problem of Evil*, trans. Gordon Andison (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1942); and *God and the Permission of Evil*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1966). René Mougel argues (in his "The Position of Jacques Maritain regarding *Surnaturel*: The Sin of the Angel, or 'Spirit and Liberty,'" in *Surnaturel: A*

the natural instrument through which the divine light of truth illumines the mind, but there is also in the human person a natural power or faculty (pertaining to its own nature or essence) with its own integrity by which the process of sanctification operates, namely, free will. While Bañezian Thomism exhibits a tendency to overemphasize the autonomy of intellectual creatures with respect to the supernatural order—an emphasis manifest in undue speculation on "the state of *natura pura*"—it also undermines the dispositive role of the *appetitus rationalis* in the effective ordering of free creatures toward deification. Far from Pelagianism, Lonergan's position avoids the pitfalls of the two polar-opposite schools of thought in the *de auxiliis* controversy by his unparalleled analysis of Aquinas's developing positions on how grace and freedom interact in the intellective creature.[9] While this topic occupied his doctoral work, his subsequent *De ente supernaturali* also addressed the question of the relationship between grace and nature in general and in a way that again cuts a unique path between (or above) the diametrically opposed neo-Augustinianism of Henri de Lubac and the "extrinsicism" of the traditional Thomist commentators, much like his interpretation of Aquinas transcends the false dichotomy of Bañezianism versus Molinism.

I do not intend here either to trace the development of Aquinas's thought regarding nature/grace and grace/freedom or to rehash the polemics surrounding de Lubac and Molina. Instead, I focus on how Lonergan's positions relate to Bañezian Thomism as it stands today (i.e., neo-Bañezianism). I first present Lonergan's proposed solution to the central question of the grace–nature debate, namely, In what sense do intellectual creatures have a *desiderium naturale ad videndum Deum* (or *desiderium naturale visionis Dei*)?[10] The consequent understanding of how the two orders relate to each other in humanity should provide a general framework within which the more particular question of how creaturely freedom relates to the efficacy of divine grace can be worked out; I therefore present Lonergan's critique of the Bañezian errors in the grace–freedom debate. On the natural desire to see God, I confront Mansini's critique of Lonergan on the natural desire and therefore indirectly engage Feingold's monograph insofar as it is the basis for Mansini's conclusions.[11] Throughout my article, but especially in the section on the second issue, I make significant use of Michael Stebbins's monumental work on Lonergan[12]

Controversy 59–83) that Maritain by no means fits squarely into the Bañezian camp on the grace–nature question, but I find him following the traditional Dominican position in his "Beginning with a Reverie," in *The Collected Works of Jacques Maritain: Untrammeled Approaches*, vol. 20, trans. Bernard Doering (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1997) 3–26. In any case, Lonergan's unique conclusions with respect to both issues are the topic of my article.

9. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000). Hütter lauds this work as "still . . . the benchmark analysis of Aquinas' profound treatment of this utterly complex topic" ("*Desiderium Naturalis Visionis Dei*" 103 n. 42).
10. For this phrase, see, e.g., Aquinas, *Summa theologiae (*hereafter *ST)* 1, q. 75, a. 6; *Compendium theologiae* 1, chap. 104; *Summa contra gentiles* (hereafter *SCG*) 3.25.
11. See Mansini, "Lonergan on the Natural Desire."
12. J. Michael Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative: Grace, World-Order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995).

but indicate where my emphases differ from his.[13] The theme that unifies the two questions is precisely Lonergan's defense of the natural integrity of both intellect and will in the event of "elevation"[14] exhibited in the "theorem of the supernatural" and the notion of "vertical finality" that are synthesized in the reality of "obediential potency." I propose Lonergan's defense as both a powerful Thomist critique of the Bañezian interpretation and a unique contribution to the debate that transcends the typical divides.

Since created freedom is a subcategory of "nature," understood as an order of reality, the dynamic between created freedom and the efficacy of divine grace is a particular feature of the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders (or nature and grace in general). It is at least pedagogically fitting, therefore, to clarify how grace and nature interact in intellectual creatures before determining the precise nature of the cooperation that takes place between created free will and divine aid.

The Parameters of the Two Debates

In general the late Scholastic or traditional (neo-)Thomist position on the nature–grace relationship takes Aquinas's assertion of a twofold beatitude as the de facto end of man;[15] it then argues that man could have been created with a singular end, namely, the natural one of imperfect beatitude consisting in natural knowledge and love of God.[16] The latter speculation is justified by appeal to the principle that the end intrinsic to something cannot be disproportionate to the means at its disposal for attaining such an end,[17] which is an elaboration on the principle that "for every natural passive potency there must be a corresponding natural active power."[18] In other words, the end of man's nature as such cannot be supernatural because he does not naturally possess the requisite means for attaining such an end. To argue otherwise is, for the commentators,

13. Stebbins seems to want Lonergan to be more in line with de Lubac (against the late Scholastic model) on natural desire (ibid. 163, 178–79), and he seems particularly concerned to distance Lonergan from Bañez on the grace–freedom dynamic (e.g., ibid. 286).
14. Here I mean to include g*ratia operans* as the working out (in the form of acts that merit salvation) of *gratia elevans* as an initial ordering of the human person to the supernatural.
15. E.g., *In III. Sent*. d. 23, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 3; *De veritate* q. 27, a. 2; *ST* 1, q. 62, aa. 1–2; *ST* 1–2, q. 62, a. 1; *ST* 1–2, q. 114, a. 2. Hereafter I use "man" instead of the awkward "human person"; no gender specificity is intended.
16. Aquinas explicitly mentions such a possibility in *Quodlibet* 1, q. 4, a. 3 [8], although Jean-Pierre Torrell concedes that Aquinas's *naturalia pura* is not equivalent to the later Scholastic *in statu naturalium* or *in puris naturalibus* (Torrell, "Nature and Grace in Thomas Aquinas," in *Surnaturel: A Controversy* 155–88, at 169). See also *In II. Sent*. d. 31, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3; and *De malo* q. 5, a. 1, ad 15.
17. *ST* 1–2, q. 62, a. 1, ad 3; *ST*, 1–2, q. 63, aa. 1 and 3; *De veritate* q. 27, a. 2; q. 14, a. 2; *In III. Sent*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 4; *In III. Sent*. d. 27, q. 2, a. 2, ad 4; *in III. Sent*. d. 27, q. 2, a. 3, ad 5.
18. See Aristotle, *De anima*, Book 3, for example. Aquinas appeals to *De anima* in, e.g., *SCG* 3, chap. 45.6. De Lubac denies the universal applicability of this principle (along with John Duns Scotus); see *The Mystery of the Supernatural* (New York: Crossroad, 1998) 140–46.

tantamount to denying the gratuity of grace;[19] consequently, it is helpful to speculate about a state of *natura pura*.

Stebbins does not mention Bañez's understanding of the natural desire to see God, although he engages the Bañezian position in the grace–freedom dynamic, presumably because he, like so many, understandably lumps the former with the position of Cajetan and the commentator tradition in general,[20] which exhibits a consistent thread of interpretation of Aquinas but also contains internal differences relevant to an integral understanding of the issue. Feingold treats these minor discrepancies at length throughout his work,[21] although Mansini points up the outstanding lacuna that is Feingold's neglect of Lonergan's analysis.[22]

Bañez and Cajetan agree that the natural desire to see God as he is in himself is elicited, not innate, because there is a disproportion between the natural being of man and the supernatural end to which he is de facto called by God's free initiative to offer *gratia elevans* to all. Where they differ is the point of entry, as it were, of the elicited desire.[23] But Cajetan thinks that man's natural inclination to seek the causes of things means he will desire to know the supernatural cause of supernatural effects (e.g., miracles), whereas Bañez acknowledges that man desires to know God in Godself as soon as the intellect knows that God exists and is disproportionate to nature. But since God is disproportionate to man's nature, the preceding knowledge of God granted by revelation can elicit only a conditional desire for perfect beatitude (as the possibility of

19. Feingold (*Natural Desire* xxix) cites *ST* 1–2, q. 111, a. 1, ad 2.
20. Stebbins focuses on Cajetan as the proponent of the late Scholastic "two-story-universe" approach to the question of the relationship between nature and grace (see *Divine Initiative* esp. 162). I agree with Feingold that a two-story building is an imperfect analogy for the neo-Scholastic understanding of the relationship between grace and nature, as it undermines the belief that grace fulfills in a super-abundant manner the desires of nature (see Feingold, *Natural Desire* xxxvi–xxxvii). William H. Marshner treats the differences between Cajetan and Bañez especially in his chapter, "The Debate about Seeing God: Cajetan, Soto, Bañez, and de Lubac," in *Natural Desire and Natural End: A Critical Comparison of Cajetan, Soto, and Bañez* (Rome: Lateran University, forthcoming).
21. For a brief exposé of Bañez's doctrine in comparison with the other commentators, see Feingold, *Natural Desire* 216–18, 261–63.
22. Mansini, "Lonergan on the Natural Desire" 185. Mansini here was working with Feingold's dissertation. In his 2010 edition of *Natural Desire* on which I am depending, Feingold apparently sought to remedy his neglect of Lonergan's analysis by adding a few notes on Lonergan; the references, however, are repetitive and marginal (Mansini, *Natural Desire* xxx, xxxi–xxxii n. 50, 356, 357 n. 157, 403 n. 17) except where he briefly attempts to rebut Lonergan's characterization of the hypothesis of *natura pura* as a "marginal theorem" (437, where he also cites Mansini's article [437 n. 28]).
23. Feingold defines "elicited" in contradistinction to "innate" in the following descriptive manner: "When St. Thomas speaks of an *inclination* coming from the very nature of the will, it is clear that he is referring to an innate appetite. On the contrary, when he speaks of a natural desire that is a *movement* or *act* of the will, aroused by prior knowledge, then it is clear that he is speaking of an elicited desire" (*Natural Desire* 16, emphasis original).

the beatific vision is not naturally knowable). In other words, whereas Cajetan did not distinguish between conditional and unconditional desire for the vision and consequently made it more difficult even for such "natural" desire to be elicited, Bañez sees a "natural" desire for vision elicited as soon as man comes to know God's existence. This desire, conditioned on the possibility of such a vision—the gift of perfect vision of God—can be theoretically entertained and therefore desired as soon as one realizes the disproportion between Creator and creature. Certainly, many questions could be asked about these points, but I want to move on to Lonergan's own position.

On the opposite side are more recent theologians, such as de Lubac, who argue in effect that the principle of proportionality does not apply to the supernatural realm. In this view, man by his very nature has an innate orientation toward the beatific vision. If man were not ordered to the supernatural, he would not be man, because it is by his immaterial soul created directly by God that he is destined for direct vision of his Creator.[24] God is free to create man without grace, but it would not only be cruel to deprive intellectual creatures of elevation to the supernatural order; it would also contradict the nature of God as *ipsum amor subsistens*.[25] De Lubac originally argued that such an order could exist only in the sense that, absolutely speaking, God is free to create whatever he desires; de Lubac later adjusted this argument to say that, while it is a real possibility for God to create man without grace, in such a case man would be other than what he is de facto.[26]

The *desiderium naturale ad videndum Deum* provides the key that unlocks the grace–nature problem, since the exigencies of a nature are manifest in its innate desires.[27] It would in fact be a cruel existence for something to have an innate

24. See Aquinas, *De veritate* q. 8, a. 1. Feingold (*Natural Desire* 29–30) considers this argument not to be demonstrative. See also *SCG* 3, chap. 25, another text on which de Lubac relies in *Mystery of the Supernatural*.

25. For a good summary of de Lubac's arguments, see Mansini, "The Theological Abiding Significance."

26. Compare Henri de Lubac's *Surnaturel: Études historiques*, new ed., ed. Michel Sales (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1991) 467, with his "The Mystery of the Supernatural," *Recherchés de science religieuse* 35 (1949) 91, and *Mystery of the Supernatural* 54. For de Lubac's general argumentation taken to its logical extreme, see John Milbank, *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate concerning the Supernatural* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005). See also the critique of Milbank's book by Edward T. Oakes, "The Paradox of Nature and Grace: On John Milbank's *The Suspended Middle: Henri de Lubac and the Debate concerning the Supernatural*," *Nova et Vetera (English)* 4 (2006) 667–96; also Hütter, "*Desiderium Naturale Visionis Dei*."

27. I will argue that Lonergan does not hold, as Feingold implies (*Natural Desire* xxxi n. 50), that man has an innate desire for perfect beatitude, but rather that the innate tendency of an intellectual creature is to seek knowledge of anything and everything, especially what is most significant, and yet this inclination does not become a determinate desire for the beatific vision as such until one knows of its possibility through revelation. Therefore, one can agree with the traditional Thomist position that a nature's innate desires are indicative of its exigencies without saying that the supernatural is an exigency of nature, namely, that of the intellectual creature, which is the conclusion to which de Lubac's reasoning seems to lead.

tendency toward something and have no adequate means for actually attaining such an end. As both intellect and will must be involved in man's natural *desire* to *know* God (with the "mind's eye"—hence the meaning of "vision" here), the nature of such desire in man is indicative of the relationship between God and the spiritual being of man. If there is a connatural tendency toward perfect knowledge of God, then man's essence is inextricably connected with the divine, at least in some sense. If his natural desire to know God *ut in se est* is augmented or ameliorated by something extrinsic, then finite intellectual creatures are in need of something beyond nature in order to seek perfect beatitude as such. It will become clear through analysis of Lonergan's position that the way I have formulated the parameters of the question on the nature of man's desire to see God does not succumb to the false dichotomy that is typically set up between the approaches of the neo-Augustinians and the traditional Thomist commentators.

The starting point for understanding Lonergan's approach both to the natural–supernatural relationship and to the grace–freedom dynamic is his "theorem of the supernatural." He sees in Aquinas the culmination of a gradually developing realization among Catholic theologians that in fact there are distinct orders of reality, one essentially superior to the other, and each with its own relative autonomy.[28] At the same time, according to the actual design of divine providence, every lower order of reality, even in the natural plane, is somehow integrated into a more complex and sophisticated order that does not destroy the operations proper to the elements integrated but elevates them to serve the higher purpose of this new organic unity of diverse realities, now forged into a dynamic complexity.[29]

On the topic of the *congregatio de auxiliis gratiae divinae*, the Dominican commentator tradition is typified by Bañez and his followers, although the 20th century has seen another school of thought on the question of divine permission of evil.[30] Representing the traditional Jesuit position on the *de auxiliis* controversy are Luis de Molina and his followers (e.g., Suárez and Robert Bellarmine); today there is probably as much diversity on the question in the Society of Jesus as there is to be found anywhere else.[31] Against the error of Pelagianism, the Bañezians emphasize (with much

28. See especially Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) 527.
29. This notion of "vertical finality" involving operators and integrators appears throughout *Insight*.
30. See especially Spanish Dominican Francisco Marín-Sola, O.P., "El sistema tomista sobre la moción divina," *Ciencia tomista* 32 (1925) 5–52; "Respuesta a algunas objeciones acerca del sistema tomista sobre la moción divina," *Ciencia tomista* 33 (1926) 5–74; and "Nuevas observaciones acerca del sistema tomista sobre la moción divina," *Ciencia tomista* 33 (1926) 321–97.
31. Lonergan was a Jesuit. Other prominent Jesuit theologians (e.g., Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar [formerly a Jesuit], and Henri de Lubac) are practically silent on the issue, even if they each tend toward an Augustinian emphasis in the theology of grace.

support in Augustine and Aquinas) the intrinsic efficacy of grace precisely as supernatural aid intended to effect supernaturally meritorious acts. Against the errors of Luther and especially Calvin, the Molinists defend freedom against the hyper-Augustinian tendency to assert the necessity of supernatural aid for nature to be capable of any good whatsoever. Augustine's *massa damnata* theory contributed to the view—prevalent among Dominican Thomists until recently—that fallen man cannot avoid evil without the aid of grace. This pessimistic understanding of fallen human nature (shared by the chief Reformers) caused the reactionary stance of many Jesuits, who held that grace is made efficacious when it is freely accepted. The theory, based on Romans 5–9, says that humankind is a *massa* (or *conspersio luti*), clay in the hands of a potter, destined for hell if it is left to its own corrupt nature, and therefore only those whom God elects by a special predilection receive the efficacious help necessary to merit salvation.[32]

The key question for each school is precisely how a fallen creature can accept any particular grace (let alone be justified by the infusion of habitual sanctifying grace) without the assistance of additional divine aid. The Bañezians argue that since man is incapable by himself of doing anything but resist divine help, God must predetermine that some graces will be accepted and therefore efficacious, but since sin and damnation remain realities in the face of God's desire "that all men be saved" (1 Tm 2:4),[33] the graces that are rejected must have been predetermined to be merely "sufficient" for salvation, not actually effective (or "efficacious," speaking extrinsically). Hence, God knows which graces will be rejected and by whom, precisely because God's sovereign will is the transcendent cause of all graces, predetermining which are to be inefficacious, as God must will for every act a physical premotion that specifies the nature of

32. For the development of Augustine's *massa damnata* interpretation of Romans 5–11, see: *De natura et gratia*, Book 1 (*PL* 44, 4.4—5.5 [*CSEL* 60]; *De genesi ad litteram* 10.13–12.16 (*PL* 34) [CSEL 28.1]; *De diversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*, Book 21.2.5–7 (*PL* 40) [CCL 44/ BA 10]; *De dono perseverantiae liber unus* 14.35 (*PL* 45) [BA 20]. See also Paula Fredriksen Landes, *Augustine on Romans: Propositions from the Epistle to the Romans, Unfinished Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Chico: Society of Biblical Literature, 1982); Landes, s.v. *massa*, in *Augustine through the Ages*: *An Encyclopedia*, ed. Allan D. Fitzgerald and John C. Cavadini (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999); Ernesto Buonaiuti, "Manichaeism and Augustine's Idea of 'Massa Perditionis,'" *Harvard Theological Review* 20 (1927) 117–27; Domenico Marafioti, "Alle origini del teorema della predestinazione," *Atti* 2 (1987) 257–77; Bernard Leeming, "Augustine, Ambrosiaster, and the *massa perditionis*," *Gregorianum* 11 (1930) 58–91; James Wetzel, "Predestination, Pelagianism, and Foreknowledge," in *Cambridge Companion to Augustine*, ed. Eleonore Stump and Norman Kretzmann (New York: Cambridge University, 2010) 49–58.

33. The Bañezian school followed Augustine's interpretation of the universal salvific will as a metaphorical expression (see *Enchiridion de fide, spe et charitate*, Book 1 [*PL* 40], 27.40.103) [CCL 42]. But the condemnations of Jansenius led his followers to develop a different explanation of the discrepancy between the universal salvific will and the revealed *datum* of damnation, namely, the distinction between antecedent and consequent divine wills.

each act.[34] The Molinists, however, argue that God first knows what each person would freely choose under every possible circumstance; therefore, the graces that are actually inefficacious are known to be so because those to whom they were offered chose to reject them, and God knew this would be the case before choosing to grant such graces. In other words, graces are efficacious because their recipients choose to accept them, as God chooses to grant said graces precisely because God knows that, given these particular circumstances, they would be accepted.[35] Hence, while the Molinists grant the transcendent divine intellect a knowledge of all possible hypotheticals (*futurabilia*) in order to ensure it a determinative role in which actually existent graces are freely accepted, the Bañezians turn to the divine will as the transcendent cause of all free good acts in order to acknowledge divine control over which graces will be accepted by whom, regardless of the circumstances.[36]

Defense of Lonergan's Position on the Relationship between Grace and Nature

Before investigating the natural integrity of free will in the grace–freedom dynamic, it is fitting to address Lonergan's position on the broader problem of the relationship between the natural and supernatural orders. After briefly covering the Thomistic background to the ideas Lonergan takes up, I will critique the analysis of Lonergan's position Mansini proposed on the basis of Feingold's treatment.[37]

The starting point for understanding Lonergan's position must be the Thomist psychological doctrine of the possible and agent intellect. Presuming the reader's general familiarity with the basics of this theory of knowledge,[38] Lonergan repeatedly points to the (possible) intellect's unlimited capacity to understand being; much of his *Insight* is occupied with plumbing the depths of this transcendental capacity native to the human mind.[39] But this limitless inclination to know more and more about

34. See Garrigou-Lagrange, *Grace: Commentary* 222–23; *The One God* 530–38, 709; and *Predestination* 80–84, 206–9, 246–50, 278–79, 341–45.
35. See Luis de Molina, S.J., *Concordia liberi arbitrii cum gratiae donis, divina praescientia, providentia, praedestinatione et reprobatione ad nonnullos primae partis divi Thomae articulos*; part 4 is available in English: *On Divine Foreknowledge: Part IV of the Concordia*, trans. Alfred Freddoso (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1988).
36. For a more thorough summary of the two systems see Most, *Grace, Predestination, and the Salvific Will of God*.
37. Feingold is primarily concerned with an exegesis of Aquinas's many texts on the matter, which he interprets through the lens of late Scholastic thought (or the commentator tradition). His division of natural desire into innate/prerational and elicited/rational is the prism through which he operates. Interestingly, he does not quote *ST* 1, q. 12, a. 8, ad 4, which would help in understanding Lonergan's own position.
38. I am prescinding from the peculiarities of a full-scale interpretation of the details of Aquinas's theory of knowledge, such as is developed in Lonergan's *Verbum* articles.
39. Aquinas quotes very frequently the Aristotelian axiom *anima est quodammodo omnia* (*De anima* 3); see, e.g., his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* 3 and *ST* 1, q. 84, a. 2, ad 2. None of this is to deny the fact that the proportionate object of human intelligence

reality cannot be actualized fully by the operations of the (agent) intellect, which grasps intelligible species in the phantasms the imagination creates from (sensate) experience. Since the agent intellect is limited both by the imperfection of its power and the deficiency inherent to abstractive knowledge, the full potential of the possible intellect can be actualized only by understanding God himself through an intelligible species that is nothing but God's very own essence.[40] Still, the possible intellect can receive such knowledge only according to its created state (*quidquid recipitur ad modum recipientis reciptur*), as it is not divine; nevertheless, perfect vision of God would have to entail a *species impressa* surpassing every *species intelligibilis* that is accessible to the agent intellect.[41]

Lonergan inherits this Thomist doctrine and takes as his point of departure the nature of the inclination toward the infinite that is proper to the human mind. Using the Aristotelian categories of active and passive potency, he clarifies that the intellect is in passive potency to perfect vision of God, but he is quick to note that this truth is known only by the revelation of the reality of the beatific vision (i.e., the fact of perfect vision alone proves its possibility, and it is known only by revelation).[42] Moreover, the passive potency for such vision is remote and obediential, meaning that there is a disproportion between the created intellect and the infinite being; thus only the latter can bring about the actualization of such potency. In this sense, the potency of the intellect for such vision is not "natural," as the latter term, in contradistinction to "obediential," indicates a proportionality that enables the thing in potency to acquire the means necessary for attaining its end. However, this "obediential" potency is called "natural" in the restricted sense in which something is of such a nature that it is capable of receiving what is disproportionate to it (i.e., the intellect can be rendered proportionate to the divine by a supernatural gift).[43]

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is the quidditative being of sensible things. Hence, one could specify that the *natural* passive potency of the intellect is precisely for those intelligibles that the agent intellect is able to abstract from phantasms. See Aquinas, *De veritate* q. 18, a. 2. But dividing the passive potency of the intellect into natural and obediential does nothing to deny the intrinsic capacity of the intellect to receive infinite knowledge, whether in the horizontal or vertical sense (to use metaphorical language), even if the latter requires a *lumen gloriae* (*SCG* 3, chap. 53.6).

40. See, e.g., Aquinas, *Compendium theologiae* 1, chap. 104, where he gives a less technical summary of this argument.
41. In other words, the *species expressa* of the possible intellect will be inferior to the *species impressa*, if the latter is infinite, precisely because the human mind's capacity to understand the infinite is necessarily finite.
42. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: Regis College, 1973) 78; and Lonergan, "The Natural Desire to See God," in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Herder, 1967) 87.
43. Stebbins summarizes Lonergan's position in *Divine Initiative* 153–54. While distancing Lonergan's position from the late Scholastic understanding, he attempts to align Lonergan more with de Lubac (despite his critique of the latter); see 163, 178–79.

Thus the essential remote passive potency of the intellect for the beatific vision is more properly called "obediential" than "natural" because of the absolute disproportion between the desire and its ultimate fulfillment.[44] But since the distinction between obediential and natural is merely extrinsic (i.e., it has only to do with its relation to an agent cause), the desire can be called "natural" insofar as it is a tendency innate to potency rather than an elicited act ("elicited" here means willed into existence). The "determinate" desire for perfect vision of God is rooted in the intellect's innate tendency to seek an unlimited knowledge of being. Hence, the two terms describe the same potency from different but not incompatible angles.[45] "Obediential" is the best term because it indicates that the potency cannot be actualized through natural means, and therefore actualization is not in any sense owed to it.[46] In fact, when the beatific vision is explicitly or determinately desired, Lonergan says the desire must be supernatural, not natural.[47]

Therefore, Stebbins also says, based on Lonergan's *De ente supernaturali* 73, that

> our natural end is to know the divine essence imperfectly and analogically, on the basis of our knowledge of sensible things, while our supernatural end is to know it as it is in itself, by means of the perfect and intuitive vision enjoyed by the blessed. Ultimately, then, it turns out that our capacity to answer questions does not measure up to our capacity to ask them.[48]

In other words, the "duplex finis" of man (Aquinas's words)[49] is materially one object and formally two (i.e., it is the same God under two different aspects, namely, author of being and author of grace).

Lonergan, therefore, is not satisfied with de Lubac's treatment. Mansini's reduction of the former to the latter will become clearer when I show how Lonergan does not fall into the camp of the Bañezian Thomists, such as Garrigou-Lagrange and Feingold, who speak merely of a conditional and inefficacious natural desire to see God.[50] Stebbins reports Lonergan's critique of de Lubac:

> Lonergan cautions against making too much of the natural desire to see God. Its object is obscure; we naturally desire the most perfect knowledge of God that is possible, but we have

44. See Lonergan, *De ente supernaturalia* 68–69; and Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 153.
45. Even though de Lubac accuses Cajetan of defining natural and obediential potency as mutually exclusive (*Surnaturel* 137), Cajetan actually affirms that the rational creature's obediential potency for the beatific vision can be called, in a certain sense, "natural" insofar as the capacity is specific to intellectual nature. See his commentary on *ST* 3, q. 9, a. 2 (Leonine ed., 11:141–42, cited by Feingold, *Natural Desire* 115 n. 45).
46. Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali* 60–61.
47. Ibid. 68; Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 152.
48. Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 156.
49. *ST* 1–2, q. 62, a. 1; *In II. Sent*. d. 41, q. 1, a. 1; *De veritate* q. 14, a. 2.
50. De Lubac agrees that the natural desire is inefficacious, but he characterizes the qualifier "conditional" as an inadequate description: "To desire divine communication as a free gift, as a gratuitous initiative, is by itself an inefficacious desire, but that does not mean it is, as is sometimes said, a mere platonic desire, conditional or conditioned" (*Surnaturel* 484 [my translation]).

> no way of knowing naturally that this knowledge is in fact identical with knowledge of God *uti* [*sic*] *in se est*.[51]

The natural desire to see God is indeterminate with respect to the perfection of the vision, and therefore it is implicitly "conditional" (with respect to the beatific vision) even though not elicited; only the unconditional desire to see God can be called "elicited" as distinct from "natural" and "innate," although God must be assigned as its agent cause, since such supernatural hope can only be brought about through faith in the reality of the beatific vision as revealed (which is therefore known to be possible). Lonergan opposes de Lubac's apparent assertion that man's innate tendency to self-transcendence and the liberal self-giving of God together exclude the possibility of human existence without elevation to the supernatural order (called the "state of pure nature").[52] In an article specifically on the natural desire, Lonergan says about the "state of pure nature" that

> all things are possible to God, on condition that no internal contradiction is involved. But a world-order without grace does not involve an internal contradiction. Therefore a world-order without grace is possible to God and so concretely possible. The major premise is common doctrine and certainly the position of St Thomas. The minor premise stands until the contrary is demonstrated, for the onus of proof lies on anyone who would limit divine omnipotence.[53]

Besides critiquing de Lubac's attempt to rehabilitate the Augustinianism associated with Enrico Noris and Gianlorenzo Berti, Lonergan concedes that the hypothesis of a "state of pure nature" is a "marginal theorem," even while disputing the late Scholastic arguments from the gratuity of grace and the freedom of God.[54] Some late Scholastics purportedly argue that for this state to be concretely possible, not only must static natures not have any exigency for grace, but also the act whereby God bestows grace must be distinct from the act whereby God freely creates such natures. Lonergan wishes to leave aside the conceptualism inherent in such reasoning and maintain that a concretely possible world order comprehended by God alone would certainly entail more than the absence of grace and the existence of human beings (that is, we simply do not know any concrete details about how the "state of pure nature" would play out). Lonergan's lucid reasoning regarding the divine is manifest in these careful statements:

> The number of divine acts of will seems to me to be quite independent of possibility or impossibility of world-orders without grace, and directly to depend upon the number of objects that are willed. Hence there will be only one act of will, one freedom of exercise, and one

51. Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 180.
52. Ibid. 179–80, based on a *reportatio* of Frederick Crowe in Lonergan's course on grace: *De gratia* [*et virtutibus*] (Toronto: Regis College, 1947–48), cited in Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 150.
53. Lonergan "Natural Desire to See God" 92.
54. Ibid. 94.

> freedom of specification if, as God knows all existing things by knowing one concrete world-order, so also God wills all existing things inasmuch as he wills one concrete world-order. What I fail to see is any contradiction in affirming both that God wills the existing concrete order by a single act and that God could will another world-order in which there was no grace.[55]

Mansini, nevertheless, takes issue with Lonergan's characterization of the "state of pure nature" as a marginal theorem because he overlooks a flaw in Feingold's argumentation,[56] namely, the contention that an innate desire to see God is necessarily unconditional and therefore demands grace. If the "vision of God" is not qualified as either indeterminately desired (by nature) or desired precisely as beatific, then there is room for equivocation. It remains to be proven that the human intellect's potentially infinite, inherent desire to know God, whether as author of being simply or also as author of grace, involves a demand for grace. It is therefore unjustified to set forth, as Mansini does, only three options regarding the natural desire: innate and unconditional, elicited and conditional, or elicited and unconditional.[57]

Mansini asserts, "If the desire is innate, an inclination of the will or the nature itself, a preconscious inclining and tending to quidditative knowledge of God that is prior to knowledge, then the desire is also unconditional and absolute."[58] But he offers no argument for this assertion. Feingold, on whom Mansini relies, likewise says, "If one conceives the natural desire to see God as an innate appetite or inclination, then it follows that it will be absolute rather than conditional, for a conditional desire is possible only on the basis of knowledge."[59] Cannot a connatural tendency incline the intellect toward indefinite (i.e., implicitly conditional) knowledge? Lonergan is not advocating a preconscious desire for quidditative knowledge of God that somehow also involves knowledge of the possibility of such vision. Knowledge of the possibility of "seeing God face to face" requires deliberation. But for Lonergan, there is a preconscious inclination to seek ever-greater knowledge of God as author of all that may fall within one's purview of experience, and this "desire" assumes by its very existence the possibility that such increase in knowledge is always possible, even though deliberation is required before the parameters of such a possibility can be circumscribed.

Furthermore, says Mansini, "If we are not ordered to vision except by grace, and if the principles of attainment are grace and the theological virtues, then there is no natural desire for vision, no innate inclination to it."[60] Again, the term "vision" is

55. Ibid.
56. Mansini, "Lonergan on the Natural Desire" 193. However, later in his "Abiding Theological Significance of Henri de Lubac's *Surnaturel*," Mansini writes, "One may say, as Bonino does, that one of the abiding achievements of de Lubac is to have shown the openness of nature to grace, and this against over-confident systems of late Scholasticism, imagining in too great detail a world without grace. But the exact way de Lubac asserts this openness cannot be sustained" (608).
57. See "Lonergan on the Natural Desire" 185–86.
58. Ibid. 186.
59. Feingold, *Natural Desire* xxx.
60. Mansini, "Lonergan on the Natural Desire" 189.

unqualified here. Lonergan does not speak of an innate inclination or natural desire for perfect knowledge (or "vision") of God *ut in se est*. Rather, he prefers to speak of an obediential potency for this knowledge and, at the same time, recognizes an innate inclination toward (or natural desire for) knowledge of God *in whatever measure possible* (i.e., an indeterminate or indefinite horizon). The degree to which the possible intellect can apprehend the divine essence is unknown until by faith/grace man accepts revelation—whereby grace also produces in man a supernatural desire for the beatific vision as such. What is conditional and inefficacious, therefore, only later becomes transformed into an elicited, formally unconditional, and efficacious desire.

Moreover, Mansini says, "To make the potency obediential fits with his denying that the desire constitutes an "exigence" for fulfillment, but not with saying the desire is innate."[61] But can an obediential potency be elicited (the supposed opposite of innate)? It seems that the only way to avoid Lonergan's compelling reasoning on this matter is to dismiss obediential potency as a proper category for speaking of the *desiderium naturale ad videndum Deum*. It is this concept (obediential potency) that allows Lonergan to say that the desire we have for some kind of vision of God is concomitant with the nature of the possible intellect and therefore "innate" rather than "elicited." "Obediential potency" also enables Lonergan to deny "natural" exigency for grace and instead admit the possibility that such a preconscious inclination will never be elevated to the reflective state of formal desire for perfect vision of God.

Finally, it is therefore clear what is wrong with the following reasoning:

> For an innate appetite, Feingold reminds us, is determined to one end; if the end is natural, there is no innate desire for vision, and if there is a desire for vision, there is no innate desire for a natural end. No innate desire for vision means innate desire is for a natural end, and this implies the possibility of "pure nature."[62]

What happened to Aquinas's *duplex finis*? There is no reason to deny to the possible intellect an innate desire for an indeterminate knowledge of God through unspecified means—either by grace or by mere nature; in fact, one could argue to the contrary that, if prior to being "ordered" to grace, the intellect has only a natural end,[63] then elevation to the supernatural order would cause the intellect to have a natural end no longer (i.e., the innate tendency of its nature would be eradicated by the extrinsic influx of a supernatural ordering).

61. Ibid. 190–91.
62. Ibid. 193.
63. The distinction between being "ordered" and being "called" to the supernatural vision of God can be drawn, but such a distinction does not help Mansini's (or Feingold's) case. To say one is called to something is merely to indicate that one's call has an end, even if the requisite intrinsic means for attaining that end are not presently possessed, because the necessary supernatural means are nevertheless present to all in an extrinsic manner. One called and ordered has immediate access to the means for said end.

Since Lonergan says with Bañez that "the natural desire to know *what* God is . . . supposes knowledge *that* God is,"[64] and since at the same time he says that this knowledge is not elicited, perhaps reflection on how human persons naturally come to know God's existence would be necessary. Certainly the possible intellect begins to function very early in life, and yet the conscious rejection of its connatural conviction that God exists does not deny the fact, but rather points to the fact that the natural desire concomitant to the obediential potency of the intellect can never be eradicated, even if it can be covered over (or alienated), as it were. Leaving aside the issues of atheism and how God's existence may be known through reason (and how the virtue of faith may grant knowledge of the preambles to the articles of faith), one might argue that Lonergan's position is qualifiedly consonant with the late Scholastic attempt to defend the integrity of man's intellectual nature with respect to the gratuitous gift that is *gratia elevans*. At the same time, Stebbins's defense of the *nouvelle* perspective has some credence, on the basis of Lonergan's statements:

> For [Lonergan] . . . obediential potency is, as it were, an amplification of the innate virtualities of finite nature. Like all higher grades of being, grace preserves and is conditioned by the lower grades that it subsumes. Hence, there is no obediential potency without a corresponding natural potency. But in the bifurcated cosmic scheme, where no finite nature has an innate inclination towards anything lying beyond its own proportion, obediential potency represents the "mere non-repugnance" of any creature to God's action on it. Natural and obediential potency are no longer intrinsically linked: the former is necessary and determinate, the latter contingent and wholly indeterminate. Within this perspective, which so carefully seeks to maintain the transcendence of grace, the claim that grace perfects nature seems to have been drained of all meaning.[65]

In this light, the intellect's obediential potency for the beatific vision is called "natural" insofar as it is an inclination toward a potentially and negatively infinite knowledge of God. The obediential potency also becomes a supernatural desire for perfect knowledge through the excitation of grace, and as such constitutes a framework on which to model a theological anthropology. Accordingly, man's free will maintains its own integrity even as it is incorporated into a higher finality ("vertical finality"), namely, the supernatural order of grace, which itself has the order of glory as its ultimate and proportionate end.

Lonergan's Critique of Bañezianism on the Grace–Freedom Dynamic

Taking the "theorem of the supernatural" as a point of departure, Lonergan summarizes the history of the debate concerning the grace–freedom dynamic: "The twelfth

64. Lonergan, "Natural Desire to See God" 90, emphases added; cited by Mansini, "Lonergan on the Natural Desire" 191. Mansini claims this statement contradicts other statements by Lonergan (already cited) where he argues that the natural desire ought not be called "elicited."

65. Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 163.

century was oppressed by an apparently insoluble problem, with the necessity of distinguishing between divine grace and human freedom and, at the same time, an inability to conceive either term without implying the other."[66] Although Lonergan indicates in his dissertation that the Fathers, including Augustine, and theologians as late as Peter Lombard failed to fully undergo intellectual conversion from the first to the second level of consciousness,[67] he does not suggest that the Bañezian and Molinist systems remain below the theoretic level of consciousness; in fact, he commonly refers to them as "theories."[68] Stebbins claims that unlike the "method" Lonergan employs in his dissertation, the late Scholastic attempts to resolve the points on which Aquinas was unclear lack "an explicit orientation to theory" and pose a threat "to faith's quest for understanding."[69] While Stebbins appears to want to interpret Lonergan's method by retrojecting into his dissertation the theory of knowledge explored in *Insight*,[70] he does not go so far as to assert that the errors of Bañezianism and Molinism are due to the general bias of common sense.[71] Even though, formally speaking, Lonergan undercuts the entire Bañez–Molina antinomy,[72] he apparently thinks that the Bañezian system is much closer to Aquinas's system than is the Molinist,[73] and of course he considers himself a Thomist, even if he strives to go beyond him in the latter part of his career.[74]

66. Lonergan, *Insight* 527. In the only other place in *Insight* where Lonergan explicitly addresses this question, he summarized the conclusion to his doctoral research on the topic (664). He also indicates in *Insight* fundamental agreement with the Molinist position on the transcendence of the divine intellect, although his interpretation of the *scientia media* is peculiar (662–63). I agree with Stebbins (*Divine Initiative* 264–65) that Lonergan is here simply explicating the doctrine of *scientia simplicis intelligentiae*.
67. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 7, 165. For this notion of conversion, see Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2007) 238–40.
68. Lonergan does not undermine common sense or theory when he speaks about the medieval theology of grace as an intermediate stage of meaning in *Method in Theology* (107).
69. Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 290. He does not explain in much detail what Lonergan's methodology is at this stage.
70. Ibid. xviii.
71. Concerning the general bias of common sense, see Lonergan, *Insight* 225–42.
72. For example, "St. Thomas posits three *actiones* but only two products; Durandus maintained that if there are only two products, there are only two *actiones*; both Molina and Bañez were out to discover a third product that they might have a third *actio*, and the former posited a *concursus simultaneus*, the latter a *concursus praevius*" (*Grace and Freedom* 449). See also Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 293
73. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 448–49. Although Stebbins admits that Bañez, contrary to Molina, strived to do nothing other than stay faithful to Aquinas himself (*Divine Initiative* 194), he does not see the matter quite the same way (ibid. 248). Lonergan appears to come very close to the Bañezian position, if one is not attentive to his differentiation of "premotion" in the Aristotelian sense from the Bañezian understanding of the term (*Grace and Freedom* 75–79, 277–80, 286).
74. After arguing that Lonergan's understanding of the grace–freedom dynamic transcends the framework in which the Bañezians and Molinists operate, Stebbins in the conclusion

Lonergan's dissertation brilliantly fleshes out the stages in Aquinas's own thinking on the relationship between grace and freedom and of identifying the pieces to the puzzle missed by previous interpreters who therefore replaced them with inadequate substitutes. But it ought not to be forgotten that the chief principle defended by the Bañezians is the transcendent efficacy of the divine will, which Lonergan also upholds against the Molinists. The Bañezian mistake is precisely the attempt to work out the details of how this efficacy operates through human freedom; Lonergan simply refutes the necessity for a *praemotio physica* on the grounds that no created reality can mediate the infallible efficacy of the divine will. Lonergan's refutation has the effect of recognizing the proper contribution of human freedom to the exercise of divine providence (without appealing to the Molinist mechanism of *concursus simultaneus*). More precisely, he says, "We agree with the Bannezian [*sic*] synthesis of premotion, application, instrumental participation, and fate, but we think the explanation of the transition from rest to activity found in *In VIII Phys.*, lect. 2, to be more germane to St. Thomas than their distinction between *posse agere* and *actu agere*."[75] It is this "real distinction" between the capacity to act (*posse agere*) and the action itself (*actu agere*) to be endured by the recipient ("suffered by the patient") that leads to the necessary invention of *praedeterminatio physica* or *praemotio physica*, which expresses the divine transcendent will itself.

Divine Efficacy and the Integrity of Human Freedom

Holding the transcendence of both the divine will and the divine intellect, Lonergan advances the discussion by using the integrity of human free will as a principle by which to critique both dichotomous approaches:

> To St. Thomas cooperation was a theorem. . . . Remove this key position and it becomes impossible to reconcile human instrumentality with human freedom: one can posit a

of his book points to the need to transpose Aquinas's doctrine of grace into the methodical shift involved in the turn toward interiority exemplified in Lonergan's later work (Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 296–98). See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 352, where he reflects on his previous Thomistic studies. Also in *Method* (288–89; see also 107, 120) he briefly addresses such a transposition from metaphysical theory to transcendental interiority. Doran and Crowe have made it their life's work to respond to intimated needs such as this one; see, e.g., Robert Doran, "Essays in Systematic Theology 3: 'Complacency and Concern' and a Basic Thesis on Grace," *Lonergan Workshop* 13 (1997) 57–78. A rise to the level of interiority need not undermine the positive contribution of "common sense" to philosophy and theology, just as the theoretical need not be aligned too much with its deficiencies in order to achieve the third level of consciousness (interiority).

75. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 315. Nevertheless, as a classic axiom wisely indicates, a small error at the beginning of a reasoning process naturally becomes amplified by the end; hence, Lonergan argues that the Bañezians misinterpret premotion and application, instrumental participation and liberty, divine transcendence, and the distinction between *posse agere* and *actu agere* (ibid. 449).

> *praedeterminatio physica* to save instrumentality, or one can posit a *concursus indifferens* to save self-determination; one cannot have a bit of both the antecedents and the whole of both the consequents. There is a material resemblance between the Molinist *gratia excitans* and the Thomist *gratia operans*, but the resemblance is only material, for the Molinist lacks the speculative acumen to make his grace leave the will instrumentally subordinate to divine activity. But the Bannezian has exactly the same speculative blind spot: because he cannot grasp that the will is truly an instrument by the mere fact that God causes the will of the end, he goes on to assert that God also brings in a *praemotio* to predetermine the choice of means.[76]

Nevertheless, Lonergan holds with Aquinas that "God is the cause of each particular motion inasmuch as his mind plans and his will intends the endless premotions that make up the dynamic pattern of the universe."[77] Note that Lonergan specifies the particular manner in which it is true to say that God is cause of each motion, namely, insofar as God orders the dynamic pattern of created causes, and thus no extra divine impulse is needed for every potency of a free creature to be actualized other than God's predestination of each to its final end. Lonergan stands firm against the claim that every "choice of means" on the part of the free creature depends upon a particular (pre-)motion from God as cause of all things because "as our examination of the ideas of physical premotion, application, and *virtus instrumentalis* established, there is no evidence for the Bannezian view that St. Thomas is proving the existence of additional motions."[78]

One product of this notion that every choice must be preceded by a particular premotion is the hard distinction between "sufficient" grace and "efficacious" grace: the former indicates grace that, while intrinsically efficacious, does not fructify; the latter indicates grace that actually yields a supernaturally meritorious act. Lonergan writes,

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76. Ibid. 147–48. Lonergan's critique of Molinism and Bañezianism exhibits a delicate balancing act, which is impressive given that he was a Jesuit writing a dissertation for Rome's Gregorian University (which was certainly run by Molinists in the 1940s).
77. Ibid. 286, emphasis added.
78. Ibid. 312. Levering (*Predestination* 157 n. 106) reports that Robert Joseph Matava recently wrote a dissertation on the Bañez-Molina debate, in which he critiques as deterministic Lonergan's understanding of Aquinas's premotion, arguing that the antecedent conditions that make up fate can no more explain the determination of free acts than can Bañezian premotion. Lonergan might respond that premotion, for Aquinas, does not by itself infallibly bring about free acts, but that the restricted autonomy of the free creature is one of many elements comprising fate, itself the intended contingent effect correlative to the provident mind of God. Thomas M. Osbourne Jr. also defends the Bañezian view against Lonergan's critique of premotion here, but he is apparently unaware that the position he criticizes is precisely Lonergan's, as he merely mentions David Burrell and Brian Shanley as proponents (who depend on Lonergan's dissertation). Arguing for a priority of nature rather than of time, Osbourne misses the mark entirely—he does not address the relationship between *posse agere* and *actu agere*—and proposes that premotion is not so much a real creature as an intentional being that is nevertheless somehow distinct from God, without clarifying how an intentional being can function as a created intermediary ("Thomist Premotion and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion," *Nova et Vetera* (*English*) 4 [2006] 607–32, at 627).

> With regard to the difference between efficacious and sufficient grace, there is no difference entitatively. Both *ab intrinseco* are proportionate causes of changes of will: but in the one case the changed will *because changed* consents to the change, and this follows from the nature of the case; in the other case the changed will *though changed* does not consent to the change but reverts to evil, and, like all other sin, this is unintelligible, a fact but not a problem.[79]

Some of the early Thomist commentators discern the necessity for a grace that is infallibly efficacious precisely because they adhere to the *massa damnata* theory of Augustine, apparently adopted by Aquinas.[80] If man by himself is incapable of any free acts that may be preparatory for grace, if he is destined to fall from good in every act that is not predetermined to a particular good, then he does not have the free capacity of consenting to a grace that is not predetermined to be freely accepted. Lonergan does not point out that Aquinas opens the way to this thinking when he states,

> As a creature would fall into nothing unless it were held fast by the divine power, so also it would fall into non-good if it were not held fast by God. But it does not follow that, unless it were held fast by God through grace, it would fall into sin; *unless (this be true) only of fallen nature, which of itself has an inclination to evil*.[81]

Aquinas may very well have held that the condition here stated as necessary for the truth of the consequent is fulfilled, that is, that fallen man does in fact fall into sin unless prevented by grace.[82] But certainly Lonergan's analyses indicate why Aquinas did not have to hold the Bañezian position.[83]

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79. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 333, emphases added. White paraphrases this thought: "As Bernard Lonergan has shown in his doctoral thesis, the notion of grace as 'sufficient' and 'efficient' in Aquinas pertains not to two distinct *kinds* of grace, but to the same grace considered as sufficient for salvation and effective when it is not refused. See *Gratia Operans* 333, 441." He continues: "However, the notion of a distinct form of grace that can be refused versus a grace that is irresistible was developed in the post-Tridentine period by Thomists to oppose Jansenism and Protestantism on the one hand, and Molinism on the other. . . . I have preferred to use the terms 'resistible' versus 'irresistible' so as to avoid confusion. Aquinas, at any rate, most certainly teaches throughout his theological corpus that grace is (at least much of the time) capable of being refused, or 'resistible.' For a clear example, see *SCG* III, c. 159–60" ("Von Balthasar and Journet" 661–62 n. 68).
80. Aquinas, *In Romanos* c. 9, lects. 2–3; and *SCG* 3, chaps. 159–61.
81. *De malo* q. 16, a. 4, ad 22; quoted in Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 112 n. 88, emphasis added.
82. Most (*Grace, Predestination, and the Salvific Will of God* 278–302) provides an interesting analysis of how Aquinas may have appropriated the theory, in fact, an alternative account of how Augustine himself could have understood the theory. Lonergan poses the *massa damnata* theory as an objection, to which he responds briefly (*Grace and Freedom* 344, citing Aquinas, *In Romanos* c. 9, lect. 3 ad fin.; and *De malo* q. 3, a. 1, ad 9 and ad 16).
83. The strength of Lonergan's analysis as an interpretation of the Thomistic texts is his steady presentation of the development of Aquinas's formulations from his *Commentaria in Libros Sententiarum* to the *Prima secundae*. It would seem the latter text (of the

The "additional motions" asserted by Bañez result from concluding that every particular choice of means must be preceded by a divine "application" that causes actualization of the potency for such action (*posse agere*). Lonergan shows that such a created mediation is an unnecessary postulate and a threat to the integrity of human freedom. While Bañez reduces the essence of freedom to the sustained ability of the intellect to deliberate about the means adequate for the end to which he is directed,[84] Lonergan finds in Aquinas four essential elements of human freedom enumerated in *De malo* and the *Prima secundae* of the *Summa theologiae*: (1) the objective possibility of more than one course of action, (2) the intellectual capability of inclining toward more than one course of action, (3) a will that is not determined by the first course of action that occurs to the intellect, and (4) a will that selects a course of action through self-motion.[85] Therefore, the *motio moventis praecedit motum mobilis* of the *Summa contra gentiles*[86] ought to be understood in conjunction with his later distinctions "between what God wills to happen, what he wills not to happen, and what he permits to happen"[87] and "between *non bonum* and *peccatum*; and . . . the obvious third, *bonum*."[88] Lonergan also discerns in Aquinas the following "trichotomy": the positive objective truth of being, the negative objective truth of not-being, and the objective falsity of moral lapse, where the third element represents withdrawal from the ordinance of the divine intellect.[89] This stands in direct opposition to the Bañezian *praedeterminatio physica*:

> *Scientia Dei est causa rerum*. God is not the cause of sin. Bañez's solution to this problem is well known [see *Scholastica commentaria in primam partem Summae theologiae S. Thomae Aquinatis* 1, q. 14, a. 13]. God knows what is by causing it; God knows what is not by not causing it; sin is not a reality; therefore God knows sin inasmuch as he is not the cause of the opposite good. But, while according to Bañez there are only two categories, namely, what God causes and what God does not cause, there are according to St. Thomas three distinct categories, namely, positive truth, negative truth, and objective falsity. Positive truth

Summa theologiae, e.g., 1–2, qq. 109–11), his latest on the topic, embodies a progression beyond both the *De malo* and the *Pars prima*, which are said to have been written around the same time.

84. Bañez, *Scholastica commentaria in primam partem Summae theologiae S. Thomae Aquinatis* I, q. 19, a. 10 (Madrid: Editorial F.E.D.A., 1934) 443–44.
85. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 96–98. Hence, Stebbins claims that a *praedeterminatio physica* would destroy created freedom (e.g., *Divine Initiative* 198).
86. *SCG* 3, chaps. 149,152.
87. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 112; *ST* 1, q. 19, a. 9, ad 3; and q. 23, a. 5, ad 3. Perhaps the second term would be more profitably translated, "what he does not will to happen," so that it may correspond with *non bonum*, in which case *peccatum* would be "what he permits to happen." I do not know whether Lonergan wants *peccatum* to correspond to "what he wills not to happen" and *non bonum* to "what he wills not to happen." It strikes me that discussion of antecedent and consequent divine wills would have been beneficial for the sake of clarity and completeness.
88. Ibid. 112–13; *De malo* q. 16, a. 4, ad 22.
89. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 113–15; *ST* 1, q. 17, a. 1, co.; and *ST* 1 q. 103, a. 8, ad 1.

> corresponds to what God causes; negative truth corresponds to what God does not cause; objective falsity is a third category that contains one element, *malum culpae* [see *ST* 1, q. 17, a. 1].[90]

In other words, Bañezians are forced to say that humans sin because God has not predestined them to perform the opposite good acts. Lonergan, however, discerns in Thomas a third category besides the good and nongood (evil), and subdivides the latter into what is simply not willed (the nongood or nontrue, i.e., nonbeing) and what contradicts God's will (the evil, the false, i.e., absurdity). This enables Lonergan to avoid the Bañezian "hard place" of saying God must know all evils by infallibly permitting them, while at the same time avoiding the Molinist "rock" of basing divine predestination on divine knowledge of hypothetical conditional futures ("futurables").

Divine Providence and Transcendence

Therefore some "means" elected by men are mere absurdities, objective unintelligibles, evils that are not the result of merely being deprived of predetermination toward particular goods. But presumably everything is in some sense factored into divine providence. The question becomes the manner in which each member of the trichotomy falls under divine governance, which Lonergan does not make entirely clear—perhaps intentionally, in recognition of a proper apophaticism. But he does discover something peculiar to Aquinas's treatment of fate: unlike coincidences, concurrences, and interferences, which are *per accidens* encompassed by divine providence (contrary to Aristotle), sin, as a "withdrawal from the ordinance of divine intellect," is a "*per accidens* that does not reduce to divine design."[91] Unlike Aristotle, Aquinas affirms the transcendent efficacy of the divine will (together with an equally transcendent divine intellect), but he joins Aristotle in assigning a certain autonomy to secondary causes, one that contradicts the Bañezian view that God creates particular motions that transcend and causally (rather than temporally) precede all free acts:

> This *dispositio* [*fatum dicitur dispositio*][92] may very naturally be identified in single instances with the *dispositio* or *habitude* that must exist between mover and moved if the one is to move the other [i.e., Aristotelian *praemotio*]: thus, we have the idea of physical premotion which is necessary *quo actualiter agat*. Next, if this *dispositio* is considered in its relations to all other secondary causes, then there is the *intentio*, the participation of divine art in the secondary cause. Again, if the *dispositio* is taken in conjunction with the divine will, it is the term of the *applicatio*, for, as has been shown, application is premotion as intended. Finally, all of these *dispositiones* taken together give fate. Admittedly St Thomas's thought on the issue is rather complex. But if he ever dreamt of a Bannezian *praemotio physica*, he simply

90. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 329.
91. Ibid. 115.
92. *ST* 3, q. 62, a. 4, ad 4; see also *ST* 1, q. 116, a. 2, ad 2.

> could not have asserted that fate is merely the arrangement of secondary causes. For the *praemotio physica* is far too obviously fatal not to be mentioned by its originator when fate itself is under discussion.[93]

In the Bañezian system, divine transcendence is presumed to be communicated in effect to the created reality of *praemotio* in an effort to bring divine efficacy to the rescue of human freedom, but the resultant bipolar classification of acts (or "two-lane highway") is open to the charge that God is indirectly responsible for sin.[94] It may be safe to assume with Lonergan that grace is at least ordinarily *gratia creata* and hence resistible. But his theology of the grace–freedom dynamic is essentially negative (or apophatic);[95] that is, it seeks merely to preserve divine transcendence against the errors of the Bañezian and Molinist systems.[96] Lonergan's critique of the Bañezian interpretation hinges on obliterating a particular understanding of the distinction that provides reason for Bañez to introduce *praemotio physica*, namely, the distinction between *posse agere* and *actu agere*.

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93. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 296. Stebbins adds, "The Bannezians are certain that the *intentio*, the *esse incompletum*, the *vis*—that is to say, the *virtus instrumentalis*—that God gives the creature and by which it actually functions as an efficient cause, is nothing other than a physical premotion in their peculiar sense of that term. But Lonergan argues that a series of parallel passages shows quite convincingly that Aquinas has something else in mind (*GF*:82–84; *GO*:147–51). . . . In the *Pars prima*, Aquinas makes it clear that fate is not some cause above and beyond natural causes but rather the ordering or intelligible pattern of secondary causes. Lonergan concludes that for Aquinas *fatum* and *intentio* are one and the same thing. . . . This analysis clarifies what it means to say that secondary causes participate in the active potency of the universal cause. This participation or *virtus instrumentalis* is not a motion that, added to the active potency of some creature, causes it to produce an effect that exceeds its own proper proportion. . . . Instrumental virtue and the movement received by the instrument from the principal cause are not simply identical (*DES*: 147). Instrumental virtue consists not in movement as such, but in 'the seriation, the arrangement, the pattern of the instruments in their movements' (*GO*: 150) through which the disproportionate effect is produced" (Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 242–44).
94. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 110, 148. Against the Bañezian "infallible permissive decrees," Lonergan notes a distinction in Aquinas between permission of concession and permission of one who prohibits: "Principal supernatural acts confer active potency [*posse agere*], and do so completely, without man necessarily cooperating with these gratuitously given acts; for man's cooperation is free, and God does not always intend that man cooperate with grace. . . . This irrationality [of willing an end and not the means] does presuppose God's permission, which is not, of course, the permission of concession but rather the permission of one who prohibits. . . . Hence, those principal supernatural acts to which there is added the divine permission that man not cooperate with them are truly but merely sufficient graces" (*De ente supernaturale* 177).
95. Lonergan, *Gratia operans* 332–33, cited in Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 290.
96. See Lonergan's text from his unpublished *De scientia atque voluntate Dei: Supplementum schematicum*, quoted in Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 268.

Vital Act and the Supernatural

Lonergan has a nuanced understanding of how *posse agere* and *actu agere* ought to function in the divine causality of free meritorious acts. After detailed exegesis of Aquinas's appropriation of Aristotle on the matter, he grants a real distinction between the two realities in general, but he insists on not placing the *actu agere* in the agent itself such that the agent cannot enact its potency to act without undergoing an additional motion to cause such a change. The creation of the action does not need to change the agent through which it is produced in order to effect the change in the recipient of the action. In fact, there is no real distinction between the action itself produced by the agent and the reception of that effect in the "patient"; for, it is truly the act itself that is "suffered," and the change brought about does not affect the agent (as the act of creation does not cause a real relation in God but in the thing created). Thus, the actualization of the active potency of the (finite) agent and the passive potency of the recipient is the effect of one motion; *actio* and *passio* are one reality considered under two different aspects. In Scholastic terminology, the change effected is attributed to an agent as *actio* by extrinsic denomination, but it is called *passio* in the recipient by intrinsic denomination because it is wrought precisely in the recipient, not the agent (i.e., bringing about the change is not a change in itself, but a power that is exercised transitively in the recipient).[97]

According to the Bañezian (and Molinist) "theory of vital act," the "first act" (identified as *posse agere*) of a subject is the efficient cause of its own vital acts ("second act" identified as *agere actu*), but since something less perfect cannot produce something more perfect, such causality must be brought about through the aid of an "application" (of act to potency) provided by a higher-order cause. Against this kind of thinking, Lonergan denies that there is any divine motion that brings about the actualization of a potency for operation precisely because, in Lonergan's Aristotelian-Thomistic language, the "first act" of a being (form) is ontologically inferior to the "second act" of a being (operation). Second act is caused by God, not by first act through some divine impulse, as potency cannot actualize itself, even if under the influence of a *praemotio physica*. No form can be made proportionate to its corresponding operation. Therefore Lonergan places active potency (*posse agere*) on the level of second act (instead of first act), which means there is no need for a divine "application" to produce the *agere actu*, because the *posse agere* is itself a proportionate second act capable of producing another second act.[98] Instead of reducing second act to the exercise of efficient causality, Lonergan conceives efficient causality as a real and intelligible relation of dependence. He therefore opposes the idea that divine causality of contingent effects is exercised through some intermediate created influx, which would demand an infinite series of such influxes.[99]

97. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 65–69; Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 231–32.
98. Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom* 253–54; Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 186, 345 n. 10, 218.
99. Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 224–25.

Hence divine efficacy is not exercised through some actualization of an active potency, but *gratia operans* is essentially a new supernatural relation of dependence added to a passive potency (namely, obediential potency). Stebbins ties together various dimensions of the issue in the following manner:

> The Bannezians insist on an intrinsic distinction between sufficient and efficacious grace: one premotion causes the will to produce an indeliberate act, thereby conferring on the potency the capacity to produce (*posse agere*) a deliberate act; another, wholly distinct premotion causes the will actually to produce (*actu agere*) a deliberate act. This definition and Lonergan's are in harmony insofar as both deny that human beings are in any way the efficient cause of internal actual grace (*DES*: 164). But the Bannezians go too far, Lonergan contends, when they deny that we vitally elicit internal actual grace, for the eliciting of a vital act does not necessarily involve the production of that act by the recipient potency. Sometimes, as in the case of acts of sensing or of understanding, the potency elicits its vital act simply by receiving it; and so, according to Lonergan's definition, we vitally elicit actual grace by receiving a supernatural act of knowing or willing. The more fundamental divergence, of course, has to do with the issue of whether actual grace ought to be conceived as an act or as a Bannezian physical promotion.[100]

With respect to the supernatural order, Lonergan admits that the performance of supernatural acts presupposes elevation of the subject above the natural order (*gratia elevans*) and that the supernatural operation of a finite agent/subject is necessarily *received*. But he also affirms that choosing the means to a supernatural end is itself a supernatural act that is *produced* by the finite subject.[101]

In general, the free creature does not need to receive an active potency for the supernatural before being moved to supernatural acts, because the obediential potency proper to a finite intellectual being is the only condition necessary for reception of such elevation.[102] Obediential potency by itself suffices for the *reception* of supernatural acts (i.e., there is no need for some prior motion to make the subject proportionate to such), but the *production* of supernatural acts requires *gratia operans*. While the latter is an effect of the infallible efficacy of the transcendent divine will, the former is precisely the essential, passive potency of finite intellect and will.[103] In *De ente supernaturali*, Lonergan exposes as superfluous the connecting thread throughout the

100. Ibid. 283.

101. Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali* 177. This passage also affirms that "merely sufficient graces" are those graces accompanied by the divine permission of one who prohibits (not a permission of concession) because man chooses the irrationality of not cooperating with the means proportionate to the end that is willed.

102. See Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 215. The special cases in which reception of a supernatural active potency exists prior to all supernatural acts that may follow upon it are charity and the beatific vision. Charity is a "principal supernatural act," that is, a supernatural habit (*posse agere*), which the subject needs in order to *receive* every other supernaturally meritorious act (see Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali* 88).

103. Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 214.

Bañezian treatment of grace and freedom, namely, the need for some intermediary (*praedeterminatio physica*) to enact man's capacity to perform acts of the supernatural order.[104] Lonergan rightly gets rid of all unnecessary intermediaries and asserts that there is no incoherence in maintaining that God is capable of raising man to supernatural dignity without some *tertium quid*.

Conclusion

The theme that unites Lonergan's treatment of the grace–nature relationship with the grace–freedom dynamic is the obediential potency of man toward God, a fruit of the theorem of the supernatural. Obediential potency is that by which man is capable of receiving both the *gratia elevans* involved in performing supernaturally meritorious acts and the *gratia operans* that efficaciously brings about such acts, producing along the way a cooperation with human freedom that is necessary for such acts to be meritorious for the finite instrumental agent. Lonergan preserves the integrity of man's nature in both intellect and will by defending the obediential potency specific to intellectual creatures and the autonomous inclinations or dispositions proper to his nature. There is no need for a "supernatural existential" to precede reception of the *habitus* of sanctifying grace,[105] and the supernatural call that precedes the ordering of the spiritual faculties to their supernatural end by the indwelling of *caritas* does not necessarily confer a supernatural active potency; that is, particular graces producing supernatural acts do not require additional predetermined movements (*praemotio physica*). The essential remote passive potency of the intellect for the beatific vision is not a natural *active* potency (nor is it *properly* proportionate to supernatural active potency), and *posse agere* is not a first act in need of "application" or actualization from a second act (*agere actu*). Nevertheless, the obediential potency that is "naturally" constitutive of the intellect's motion toward the truth indefinitely discerned and the good indeterminately desired (until the intellect specifies the nature of its object by the light of revelation) is a "second act" that therefore stands (through *gratia elevans*) in proportionate relation to the *agere actu* received in the *gratia operans* through which God works every supernaturally meritorious act. *Gratia operans* produces in man a choice of means proportionate to the supernatural end to which he is called; this end is divinely—hence, efficaciously/infallibly—willed together with the requisite *gratia elevans* that orders the spirit to its supernatural end, producing in the mind and heart a supernatural *posse agere*, the *habitus* of sanctifying grace (or *caritas*).[106]

104. Lonergan, *De ente supernaturali* 85, 99; see also Stebbins, *Divine Initiative* 214.
105. See Karl Rahner, S.J., "Concerning the Relationship between Nature and Grace," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1, trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore: Helicon, 1961) 297–317; "Nature and Grace," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 4, trans. Kevin Smyth (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966) 164–88.
106. Charity is the "conjugate form" (accidental quality) that accompanies the "central form" (substance) of sanctifying grace, in the language of *Insight* (436–37).

Having defended Lonergan's position on the natural desire to see God and having explained the key points of Lonergan's dissertation on grace and freedom (prescinding from the historical analysis), the coherence of each issue with the other ought to be evident. Lonergan's work on grace is to build upon the theorem of the supernatural, signaling the precise distinction of grace from the natural realm of intellectual desire for God and the dispositions of created freedom as well as the particular relationships that obtain between these two orders of reality. Although sin has fundamentally damaged both the power of the will to adhere to God's intentions and the execution of the intellect's potency for continuous growth in knowledge of God in this life, the very nature of the intellect orients man toward the infinite being of God, and his freedom to act in accord with his deliberations remains intact. The natural integrity of both intellect and will cannot be forgotten in the midst of discourse about the supernatural order and the intrinsic efficacy of divine grace. Man does not need revelation or even philosophical knowledge of the first cause in order to desire some understanding and beatitude beyond that attainable by one's natural capabilities, nor is he naturally destined always to perform only evil. God freely wills to elevate man to the supernatural order, where his natural tendency to move toward an infinite horizon is made perfect. God knows into existence every free, good act through a conditional offer of grace, both truly sufficient and efficacious. At the same time God permits what he prohibits, namely, the will to fall away from his desires; yet God is ever ready to lift the creature back into a realm where God's love rules through wisdom, a wisdom made available to all.

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