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Sufficient and Efficacious Grace



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Sufficient and Efficacious Grace

Closely connected with the doctrine of predestination is the distinction between sufficient and efficacious graces. This distinction concerns actual graces by which God illuminates the mind and excites the will to do a salutary act. A sufficient grace is one that would be sufficient to move a person to a salutary action leading to conversion and charity. By receiving a sufficient grace, a person *could* do a salutary act. An efficacious grace, on the other hand, is an actual grace that *in fact* leads to the accomplishment of a salutary act such as repentance, prayer, faith, hope, charity, and so forth.

Is there an intrinsic difference between these two kinds of graces (merely sufficient and efficacious)? A huge theological debate arose in the sixteenth century over this question.

The Lutheran, Calvinist, and Jansenist view is that all grace is intrinsically efficacious, and that God does not give this grace to all men, but only to those predestined to salvation. The reprobate simply do not receive the graces necessary for salvation.

Catholic doctrine, on the contrary, maintains that God gives sufficient graces to all men to enable them to be saved, for God truly calls all men to salvation and holiness. If they cooperate with the actual graces that they receive, He will send further graces, and a progressive conversion will take place. However, experience shows that not all men cooperate with the graces they have received, and that they can harden their hearts to those impulses of God's mercy. Thus not all graces are *efficacious*, even though all men receive *sufficient* grace to lead them on to conversion.

Catholic doctrine on this point is expressed in the axiom that God does not command the impossible, but is ready to aid us with his grace if we seek His help through prayer (for which He also sends us grace). The Council of Trent quotes St. Augustine who says: "For God does not command the impossible, but when He commands He admonishes you to do what you can and to pray for what you cannot do."¹ Sufficient grace is given to all, but not all cooperate with the grace received.

Almost a century following the Council of Trent, Jansenius fell into the same error of denying the existence of merely sufficient grace, and thus of denying the distinction between efficacious and sufficient grace. The following positions of Jansenius were infallibly condemned by Innocent X in 1653:

There are some of God's commandments that just men cannot observe with the powers they have in their present

state, even if they wish and strive to observe them; nor do they have the grace which would make their observance possible.

In the state of fallen nature interior grace is never resisted.

It is Semi-Pelagian to say that Christ died or shed his blood for all human beings without exception.²

For Jansenius and the Jansenists Christ did not die for all men, but only for the predestined! Obviously such an opinion is supremely injurious to the mercy of God manifested in Christ's Passion. Indeed, Christ died for all men, and sufficient grace merited by the Passion is given to all who reach the age of reason. However, not all men freely cooperate with the graces merited by Christ's Passion so as to be justified and saved.

Controversy over Grace and Free Will between the Dominican and Jesuit Schools

The debate over sufficient and efficacious grace was not limited to the controversy between Catholics and Protestants, or between Catholics and Jansenists, but also bitterly divided the Dominican and the Jesuit schools of theology at the end of the sixteenth century. This debate pitted Jesuits—headed by Luis de Molina, Lessius, Suárez, and St. Robert Bellarmine, among others—against Dominicans headed by Domingo Báñez, a great theologian and former confessor of St. Theresa of Avila. The position of Banez has been carried on in the twentieth century most articulately by the great Dominican theologian Garrigou-Lagrange. Both sides claimed to be the true interpreters of the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas on this point.

The difficulty of the question comes partly from the fact that St. Thomas himself never explicitly made this distinction between sufficient and efficacious grace. In his treatise on grace in the *Summa of Theology* he divided actual graces into operative and cooperative, and similarly into prevenient and subsequent, but not into sufficient and efficacious. In fact, he never mentions this distinction at all in this context. Thus he never argues either that there is or is not an *intrinsic distinction* between sufficient and efficacious grace.

The key question in the debate was this: Is there an intrinsic difference between sufficient and efficacious graces, or is the difference simply on the part of the will of the recipient, resisting or not resisting the sufficient grace? Secondly, which solution to this question is most in accord with Revelation, Church teaching (as in the Council of Trent), and with the principles of St. Thomas and Catholic theology?

² DS 2001, 2002, 2005.

¹ Decree on Justification, chapter 11, DS 1536.

Báñez and the Dominicans argued that there is an intrinsic difference between the two kinds of graces, whereas Molina and the Jesuits argued that there was no intrinsic difference, for if there were, sufficient grace would not truly be sufficient.

The debate began in earnest in 1588, at the publication of the treatise of Luis de Molina, *The Harmony of Free Will with Divine Gifts, Divine Foreknowledge, Providence, Predestination, and Reprobation*. The debate was taken to Pope Clement VIII, who began a series of remarkable hearings on the subject, which is generally known as the controversy *De auxiliis* (which refers to the gratuitous aids of divine grace). The Pope appointed a commission to examine Molina's book. This commission recommended that Molina's book be censored. Clement VIII thought that the decision was too hasty and so he decided to extend the commission and to personally be present at the lengthy debates. Between 1602 and 1605 he was present at the 68 sessions, each of which lasted several hours! At Clement VIII's death, the debate was still inconclusive, and his successor Paul V continued it, and was present at 17 more sessions of the commission of Cardinals. He finally brought it to a still inconclusive close, after a total of 85 congregations had been held in the presence of the two Popes. After consulting with St. Francis de Sales, he decreed that neither position was +condemned; both sides were permitted to continue to teach their respective positions; neither party could refer to the other as heretical; and a final judgment was reserved to the Holy See (which in fact has never been given). Paul V mandated that "in treating of this question, neither side may condemn the position opposite to his own or charge it with any censure. Even more he desires that they abstain from using harsh epithets that betray animus towards one another."³

Position of Báñez

According to the position of Báñez, only efficacious grace infallibly moves the soul to consent to grace by "physically⁴ premoving" or "predetermining" the will to that consent. Hence this system is generally referred to as "physical premotion." Báñez maintained his position in order to clearly defend (a) the absolute sovereignty of God as First Mover in both the natural and supernatural order, (b) to defend the infallible knowledge of God with respect to all free actions in human history, and (c) to defend the infallible efficacy and total gratuitousness of God's eternal decree of predestination.

Although this position seems very hard to reconcile with the true freedom of the will, Báñez and his followers continued to defend free will (against the Protestants and

Jansenists), by saying that God's omnipotence is such that He not only predetermines the acts of all creatures, but He also determines their mode (necessary or free) such that the actions of rational creatures are truly free and contingent, in that free choice occurs after a free deliberation.

Problems with the Position of Báñez

There are four principal problems with Báñez's solution, which prompted the opposing Jesuit position. The first and most obvious problem is that this position seems to annihilate free will, in the sense of a true self-determination of the rational creature. According to St. Thomas, the rational creature is distinguished from all others by his capacity to act through himself by truly determining himself through deliberated choices. This self-determination is made possible because God moves the will to desire the end in general (happiness), and on the basis of this natural desire for the end, the will moves itself, after deliberation, to desire particular means for the sake of the end. The same occurs in the supernatural order, in that the operative grace of God awakens a first desire for salvation, on the basis of which the will consents to particular means to achieve salvation. However, in the system of Báñez, this self-determination of the will would seem to be rendered superfluous by the physical premotion that he postulates, which predetermines the will not only to desire the end (natural or supernatural), but also infallibly to desire *particular means*.

The second problem is that this solution seems excessively close to the Calvinist and Jansenist positions, which were solemnly condemned by the Church. St. Robert Bellarmine, when questioned by Pope Clement VIII, said: "This opinion does not seem to save free will, nor can it be distinguished from the formulae used by the modern heretics." Nevertheless, he prudently added: "I do not, however, dare to condemn it absolutely, as I know it is defended by great men."⁵

The third problem is that this position, by so stressing the sovereignty of God, seems to completely do away with the true sufficiency of merely sufficient grace. Báñez and his followers continue to hold that God gives sufficient grace to all men. Nevertheless, if God does not elect to give efficacious grace to a person, they hold that it is metaphysically impossible for him to consent to the merely sufficient grace. In what sense, then, is such grace truly sufficient?

Fourth, it cannot be understood how, in such a system, God truly wills the salvation of all men, which nevertheless

³ DS 1997.

⁴ "Physically" here is used in opposition to "moral" impulses of interior illumination, attraction, persuasion, etc., which move the will without predetermining it. It thus refers to an ontological determination in the will—a real quality or action—caused directly by God.

⁵ Xavier-Marie Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1913), 143-47, quoted in John Hardon, *History and Theology of Grace* (Ann Arbor, MI: Sapientia Press, 2002), 266. See also Bellarmine, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, bk. 1, ch. 12, in *Opera omnia* (Naples, 1872), 4:291: "This opinion seems to me to be either completely the same as the error of Calvin and the Lutherans, or very close to it. . . . This opinion destroys sufficient grace and at the same time takes away free will."

is a revealed truth. St. Paul, in 1 Tim 2:4, says that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” For if sufficient grace is not truly sufficient for salvation, then how can we say that God wills the salvation of all men, since efficacious grace is not given to all?

Furthermore, the Banezian position, like that of Calvin, seems to be incompatible with various Scriptural texts that speak of our capacity to resist grace. For example, in Rev 3:20, Jesus says: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I myself conquered.”

Jesus stands at the door of our soul and knocks through operative graces, by which He touches our intellect, giving it a light to see something, and He also touches our will, exciting it to desire salvation. He does the knocking independently of our opening the door. That is, His knocking is a prevenient grace that is prior to our response. However, the purpose of the knocking is to elicit a response on our part. That response is to open the door to allow the Lord to enter. We do this by consenting to the action of the prevenient grace, and following through with it in a free act by which we enter into the process of conversion to which the Lord calls.

In other words, the operative grace represented by the Lord’s knocking is intended to set in motion a free consent on the part of the recipient, represented by the opening of the door. This consent may or not follow. If it does not follow, it is because man resists the action of grace, and fails to initiate an action inspired by grace. If man does open the door, it is because he does not resist the action of grace, and, through the power of the prevenient grace, initiates some salvific action leading to or involving conversion, such as prayer, an act of faith, or an act of contrition. In this case, God supports that salvific action by His cooperative grace.

Why is it that when the Lord knocks on the door, sometimes it is opened and sometimes it fails to be opened? The Calvinist response would be that it will only be opened if God gives irresistible grace to open the door to Him. The Banezian response is practically the same. The door will only be opened if God gives an intrinsically efficacious grace to open the door.

But if one can only open the door if God gives an efficacious grace to do so, why does He knock on some hearts but fail to give them the grace to open the door? How can He complain that some people do not open the door of their heart if the capacity to open that door depends solely on God giving or withholding a particular gift, which would be efficacious grace?

A much simpler explanation of this passage would be to hold that the knocking represents operative grace, which

is efficacious in itself to touch the mind and the heart, but which is not efficacious of itself alone to produce the further effect of interior consent and conversion. Interior consent and conversion requires, in addition to the prevenient grace of the Lord’s knocking, an interior *cooperation* with that grace by which man begins a process of self-movement towards the supernatural end, which movement will be supported by cooperative grace. Man is free to give this interior cooperation or to withhold it by resisting the movement suggested by the operative grace received.

Similar considerations can be made with regard to the revelation of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque concerning the Sacred Heart. Jesus complained to her about the cold response He received from those on whom He lavished His love:

I feel this more than all that I suffered during My Passion. If only they would make Me some return for My Love, I should think but little of all I have done for them and would wish, were it possible, to suffer still more. But the sole return they make for all My eagerness to do them good is to reject Me and treat Me with coldness. Do you at least console Me by supplying for their ingratitude, as far as you are able.

Jesus complains that those on whom He lavishes grace make but scant return on the grace. But if this depends exclusively on God giving intrinsically efficacious grace, how can He complain? Clearly He complains because the effect of conversion also depends on man’s free cooperation, which can be given or withheld. This implies that grace of conversion (cooperative grace) is not intrinsically efficacious.

St. Thomas explains this by saying that the work of salvation in adults requires two causes: God and the free creature.⁶ God is never deficient in His part, but the free creature can freely defect from God’s plan. Thus God’s antecedent will is not always realized.

The Banezian solution would also seem to make impossible St. Thomas’ explanation of why intercession for others is not always efficacious. He says this is because of an obstacle—hardness of heart—in the person for whom we pray. It would make impossible to understand why Mary does not intercede efficaciously for every person. Clearly Mary intercedes for every person, for we are all her children. That intercession wins operative graces for all men, but some men obstinately resist those graces to the end.

Finally, the most grave problem concerns God’s relationship with sin. If not all adults are given a true possibility of conversion, how is God not responsible for the sins which they will inevitably commit in the absence of efficacious grace?

6 See St. Thomas, *Quodlibet* 11, q. 3.

Solution of Molina and the Jesuit School

In order to avoid all these problems, Molina and the other Jesuit authors (Lessius, Bellarmine, Suárez, etc.) attempted to give a different solution to the problem of efficacious grace and its harmony with free will.

First of all, they held that sufficient grace is truly sufficient of itself, such that the soul could truly cooperate with it so as to consent unto conversion. Thus efficacious grace cannot be intrinsically different in kind, but becomes efficacious precisely through the free consent of the will that does not resist that grace, even though it theoretically could have. Thus they held that efficacious grace is not intrinsically irresistible, even though it is not resisted in fact.

Secondly, the Jesuit authors sought to preserve the sovereignty of God and the infallibility of His providential plan through stressing God's eternal knowledge of the free choices of rational creatures in all the conditions in which they God's providence could place them. This all-penetrating knowledge of God enables Him to make an eternal providential plan that is infallible and yet takes into account the truly free acts of men (and angels).

Through this all-penetrating knowledge, God prepares graces for all men to bring them to salvation. Nevertheless, He knows that some of these graces, although truly sufficient, will in fact be resisted. Similarly He knows that other graces will in fact not be resisted, although they could be since the creature is truly free. Thus God prepares a series of sufficient graces for every person, eternally knowing the efficacy or inefficacy of each grace due to the condition of the creature's freedom.

The predestination of the elect is preserved in this system, precisely through God's eternal preparation of a series of congruous graces for the elect which God foreknows will not be resisted at the decisive moments of their lives. In the same way, God eternally foreknows the fate of the reprobate, but does not *cause their reprobation* (as in Calvinism), which is entirely caused by their free resistance to the series of truly sufficient graces that God had gratuitously prepared for them.

Thus God's sovereignty is maintained through His foreknowledge and preparation of congruous graces that will in fact not be resisted. Man's free will is maintained because the difference between merely sufficient and efficacious graces truly depends on the cooperation of man's free will. Thus the Jesuit solution seems both to do justice to man's free cooperation, and the priority of God's plan of Providence.

It is undeniable that the Jesuit position was very fruitful on the spiritual and pastoral plane, for its emphasis on both God's perfect plan of Providence, and the necessity of human cooperation. The pastoral and spiritual richness of the Catholic Counter-Reformation was due in no small part to the contribution of the Jesuit school of spirituality.

The Jesuit position, although it was fully worked out a generation after the death of St. Ignatius, nevertheless seems inspired by the defense of freedom that St. Ignatius put in his celebrated *Spiritual Exercises*, in the Appendix on "Thinking with the Church," in which he writes:

We should not make it a habit to speak much of predestination. If somehow at times it comes to be spoken of, it must be done in such a way that the people are not led into error. They are sometimes misled, so they say, "Whether I shall be saved nor lost, has already been determined, and this cannot be changed whether my actions are good or bad." So they become indolent and neglect works that are conducive to the salvation or spiritual progress of their souls.

Likewise we ought not to speak of grace at such length and with such emphasis that the poison of doing away with liberty is engendered.

Hence, as far as possible with the help of God, one may speak of faith and grace that the Divine Majesty may be praised. But let it not be done in such a way, above all in times which are as dangerous as ours, that works and free will suffer harm, or that they are considered of no value.⁷

First Mover Objection

Dominicans pose various fundamental objections to the Molinist position.

First, they ask how man can move himself to the acts of conversion if God does not efficaciously move him to those acts.⁸ It would seem to make man the *first mover* of his own salvation. Hence the charge of Pelagianism is leveled against it. Calvin would make a similar objection!

Response: The key to answering this question is to investigate how God moves the human will as its first mover. St. Thomas beautifully shows both how God is the first mover of all the acts of the will, and yet how the will freely moves itself and thus determines itself. God is the first mover of every act of the will by moving the will into act with regard to the natural desire for the universal good. This movement of God is active and foundational in every other act of the will, for whatever is willed, is willed for the sake of the universal good. This includes even sins, for no one would act at all, even sinfully, if one did not first will the universal good, to which the will is moved by God.

Every movement of the will acts only in virtue of the logically prior divine actuation of the natural desire for the universal good. This holds both for the natural and the supernatural order. However, in the supernatural order God is first mover in a twofold sense, moving it both naturally to will the natural end and supernaturally to desire the supernatural end. He does this through operative grace, by

⁷ *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1951), para. 376-69, pp. 160-61.

⁸ For this reason, Banez insists that God has to "pre-move" every human act and choice.

which He touches man's intellect and will, exciting them with some desire for salvation.

The will can move itself freely to choose particular goods because it is first sufficiently activated by God's first movement by which the will is moved to actually desire the universal good, on the natural or supernatural order. The universal good has all particular goods in potency within it, and reason is sufficient to determine the ordering of particular goods to the universal good. Thus the actual willing of the universal good plus the deliberation of reason are sufficient in themselves to move the will from potency to act with regard to particular goods. God is still the first mover of this self-determination by which the will chooses particular means. However, He is not first mover of this self-determination in the sense of predetermining the will. Rather, by moving the will to desire the universal good, he moves the will in such a way that He does not predetermine the particular free choice.

In addition to safeguarding the primacy of God's action as first mover and maintaining a clear explanation of free will, this solution also clearly shows that God is not the cause of sin in any way. The solution of Banez, however, only maintains the primacy of God's action, but fails to clearly maintain the other two aspects: free will and God's non-responsibility for sin.

This explanation also clearly shows the importance of habits in human life, because the movement of the First Cause is received according to the disposition of the recipient. This means that the habits of virtue and vice as well as the disposition of the will during the act of deliberation will determine what particular means to happiness will be chosen by the will. In this way the action of the first cause is received by all, but this impulse to the universal good causes different choices according to the disposition of each one.

Principle of Predilection Objection

Second objection. How does one man cooperate with grace and another man resist grace, if they both are given equal graces? Luis de Molina had written:

It may happen that two persons receive in an equal degree the interior grace of vocation; one of them of his own free will is converted, and the other remains an infidel. It may even happen that one who receives a far greater convenient grace when called, of his own free will is not converted, and another, who receives a far less grace, is converted.⁹

Garrigou-Lagrange thinks that this answer of Molina contradicts a principle that he calls the principle of predilection, according to which nothing would be better than another if God did not will it to be better. St. Thomas writes: "Since God's love is the cause of goodness in things, no one thing would be better than another, if God

did not will greater good for one than for another."¹⁰ From this Garrigou-Lagrange infers:

This principle of predilection, as we shall see, presupposes that the divine decrees concerning our future salutary acts are intrinsically and infallibly efficacious. Otherwise the case might arise in which of two persons who are loved and helped to the same extent by God and who are placed in the same circumstances, one would correspond with the grace received and the other would not. Thus without having been loved and helped more by God, one would prove to be better than the other. . . . This is what, in opposition to St. Thomas, Molina maintained.¹¹

To this objection I would reply that God's gift of grace is always the first cause of every supernaturally good act. Thus nothing can be supernaturally good without God first giving the grace for that act. The creature can never make itself better than God's gift to it. However, the creature can make itself worse than God's gift to it. We do this precisely by resisting grace. Since the creature is created from nothing, it has the power to cause nothingness by itself. We do this by resisting grace. The creature cannot cause supernatural being in Himself independently of God's action. However, the creature can block the effect of those graces by resisting their impulse. Thus if two people receive the same grace, one can make himself *worse* than the other freely, by resisting that grace.

On the Concern about Boasting

Protestants accuse the Catholic position (and particularly the Molinist position) of giving rise to boasting, for our cooperation would seem to be something that we could boast about. If we have done better than the next person on account of our free cooperation, then it would seem that we could boast.

The response is that every good that we do is principally from God who gives us the capacity to cooperate with Him. Luke gives the response: We are simply useless servants who have done what we were given to do.

The Molinist position also allows one to practice fraternal humility, as St. Thomas describes, by regarding God's gifts in one's neighbor, and one's own failure to correspond to God's gifts in oneself. This would not be possible in the Calvinist (or Bañezian) system, for it would not be possible to fail to correspond to grace.

However, the contrary position—that of Calvin (or Bāñez)—would seem to give rise to another kind of boasting—the elect have been specially favored. Thus it could seem that one could boast interiorly about one's election.

Whereas on the Molinist and Jesuit position, there could be no boasting because we should think that if others were given the same graces that we were given, they would

¹⁰ St. Thomas, *ST I*, q. 20, a. 3.

¹¹ Garrigou-Lagrange, *Predestination* (Rockford, IL: TAN Books, 1998), 36.

⁹ *Concordia*, disp. 12, p. 51.

have corresponded better. Likewise, we should always think that we ourselves did not correspond to God's gifts as we should have, but have been at least somewhat negligent, which is all the more distressing in proportion to the abundance and value of the gifts received. This is the attitude of St. Francis Assisi, St. Teresa of Avila, and all the saints. This response would be impossible in the Calvinist or Bañezian system, in which everything depends exclusively on God's gift of efficacious and irresistible grace. For if grace is intrinsically irresistible, how could one ever justly accuse oneself of negligence in corresponding to God's gifts?¹² I think that every humble person can see how absurd that would be!

However, there is still worse spiritual consequence. In the Calvinist (and Bañezian?) system, the sinner could accuse God for not giving him the indispensable gift of irresistible grace. In other words, this position gives rise not only to boasting in the "just," but would give rise to complaining and despair in those less favored. Worse still, both the love and the justice of God are obscured as the price, as it were, of maintaining His sovereignty.

Two Models of God's Providence

It would seem that God can make an infallible providential plan in two ways. The simplest way would be by predetermining events by moving them with intrinsically efficacious movements. However, in that case, I don't see how such causes would be truly free. For St. Thomas explains that God wills some events to occur contingently or freely, and He does this by supplying them with *contingent proximate causes*. However, if God moves things by intrinsically efficacious movements (physical promotion), I don't see how such proximate causes could be classified as contingent. And if the proximate cause is not contingent, then the act would not be contingent. Such a mode of executing a providential plan would not seem allow for true creaturely self-determination. The impression is given that such a plan treats free creatures like puppets, by predetermining them and giving them divine movements (proximate causes?) which they cannot in fact resist.

A second way for God to execute an infallible providential plan while conserving true creaturely contingency or freedom would be by way of perfect foreknowledge of what free creatures would in fact freely choose if God were to place them in such and such conditions. God knows what graces will be freely resisted and which will not be freely resisted. Thus he supplies a series of internal and external

graces for each free creature. Through His foreknowledge (middle knowledge), He knows that these will produce an effect of salvation that he wills in some free creatures, and, on the other hand, fail to produce it in other free creatures, which He wills to permit. He also foreknows that of the many graces that He gives to each person, some will be resisted and others will be accepted.

St. Thomas speaks in this way in a text explaining the infallibility of God's providential plan (predestination):

Furthermore, it is clear that the certainty of providence is safeguarded by the wisdom of the divine dispensation, without prejudice to the contingency of things. Even the providence exercised by man can enable him so to bolster up a cause which can fail to produce an effect that, in some cases, the effect will inevitably follow. We find that a physician acts thus in exercising his healing art, as also does the vine-dresser who employs the proper remedy against barrenness in his vines. Much more, then, does the wisdom of the divine economy bring it about that, although contingent causes left to themselves can fail to produce an effect, the effect will inevitably follow when certain supplementary measures are employed; nor does this do away with the contingency of the effect. Evidently, therefore, contingency in things does not exclude the certainty of divine providence.¹³

This text implies that God would have to know what someone would do if He gives such and such aids of grace (spoken of here as "supplementary measures"), in order for His providential plan to be infallible. This knowledge (spoken of by theologians as middle knowledge) is part of the infinity of God's omniscience. Thus even though we remain free to resist God's grace, God still has an infallible plan which takes into account our free resistance and cooperation.

¹² See St. Robert Bellarmine in *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, bk. 1, ch. 11, in *Opera omnia* (Naples, 1872), 4:290: "The third problem [with the thesis denying sufficient grace which can be resisted] is that no one . . . could properly accuse themselves of not cooperating with the grace of God as much as they could and should have. . . . However, certainly all the saints frequently accuse themselves of negligence and sloth, and they confess with sighs that they have not cooperated with grace as they should."

¹³ *Comp. Theol.*, ch. 140.