

TESTAMENT OF HIS EMINENCE,
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EX-MASTER GENERAL OF THE ORDER
OF PREACHERS

His Eminence, having returned from the Solemn Consistory where he received the red hat from His Holiness Pope John XXIII, addressed the Provincials and other Fathers of high rank gathered in assembly to show him their respect and esteem. The following is a translation of the speech delivered in Italian and reported in Latin in the ANALECTA of the Order. (Cf. ANALECTA, Vol. 35, April-June, 1962, p. 485.)

Now that I have very recently resigned as Master General of the Order, since the Supreme Pontiff wishes me to devote myself more completely to the work of the Holy See, I wish to proffer a few words, as my testament to the brethren of the Order, whose Master General I have been and whose most devoted son I remain.

Many considerations worthy of mention come to mind, yet I shall elaborate on one which I believe to be of prime concern. Most of all, I strongly urge fidelity to St. Thomas and his doctrine, which was always necessary, always the crowning glory of the Order, and which is now needed more than ever.

Perhaps someone may wish to know the reason behind this statement of mine. The answer I give is as follows: at the present, many false doctrines have ensnared the minds of men, and these doctrines offer themselves as false solutions to the vexing problems of our day. For this reason it is necessary to be faithful to the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor, so that the Order may fulfill its mission to the Church.

Perhaps someone will say: St. Thomas is not the only Doctor of the Church. There is no doubt about this statement. There are many masters besides Aquinas, whose genius and brilliance is manifest in their contributions to the fields of Sacred Scripture, church history, the works of the Fathers, the histories of errors and heresies and so forth. But there is one thing in sacred theology in which St. Thomas stands alone, and this occurs

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when with all the depth and perfection of his metaphysical attainments, he presents to us the understanding, as far as it may be given to the human mind, of the content of divine revelation and of the doctrine of the Church. The Christian mind seeks the understanding of the divine message given us through the Church, *fides quaerens intellectum*, and it is this need which the Angelic Doctor, among all the theologians, most perfectly satisfies.

Without any doubt, we must study every scientific contribution which bears on sacred theology. We must even study errors in faith, in the doctrine of morals, in social and political thought, in fact in every branch that bears on sacred science. But all must be studied in the light of the doctrine of St. Thomas. It is in this way that we will achieve holiness, maintain the noble tradition of the Order, be of assistance to the Church, and win many souls.