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Active Life and Contemplative Life: A Study Of The Concepts From Plato To The Present

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Edited and Foreword by George E. Ganse, S.J.

Editor's Foreword

This study is being published as one intended frankly and precisely to serve as a basis for further discussion and research. It is a monograph which presents a problem and its tentative solution. In its original form it was submitted by Sister Mary Elizabeth Mason, O. S. B. , as the last requirement for her degree of Master of Arts in Latin, with the title: *Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa: their Meaning in the Works of Pope Saint Gregory the Great*. However, investigation of this subject soon necessitated a study of the constantly changing concepts evoked by these two terms in writers earlier than Gregory from

Plato onward, and in authors after Gregory to our own day. Hence, the present title is more truly descriptive of the contents.

The central problem of the study, briefly stated, is this. Even in scholarly modern reference books authors reveal widespread discrepancy and even confusion in the use of the terms "active life" and "contemplative life." This confusion among the scholars naturally reappears in the opinions of many educated Catholics. They tend almost to equate active life with religious life in an apostolic order, and contemplative life with religious life in a cloistered order; and thus they seem to imply that neither active nor contemplative life pertains to the laity. Often they think that their opinion is based upon St. Thomas' treatment of the two lives in the *Summa Theologiae* (II-II, 179-182), because they have heard or read his statement that "the contemplative life is simply more excellent than the active" (*Ibid.*, 182, 1). This study, however, presents indications (gained from exchange of correspondence) that they are inadvertently reading the confused modern meanings back into the terms of St. Thomas and his sources, especially his immediate source, Pope St. Gregory the Great. Sister Elizabeth comes to grips with this problem by making a historical study of the evolution of the concepts which the ancient Christian writers expressed by the terms *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. Thus it is a step toward understanding how the modern discrepancy of terminology arose, and toward finding an antidote for the confusion which it engenders. The slowly changing meaning of the two terms is traced in Plato, Aristotle, Philo, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Augustine, and Gregory. Then follows a study of the use which St. Thomas made of Gregory's concepts and terminology, with some passing treatment of the gradual departure from both Gregory and Thomas in subsequent centuries.

The study presents the following documented but tentative solution of its problem. In Gregory, the terms "active life" and "contemplative life" do not refer primarily to exterior or observable manners of living, such as those of apostolic religious in contrast to the cloistered, or of public officials in comparison with scholars. Rather, in their basic and original Christian meanings they designate successive but interacting stages of growth in the interior life of an individual Christian. The active life is the early stage when, in his struggle against vices, the individual is exercising chiefly the moral virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance), and performing the exterior works which spring from them. It comprises the stages which in later centuries were named the "purgative way of the beginners" and "the illuminative way of the advancing." The contemplative life is the higher stage when the seeker of perfection is exercising principally the theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity), especially charity, and practicing the works which spring from them. Thus the contemplative life is what was later named "the unitive way of the perfect" or highly developed Christians. This basic meaning of the two lives in Christian tradition has been overlooked by modern authors of great importance.

In general, the farther removed in time writers were from the intellectual atmosphere of Alexandria and Neo-Platonism, the less were they aware of the original basic meaning of the two lives as successive but interacting stages of growth in the interior life of an individual. Rather, from the time of Augustine until the present, writers and readers alike shifted their attention more and more away from the two lives as states or orientations of soul and toward the exterior or observable manners of living into which the states of soul naturally issue: engagement in affairs, or retirement for contemplation, or some mixture of both. In St. Thomas Aquinas the basis of dividing an individual's interior life into active and contemplative shifted from that bequeathed by the Alexandrians (stages of growth) to an Aristotelian one (the respective ends of the practical and speculative intellects) and the dominant inclination (*studium*) of an individual toward either of these ends.

Sister Elizabeth's study has clearly set up the problem and taken substantial steps toward its solution. However, it also reveals the desirability of much further work, including ramifications into many areas of ascetical and mystical theology. This work of perfecting can be accomplished better and faster through discussion by many persons than by one working alone. It will be a benefit for scholarship if the present study stimulates someone to work through the entire Gregorian corpus to establish fully and systematically all the shades of meaning which St. Gregory expressed by the still oscillating terms *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. A systematic study of the further changes from his time to the present would be a further help.

To facilitate such cooperative discussion is the reason why the present writer, after counsel from others who kindly read Sister Elizabeth's study in its original form, has urged her to publish it in its present form: that of a monograph which will attract attention to the problem and facilitate discussion and research about it. Although a Doctor's dissertation is expected actually to make a contribution to knowledge, it is sufficient for a Master's thesis to show possession of the skills required to make such a contribution. Even if Sister Elizabeth's study does not yet have the final perfection which would be expected in a doctoral dissertation, it has gone beyond most Masters' theses. Her desire would be to have abundant leisure in a well-stocked library in order to pursue her topic further. But she is now the busy principal of a high school. If and when she has an opportunity for re-search at some future date, she will be able to accomplish more if others have meanwhile proffered their comments and discoveries.

Both she and the present writer feel profound gratitude to the following persons who kindly read the work and encouraged us to make it available for the discussion of others: the Rev. Bernard J. Cooke, S.J., and the Rev. Robert G. Gassert, S.J., of the Department of Theology, Marquette University; the Rev. Roland F. Behrendt, O.S.B., of the Department of Modern Languages, St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota, and Chairman (1957-1959) of the Section of Language and Literature of the American Benedictine Academy; the Rev. Paulin Sleeker, O.S.B., also of St. John's University; the Rev. Gerard L. Ellspermann, O.S.B., of the Department of Latin, St. Meinrad's Seminary, St. Meinrad, Indiana; the Rev. Michael J. Marx, O.S.B., of the Department of Dogmatic Theology, St. John's University; and the Rev. Leo A. Arnoult, O.P., Professor of Moral Theology in the School of Sacred Theology, St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, who made penetrating and helpful comments on the chapter about St. Thomas.

All these gave much constructive criticism. In the work of revising the manuscript for the press, which circumstances brought to me as the director of the thesis, I have gratefully incorporated into the text as many as possible of their suggestions. Leads which they furnished also brought some further thoughts of my own which I included. Examples are these: in Chapter III, some remarks about Origen, and in Chapter V, pp. 60-62, the distinction (implicit in Augustine's treatment) between the moral or theological virtues and the exterior or observable actions which respectively spring from them; also, the application of that distinction in Chapters V and VI, and to the norms and counsels for choosing a vocation which are given in the concluding Chapter VII; and extensive revisions of Chapter VI on St. Thomas. All these changes were submitted to Sister Elizabeth who revised them, approved them, and made them her own. Her thesis in its original form is available in the Library of Marquette University. It seems wise to mention several avenues which promise much fruit in further investigations. The Rev. Roland F. Behrendt, O.S.B., has called attention to a probable relationship between (a) *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* as these terms were understood in St. Gregory's day and (b) the *conversatio morum* as one of the three Benedictine vows according to Chapter lviii of the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. By the time of Paul the Deacon in the late eighth century this term had become, through the evolution of Latin

or possibly an error of copy-ists, *conversio morum*, which has often been translated "conversion of life." This, if accepted, would be a new and quite different meaning, and one for which no certain passages can be found in monastic writings of the earlier patristic era. *Conversatio* means, as in various chapters of the Holy Rule (for example Chapter lxxiii), the entire "monastic manner of living" which leads *ad celsitudinem perfectionis*. This would seem to entail the novice's firm proposal to try to progress through both the stages of spiritual growth which St. Gregory called active and contemplative life. Abbot Ildefons Herwegen has already pointed out (1) stages which St. Benedict's Holy Rule indicates for such a progression.

The Rev. Michael J. Marx, O.S.B., has rightly pointed out that the basic meanings of "active" and "contemplative life" treated in Sister Elizabeth's study have important and encouraging implications which will be helpful in developing the theology of the spiritual life for the laity, for the diocesan clergy, and for religious in the apostolic orders which are so common in the modern Church. Lastly the present writer sees a possible implication of importance for Jesuit spirituality. Today, many Jesuit writers are rightly bestowing much study upon the phrase by which Father Jerome Nadal, S.J., described his esteemed companion, St. Ignatius of Loyola: *contemplativus in actione*. This inspiring phrase can become still more significant if we learn with greater precision what Father Nadal meant by his two terms, *contemplativus* and *actio*.

George E. Ganss, S.J.
Chairman, Department of Classics Marquette University
February 2, 1960

Author's Preface

The writer is most grateful to her Prioress and the other Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Priory, Bismarck, North Dakota, for the opportunity of graduate study at Marquette University. She also wishes to thank the Rev. George E. Ganss, S. J., her thesis director, for suggesting the topic, helping her in its development, and finally, editing it for publication. She is grateful, too, to the other members of the thesis committee, the Rev. Richard E. Arnold, S. J., and the Rev. Claude H. Heithaus, S.J.

She deeply appreciates the kindness of the Benedictines of St. Meinrad's Archabbey and of Assumption Abbey, and of the Dominicans of River Forest, Ill., who graciously lent materials from their libraries. A number of friends and acquaintances were of help because of their interest in the topic and their willingness to express themselves on it.

For every one of these, her prayer is: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the imparting of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." (2 Cor. 13, 13.)

Sister Mary Elizabeth Mason, O.S.B. Annunciation Priory
Bismarck, North Dakota
December 25, 1958

Chapter 1: Introduction

A Statement of the Problem

For centuries men in their love for classifying have divided their fellows according as these lived an active life or a contemplative one. In our modern times, when the average educated Catholic hears the

term "active life" (*vita activa*), he thinks, as some experience has shown, of the social or observable manner of living by religious men or women such as Maryknoll Sisters, devoting much of their day to apostolic activity in teaching, nursing, and social work. When he hears the term "contemplative life" (*vita contemplativa*), he thinks of the social manner of living of cloistered religious such as Carmelites and Trappistines, wherein the whole day is given as far as possible to prayer or spiritual reading.

This use of the ancient terms to classify religious orders or institutes according to the chief occupations of their members did not exist in the time of Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604); and it was only beginning to appear in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

It is well known that there has been evolution in the exterior or observable forms of religious life -- for example, from the consecrated virgins living within their families, to the hermits, to the cenobites, to those in apostolic orders. In this evolution the law of strict enclosure for religious women dates only from the Constitution "Periculoso" of Boniface VIII in 1298. Hence, if Catholics having such comparatively modern concepts read the works of Gregory, who uses the classic terms in a different sense, there is a danger. Without any suspicion of error the modern readers may read their meanings into St. Gregory's terms, and consequently fail to grasp his meaning accurately. They may easily do the same when they read the treatises (1) *De Vita Contemplativa* and *De Vita Activa* of St. Thomas Aquinas,

"Active order," then, is merely a theoretical term and not a reality, according to Van Aken. But we find a conflicting opinion elsewhere. The 1955 National Catholic Almanac, for instance, states:

The various religious groups or families have particular aims of their own which divide them into contemplative, active, and mixed societies. The contemplative are those which devote themselves to union with God by prayer and penance in a life of solitude and retirement; the active, those which expend their energy in serving mankind according to the corporal works of mercy. If their service is mainly in accordance with the spiritual works of mercy, requiring contemplation for its attainment, they are called mixed. (6)

As to the relationship existing among the three --if there are three rather than two --we may next turn to *The Catholic Concise Encyclopedia*, which is quite definite about one form of life, although it has no entry for either of the others.

Contemplative life, an austere religious life adapted to foster contemplation as in a contemplative order. In the religious life it is the highest form, for not only does it encourage the members to seek union with God through love, but by seclusion and freedom from the worldly spirit, the objective worship of God is perfected. (7)

In this treatment, contemplative life and life in a contemplative order seem to be identified.

In at least partial agreement with the above explanation is another from an earlier and more authoritative work, published under the aegis of *The Catholic Encyclopedia* as *The New Catholic Dictionary*. (8) The following description of what it terms "contemplative life" seems to suggest that it is the only opposite of active life, disregarding the mixed altogether; yet its definition of the contemplative's "twofold ministry" might well fit the Almanac's definition of "mixed society." Explaining that the contemplative is "a way of living especially adapted to induce and facilitate contemplation" by union with God in loving worship and love of neighbor shown chiefly "by means of prayer for suffering humanity and by penance as an atonement for sinners," the Dictionary article continues:

Those who practise this twofold ministry have greater merit, theoretically, than those in active orders, but the individual vocation in all cases must be considered. Undoubtedly the contemplative life presupposes a remarkable vocation. (9)

If it becomes increasingly difficult to decide what authorities mean as to the nature and the number of kinds of religious life, the task is even more complex when we come to another reference work, this one from Britain. Donald Attwater, editor of *A Catholic Dictionary*, names three sorts of life, but cites different characteristics from those found in the *American Franciscans' Almanac*. Moreover, he is unlike the two last-quoted sources as to the relative excellence of these ways of life.

Active Orders. These religious orders and congregations of men and women whose daily labours are the works of active charity, whether spiritual (preaching, hearing confessions, giving retreats, the cure of souls generally) or temporal (the care of the sick, schooling children, bringing up orphans ...). (10)

Contemplative Order. A religious order whose members are engaged in the objective worship of God to such a degree as to exclude the external works of the active life ... and all else that could be a hindrance to divine contemplation What exactly constitutes the contemplative life is a matter of some dispute, but even in the above strict sense certain monasteries of Benedictine monks and most of Benedictine nuns, must be called contemplative (11)

Mixed Life. The highest form of the Spiritual life in which the active life is superadded to the contemplative. (12)

Among them, these definitions do not merely treat of active, contemplative, and mixed religious institutes; they employ virtually as synonyms, the terms "active," "contemplative," and "mixed" life.

As a consequence, the above definitions and distinctions may bewilder the reader more than ever. For they clearly reveal the existence of inconsistent and confusing terminology in this field. Furthermore, Attwater states a point which has been merely suggested thus far: "The phrase 'active life' is generally used in antithesis to 'contemplative life.'" (13) At this, one may have reason to wonder how the pair together constitute the mixed life --how, of two things held "generally in antithesis," one can be "superadded" to the other.

A French authority, A. Bride, writing on "Divisions of Religious" in *Le Dictionnaire de theologie catholique*, (14) accepts the threefold classification of religious institutes as existent. He observes that among recently founded orders, the mixed are most numerous; moreover, he states that some which were once contemplative have become mixed, as their members, who were at first laymonks, came to be ordained and to take up the care of souls. His article takes cognizance of military orders now obsolete, yet, oddly enough, omits any classification of women religious. Bride emphatically disapproves of attempts to oppose active and contemplative life:

... This division into contemplative and active orders must not lead to the belief that there is watertight separation between these two types of life; as St. Thomas notes, contemplative life must lead to action directly or indirectly; and action, if it wants to avoid sterility, must depend upon contemplation. (15)

Additional emphasis on this point of reconciling the apparent opposites is given elsewhere in the same work: "It is not rare to meet in certain books of spirituality a parallel established between contemplation and action, and certain rules concerning the proportions in which there must be union of these two seemingly opposite things." (16)

Another and more recent French reference work, *Catholicisme*, briefly treats the history of the terms "active" and "contemplative" life in Christian usage, and indicates that the writings of Gregory the Great are of value, in that his exposition of the nature and relationship of the two lives was profoundly

influential in the Western Church for centuries. (17) St. Gregory, to be sure, was not herein an originator. His position is well explained by Abbot Cuthbert Butler, whose *Western Mysticism* has sometimes been called a classic dealing with "The Teaching of Saints Augustine, Gregory and Bernard on Contemplation and the Contemplative Life" (the book's subtitle).

Of St. Gregory, Abbot Butler writes:

... Along with St. Augustine and pseudo-Dionysius, he was St. Thomas' principal authority over the range of subjects comprised under contemplation and contemplative life

It will be found that in his teaching ... St. Gregory stands where we should expect the Roman to stand, midway between St. Augustine and St. Bernard --less intellectual than St. Augustine, less emotional than St. Bernard. But if he falls short of the elevation of the former and of the unctiousness of the latter, he has a value all his own for his Roman actuality and practicality. (18)

Later, in regard to the Saint's presentation of the two lives, Abbot Butler states: " His indebtedness to St. Augustine is much more apparent here; ... but his teaching ... is characterized by a practicality and good sense ... that makes it a truly valuable guide for the shaping of life." (19) Moreover, Gregory could draw not only upon his own understanding of the spiritual life, of which he had been a zealous practitioner for years, but also on his grace of state as teacher of monks, and later, of the Church Universal. In one of his Homilies on Ezechiel (20) we find the first formal definition of the two lives, active and contemplative. This has ever since been accepted as a standard one. (21) Since it is rather lengthy, it is not given here, but will be found below on page 59.

Investigation of the sources reveals that Pope Gregory I not only crystallized Christian thought regarding active and contemplative life for his own and succeeding ages, but also profoundly influenced what the Angelic Doctor wrote on this matter. Hence it is apparent that Gregory the Great is one key figure in any study of the two lives and their relationship. He rightly merits a place of special honor in this study.

A Note on the Senses of "Contemplative"

"Contemplative," as was stated on page 1, is today often applied to the social or observable way of living characteristic of certain cloistered religious. Besides being used thus to describe a form or state of life based on evangelical counsels in an institute secluded from the world's activity, the word "contemplative" is employed to designate a person in that state. It may also be used of an attitude of mind (22) and a form of prayer.(23)

Now, while recognizing that the person, the social or observable manner of life, the attitude of mind, and the prayer are not stringently isolated --since union with God is their unique end --this work will try especially to find the ancient meaning of the term *vita contemplativa*, which it possessed in St. Gregory's day. At that time there did not exist such sharply distinct forms of religious living (social modes of life) as the apostolic and the cloistered institutes known today, nor even as the monastic and mendicant orders known to St. Thomas six centuries after St. Gregory.

Consequently, while the Angelic Doctor might find it expedient to distinguish groups of religious according to their social manner of life and their secondary ends, (24) this is not true of Gregory. He was not concerned with any special divisions of social forms of the religious state labeled "contemplative," such as today's cloistered communities. (25)

While prescinding, therefore, from extensive research into comparatively recent concepts concerning the contemplative state and the nature of contemplative prayer, we are here examining that life known as contemplative in its constituent elements and its relationship to the active life, as St. Gregory the Great understood these terms. We begin with the etymology of both, to be followed by study of the connotations they acquired in writings prior to those of the saintly Pope.

Chapter 2: The Terms in Pre-Christian Times

Etymology and Evolving Definitions of the Adjectives *Contemplativus* and *Activus*

The Greek adjective *θεωρητικός* which came to be *contemplativus* or *peculativus* in Latin, derives from the Greek *θεωρία*, a beholding. An idea of vision, seeing, is suggested in both languages, and most scholars agree that the Greek is a composite of two roots, *θέα* and *φορ(όραω)*, which imply not only sight but also observing and surveying. (1)

The idea of connecting the word with *θεός* (god), was advanced by the Peripatetics, but this cannot be defended on etymological grounds because of the dialectal variations in which the word is found; nevertheless, we have evidence that *θεωρός* (one who views) and its composites early acquired such religious connotations. (2) This is the easier to understand because we know that sages like Anaxagoras, who devoted himself to scientific observation and philosophical contemplation, might be regarded as considering *θεῖα* (divine and celestial things), since material concepts of the divine were common. (3) Moreover, *θεωρός* in the sense of one who went to observe a religious rite, came to be considered as approaching divinity and rejoicing with a god. (4)

It is surely no coincidence that just as philosophers were originally interested in physics, and only later in metaphysics, when their quest for ultimate causes had led them to study concepts rather than matter, so too *θεωρία* underwent a similar metamorphosis. "Thus, in the beginning *θεωρία* designates a model of sociability; in the end, a sort of recluse." (5) This last meaning the word was to acquire thanks to Plato, of whom Festugiere says, "It is certain that our idea of contemplative life dates only from the *Dialoḡ*, which are consequently a starting point." (6) Yet Plato's work was in another sense a culmination, for by his time *θεωρία* had evolved from meaning the sage's view of the wonders of nature and of man's city; it had become the seer's loving vision of Divine, Invisible Beauty. (7)

The Greek equivalent for *activus* is *πρακτικός* which means "fit for doing, concerned with action, practical." In the writings of Aristotle there is occasional use of this term in contrast to *θεωρητικός* (8) earlier writers, including Plato, of course, were familiar with both terms. It would be a mistake, however, to hold that the two ideas were really opposed. Knowledge, learning, and every sort of skill were generally for the sake of action; in the writings of Homer, Pindar, and Euripides we see heroes courageous in act, not dreamy theorists.

Among the Greeks there was prevalent the idea that in the measure men used their intellectual gifts for proper conduct, they were truly wise and could profit others by good counsel (such as Nestor gave) or by cunning stratagems (such as Ulysses devised). Moreover, the vulgar Greek attitude toward a mere thinker was one of suspicious contempt, as anyone who has read Aristophanes' *Clouds* is well aware. Scholars may not agree as to which learned man is there satirized, but none doubts that the comedy reveals how the majority of the Greek people saw in the *σοφός* a figure of mockery as well as a traitor to his country's gods.

The Contributions of Plato and Aristotle

It was, as we have seen above, Plato (d. 347 B.C.) who gave to βίος θεωρητικός its place of honor, showing how it could be united to the life of the good citizen which was the ideal of all Greeks. For them the truly best life was not termed πρακτικός but πολιτικός, for the most admirable men were those bringing glory to their city by athletic prowess, military victory, and skillful administration. One can best judge how much Plato's emphasis on the value of a life de-voted to contemplation went counter to his contemporaries' thought by seeing the vehemence with which he upholds it in *The Republic*. It would seem natural to find him anticipating numerous objections to his suggestions regarding women soldiers, communal wives, and state nurseries; but instead, he expected the greatest wave of disap-proval to be launched against the Philosopher King. (9)

Gifted thinker that he was, Plato saw more clearly than his pre-decessors and most other men since, that contemplation is knowledge of the Good Itself, the Supreme Being, rather than of anything less; and he understood that this Object of knowledge must be grasped by some sort of spiritual contact immediately uniting the knower and the Known. The means of achieving this must be a habitual mode of existence, a life properly so called, which alone could lead to such θεωρία. The encounters of human intellect and Pure Being would be by dint of long asceticism and mental discipline. Only in seclusion and at the mature age of fifty or fifty-five, could such concentration occur and be perfected in loving union with the Supreme Good; but Plato was too much a Greek to end here. (10)

The central problem of *The Republic* is to fit the philosopher into the city. The reason is that in Plato's time a truly 'just' life still cannot be lived apart from the city. Individual and social justice are closely connected. Pure contemplation is not currently acceptable. The contemplative returns to the cave for the salvation of his brothers. And the purpose of the Academy is precisely to form such contemplatives as are capable of serving, and preserving, the city. Perhaps it was not without some regret that, having tasted its joys, Plato renounced pure θεωρία... [Nevertheless] for Plato the contemplative life, properly understood, remains always that life most useful to the city. (11)

It will be needful to return to Plato in order to summarize his legacy to that greatest of Christian Platonists, or at least Neo-Platonists, St. Augustine; but another matter that merits mention concerns his classification of men according to their way of life. It is the opinion of Burnet (12) that two related doctrines commonly attributed to Plato are really of much earlier origin. One of these is the doctrine of the tripartite soul; (13) the other is the classic division of three lives-Theoretic (truth-seekers who merely observe), Practical (action-seekers who compete for honors), and Apolastic (pleasure-seekers who trade for gain). (14)

Some scholars, of whom Burnet himself is most prominent, have held that these beliefs, antedating Plato by at least two centuries, have Pythagoras as their source.(15) This sage, it would seem, used an analogy dear to Greek hearts, explaining:

There are three kinds of men, just as there are three classes of strangers who come to the Olympic Games. The lowest consists of those who come to buy and sell, and next above them are those who come to compete. Best of all are those who come simply to look on (θεωρεῖν)
Men may be classified accordingly as lovers of wisdom (φιλόσοφοι), lovers of honor (φιλότιμοι), and lovers of gain (φιλοκερδεῖς). (16)

Despite this ascription of the three-lives doctrine to the Pythagoreans - chiefly on the basis of a rather late text of Iamblichus (d.c. 330 A.D.)-Plato's position is not seriously challenged.(17) Whatever its origin, he was surely familiar with the threefold classification which was adopted and somewhat modified by

Aristotle (18) and countless others. But to Plato belongs pre-eminently the honor of having defined contemplation as the highest activity of the soul. (19) Pythagoras, as Abbot Butler explains, is little more than a myth; and "in the matter of contemplative life we do not touch terra firma until we come to Plato." (20) The reason for this, succinctly given by Festugiere, lies in the meaning of one word: "θεωρία does not appear in the Pre-Socratics in the sense of contemplation of θεῖα." (21)

Unquestionably this last was the key principle which Christian thinkers adopted from their Athenian predecessor. It is beyond the scope of this study, of course, to show in detail Plato's marvelous exposition of contemplation as that perfect knowledge attained in the synoptic vision of Being which embraces all the hierarchy of beings -a vision including Being itself, its identity with the Good, and its ravishing Beauty. Nevertheless, these must at least be mentioned because of their importance for Augustine.

Since he, too, had experienced the Being Who is the One, the Good, the True, and the Beautiful-had in rare instances touched Being itself-the Saint took over these doctrines from the pagan philosopher. We may therefore expect to find in the works of Augustine an insistence on the eminent dignity of contemplation, yet recognition of the contemplative's duty to renounce his individual delight in order to help his brothers work for justice in the City. (22) Like Plato, Augustine will affirm that this action is fruitful in the measure that it is the action of one contemplatively wise.

Chapter 3: The Christian Writers of Alexandria on Active and Contemplative Life

Many centuries intervene between Plato and St. Augustine, centuries marked by that central event of history which was to unite man with his Maker more intimately than any human mind could have conceived: the Incarnation. The mysticism of the early Christians was naturally much influenced by contemporary philosophical schools, and by none more than Plato's, particularly as modified by Philo the Jew and the Neo-Platonists, Plotinus and Porphyry.

The article by Rene Arnou, S.J., on "Contemplation" in *Le Dictionnaire de Spiritualite*, explains in an excellent historical summary that in all its forms Platonism remained ambiguous because it some-times viewed the soul's union with God as its end, yet elsewhere apparently subordinated this to the acquisition of knowledge and establishment of civic justice. Confusion was further increased by the existence of Stoics and Peripatetics, who discussed man's end in terms of θεωρία and πράξις while differing as to the degree and modes of the two lives. In time, the meanings attached to the terms were as varied as the personalities of the writers would warrant one to expect. (1)

The effort to harmonize Greek philosophy and Hebrew theology was carried to its farthest extent in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria. Elements of Greek speculation were selected which agreed best with the Jewish religion, and the Hebrew Scriptures were allegorically interpreted to make them harmonize with Greek thought. Philo (c. 25B.C. -c. 40A.D.) is the chief exponent of this Jewish-Hellenistic philosophy. Especially because of his influence on the Christian writers of Alexandria, his ethics is important for this study.

He maintains a sharp dualism between the body and soul, and insists that man should liberate himself from the sensual. Virtue is the only true good, and apathy of the passions is the best way to attain to virtue. Man's chief task, says Philo, is to achieve the greatest possible likeness to God. Public life is discouraged, since even at its best it is distracting, while knowledge is good only in so far as it aids the

interior life of the soul. There are, according to Philo, stages in this interior development, for above conceptual knowledge of God there is a heavenly wisdom or ineffable and immediate intuition of the Godhead. This passive state of ecstasy is the highest stage of the soul's life on earth. (2)

Philo: the Active and Contemplative Lives as Stages

In Philo the βίος πρακτικός and βίος θεωρητικός of the Greeks re-appear, but with an important difference. They are regarded as successive stages in religious learning or development. Men in general are divided into two groups: the godless and the devout. Of the latter, those who are struggling upward in order to know God through His powers are mere servants; they are in the lower or active life (βίος πρακτικός) of faith, hope, discipline, and effort. Those who have emerged into the full light where they know God in Himself are fully developed men; they are in the higher or contemplative life (βίος θεωρητικός) of wisdom, vision, and peace. (3) Thus the moral or spiri-tual life has two stages: that of the babes which is named asceticism (ἄσκησις); and that of the perfect men which is called wisdom (σοφία). (4)

The Christian Writers

Because of Plato's importance, an essential work of the early Christian writers on contemplation was a "baptism" of Platonic doctrine aimed at reconciling his thought with the writings of Saints John and Paul, particularly as to the nature of the soul's union with God in prayer. At first, the speculative Christian authors in the East gave most of their attention to contemplation, and devoted little discussion to the mutual relationship of active life and contemplative life. Furthermore, while groping for definitiveness, they made few innovations or important distinctions in their use of these terms.

Contemplative life was, of course, held to be the summit of the spiritual state. "Contemplatives," says Origen, "are in the house of God, while those who lead an active life are only in the vestibule." (5) In general, we may say, Eastern writers urge faithful souls to aim at contemplation, yet they consider it a privilege reserved to a learned elite or a special group within the Church. According to Clement, it is the fruit of secret revelation not available to all.

In orthodox works there is recognition of the important role of grace; nevertheless, emphasis is placed on the operation of the human intellect under divine action. (6) Entirely representative in this are Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 - 220) and Origen (c. 185 - 253-255). Like their less gifted contemporaries, both have a marked intellectualism - a trait which had already been evident to St. Paul in the gnostic tendencies of certain Christian communities of his day, notably Ephesus and Colossae. (7)

Clement of Alexandria

In The Christian Platonists of Alexandria, Dr. Charles Bigg explains that Clement accepts Philo's concept of βίος πρακτικός and βίος θεωρητικός as respectively the lower life and the higher life. (8)

Clement proclaims that the life of the ordinary believer, that is to say of the great body of the Church, is a lower life. Its marks are Faith, Fear, and Hope - unquestioning obedience to the letter of Authority, a selfish motive, a morality of abstinence from wrong. It is a sphere of discipline, of repression, of painful effort. Its crown is Holiness, the negative virtue of Self-Control. It is the state of salvation, but not of peace or joy. Above it stands the Higher Life, that of the true Gnostic; the life of Love, Righteousness, Knowledge, of serene and reasonable convictions, of glad and spontaneous moral activity, in which the soul of man is so closely

wedded to the Spirit of his Lord that there is no more recalcitrance, and freedom is merged in the beata necessitas non peccandi

As against the Gnostic, ... Clement protests that the two lives are not divided by any law of nature. The one must and should grow out of the other, the one is incomplete without the other. All men, all women, are called, as he says, to 'philosophize,' to strive upwards to the highest ideal. (Emphasis supplied.) (9)

Later in the same passage Bigg shows the relationship in terms of the theological virtues:

In the Higher Life Faith gives way to Knowledge, Fear and Hope to Love, while Holiness is merged with Righteousness. (10)

As for the characteristics of the true Gnostic's life, "contemplation is the Gnostic's chief delight; the next is active benevolence; the third is instruction, the work of making others like himself." (11) This order is one we shall see contradicted later; for these Alexandrian writers, admirable pioneers that they were, had by no means said the last word on the nature or excellence of the contemplative life. (12) Nevertheless, their authority is weighty.

One claim of Clement merits attention here. Besides being venerated for "his eminent piety, learning, and talent, ... in his *Stromata* he professes to reproduce the traditional doctrines which he had received from the disciples of the Apostles." (13) He did not despise philosophy either, for his treatises on Christianity draw heavily on natural wisdom. Hence arose much of the polemical value of many of his and his school's writings against the Gnostics.

Origen

Another third-century giant of the Alexandrian school is Clement's pupil, Origen. It will be useful for the purposes of this study to indicate how, thanks to facts made known by modern scholars' re-search, his eminence is still growing. Origen has long been recognized as the founder of scientific Scripture study and as "the father of systematic Christian theology." But now a number of authorities are attributing to him another significant achievement. Increasingly he is being hailed as the founder of the theology of the spiritual life. (14) His work in this regard, long overlooked by scholars, has been the object of much investigation since 1931, when Walter Volker published at Tübingen his book, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes*. (15)

As might be expected of one who lived in Philo's Alexandria, Origen saw in Scripture, besides the literal sense on which dogmatic theology could be based, a spiritual sense (also called anagogical, allegorical, mystical, or metaphorical sense). It was this latter that he wished all spiritually minded men to scrutinize for help in developing their Christian life to its full potentialities. "This idea that Scripture speaks in symbolical terms of the spiritual life," Danlelou well says, "was to play a very prominent part in the mystical writings of later ages." (16)

Stages of Growth in Origen's Works

There can be little doubt that Origen's theology of the spiritual life was popularly accepted and remained influential in later centuries because he based it so much upon the Bible. Not only does he appear to have been the first to describe the main stages of development in the soul's journey back to God, (17) but he did this by drawing on Scripture - even though allegorically interpreted. We find his

exposition especially in his homilies on Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers, and in his commentary on the Canticle of Canticles.

The first stage, Origen tells us, is that in which a man is converted. (18) He conceives the desire to restore in himself, by struggling against his lower nature, the image (εἰκὼν) of God according to which he has been created. He finds this image of God especially in the Savior, the Logos. In the next stage he struggles through his period of purgation, guided in the midst of his trials by occasional flashes of light. If he is to continue his battle against sin and his passions, he will need both action (typified by Moses) and contemplation (typified by Aaron). In the third stage he still uses a moderate practice of penance. In a fourth stage occurs the ascent of the watch-tower (ascensio speculae) from which he gets at least a dim idea of the spiritual gifts in store for him. He learns, too, how to discern good spirits from bad. In a fifth stage he is fortified by consolations against spiritual trials and he begins to enter the mystical region.

Several more stages bring him to the gnosis, a transforming knowledge of the things of God. It detaches him from transitory earthly things and admits him to the intelligible world. By now he has reached great heights; but he is still vexed by temptations. And although he already has many virtues, he must go out and fight -- not merely within his own soul, but also exteriorly by his teaching and preaching. It is clear, therefore, that in Origen's view, mere contemplation is not the goal of an earnest Christian in this life; rather, God's light and strength are given to enable him to undertake the battles of the apostolate.

The seeker for perfection is now ready to pass through the final stages of the contemplative life, and even to experience ecstasy (ἔκστασις). Whether this ἔκστασις means for Origen a truly mystical experience or merely intense astonishment at the great mysteries of Christianity is still an unsettled controversy. In either case, however, it remains true that Origen's mystical theology tends somewhat more toward intellectual contemplation than toward an experimental and loving awareness of God's presence such as Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335- c. 395) afterward described. Origen gives the most satisfying exposition of his ideas concerning the zenith of the spiritual life in his Commentary: on the Song of Songs.

This Commentary is in fact our most important source for learning Origen's ideas on all that pertains to the spiritual life. It had, moreover, a profound influence on the spiritual writers of subsequent centuries. In this work Origen, building upon ideas which Philo had taken from the Greeks, works out a theory about the three stages of development in the spiritual life. Danielou has condensed (19) one passage which is of great importance for our study:

...To distinguish between these three sciences [of the Greeks], namely ethics, physics, and theory [or inspection or contemplation] , Solomon treated of them in three separate books, each in keeping with the degree of knowledge it was concerned with. First, in the Book of Proverbs, he taught morals and set out rules for living a good life. Then he put the whole of physics into Ecclesiastes. The aim of physics is to bring out the causes of things and show what things really are, and thus to make it clear that men should forsake all this emptiness and hasten on to what is lasting and eternal. It teaches that everything we see is frail and fleeting. When anyone in pursuit of wisdom comes to realize that, he will have nothing but scorn and disdain for those things. He will, so to say, renounce the whole world and turn to those invisible, eternal things the Song of Songs teaches us about in figurative terms, with images taken from love-making. Thus, when the soul has been purified morally and has attained some proficiency in searching into the things of nature, she is fit to pass on to the things that form the object of

contemplation and mysticism; her love is pure and spiritual and will raise her to the contemplation of the Godhead.

Danielou aptly comments (20) that this passage

. . . is of the greatest importance for the history of the theology of the spiritual life .. What it amounts to is, in fact, an account of the three ways, the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive The essential operation of the illuminative way is the formation of a just estimate of things: the soul must come to realize the nothingness of temporal things and learn to understand that the spiritual world is real. What she has to do, then, is to rid herself of her illusions about the world and get a firm grasp of reality. Once this conviction is securely established in her, the way is open for her to enter on the contemplation of the things of God. (Emphasis supplied.)

Martha and Mary as Types of the Two Lives

In the work of Origen there are two points notable by reason of their possible influence on St. Augustine as well as their presence in the subsequent history of the two terms, *activa* and *contemplativa*. First is the fact that, according to Abbot Chapman, Origen, who treated frequently of the two lives, deserves credit for having been "possibly the first to compare Martha and Mary as their types." (21) Secondly, Origen used another Gospel incident, the Transfiguration, to illustrate his concept of the relationship between action and contemplation. His words are amazingly clear:

Peter was eager that they should continue in the vision he was privileged to see, but that was not to be. By leaving the vision and going down to serve His brethren once more, Our Lord demonstrated to him that the active life must always continue with the contemplative, that the βίος θεωρητικός and βίος πρακτικός are inseparable. (22)

While thus studying the Christian writers of Alexandria in this pre-Augustinian period, we often notice with pleasure that in them there is little of our modern notion that active life and contemplative life are in mutual opposition. Rather, they hold that each complements the other in a higher synthesis: a union of the two lives which is possible because the one God of Truth is Source of all good. This attitude of synthesis is perhaps best exemplified in the concise formulae of one of Origen's fourth-century disciples, Evagrius (d. 399). Two of his *Sententiae*, a work dear to medieval monks, read thus:

Fides initium caritatis, finis autem caritatis scientia Dei.

Cognitor (γνωστικός) et actuosus (πρακτικός) occurrerunt invicem; medius utrorumque stat Dominus. (23)

Origen's Influence

Origen's influence on those who later wrote about the spiritual life has been immense. Time after time in succeeding centuries, when a mystic has tried to describe his experiential awareness of God through graces of infused contemplation, he has done so in terms and language and imagery inherited from Origen -- often through Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335 - c. 395), "the true founder of mystical theology." (24) For example, he may liken his union with God to a spiritual marriage, or apply to himself the story of Martha and Mary, or attempt to portray in words a state of ecstasy or rapture. In all these parallels he is but following the trail blazed by Origen.

To speak more concretely about matters important to this study, Origen's influence affected Gregory of Nyssa, and, directly or indirectly, Evagrius of Ponticus (d. 393). Through this latter, Origen's thought

reached the monks of Egypt. Evagrius also handed it on to Cassian (c. 360 - 435), whose writings on the spiritual life had wide-spread vogue in the West for centuries. (25) In Cassian and a few other writers before βίος πρακτικός and βίος θεωρητικός become respectively in Latin *vita actualis* and *vita theoretica* or *contemplativa*. (26) St. Isidore of Seville (c. 560 - 636) has a chapter on the two lives. (27) His doctrine on them is similar to Gregory's, but not so extensive or profound. In PL 83, 6908 he uses the terms *actualis vita* and *activa vita* as synonyms. The majority of authors since then, however, have preferred to use *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

Chapter 4: St. Augustine on Active and Contemplative Life

Into a world in which Christianity was a recognized and influential religion, though one frequently needing to ward off the onslaughts of heretics more vicious than the old pagans had been, came the man who was to be ranked among the greatest thinkers and lovers of God ever known: Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430) teacher of the Church Universal. It seems almost foolhardy to attempt here to set forth his doctrine on contemplation and its relationship to the active life; yet a brief background sketch is essential for any presentation in its proper light of St. Gregory's work.

Other aspects of St. Augustine's thought have had more attention, at least until recent years, but no one can fairly question his importance and originality here. In the words of Abbot Butler, "No previous writer had discoursed with such fullness and insight as Augustine on the nature of the two lives and the claims of each of them on the individual." (1) And lest anyone think that he was merely the heir of preceding ages, synthesizing his predecessors' achievements, one of his learned sons writes:

Saint Augustine is not one of those servile minds that are contented to assimilate their masters' doctrine. He rethought all that he received, particularly concerning the union of the soul with God which he investigated with so much passionate ardor and observed with so much subtle insight. Thus he appropriated what he took from his predecessors. He so Christianized what he borrowed as to make it his; and often the question of the sources of his thought becomes a mere problem of history--and an interesting one—rather than an indispensable condition for correct understanding of his writings. This is true of contemplation. (2)

Augustine was peculiarly fitted to teach about contemplation because he had previously been a contemplative. In fact, as we learn from *Confessions* vii, 17, he had been privileged to commune intimately with God even before his baptism in 387 at the age of 33. In the humble outpouring of praise and repentance that we call his *Confessions*, the Saint admits that at the very time of their being written (probably in 397 and not later than 401) he was the recipient of manifest spiritual favors almost unbearable for their brevity and for their sweetness:

Sometimes, Thou dost introduce me to a very unusual inner experience, to an indescribable sweetness, which, if it reaches perfection in me, will be beyond my present knowledge. But, it will not happen in this life, for I fall back among these lower things, pulled down by troublous weights, and I am absorbed again in ordinary affairs. I am held fast and weep a great deal, but I am held quite firmly. So great is the burden of custom! Here, I am able to exist, but I do not want it; there, I wish to be, but I cannot; in regard to both, I am unhappy. (3)

The passage, it should be observed, is in line with other saints' insistence on the transiency of mystical graces in the present life.

In addition to such supernatural experiences as these, which penetrate his exposition of contemplative life with a unique note of conviction, Augustine had a naturally keen and well trained intellect, apt for

scholarly meditation on truth; hence, for him it was a relatively simple transition to exercise his gifts on the spiritual plane. That is, for him contemplation was chiefly a supernaturalized and loving cognition of the Supreme Being. Other writers, before him as well as after, might make a sharp distinction between philosophical contemplation and religious.

But for Augustine there could be no distinction - his intellectual perception of truth was religious, and his religious experience was intellectual. God as absolute Being, Good, Truth, Beauty, was the object not only of his intellectual vision, but at the same time of his religious emotion. Probably in a higher degree than any other saint or seer has he synthesized in his religious consciousness the two faculties of knowing and loving. So that his contemplative life was intellectual, and simultaneously religious, in a measure perhaps not achieved by any other. (4)

Before quoting further from Abbot Butler's *Western Mysticism*, it is only proper to credit him with the general outline of the analysis of Augustine's teaching on the two lives to be followed here. It consists of: 1) a definition of the two lives, together with examples from Scripture; 2) an exposition of the relative superiority of the contemplative life; 3) consideration of the possible presence of the lives alone or united in the individual soul; 4) Augustine's contrast between (a) the stages of the interior life of an individual and (b) the exterior or observable modes of his social living; and 5) the availability of contemplation for all. (5)

Definition of the Two Lives, with Biblical Examples

In the *City of God* we find St. Augustine's simplest definition of the two lives. It is helpful, though too brief to reveal the rich treasures he brought forth elsewhere in his works by varying his terms, emphasis, and points of reference, much as a jewel lover would handle gems of many facets to manifest beauties not visible at a glance. The merits of this particular definition lie in its distinctness and its use of the very words *contemplativa* and *activa*.

As the study of wisdom consists in action and contemplation, so that one part of it may be called active, and the other contemplative - the active part having reference to the conduct of life, that is, to the regulation of morals, and the contemplative part to the investigation into the causes of nature and into pure truth - Socrates is said to have excelled in the active part of that study, while Pythagoras gave more attention to its contemplative part, on which he brought to bear all the force of his great intellect. To Plato is given the praise of having perfected philosophy by combining both parts into one. He then divides it into three parts - the first moral, which is chiefly occupied with action; the second natural, of which the object is contemplation; and the third rational, which discriminates between the true and the false. And though this last is necessary both to action and contemplation, it is contemplation, nevertheless, which lays peculiar claim to the office of investigating the nature of truth. Thus this tripartite division is not contrary to that which made the study of wisdom consist in action and contemplation. (6)

The constant element in all of Augustine's discussion on contemplation is Wisdom, the Image of God: Wisdom, Second Person of the Trinity, lovingly intuited, and become the Exemplar for that restored creaturely likeness of Himself wrought by faith which is luminous with love - and which is true wisdom, *sapientia*. Like other living processes, progress toward wisdom is one of advancing levels, described by the Saint in several ways. Of these, the underlying similarity is that the earlier stages emphasize efforts

of the human will at purification and acquisition of moral virtue; the later ones are more manifestly due to the operation of the Holy Spirit, Giver of Gifts, Who is but allowing on earth some foretaste of that joy in loving vision which is the essence of heaven: "Haec enim nobis contemplatio promittitur actionum omnium finis atque perfectio gaudiorum . " (7)

To attain this contemplation, the soul must enter upon a life of asceticism in the literal meaning of that word: training. One of Augustine's contemporaries, Cassian, "divides spiritual knowledge into two branches: practical, which consists in the elimination of faults and acquiring of virtues; and theoretic, which consists in the contemplation of divine things." (8) Augustine would approve such states and agree with Cassian's statement: "In vain does one strive for the vision of God, who does not shun the stains of sin." (9) Save for the use of the terms "purgative," "illuminative," and "unitive," Augustine's teaching on stages of growth in the spiritual life is identical with what became classic in later writers. (10)

The fact that spiritual life is one harmonious whole, though it has stages which St. Augustine sometimes contrasts vividly, is perhaps best brought out by his using (like Origen) Biblical pairs - Lia and Rachel, Martha and Mary, and the apostles, Peter and John. Of the two Old Testament women he writes:

Two lives are held out to us in the Body of Christ - the one temporal, in which we labor, the other eternal, in which we shall contemplate the delights of God. . . . Even the names of the women teach us to understand that. For it is said that Lia is interpreted 'Toiling,' but Rachel 'The Beginning Beheld' or 'The Word by Which Is Seen the Beginning.' Therefore the action of human and mortal life, in which we live by faith, doing many laborious works, is Lia But the hope of the eternal contemplation of God, which has a sure and delightful understanding of the truth, is Rachel. (11)

It is a bit amusing, and quite typical of St. Augustine as a polemicist, that his explanation of the soul's union with God, which is typified by the two sisters wedded to Jacob, should have come about because he wished to defend the Patriarch against Faustus' charge of bigamy. That, however, is totally irrelevant to our interest in the Saint's exegesis. The above quoted words of Augustine are particularly significant because, as Butler points out:

The contemplative life spoken of in the foregoing passage is such a contemplative life as may be lived in this world. It is perhaps the most important single exposition of St. Augustine's theories on the relations between the Two Lives, and supplies a valuable summary of the chief points of doctrine that will be further illustrated from other of his writings. (12)

Moreover, Augustine here sets for the West the interpretation (already seen in Origen's work) which became traditional there: Lia as the representative of *vita activa* and Rachel of *vita contemplativa*. So general was the understanding of it that eight centuries later in his *Purgatorio*, Dante could envisage Lia saying:

Know thou, whoe'er dost seek to know my name,
That I am Leah, and fair hands I ply
To make myself a garland with the same;
I deck myself that in the mirror I
May joy to gaze; my sister Rachel, she
All day unceasing doth her mirror eye.
She those her beauteous eyes still longs to see,
As I with busy fingers to adorn;
Sight pleases her, and active working me. (13)

In such context, the poet knew, "sight" would be understood as *contemplatio*, and "active working" as *actio*.

If some passages in Augustine emphasize the similarities of the two lives, in others he will stress their distinctions. For example, he says:

The active life is signified by the Apostle Peter, the contemplative by John. The first is wholly carried out here until the end of this world, and there finds an end; the last is deferred, to be completed after the end of this world, but in the world to come it hath no end Let perfected action follow Me, informed by the example of My Passion: but let contemplation that has been begun, tarry till I come, to be perfected when I come. (14)

Quite closely related to the above is Augustine's depiction of the beloved evangelist in another work, *De Consensu Evangelistarum*, wherein he again shows that active labor is prelude to contemplative joys unending. This passage is remarkable for an illuminating change in his terminology. Instead of using the customary terms, *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, Augustine employs *virtus activa* and *virtus contemplativa*, of which he makes statements similar to those he ordinarily gives concerning active and contemplative life.

There are two virtues set before the human soul, the one active and the other contemplative. Through the former one makes progress, through the latter he attains his goal. By active virtue he labors to purify his heart for the vision of God; by contemplative virtue he is at rest beholding God. Therefore, the one consists in observing those precepts by which we must toil in this temporal life, while the other fills us with truths concerning that everlasting life to come.

Consequently, the active virtue is engaged in struggle, but the contemplative virtue enjoys repose. For active virtue consists in cleansing the soul from sins, while contemplative virtue abides in the light of those already purified. A second consequence is that in this mortal life the active virtue consists in the pursuit of a good manner of living, but the contemplative virtue consists especially in faith and, for a very few, in some partial vision of the unchangeable truth, seen through a mirror in an obscure manner (1 Cor. 13, 12). These two virtues are symbolically presented to our minds in the two wives of Jacob Lia indeed is interpreted 'the Toiling One,' but Rachel 'The Beginning Beheld.' Hence, we are enabled to have some grasp of the mystery. Three of the Evangelists gave major attention to the temporal deeds and words of the Lord, which are especially valuable for our moral formation in the present life. These Synoptics concerned themselves, then, with a study of virtue. John, however, narrated far fewer deeds of the Lord, yet with greater care and more detail he cited His statements, particularly those revealing the unity--of the Trinity and the happiness of eternal life. John thus focused his attention and preaching on the recommendation of contemplative virtue. (15)

In the revised edition of *La Contemplation Augustinienne* (1954, pp. 35-37), Cayre has an excellent analysis of this passage. Augustine here uses the word "virtue" to mean the Christian life itself, considered as the source of energy producing the interior development or perfection of the soul. "Active virtue" and "contemplative virtue" are the two profound forces which characterize the Christian life and direct it by turns.

Some lines in the text just quoted might give the impression that St. Augustine regarded *vita contemplativa* as the reward given only in eternity, and as something separate from *vita activa*, the temporal struggle to earn it; but numerous other passages, even more specific than the reference to hope as the "beginning of vision" typified by Rachel, clearly indicate his rejection of any such view.

Contemplative life begins on earth and is "completed after the end of this world," as Augustine wrote about Peter and John in the passage cited just above (on page 33). Always he would insist on the oneness of the vita, despite the differences between activa and contemplativa. As a matter of fact, there is no opposition between the two, since one evolves from the other; just as when we say that the oak tree is not the acorn but a more developed outgrowth thereof, we are not treating of two adversaries but are instead pointing up a vital, organic relationship.

The Relative Superiority of Contemplative Life

With the next Scriptural pair, Martha and Mary, another classical example from Augustine's forceful pen, we enter into the second phase of this discussion. Here even more explicitly than in the case of Peter and John, the Saint asserts the relative excellence of contemplation, so often indeed that the sisters at Bethany seem his favorite illustration. The exegesis of the better part (Luke 10, 42), found frequently in his sermons, became traditional in Western mysticism.

Martha chose a good part, but Mary the better She hath chosen to contemplate, to live by the word. (16)

In another sermon:

Martha's part is holy and great: yet Mary hath chosen the better, in that while her sister was solicitous and working and caring for many things, she was at leisure and sat still and listened. Mary's part will not be taken away from her, Martha's will - for the ministering to the saints will pass away; to whom will food be given, where none hungers? Mary's part does not pass away, for her delight was in justice and truth, and in this same will be her delight in eternity. What Mary chose waxes greater; for the delight of the human heart - of a faithful and holy human heart - in the light of truth and the affluence of wisdom, if it be sweet now, will then be sweeter far. (17)

And again:

In these two women, both pleasing to the Lord, two lives were figured:

the present and the future,
the laborious and the quiet,
the troublous and the happy,
the temporal and the eternal.

Both are praiseworthy; but the one is laborious, the other leisured. What Martha was doing, there we are; what Mary, that we hope for. While in this life, how much can we have of Mary's part? For even now we do somewhat of her work, when removed from businesses and laying aside our ordinary cares. Inasmuch as we do this, we are like to Mary. (18)

At other times Augustine speaks, not of the two sisters, but of the virtues they typify, scientia and sapientia. Abbot Butler summarizes the Saint's teaching on "wisdom's" relationship to "knowledge" as revealing the superiority of the contemplative to the active life; the idea is especially frequent in De Trinitate. The Abbot writes:

Action, whereby we use aright things temporal, is different from the contemplation of things eternal; and contemplation is assigned to 'wisdom, ' motion to 'knowledge' (De Trinitate xii, 22). Here action is taken as being the right ordering of the present life, in so far as it is concerned with transitory things. And so he goes on to explain that 'knowledge' has to do with abstaining from evil and striving after good, wherein our action is exercised (ibid., 21, 22). Thus it includes the practice of the moral virtues: also the exercising of works of mercy, both spiritual and corporal.

Contemplation, or 'wisdom,' is the intellectual cognition of things eternal (ibid., 25). In its wide sense it has to do with Platonic Ideas -- abstract ideas and universals; but pre-eminently it lies in the cognition and love of That which always is and unchangeably abides, viz. God (Enar. in Psalm. cxxxv, 8); for what among eternal things is so excellent as God, Whose nature alone is unchangeable (De Trinitate xii, 22)? (19)

The culmination for the soul, the rest for the hitherto restless heart of man, lies not in inactivity (*vita desidiosa*) but in peaceful pos-session of truth (*tranquillitas, otium*). It is eloquently described in one of the Saint's earliest works, *De Quantitate Animae*: "The going to God, that is, to the very contemplation of Truth, ... the striving to grasp intellectually those things which truly and supremely are, is the soul's highest act of seeing, than which there is none more perfect or better." (20) Of this Augustine tells us, "Tunc erit Alleluia in re," for which we are already rehearsing: "Modo nobis Alleluia canticum est viatoris." (21)

The Presence of the Two Lives Alone or Combined in the Individual

Thirdly, we come to the practical reconciliation of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* in the individual's own life. The possibility of this should be no surprise if we remember their organic and causal relationship: the active life (later called the purgative way of the beginners and the illuminative way of the advancing) consists chiefly in the exercise of the moral virtues and the exterior works into which they issue; and the contemplative life (later termed the unitive way of the perfect) chiefly exercises the theological virtues and issues into those exterior deeds which charity prompts. (22) We must also bear in mind the fact that the act of contemplation, as distinguished from the contemplative state of soul, is of transient duration in *hoc statu viae*.

The best evidence for their harmonious co-existence when considered as states of soul, is, once again, the example of Augustine's own life. He writes in the passage from the *Confessions* cited earlier:

It gives me joy to take refuge in this pleasure, in so far as I can take a rest from necessary duties.... I find no safe place for my soul, except in Thee, where my scattered parts are gathered together and no portion of me may depart from Thee. (23)

There remains, of course, a problem about balancing the amounts of activity and contemplation in one's external manner of living.

Augustine's Distinction between Stages of Interior Life and Observable Manners of Living: Busy, Leisurely, or Mixed

In numerous sermons and letters of counsel Augustine, an indefatigable toiler in Christ's vineyard himself, exhorted others to set aside virtuous study for apostolic labor. (24) In this vein he composed Chapter Two of the *Q!Y. of God*, Book xix. Unwary readers may easily consider the thought of this passage identical with his customary treatment of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. Close scrutiny, however, shows that Augustine uses quite dissimilar terminology: *genus vitae negotiosum* or *actuosum*, *genus otiosum*, and *genus ex utroque temperatum* or *compositum* or *modificatum*. His statement is:

Moreover, there is the case of those three modes of living, namely, the first of studious but not lazy leisure for the contemplation and investigation of the truth, the second busy in the management of human affairs, and the third one compounded of the other two. When it is asked which one of these it is best to choose, there is no controversy about the supreme good. Rather, the question is, which of these three makes it hard or easy for a man to reach the

supreme good, and to hold it fast. For this supreme good is that which, once a man has attained it, makes him continuously happy. But not every man is invariably happy in studious leisure, or in public activity, or in some mingling of these. (25) (Emphasis supplied.)

Clearly, the Saint is discussing here modes or *modi* of exterior or observable living (*vitae genera*) in which there is more or less busy-ness (*negotium*) or leisure (*otium*) for study. (26) Consequently, he is not dealing with his more usual concept of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, or of *virtus activa* and *virtus contemplativa*, considered as states of the soul in successive but interacting stages of spiritual progress.

If Augustine's terms *vita contemplativa* or *activa* (as used in the *City of God* viii, 4 and so implied in *Contra Faustum* xxii, 52) or his terms *virtus activa* or *virtus contemplativa* (in *De Consensu Evangelistarum* i, 8) are taken as synonyms for *vitae genus otiosum* or *negotiosum*, the above statements flatly contradict what Augustine writes elsewhere (see pages 29 to 32 above) regarding the nature of *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*. For there (27) he shows that he is involved in discussion of the "supreme good," and repeatedly explains that perfect contemplative life is that unique *summum bonum* which will eternally make a man happy. But here in the *City of God*, xix, 2, he states that asking which of these three kinds of life is best to choose does not entail controversy about the supreme good. Must we not therefore conclude that in the section of the *City of God* now under consideration he is discussing kinds of life (modes of living) in a sense different from his customary treatment regarding life in its active and contemplative stages?

A survey of his exegesis of Biblical models reveals that he ordinarily portrays the Christian's progress from an active life according to the moral virtues to one that is contemplative, wherein the theological virtues, especially charity, play a predominant role. In these advancing stages there is no break or division; rather, as Portalie says, "the ascent of our soul to God" (28) is in degrees of moral perfection culminating in the victory of "love of God unto contempt of self over concupiscence, which is love of self unto contempt for God." (29) It is this ultimate union of contemplative life, which Augustine exhorts the Mary in each of us to begin on earth, that will constitute heaven's bliss.

But in the *City of God*, xix, 1, 2, 3, and 19, Augustine is not dealing with the stages of growth in spiritual life, but with three modes of living, any one of which may be a means toward the continuous progress leading to perfection of the contemplative life. In the latter half of Chapter 19, apparently without explicit attention to what he had written elsewhere about the active and contemplative stages of life, Augustine discusses the proper disposition of time whereby one may provide for the neighbor's needs and one's own in order to have both hours of "busy-ness" and intervals of leisure. Doubtless his intention influenced his choice of words: *otioso* and *actioso* are the Latin which Dods' translation (unfortunate, as it seems to us, because it is misleading) renders as "contemplative" and "active" rather than "leisurely" and "busy."

As to these three modes of life, the contemplative, the active, and the composite, although, so long as a man's faith is preserved, he may choose any of them without detriment to his eternal interests, yet he must never overlook the claims of truth and duty. No man has a right to lead such a life of contemplation as to forget in his own case the service due to his neighbour; nor has any man a right to be immersed so in active life as to neglect the contemplation of God. The charm of leisure must not be indolent vacancy of mind, but the investigation or discovery of truth, that thus every man may make solid attainments without grudging that others do the

same. And, in active life, it is not the honours or power of this life we should covet, since all things under the sun are vanity, but we should aim at' using our position and influence, if these have been honourably attained, for the welfare of those who are under us Accordingly, no one is prohibited from the search after truth, for in this leisure may most laudably be spent And therefore this holy leisure is longed for by the love of truth; but it is the necessity of love to undertake requisite business. If no one imposes this burden upon us, we are free to sift and contemplate truth; but if it be laid upon us, we are necessitated for love's sake to undertake it. And yet not even in this case are we obliged wholly to relinquish the sweets of contemplation; for were these to be withdrawn, the burden might prove more than we could bear. (30)

Probably Augustine had no idea that later readers would be mis-led by his seeming departure from his earlier treatment of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*; yet it seems a number have been confused. While reading (or writing) about the active and contemplative lives

as stages of progress in a man's interior life, these readers seem to have treated the two lives as if they were a different, but somewhat re-lated, problem: that of finding the proper balance between action and contemplation, in a man's external activities or social manner of living.

Even a scholar as meticulous as Abbot Butler seems to overlook Augustine's basic meaning of the two lives, namely, successive stages of progress in interior life. Although Butler calls attention (31) to the changed terms in the passage just cited, he appears not to advert to the fact that the two lives described elsewhere by Augustine (for example, in the *City of God* viii, 4, in *Contra Faustum* xxii, 52, and in *De Consensu Evangelistarum* i, 8) are a quite distinct concept from that of the three modes of exterior living in the *City of God* xix, 1, 2, 3, and 19, and in *Contra Faustum* xxii, 56 and 57. The earlier passages focus attention on *vita* - the term which denotes, as Cayre points out, (32) "a state of soul" (*etat d'ame*). The state of soul is naturally accompanied by a habitual attitude of mind. The latter passages, concerning the way to combine occupations and leisure in a "mode or kind of life" - *vitae genus* called by the synonym *mos vi-vendi* in xix, 19 - do treat a different problem which concerns most of us; and the saintly author indicates some principles or norms by which an individual may be guided to find his own satisfactory solution of it.

In the pages of Augustine we may wish to find specific directions as to what he considers the best means of fostering progress in the moral virtues (*vita activa*) which culminate in Christian perfection (*vita contemplativa*) thanks to the increasing dominance of the theological virtues, particularly charity. Cayre (*Manual of Patrology* I, 701- 703) has listed many such means, found in widely scattered passages of Augustine. Examples are: actual grace; exercise of temperance, fortitude, justice, and prudence; combat against temptations; good works; prayer; and the study of Scripture. But it must be admitted that the Saint's talents do not lend themselves to listing in order precise details of this sort. Indeed, many would hold that this holy Doctor's chief contribution to practical asceticism is not in any of his books. Rather, it is the example of his own holy life: that of a man of contemplative prayer who was at the same time one of the ablest administrators of a diocese and one of the most astonishingly prolific writers the world has ever seen. Only because grace flooded his contemplative soul can we account for his activity in not one, but several fruitful careers. In the very living of it, then, St. Augustine proves that Mary's life is compatible with Martha's.

The Availability of Contemplation for All

We should perhaps be even more grateful to Augustine for what we learn from his insistence on the universality of Christian contemplation. Many passages in his writings might be quoted to show how literally he accepted the Gospel's "Venite ad Me omnes." He held it to be a divinely generous invitation to eternal union with Him who alone is the soul's delight.

Before quoting any example, it is well to point out that, as will be seen later in this paper, neither St. Gregory nor St. Thomas questions this view. Here Augustine expresses it with mingled humility and hope:

I now dare aver that we, if we steadfastly hold to the course that God commands us, and that we have undertaken to hold to, we shall come by the Power and Wisdom of God to that First Cause, or First Principle of all things; which when we have intellectually seen, we shall truly see the vanity of all things under the sun. (33)

It should be noted that this vision is for those who have diligently fulfilled the commandments, and so merited by their active life admission to Contemplative joys.

Nor are we to think that the faithful one is rewarded by some quite sudden miracle of vision. In the concluding pages of his study on Augustinian contemplation, Cayre writes: "St. Augustine better than any other has shown that this union of the active and the contemplative life is attainable thanks to the ever more marked predominance in the interior life of that profound knowledge of God which is, properly speaking, contemplation." (34) A gradual growth is characteristic of life; and as a living thing, once begun, can become more fully alive, so too with contemplation - to have begun is to be on the way to seeing Truth with ever more perceptive and loving wisdom.

Augustine, however, would have been quick to concede that some Christians, such as those living in the solitude of Egypt's hermitages, might more easily achieve the prayerful union which is heaven begun on earth. But he would have been equally quick to condemn selfish preference for peaceful leisure in prayer which is akin to indolence and is negligent of apostolic work; this we have seen already.

"The holy Doctor desires that contemplatives, too, devote themselves in charity and obedience to external good works, and become men of action without renouncing on this account their joy in God and truth," writes Cayre. (35) Only thus can the soul so unite its prayer-life and its prayer lived out in act that when it says "Thy kingdom come," it may mean this prayer both about itself (the kingdom of God within itself) and about the Church (the kingdom of God without). (36) The charity predominant in the contemplative life must motivate and inform the exercise of the moral virtues which characterize the active life.

Here, then, is a resume of St. Augustine's great synthesizing work; he shows that in God's plan for man, action and contemplation (conceived as two stages of the soul's interior life) are united; that the earthly life is a rehearsal for heaven's; that either leisure, or activities, or a combination of them (modes of living) may furnish the circumstances for our spiritual growth (advance in virtue to love's perfection); and that the truest mysticism can well be practical and motivate external good works. Surpassing others by the breadth of his vision and the lyrical exaltation of his language, Augustine has given the classic presentation of *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*. It remained for the men who came after him to explain its applications and express it in a more technical vocabulary: respective tasks for which Gregory the Great and Thomas Aquinas were eminently qualified.

Chapter 5: St. Gregory and Great on Active and Contemplative Life

To walk in the shadow of St. Augustine and not be completely overshadowed - that is what the first Pope Gregory achieved, the Gregory deservedly called "Great." He is a writer neglected in an age that wants even its magazines in digest form, preferring brevity in a writer to most other qualities. His conferences on just one book of the Bible, Job, take up four large volumes in their English translation. (1) Even serious Catholic readers are likely to neglect him, for much that he said had already been said, and with greater warmth and charm, by Augustine. Gregory neither was nor desired to be a scholar or a speculative theologian. Rather, he was a moralist, less intent upon erudite exposition of doctrine than upon exhorting his flock to lead devoutly Christian lives. Well acquainted as he was with Augustine's writings, Gregory contented himself with promulgating Augustine's thought in a somewhat popular and simplified form. It was a sound and satisfying system that was to remain the major theological influence of the early Middle Ages. (2)

Nevertheless, there are many points on which Augustine and Gregory do not overlap; and a practical mind like Gregory's, with its quiet but firm faith, can present us with teachings not found in a speculative genius like Augustine. The African is a mighty cascade, magnificent, dazzlingly beautiful; the Roman has a different kind of beauty, that of a peaceful river. Both offer the waters of life, the truth that frees, for their source is Divine Truth.

While defending the works of St. Gregory from being thought narrow or slavish imitations of Augustine and Cassian, the two writers who undoubtedly influenced him most, a French scholar, Dom Robert Gillet, asserts:

Gregory is then in fact an original writer If he scarcely appears so to moderns, it is because his great figure dominated all the Middle Ages, and the Gregorian themes deeply permeated all the spirituality of Western Christendom Unconsciously we live on his ideas and work, so that they no longer seem new to us. (3)

St. Gregory, who is credited by P. Godet in *Le Dictionnaire de theologie catholique*™ with having "inaugurated the Middle Ages, modern society, and Christian civilization," (4) was not only a holy monk; he was one of the Church's most gifted administrators and zealous apostles. We must recognize this in observing what he achieved in many fields. Gregory worked constructively to convert new nations, to increase the prestige and autonomy of the Church menaced by secular powers, and to augment the influence of Peter's successor as the Bishop of bishops but Servant of God's servants .. He also sought strenuously to insure the proper formation of priests and laymen for their respective responsibilities, to strengthen monastic observance, (5) and to maintain purity, propriety, and dignity of worship in the liturgy.

That he could accomplish all this so effectively is fair indication of his having been an instrument of grace; and that he could be so active without jeopardizing his union with God in prayer is another of those proofs furnished by countless saints that truly fruitful labor sanctifies the laborer because its source is in grace, not unaided nature. It is typical that this busy administrator was also a writer of numerous spiritual works, as is evident in Cayre's observation: "there is no doubt that of all the early authors, St. Gregory spoke most often of contemplation." (6)

Occasionally even Gregory's great modesty failed to conceal the fact that he had mystic experiences. Further evidence of this fact is found in his regretful sighs when episcopal burdens lessened his hours of peaceful prayer:

Mine unhappy soul, wounded with worldly business, doth now call to mind in what state it was, when I lived in mine Abbey, and how then it was superior to all earthly matters, far above all transitory and corruptible self, how it did usually think upon nothing but heavenly things; and though it was enclosed in mortal body, yet did it by contemplation pass far beyond earthly bounds, and penetrate to the very height of heaven. (7)

Divisions of the Topic

In this chapter on the Saint's treatment of the two lives we shall develop our topic according to the following divisions: 1) a survey of the sources of St. Gregory's teaching; 2) a summary presentation of his understanding of contemplation, and an analysis of his writing regarding the relationship between contemplation (*vita contemplativa*) and action (*vita activa*) in the life of the Christian. This last, based on the order found in Butler's *Western Mysticism*, comprises Gregory's treatment of: 3) the nature of the two lives; 4) the relative superiority of contemplative life; 5) the presence of the two lives in the individual Christian life; 6) the availability of *vita contemplativa* for all; and 7) a summary which sets forth the meanings Gregory attached to the terms *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

The Sources of Saint Gregory's Teaching on the Two Lives

The works of Pope Gregory I generally accepted as authentic are: his Letters (14 books); the *Morals* (37 books); *Pastoral Care*; *Dialogues* (4 books); and *Homilies on Ezechiel the Prophet* (2 books) and *Homilies on the Gospels* (2 books). We shall limit our discussion to these, since their presentation on the two lives is so adequate as to require no reference to those writings of dubious authorship included in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, 79. (8) Letters and Dialogues, valuable for data on many phases of life in the sixth century, are only incidentally relevant to this study; *Pastoral Care* contains a few important passages which confirm Gregory's principal exposition of the relationship between active and contemplative life. The chief sources, however, are found in *Morals* and *Homilies on Ezechiel*, which accordingly supply most of the texts analyzed here.

Ordinarily, Saint Gregory designates contemplative life by the expression *vita contemplativa*; we meet it especially in the *Homilies on Ezechiel*, for it occurs forty-four times in the twenty-two *Homilies*, whereas we see it only twenty times in the thirty-seven books of the *Morals on Job*. (9)

In his monastic solitude at St. Andrew's, Gregory had delved deep into Scripture and so acquired familiarity with the Book of Job. This he was later to reveal in his conferences to the monks of his household in Constantinople. The work was long and diligently reviewed whenever the saintly author could devote himself to this, his favorite task; its final retouching was made during his pontificate. (10) Known as the *Magna Moralia*, or *Expositio in Librum B. Job*, the book was actually an occasion for Gregory to show his readers how faith must manifest itself in works; and he did this in a commentary unlike the exegesis or literary analysis we should expect today. In this exegesis he shows himself a member of the school of Origen, as is clear from his own account of his method:

I shall often be found ... to put rather in the background the order of exposition, and to employ myself at greater length upon the wide field of contemplation and of moral instruction. But yet whosoever is speaking concerning God, must be careful to search out thoroughly whatsoever furnishes moral instruction to his hearers; and should account that to be the

right method of ordering his discourse, if, when opportunity for edification requires it, he turn aside for a useful purpose from what he had begun to speak of. . . .

But be it known that there are some parts, which we go through in a historical exposition, some we trace out in allegory upon an investigation of the typical meaning, some we open in the lessons of moral teaching alone, allegorically conveyed, while there are some few which, with more particular care, we search out in all these ways together, exploring them in a three-fold method. For first, we lay the historical foundations; next, by pursuing the typical sense, we erect a fabric of the mind to be a stronghold of faith; and moreover as the last step, by the grace of moral instruction, we, as it were, clothe the edifice with an overcast of colouring. (11)

In simple yet dignified style, which he humbly deprecated for its lack of elegance, (12) the Saint wrote this remarkably influential book. His Anglican biographer, Dudden, summarizes rather baldly its salient characteristics thus:

The *Magna Moralia*, or Exposition of the Book of Job, is a very remarkable work, and a veritable treasure-house of sixth-century theology and ethic Each paragraph of the book was to Gregory merely a peg on which to hang disquisitions on all manner of subjects - theological, philosophical, and moral. The poem was the running text of a series of sermons, many of them very much off the point. The form of the book disgusts the modern reader. It is not the style of the writing - the rudeness of which was perhaps exaggerated by Gregory in his dedication - so much as the endless allegorizing, the twisting of every word and phrase into a symbol of hidden truth, that is so inexpressibly wearisome. (13)

In assessing its importance, Dudden continues:

The *Magna Moralia* is a mine of theology, and the unambiguous matter-of-fact way in which the dogmas are dealt with commended it to many who were unable to follow the subtle reasonings of Augustine. Hence it soon became a standard authority, and throughout the Middle Ages there was perhaps no work on theology more generally esteemed or more diligently studied. (14)

On the whole, Catholic authors agree with Dudden. Dom Gillet, however, calls attention to the fact that a reader must beware of concluding that the *Morals* can be used without any reference to the Book of Job; quite the contrary is true for a meaningful grasp of the context. (15) And Abbot Butler, in contrast, holds the opposite to be true. Although his opinion on this point is perhaps extreme, Butler nevertheless argues the value of the book in its own right with characteristic insistence:

It would be a complete mistake to estimate the *Morals* as a commentary on Job, or the Homilies as an exposition of Ezechiel They should be read without any thought of Job or Ezechiel and without any attention to the constant allegorizing, as positive teaching over the whole range of religious duty and life. If read as the inmost thoughts on the deepest subjects of a singularly holy and lofty-minded man, their religious value and also their beauty will be appreciated. It has seemed to me that a coordinated exposition of the ascetic side of the *Morals*, that concerned with Christian life and religious effort, would give a luminous, exhilarating, and most practical contribution to Christian ascetic and spiritual literature of quite extraordinary value. (16)

Dom Gillet explains St. Gregory's stress on the two lives in the *Morals* as a result of the author's weaving together moral and dogma. In Gregory, as in the other theologians of Christian antiquity and even the early Middle Ages, there is a lack of systematization of their theological concepts. No one had yet thought of separating dogma from morals. Rather, as they were interpreting scriptural passages, their thought, relating at one time to dogma and at another to morals, came out as a harmonious whole. In consequence, Gregory's treatment of the role of grace in Christian life covers "all the manifestations of supernatural life: from the state of beginners whose life consists of a habitual combination of virtues and sins, up to the most lofty degrees of union with God." (17)

Since all Christians fall into or between the above categories, it is wrong to consider that the teaching on the two lives in the *Morals* is suitable for monks to the exclusion of laymen. As a matter of fact, Gregory himself said that some portions of the book, since it was "not a popular one, could "with an uninstructed audience ... do more harm than good. (18) The Pope's humility may have led him to speak thus because he desired no acclaim for his writings, and so he strove to disparage the value of the book.

Nevertheless, he was willing and able to give both clergy and laity sermons which closely parallel his explanation of the two lives in the *Morals*; it is for precisely this reason that his *Homilies on Ezechiel* are especially valuable. These occasionally bring fresh emphasis or clarification to the Saint's exposition of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* as set forth in the *Morals*; but they present nothing unique, in as much as all Christians, regardless of their state, are called by the same God to seek eternal happiness in His love. We can draw the essentials of Gregory's doctrine from either or both of the works, as the ensuing pages will show.

One important purpose of this study is to investigate whether St. Gregory conceives the two lives more as (a) social modes of living (chiefly for religious), or as (b) interior states of soul in successive stages of spiritual progress. In three major works his texts will be more meaningful for the solution of this problem if we read them with certain questions in mind. In the *Morals* he is addressing his monks of Constantinople, and in the *Homilies on Ezechiel* he is preaching to his beloved people of Rome. Are any notable modifications of his teaching discernible in the two books? In *Pastoral Care* he stresses the sacerdotal obligations of bishops and other shepherds of souls. Shall we find him reminding them that they, like all other men, are called to one perfection in charity? And is this perfection one effected by fidelity in the practice of the moral virtues characteristic of the active life - one which, furthermore, is to be united with, and motivated by faith, hope, and charity, the theological virtues characteristic of the contemplative life? It is with such questions in mind that we can come to fruitful analysis of his writings and learn precisely what he meant by *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

St. Gregory's Understanding of Contemplation

In a scholarly study of the word *contemplatio* as used by St. Gregory the Great, (19) A. Menager found that in the *Morals*, the *Homilies on Ezechiel*, and the *Homilies on the Gospels* there are 302 occurrences of *contemplatio* and 106 of *contemplari*. (20) Menager points out five different meanings attached to the word by Gregory:

1. To gaze upon attentively with the eyes. (21)
2. To ponder attentively in thought. (22) This means to perform occasional acts of pondering.
3. To gaze on God and the things of God. In this usage of *contemplari* the attentive pondering has become habitual, and *contemplatio* is used as a synonym for *vita contemplativa*. [See especially his explanation (23) of Job, 5, 26.] For example, in *Homily on Ezechiel I, iv*, Gregory

explains that corporal and spiritual works of mercy are the lot of the active life, while the part of the contemplative life is to gaze upon God and the things of God. (24) In this same work Gregory speaks (25) of preachers who lead the two lives, both active and contemplative. In explaining this he often employs the word *contemplatio*, and also replaces *vita activa* by *QP.US* or *QP..* By *contemplatio* here he means that contemplation which is attainable in this life, and which he names *inchoatio contemplationis* or *inchoata contemplatio*. (26)

4. To gaze on God and things divine under the supernatural influence which today is termed "infused contemplation." (27)
5. To gaze on God in perfect contemplation of the beatific vision: "cum hunc ad perfectionem tuae contemplationis admiseris." (28)

Menager also notes that *vita contemplativa* has a fixed, univocal meaning for St. Gregory, even though the Saint sometimes uses *contemplatio* as a synonym for it. (29) While this study is not directly concerned with the other significations of *contemplatio*, since it is not intended to set forth in detail Gregory's teaching on the nature of the soul's union with God, we cannot ignore entirely this question about the nature of contemplation as Gregory conceived it; for herein lies the goal of all Christian life, be it active or contemplative. The Saint is insistent on this point; in the *Morals*, for example, are many passages similar to the following:

And when the eyes of our heart are purged from sin, that joy of our heavenly home is disclosed to them that we may first wash away by sorrow what we have done, and afterwards gain in our transports a clearer view of what we are seeking after. For the intervening mist of sin is first wiped away from the eye of the mind by burning sorrow; and it is then enlightened by the bright coruscations of the boundless light (*incircumscripti luminis*) swiftly flashing upon it. At which sight, seen after its measure, it is absorbed in a kind of rapturous security, and carried beyond itself, as though the present life had ceased to be, it is refreshed in a manner by a kind of new being. (30)

Abbot Butler has competently given one summary of Gregory's concept of contemplation as follows:

It is a struggle wherein the mind disengages itself from the things of this world and fixes its attention wholly on spiritual things, and thereby raises itself above itself, and by dint of a great effort mounts up to a momentary perception of the 'uncompassed Light,' as through a chink; and then, exhausted by the effort and blinded by the vision of the Light, it sinks back wearied to its normal state, to recuperate its spiritual strength by exercising the works of the active life, till in due time it can again brace itself for the effort of another act of contemplation. (31)

Commentators on St. Gregory generally agree with Abbot Butler that for Gregory, contemplation in the highest sense consists in this gaze of the soul on eternal or uncompassed Light, seen in fervent love and joy, and striking the earthly beholder only like the brief beauty of a sunbeam coming through a chink. (32) All concede, too, that this transient union can be brought to its full perfection only in eternity. But there are also many points on which modern scholars disagree.

For example, does Gregory mean that contemplation at its highest includes the vision of God in this life? And if so, what is the nature of this vision? Abbot Butler would hold that Gregory is thoroughly in the Augustinian tradition, although he differed from Augustine on one point by denying the possibility of seeing God in this life; (33) Dom Gillet thinks Butler is mistaken, and suggests that he has exaggerated the differences between the expositions of Gregory and Augustine. (34) The arguments presented by Butler and Gillet make it apparent that in the course of the centuries a discussion of this nature increases in complexity. Can we be sure exactly what the Saint meant in regard to the essential nature of contemplation, and how literally we are to understand his expressions? If we know what he meant, is he correct? Which modern commentator on Gregory has most accurately interpreted his thought?

Cayre, Godet, Saudreau, Menager, Leclercq -- all these agree on much of Gregory's teaching; but when they cannot, their readers may be thoroughly bewildered.

Fortunately for us, however, it is not necessary to await settlement of these disputed points in order to proceed with the central problem of this study. That problem requires us to study Gregory on *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*, rather than to examine subtle distinctions as to the nature of contemplation.

The Nature of the Two Lives

A brief statement (35) of Gregory's ascetical and mystical doctrine will both show how similar it is to Augustine's and provide a solid basis for our further investigation. Gregory envisages a gradual advance of the earnest Christian toward perfection. In the first stage one fights against the passions by uprooting the capital vices (Mor. v, 86, PL 75, 728). In the second stage he acquires virtues, but only by degrees (Mor. v, 3; PL 75, 696). Gregory stresses the four moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance (Mor. ii, 76; PL 75, 592; Hom. on Ezech. I, iv, 8; PL 76, 809; II, x, 18; PL 76, 1068) which, to be meritorious, must be accompanied by the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity (Hom. on Ezech. II, iv, 4; PL 76, 796). All the virtues are brought to their fullness through the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost (Mor. ii, 77; PL 75, 592; xxv, 15; PL 76, 328): the moral virtues especially by fear, piety, knowledge, fortitude, and counsel, the theological virtues especially by understanding and wisdom. (36)

For Gregory the active life (*vita activa*) is this interior life of the moral virtues. It corresponds to the stages of spiritual growth named in later centuries the purgative and illuminative ways. The exercise of these moral virtues in the active life prepares the earnest Christian for contemplation in its lower and higher forms (Mor. xxxi, 102, PL 76, 629). The contemplative life (*vita contemplativa*) is, then, the interior life motivated chiefly by the theological virtues. It corresponds to what was later to be called the unitive way. The theological virtues of the unitive way, on being acquired, in turn motivate a more diligent practice of the moral virtues and of the exterior works which spring from them (Mor. xxx, 8; PL 76, 525-527).

The "Classical" Definition

After this summary view we are in position to examine important statements of Gregory which are relevant to our study. In the second set of Homilies on Ezechiel, Gregory gives the following exposition of the two lives, which Abbot Butler has called "the classical and standard definition." (37)

There are two lives in which Almighty God by His holy word instructs us -the active and the contemplative.

The active life is: to give bread to the hungry, to teach the ignorant the word of wisdom, to correct the erring, to recall to the path of humility our neighbour when he waxes proud, to tend the sick, to dispense to all what they need, and to provide those entrusted to us with the means of subsistence .

But the contemplative life is: to retain indeed with all one's mind the love of God and neighbour, but to rest from all exterior action, and cleave only to the desire of the Maker, that the mind may now take no pleasure in doing anything, but having spurned all cares, may be aglow to see the face of its Creator; so that it already knows how to bear with sorrow the burden of the corruptible flesh, and with all its desires to seek to join the hymn-singing choirs of angels, to

mingle with the heavenly citizens, and to rejoice at its everlasting incorruption in the sight of God. (38)

A careful reading of this passage, justly famous as it is, would seem to indicate that here Gregory spontaneously expressed in summary fashion his principal ideas about the two lives. Some important features of his thought are evident.

First, there is here no question of types of religious orders, such as those in modern times chiefly devoted respectively to apostolic activity or to contemplation. Nor is there reference to noncloistered and cloistered religious. Gregory's remarks are just as applicable to earnest Christian laymen as to priests or religious.

Second, the basic idea underlying his two descriptions is clearly the stress put upon the practice of two groups of virtues. The active life consists in the exercise of the moral virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance) which concern the neighbor and are means of advancing in goodness toward God. The contemplative life, on the other hand, consists in the exercise of the theological virtues, especially charity, concerned directly with God, the Absolute Good and the Final End of all striving. The active life prepares a sincerely devout Christian for the contemplative life -and this latter is manifestly nobler, since it deals immediately with God.

Third, Gregory's basic idea in this passage has reference primarily to the interior or spiritual life of the individual soul and to stages in its development. Up to this point Gregory is manifestly in the current of ideas and terminology flowing, as we have seen, from pagan antiquity through Christian Alexandria: the βίος πρακτικός and βίος θεωρητικός of the Greeks; the ἄσκησις and σοφία of Philo (see page 68 above; the life of πίστις and that of γνῶσις in Clement;(39) the active and contemplative lives or stages which Origen found symbolized by Martha and Mary; the vita actualis and vita theoretica of Cassian (PL 49, 995; see page 31 above); and the vita activa and vita contemplativa of Augustine, from whom Gregory took his terminology and doctrine alike.

But fourth, there is something peculiar to Gregory, too. Even though his basic idea is that the two lives consist essentially in the practice of virtues (respectively moral and theological), he nevertheless describes the two lives in terms of the observable exterior activities which spring from the respective groups of virtues; for example, in the active life, to feed the hungry, to teach, to care for the sick; in the contemplative life, to withdraw into solitude to contemplate God. (40)

In consequence, a perceptive reader discovers that in this passage (and many others) Gregory speaks of the stages of growth in interior life (vita activa and vita contemplativa) in much the same fashion as Augustine spoke (see pages 39 to 42 above) about the various modes of exterior living (genus vitae negotiosum, genus otiosum, and genus ex utroque compositum). Unfortunately, however, if a reader's attention has not been forcefully focused upon the difference between interior life and exterior mode of living, he will all too likely miss this subtle difference and the many problems it entails. Even Abbot Butler overlooked it (see above, pages 42-43, and below, pages 102-104).

Augustine's very terminology is an indication that he had clearly in mind this distinction between stages of interior life and modes of exterior or observable living. Nothing led him to emphasize the point for his readers; but the contrast between vita activa and vitae genus negotiosum reveals that he had the difference in his mind and would have explained it if pressed. Augustine's distinction is a highly subtle one, and Gregory (being further from the climate of ideas familiar to the Alexandrian writers about the

two lives) may well have overlooked it. At least, as far as the present writer knows now, he did not explicitly reveal an awareness of this distinction; and so he did not bring it forcefully to the attention of his readers. Hence, many of them have likewise failed to notice it. Therefore, because Gregory's works were widely read throughout the Middle Ages, he may have given rise to much of the inconsistency, not to say confusion, which is still with us today when we try to interpret the two terms, *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

Fifth, as a result of the factors just mentioned, Gregory's concept of the two lives is a highly complex one. It embraces both (1) the virtues characteristic of the respective stages of growth in interior life and (2) the exterior activities which spring from the exercise of these virtues.

The Active Life Necessary, the Contemplative Voluntary

Another feature of Gregory's thought requires attention. Like Augustine, he shows clearly that, even though the two lives may well be together like Lia and Rachel, yet in this world the active alone is necessary for salvation. No one can be saved without good works, but he can reach heaven without possessing on earth a high degree of contemplation: "The one life is necessary for us, the other is voluntary." (41) Assuredly, however, Gregory here supposes what he explicitly states elsewhere: to be meritorious, the moral virtues of the active life must be accompanied by the theological virtues. (42) The theological virtues are present with the moral virtues in the active life, but they are stressed more in the contemplative life.

The active life is an essential prelude to the contemplative. This latter can be perfected only in heaven. Its essence is charity, abiding for eternity, whereas the moral and ascetic practices of the active life are found only in time. (43)

For the two lives, the active and the contemplative, when they be preserved in the soul, are accounted as two eyes in the face. Thus the right eye is the contemplative life, and the left the active life When thou are not qualified for the contemplative life by a fitting degree of discretion, keep more safely to the active alone, and when thou failest in that which thou choosest as great, be content with that which thou heedest as very little, that if by the contemplative life thou art forced to fall from the knowledge of the truth, thou mayest by the active life alone be able to enter into the kingdom of heaven at least with one eye. (44)

In similar vein the Saint elsewhere counsels, "In the active life the mind is established without failing, but from the contemplative, being overcome by the load of its infirmity, it faints away." (45) Despite such lapses, one must continue undaunted, attempting to ascend to the heights by the steps of active life. (46)

The Relative Superiority of Contemplative Life

The contemplative life is greater in merit than the active, which labours in the exercise of present work, whilst the other already tastes with inward savour the rest that is to come.

Although the active life is good, the contemplative is better. (47)

To show the excellence of *vita contemplativa* over *vita activa*, St. Gregory often uses the same scriptural pairs as St. Augustine. Although he can be commended for the precision and judgment with which he condenses the latter's thought, shearing away rhetoric for more concisely simple presentation, he makes no significant developments. (48) Here is an example:

... Every one that is perfect is first joined to an active life in productiveness, and afterwards united to a contemplative life in rest. For that the life of contemplation is less indeed in time, but greater in value than the active, we are shown by the words of the Holy Gospel, wherein

two women are described to have acted in different ways. For Mary sat at our Redeemer's feet ... but Martha eagerly prosecuted bodily services Now Martha's concern is not reproved, but that of Mary is even commended. For the merits of the active are great, but of the contemplative, far better. (49)

As Gregory was an admirer of St. Benedict, it is interesting to point out here the similar idea expressed in that "Instrument of Good Works" in the Rule which admonishes ardent anticipation of the realities of heaven: "To desire eternal life with all spiritual longing. ff (50) Such an outlook, if habitual, would truly enhance the value of activity on the part of a Martha or Lia .

If once the mind is fixed with strong steadfastness in the longing after the Country Above, it is less distressed by the annoyance of earthly things. Far from all outward commotions it seeks its aim, like a kind of most secret retreat, and there attaches itself to the Unchangeable. (51)

This citation, too, clearly shows that for Gregory, *vita contemplativa* basically designates a state of soul from which springs a habitual state of mind, one of yearning for union with God. He was not primarily concerned with discussing modes of exterior social living such as Augustine designated by his terms *genera vitae* or *mos vivendi* (See above p. 43) .

The Two Lives in the Individual Christian Life

It is the distinction of St. Gregory, states Menager, to have insisted more than any earlier writer that contemplative life is for men of every class and condition. Cassian, for example, had written as if it were reserved for anchorites. (52) And although the most profound and scholarly treatment of the two lives is undoubtedly St. Augustine's, there is yet one aspect of their relationship wherein Gregory merits first place. Regarding the latter's exposition of the two lives, Abbot Butler says:

... On the conciliation of their claims on the individual, and on the way in which they may both play their part in a well - ordered spiritual life, his teaching is fuller, more detailed, more practical, richer, than Augustine's. It is indeed his great contribution to the theory and practice of the spiritual life for all succeeding generations in Western Christianity; and as such it merits to be set forth here with much care and fullness. (53)

When the two lives are considered as stages of progress in interior life, there is no conflict between them. Rather, there is mutual support. The moral virtues of the active life prepare the Christian for the contemplative life wherein the theological virtues have primacy (Mor. xxxi, 102; PL 76, 629); and the theological virtues in turn motivate increased practice of the moral virtues (Mor. xxx, 8; PL 76, 526-527; Hom. on Ezech. I, v, 12; PL 76, 825-826). So far, the theory. But when the two lives are considered from the aspect of those exterior works and modes of living which spring from them, we have the age-old practical problem of finding wise balance between activities and prayer. Appropriately enough, even on this point St. Gregory, ever the practical Roman, proves most helpful.

Christlikeness, the Aim of Union of the Two Lives

The central idea for St. Gregory is that Christlikeness is the aim of all Christians. Christ's followers, like Christ our Lord in his observable activities, unite the two lives. Even as he insists on this universal rule, Gregory points out its particular application to those engaged in apostolic work, such as priests and pastors of souls, who should diligently imitate what was perfectly exemplified by Christ.

He set forth in Himself patterns of both lives, that is, the active and the contemplative, united together. For the contemplative differs very much from the active. But our Redeemer by becoming Incarnate, while He gave a pattern of both, united both in Himself. For when He wrought miracles in the city, yet continued all night in prayer on the mountain, He gave His

faith-ful ones an example not to neglect, through love of contempla -tion, the care of their neighbours; nor again to abandon contem - plative pursuits through being too immoderately engaged in the care of their neighbours; but so to keep together their mind, in applying it to the two cases, that the love of their neighbour might not interfere with the love of God, nor again the love of God cast out, because it transcends, the love of their neighbour. (54)

Cayre, praising the practicality of St. Gregory's exposition of the need for harmonizing the two lives (which are stages of perfection) (55), notes the special import given by the Saint to the four moral vir-tues, (56) and still more to the three theological virtues. (5 7) Since Gregory shows their union to be of paramount significance for zealous preachers of the Word, several passages in Pastoral Care deal with the two lives.

First, however, a succinct statement in the Morals bears quot-ing: "He is· no perfect preacher, who either, from devotion to contemplation, neglects work that ought to be done, or, from urgency in business, puts aside the duties of contemplation." (58) The word "duties," here signified by the use of the gerundive *contemplanda*, is arresting: far more necessary and effective than any sermon is the edifying ex-ample of prayerful beneficence set by the preacher's life.

One who is truly God's spokesman listens to God before he ad-dresses men; his most eloquent sermon is his Christlike service of others:

There are those who, endowed, as we have said, with great gifts, in their eagerness for the pursuit of contemplation only, decline to be of service to the neighbour by preaching Now, if they are judged strictly on their conduct, they are cer-tainly guilty in proportion to the public service which they were able to afford. Indeed, what disposition of mind is revealed in him, who could perform conspicuous public benefit on coming to his task, but prefers his own privacy to the benefit of others, seeing that the Only-Begotten of the Supreme Father came forth from the bosom of His Father into our midst, that He might benefit many. (59)

A striking truth confronts any modern reader of St. Gregory who picks up a copy of Pastoral Care with some preconceived notion that bishops and cloistered contemplatives are poles apart in their ascetic and mystic life Gregory insists before all else that those called to govern and teach in Christ's name be prayerfully contemplative like Moses and Jacob; only then are they worthy to be active ministers.

Let the ruler be neighbour in compassion to everyone and exalted above all in thought (contemplatione), so that by the love of his heart he may transfer to himself the infirmities of others, and by the loftiness of his contemplation (*speculationis altitudinem*) transcend even himself in his aspirations for the invisible things....

Thus Jacob, as the Lord leaned on the ladder above and the anointed stone was below, saw angels ascending and descend-ing, which was a sign that true preachers do not only aspire by contemplation to the Holy Head of the Church above, namely, the Lord, but also descend to its members in pity for them.

Thus Moses frequently goes in and out of the Tabernacle; and while within he is caught up in contemplation, outside he devotes himself to the affairs of the weak. (60)

The Advantages in Uniting the Two Lives

There are many reasons why Christians should seek a union of the two lives. Besides setting forth Christlikeness as a goal, St. Gregory also shows other motives: Divine Providence regarding the nature of man, and man's role in the salvation of his fellows. This is the eternal plan of Almighty God, for even before the Incarnation, and before the promulgation of Sinai's Law, even in the Age of the Patriarchs the active and contemplative lives existed in Lia and Rachel. (61)

Man's holiness lies in loving union with God, but he does not truly love the invisible God apart from Christ's brethren, made to God's image. In Gregory's simple phrase, "One virtue without another is either none at all or but very little." (62) Love of neighbor is in truth a commandment like to the first; "For the Lord would not at all descend to us if His preachers were to remain inflexible in the rigour of contemplation." (63)

When an apostolate of the active life is needed it would be crass pride to refuse it: a Christian must be humbly conscious of his unworthiness to co-operate with the Absolute; but only a selfish hypocrite could sit idle while pleading lack of fitness to fulfill God's will. True humility would be ready at need to accept even the highest dignity, culmen regiminis, with the loving confidence of Isaias and the diffidence of Jeremias. (64)

St. Gregory repeatedly asserts that contemplative life is enriched through such apostolic endeavors; moreover, it is kept safe from pride's assaults by asceticism. Sometimes he reminds us of Augustine, showing that exercise of moral virtues is the starting point on a Christian's way to charity's perfection.

Let all then that strive to lay hold of the summit of perfection, when they desire to occupy the citadel of contemplation, first try themselves, by exercising, in the field of practice, that they may heedfully acquaint themselves, if they now no longer bring mischiefs upon their neighbours, if when brought upon them by their neighbours, they bear them with composure of mind, if when temporal advantages are put in their way, the mind is never dissipated by joy, if when they are withdrawn, it is not stung by overmuch regret, and then let them reflect, if when they return inwardly to themselves, in this work of theirs of exploring spiritual things, they never draw along with them the shadows of corporeal objects

For the season for action comes first, for contemplation last. (65)

The holy Pope also points out that by God's goodness a soul may derive greater graces for itself and the rest of the Mystical Body by uniting *vita activa* to *vita contemplativa*. "Very often such a one is able to pass to the contemplative life, and yet not give up the active life, so that he who has arrived at contemplation does not abandon the activity of good works whereby he is able to be of use to others. "(66) Then, in the marvelous Providential design, all things work together unto good:

Whilst they suit one another by turns, by reciprocal ministering, in a wonderful way it is brought about, that whereas all the Elect, by bestowing labour on one another, do what they are able, those works too become their own, which they cannot do themselves. (67)

Some Means to Successful Union of the Two Lives

In all aspects of the Christian life, St. Gregory warns against confusion of *actio* and *contemplatio*. Neither *vita activa* nor *contemplativa* can be fruitful unless the soul knows the tranquility born of faith. In the midst of action there must be in its depths that stillness which acknowledges God's presence. In imitation of Moses, such souls consult the Lord, as it were.

And what they first hear in silence, they afterwards make known to the world in their conduct. For in order that they may engage in outward employments without injury to themselves, they constantly take care to withdraw to the secrets of their heart. (68)

Closely allied to this serenity of soul is the view of life on earth in the light of eternity, or remembrance of man's goal. This was previously mentioned as one of the proofs for the superiority of *vita contemplativa* over *vita activa*. It serves also to unite the two lives by permeating the lesser with an aura of eternity.

Everyone wishing to combine the two lives as external manners of living must recognize that individuals vary in temperament; hence, each must live the *vita contemplativa* on earth (in the measure that he can live it then) according to his own endowments of nature and of grace. Perhaps nowhere else is St. Gregory so close to contemporary thought as in his appreciation of individual differences. A wise physician of souls, he writes:

But herein it is above all necessary to know that the compositions of souls are infinitely varied one with another, for there are some of such inactivity of mind, that, if the labours of business fall upon them, they give way at the very beginning of their work, and there be some so restless that if they have cessation from labour, they have only the worse labour, in that they are subject to worse tumults of mind, in proportion as they have more time and liberty for their thoughts. Whence it behoves that neither the tranquil mind should open itself wide in the immoderate exercising of works, nor the restless mind stint itself in devotion to contemplation. For often they who might have contemplated God in quiet, have fallen, being overcharged with business; and often they who might live advantageously occupied with the service of their fellow-creatures, are killed by the sword of their own quiescence. (69)

A final, and most important point for combining the two lives results from awareness that on earth the contemplative one, even though open to all, will not in fact be lived by the many, chiefly because they strive too little; nor is it of long duration. (70) "We can remain fixed in the active life, but in the contemplative we are by no means able to keep our mind applied" (intentam). (71) More-over, it is a glimpse, not eternity's blessed vision: "Quia in hac vita positi contemplationis intimae sola initia degustamus." (72)

There is no glossing over the difficulties in this, for Gregory is convinced of our nature's frailty. Nevertheless, he is not a pessimist, though sometimes he is called one. He might perhaps be considered a Christian pessimist, viewing simultaneously the effects of original sin and of the redemptive Incarnation. If the medieval writers, looking inward oftener than we, cried, "Mea culpa!" they also remembered better to look at the Cross and say, "Felix culpa!" Had Gregory not understood that souls, despite their weakness, are able through grace to unite the two lives and achieve even on earth some measure of heavenly contemplation, he would not have devoted so many texts to the topic of the following section.

The Availability of *Vita Contemplativa* for All

In the words of Abbot Butler, it is Gregory's conviction that contemplative life, as he understood the term, is not "the perquisite of any small select spiritual circles, 11 but instead, is "open to all sincere lovers of a good Christian life. 11 (73) This is easily proved by citations from his Homilies on Ezechiel, "public sermons preached in the Lateran Basilica to mixed congregations of all comers." (74) Here is a typical passage:

It is not the case that the grace of contemplation is given to the highest and not given to the lowest; but often the highest and often the most lowly, and very often those who have re-nounced, and sometimes also those who are married, receive it. If therefore there is no state of life (officium) of the faithful, from which the grace of contemplation can be excluded, any one who keeps his heart within him (cor intus habet) may also be illumined by the light of contemplation; so that no one can glory in this grace as if it were singular. It is not the high and preeminent members of holy Church only that have the grace of contemplation; but very often those members receive this gift, who, although by desire they already mount to the heights, are still occupying low positions. (75)

Similar to the above, but showing more explicitly the work of grace, which can bring souls to holiness, is a passage in the *Morals*:

The foot of the mind first by fear we set below, and afterwards by charity lift it to the heights of love Now these steps of virtuous attainments it is no great labour to lay hold of, since there is passing from one to the other. (76)

Nor is the first step to be belittled, for the glorious culmination necessarily depends on the humble exercises of the active life; "because the soul would not be made bright in the radiance of everlasting beauty, except, so to say, it were first burnt here in the workshop of charity." (77)

Summary

St. Gregory, like Augustine before him, lived and wrote among men who were given to discursive descriptions, repeated on different occasions in different words, rather than concise formulas couched in technical phrases such as the Schoolmen would bring to chiseled perfection. It is therefore useless to expect from Gregory a single statement on the meaning of the two lives which is written in the succinct style or fixed terminology of modern theologians. Nevertheless, from the Pope's writings quoted earlier in this chapter we can gather clear indications of the essential features of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

(A) Definitions of the Two Lives

Basically, for St. Gregory the two lives are successive but inter-acting stages of growth in the interior or spiritual life of an earnest Christian.

The active life is the life of an imperfect Christian who strives to overcome his moral weakness or inclinations to evil (78) and to acquire virtue by the exercise of good works on behalf of his neighbor (79) chiefly from a motive of holy fear. (80) Since this life is a path leading upward to perfection, (81) its beginning in self-abnegation and reverential fear corresponds to what was later named the purgative way; and the increase in positive virtue with growing charity can be termed the illuminative way. (82) This state of soul is properly called a *vita activa* by reason of the fact that the Christian is habitually engaged in exercise of the moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance as he seeks to serve God. (83)

The contemplative life, according to St. Gregory, is the life of a Christian who is in a higher stage of spiritual progress, so that he is chiefly motivated by the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. (84) Beyond and above any activity of exterior works, he desires a serene rest in cleaving to his Maker, and his greatest longing is to "join the hymn-singing choirs of angels, to mingle with the heavenly citizens, and to rejoice ... in the sight of God." (85)

The two lives interact. The theological virtues of the contemplative life, especially charity, motivate this Christian's love of his neighbor; and thus they should motivate him to practice still more zealously the moral virtues of the active life and the good works which spring from them. These good works are indeed an aspect of the vital force of contemplative life, but only one aspect. (86)

Compared to the Beatific Vision, such a life as this is merely inchoatio contemplationis; (87) but on earth Christian perfection surely entails this beginning. It is, Gregory teaches, the union of two lives or *etats d'ame*: "Everyone that is perfect is first joined to an active life in productiveness, and afterwards united to a contemplative life in rest." (88) The culmination of the unitive way is this, the soul's loving gaze on the all-Beloved.

(B) The Relationship of Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa

For Gregory, then, the two lives, regarded as stages of growth in interior life, are complementary, not opposed. He expects them to exist simultaneously in the life of the Christian who is sincerely striving for perfection. His teaching on how to unite them can be given in three statements.

- 1) Everyone who wishes to be perfect - and Christ said, "Be ye perfect," to an everyday crowd of Palestine's men, women, and children - is obliged to an active life, characterized chiefly by the exercise of moral virtues and the good works which spring from them; moreover, many Christians are invited to enjoy at times some earthly foretaste of heaven's joys, which consist in loving intimacy with God, in Whom they believe and hope.
- 2) Although comparatively few respond to this invitation, and no one can have on earth more than a glimpse of Him Who is the True Light, yet all who are in Christ will live thus in eternity.
- 3) It is better, both for the individual Christian, and for all the Church, that each man's life be a union of these two lives: the *vita activa*, which prepares for, fosters, and safeguards the contemplative; and the *vita contemplativa*, which in turn stimulates one to further exercise of the virtues and works of the active life. Also, the contemplative life is especially essential for bishops and preachers. For it renders all good actions more meritorious and fruitful because they are principally motivated by love. By that fact, too, these actions are more like Christ's.

As long as we restrict our consideration to Gregory's basic concept of the two lives as stages of growth in the interior life, we do not become involved in any attempts to solve such problems as are entailed in the lives when taken to mean manners of living. We need not try to reconcile hours of holy leisure and the demands of external activities according to *genera vitae* such as Augustine mentions in the passages of the *City of God*, Book xix, Chapters 2 and 19, discussed above (pages 38-43). Nor is there any singling out of religious, except in the sense that those vowing evangelical perfection should more earnestly exemplify the ideal of all: loving imitation of Christ, Model and Source of our supernatural love.

The words "everyone," "all," and "each man," underlined in the three statements above, bring out the universality of St. Gregory's application of the two lives. By contrast, it is easy to see how inadequate (and often erroneous) is contemporary understanding of these terms, because it so often attributes contemplative life to a few - even to very few of those in the cloister. (89) A consequence is the possibility, or, rather, the near certainty, that much which Gregory wrote is misunderstood in our day.

Such failure to grasp the teachings of this Doctor of the Church would already, be serious; it becomes tragic if an effect of their ignorance is that souls are thwarted, deprived of development to spiritual maturity. How few, religious or lay, despite their baptism and their frequently renewed self-oblation in union with Christ's in the Mass, have comprehended the universality and the inherent challenge in Gregory's categorical affirmation: "Whosoever then has already offered himself as a sacrifice to God, if he desires perfection, must needs take care that he not only stretch himself out to breadth of practice (operationis), but likewise up to the heights of contemplation (contemplationis)." (90)

(C) The Relationship between Interior Life and Exterior Activities

Nevertheless, Gregory's full concept of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* is a highly complex one, since he often wrote of the moral or theological virtues (respectively characteristic of the active and contemplative life) in terms of the exterior activities or observable features which spring from them (see pages 61-62 above). Hence he made it easy for unwary readers to overlook the distinction of Augustine between 1) the stages of interior life (*vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*) and 2) the manners of living in regard to exterior activities (*modus vitae negotiosum, otiosum, and contemplativum*). Thus, even while Gregory was bestowing on later centuries the truly immense treasure which is his teaching on the two lives, he may have helped to produce the inconsistent or confusing concepts and terminology of later centuries.

Menager suggests that Gregory ought to be known as Doctor Contemplationis because he wrote so authoritatively on *contemplatio* and *vita contemplativa* (which for the Saint, as we have said, are sometimes synonymous terms). Menager then observes:

When later St. Thomas of Aquin will discuss contemplation, it will not ordinarily be St. Augustine he will put forward. He will go seeking his texts and proofs in St. Gregory the Great. (91)

Let us too, therefore, proceed to examine the use which St. Thomas made of Gregory's terms. This should further illumine the meaning which St. Gregory attached to the terms *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

Chapter 6: The Two Lives in St. Thomas and Later Authors

St. Thomas Aquinas' Concept of the Two Lives

From many points of view there is justification for referring to the centuries before the Twelfth Century Renaissance as the "Dark Ages," if only by contrast to the bright dawn that lay ahead; but for human speculation in philosophy and theology, those early centuries were making possible a flowering of Christian culture in the high noon of the thirteenth century which produced Thomas Aquinas.

Ever since, thoughtful men have gratefully admired the synthesizing genius of him who is the Dominicans' glory and the Church's foremost teacher. Doubtless, he was great; furthermore, his greatness was abetted by a gift of Providence; the fact that he found ready at hand a vast heritage of human knowledge on which he might labor, together with colleagues able to encourage, assist, and continue his work.

We cannot hope to know the role or importance of the countless scholars of the intervening centuries who contributed to an understanding of the two lives while transmitting the legacy of Augustine and Gregory. Nevertheless, the name of Albert the Great must not be overlooked; not only did he train Thomas, but he is the probable author of a little work, *De Adhaerendo Deo*, (1) which merits attention here.

This contains a lucid description of the traditional way to union with God, by means of recollection and detachment in cooperation with grace; but it concerns us at present because it makes explicit man's realization that for Christians, *vita contemplativa* is something very different from what it was for even the noblest pagans.

In this must be observed a difference between the contemplation of the Catholic faithful and that of the pagan philosophers: the philosophers' contemplation is for the sake of perfecting the person who contemplates, and therefore it rests in the intellect; and thus the end of the philosophers in this matter is the knowledge in the intellect. But the contemplation of the saints, which is that of the Catholics, is for the sake of the love of Him Who is contemplated, namely, God: and therefore it does not through knowledge rest in the intellect as in its last abode, but through love it passes over into the affections. (2)

At least in an indistinct way, thinkers of the Middle Ages must have realized that their terminology had been taken over from Hellenism and Neoplatonism, and that it had been used as a framework to set forth the teaching of Christ. The total signification of *contemplatio* and *vita contemplativa* (as understood by Christians) must not, then, be attributed to the non-Christian Greeks.

In the case of Augustine, however, and also of Gregory thanks to his dependence on Augustine, there was (unconsciously perhaps in the case of Gregory) a residue of Platonism. (3) Hence, for a historical survey of evolving concepts it is interesting to see that Thomas was only one, albeit the most important one, who in the thirteenth century achieved such perspective on religious and philosophical matters, their relations and distinctions, as to have a unified view of past contributions to thought.

In a study such as the present one, which will endeavor to show Thomas' use of Gregory's exposition of the two lives, only a small portion of Thomas' teaching occupies us; but it is, as Butler says, "the marrow of his teaching" (4) on this topic. It is chiefly found in four Questions (179-182) of *Summa Theologiae* IIa-IIae, and in Article 6 of Question 188. We shall use, too, some relevant texts from his earlier work, the commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, especially Book III, Distinction 35, Question 1. Other works in which he mentions the two lives should be listed, too: *In Decem libros Ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nichomachum Expositio* ed. A. M. Pirotta, O. P., (Torino: Marietti, 1934), Liber i, Lectio 5, ## 55, 59; Liber x, Lectio 11 and 12, ##2105, 2115; *Opusculum Theologicum* III, *Contra Pestiferam Doctrinam Retrahentium Homines a Religionis Inm;* essu 7, ad 7; *De Virtutibus Cardinalibus* Article 1, ad 4.

Father Hugh Pope, O. P., in the introduction to his translation of Aquinas' work, *On Prayer and Contemplative Life*, writes:

For how many does not the Contemplative Life mean the life of ecstasy and vision with which we are familiar in the lives of the Saints? For S. Thomas, on the contrary, the Contemplative Life is but the natural life of a man who is serving God and who devotes a certain portion of his time to the study and contemplation of Divine things. (5)

Father John Proctor, O. P., writes in the prefatory notes to his translation of St. Thomas' minor work on *The Perfection of the Spiritual Life*:

This short treatise on their life will be of spiritual help to religious men and women, whether cloistered or leading an active life in the world. (6)

This last statement is unfortunately worded. The impression is already widespread that active life refers to the religious of an apostolic order, and contemplative life to the religious of a cloistered order; and this, in turn, implies at least obscurely that neither life has much importance for lay persons. Father

Proctor's statement does not correct such impressions, but rather confirms them. Thus it is new evidence of the need of clarifying the meaning of *vita* in St. Thomas' Questions about the two lives and about the kinds of religious orders.

From Father Pope's observation quoted above we would immediately think that Thomas had much in common with Gregory. But we also notice that, like Abbot Butler, both Father Pope and Father Proctor express themselves in such a way as to fail to bring out the ancient basic distinction between 1) the two lives considered as stages of interior development and 2) modes of living in regard to observable activities. Apparently there are here problems still unsolved. Hence it now devolves upon us to investigate, by examination of Thomas' writings, precisely what use he made of Gregory's concepts.

The evidence that Thomas drew heavily from Gregory appears undeniable as soon as one discovers how frequently Gregory is the main authority for Aquinas' discussions in the *Summa Theologiae*. The passages cited are usually drawn from *Morals vi*, and - most important - from the *Homily on Ezechiel II, ii* (which is numbered *Homily on Ezechiel xiv* in many texts of the *Summa Theologiae*). St. Thomas was not wont to accept slavishly the ideas or terminology which he took from earlier authors. Rather, his habitual practice was to read the earlier writers, to think out for himself the topic under consideration, and then to fit the earlier author's ideas into his own system. When he found it necessary, he modified their notions somewhat, or he found a sense in which their words were true. We shall not be surprised if he uses this procedure with St. Gregory.

Some Basic Concepts in St. Thomas' Treatise

In *Initiation theologique* (7) the scholarly four-volume work compiled by many Dominican fathers to provide an introduction to the successive treatises of the *Summa Theologiae*, Chapter XVIII on "*Les vies contemplative et active*" was composed by Th. Camelot, O. P. and I. Mennessier, O. P. This chapter succinctly provides readers with a working knowledge of the basic meanings of the terms *vita*, *vita activa*, and *vita contemplativa* as used by St. Thomas in *Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae*, 179-182, and 188. (8)

Taken fundamentally, *vita* does not refer here to something exterior, such as the manner of social living of a public official in contrast to a scholar, or of a Franciscan in contrast to a Carthusian. Rather, *vita* signifies something interior, (9) the intellectual and volitional activity of an individual person. *Vita* denotes his *inclinatio* or *intentio* or *studium*: dominant inclination, preoccupation, interests, and pleasures - what he would most like to share with a friend. As St. Thomas, following Aristotle, (10) said:

The life of every man would seem to be that wherein he delights most, and on which he is most intent; thus especially does he wish to associate with his friends. (11)

This dominant inclination, interest, or intention in the sense of voluntary aim, which carries some men toward contemplation and others toward external activities, is for St. Thomas the basis of the division of contemplative and active life.

Accordingly since certain men are especially intent on the contemplation of truth, while others are especially intent on external actions, it follows that man's life is fittingly divided into active and contemplative. (12)

The division springs ultimately from the distinction between the ends of the speculative and practical intellect.

Vita activa, however, in St. Thomas no longer means merely the practical life of the pagan Greeks, a life devoted to this or that occupation in the city. Rather, it refers especially to the moral life: the ascetical struggle against defects and for the acquisition of virtues (especially the four cardinal virtues) which

dispose the Christian for contemplation. (13) Moreover, *vita activa* issues naturally into works of charity toward the neighbor. (14)

Vita contemplativa is the life of a man whose principal interest is to contemplate truth. (15) Now, it is the will which moves one to turn his intellect upon an object, sometimes on account of his love for the object seen, and sometimes on account of his love for the very knowledge acquired. In the spiritual life, the chief object of contemplation is God, the supreme Truth and Good. Therefore love of God first motivates a man to gaze on Him; and since one delights when he obtains what he loves, the contemplation of God also terminates in delight which intensifies love. (16) Hence charity initiates and terminates *vita contemplativa*, which becomes a loving gaze on God, a knowledge transfused with love.

When the Christian is still in the active life, charity stimulates him to carry on the ascetical preparation necessary for the contemplative life; and when he has reached the contemplative life, charity stimulates him further to the works of the active life - sometimes even to sacrificing the sweet leisure of contemplation to perform works which benefit his neighbor. (17) The two lives interact to their mutual support; and both lives are a means for increasing the one life of charity in which Christian perfection essentially consists. (18)

Gregory and Thomas - Similarities and Contrasts

From the above summary it becomes immediately clear that Thomas' terminology and basic concepts of *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* are in general highly similar to Gregory's. But there are differences, too, especially in emphasis.

A point of similarity is found in the basic concept. For both Gregory and Thomas it is a concept of two orientations in the interior life of an individual soul - or, in Cayre's terminology (cited below, pages 99-100, of two states of soul (*etats d'ame*) as distinguished from states of life (*etats de vie*) characterized by exterior and observable differences.

But a point of difference is found in the very basis of the distinction between the two lives. In Gregory, the basis is the Neo-Platonic outlook which he inherited from the Alexandrians and Augustine: stages of growth in the interior life of the soul. Thomas changed his basis to an Aristotelian one springing from the distinction between the ends of the speculative and practical intellect. Thus in Thomas the basis of distinction is the intention, motivated by charity, chiefly to contemplate divine truth or chiefly to practice the moral virtues and to help one's neighbors. However, the characteristics of the two lives as described by Gregory fit nicely into this new framework. To take examples from Gregory's "classical" definition, (19) the acts of the moral virtues, such as giving bread to the hungry or tending the sick, pertain to the active life according to both authors. Likewise, to rest from external action and to cling with one's whole mind to the love of God and neighbor because of the theological virtue of love pertain to the contemplative life.

In Augustine and Gregory, the fact that these two lives are successive stages in the development of the interior life receives much emphasis. Thomas is far from denying that they are stages, for he writes that the active life disposes (20) the Christian for the contemplative life, which is manifestly higher. Nevertheless, he does not stress their being stages. He reserves his treatment of the stages of growth until his next treatise (*Questions 183-189*), which treats of the states of life in which men live, such as those of freemen or slaves, bishops or religious. These are states characterized by different exterior manners of living. In *Question 183, article 4*, he divides the seekers of perfection into the beginners, the

progressing, and the highly developed (incipientes, progredientes, and perfecti}, in a manner consonant with what he had said about the three degrees of charity in *Ila-IIae*, 24, 9. For Thomas, the degrees of perfection of charity can exist either in a person devoted chiefly to the deeds of the active life or in a person devoted chiefly to the deeds of the contemplative life.

Gregory had emphasized the affective element in contemplation. For example, in his justly renowned definition (cited above on page 59) he stated:

The contemplative life is: to retain indeed with all one's mind the love of God and neighbour, but to rest from all exterior action, and cleave only to the desire of the Maker, that the mind may now take no pleasure in doing anything, but having spurned all cares, may be aglow to see the face of its Creator. (21) (Emphasis supplied.)

Thomas, however, stressed the intellectual foundation of contemplation. For example, he writes:

The contemplative life has one act wherein it is finally completed, namely, the contemplation of truth, and from this act it derives its unity. Yet it has many acts whereby it arrives at this final act. Some of these pertain to the reception of principles ... ; others are concerned with deducing from principles ... ; and the last and crowning act is the contemplation itself of the truth. (22) (Emphasis supplied.)

This stress upon the intellect is much to be expected in Thomas, since his very division of contemplative and active life is based upon the interests (*studia*) of different men who are respectively more inclined to exercise the speculative or the practical intellect. However, he does not stop there; he also treats of the heights of love to which con-templation of God can lead:

Since, then, the contemplative life consists chiefly in the contemplation of God, of which charity is the motive, ... it follows that there is delight in the contemplative life, not only by reason of the contemplation _itself, but also by reason of the divine love.

In both respects [i.e. , by reason of the operation itself, and by reason of the object] the delight thereof surpasses all human delight. (23)

Thomas is also very much aware that love is the cause of contemplation and that contemplation in turn intensifies charity (180, 1).

Although Gregory, like Augustine, had based his division of the two lives on their being successive stages of growth in interior life, he generally described the exterior or observable features which spring from the two sets of virtues respectively characteristic of each life. Thomas seems to emphasize this latter feature even more. For he makes the respective ends of the practical and speculative intellects the basis of his division, and consequently he stresses the dominant inclination (*studium*) of an individual to use either the one or other in-tellect. This inclination, too, results in exterior and observable features.

As we saw earlier (pages 62, 77), Gregory did not stress - perhaps did not even notice - Augustine's distinction between 1) two interior lives (*vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*) and 2) three manners of living (*mores vivendi*) in regard to external occupations (*genus vitae negotiosum*, *genus otiosuni*, and *genus compositum*). Thomas, by contrast, was keenly aware of this distinction and often cited it, though sometimes he used the term *actuosum* to indicate Augustine's *genus negotiosum*. For example:

Obj. 2. Further, Augustine (*De Civ. Del* xix, 1, 2, 3, 19) mentions three kin9s of life, namely the life of leisure which pertains to the contemplative, the busy life which pertains to the active, and a third S,2,!EPOsed of both. Therefore, it would seem that life is inadequately divided into active and contemplative. (24) (Emphasis supplied.)

Thomas bases his reply on the consideration that a mean is a combination of extremes:

... In like manner active and contemplative comprise that which is composed of both.

Nevertheless as in every mixture one of the simples predominates, so too in the mean state [sic] of life [in medio genere vitae] sometimes the contemplative, sometimes the active element, abounds.

Elsewhere, (181, 2, ad 3; 182, 1, ad 1) his answers become more and more explicit, and he reaches a final resolution in 186, 6, especially ad 3:

But this third kind of life [illud autem tertium vivendi genus] is intermediate between the active and the contemplative life as regards the things about which it is occupied [quantum ad ea circa quae occupatur], because it is occupied sometimes with the contemplation of the truth, sometimes with external things.

Thomas also presents answers in Scripta super libros Sententiarum III, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1, especially ad quintum. This latter answer will be treated below (pages 92-93).

Texts from St. Gregory in Summa Theologiae,
IIa - IIae, 179 - 182

We shall now study, article by article, the use which Thomas made of Gregory in Summa Theologiae, IIa - IIae, 179-182.

Question 179: On the Division of Life into Active and Contemplative.

There are only two articles in this Question, and Thomas cites Gregory in both of them. After stating his objections in Article 1 - his customary manner of setting up a problem - he begins the exposition of his own view by quoting from Gregory's famed definition (on page 59 above) in the Homily on Ezechiel II, ii, 8. In Article 2, which is concerned with the adequacy of the division of the two lives, Thomas follows Gregory as his precedent in the use of Rachel and Lia, Mary and Martha to represent respectively the contemplative and active lives.

Question 180: On Contemplative Life.

Of the eight articles here, St. Gregory is cited in six (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8) as an aid in discussing the problems. These articles contain the essential points of the discussion. Article 1 states that contemplative life, as regards the essence of the action, pertains to the intellect, but in regard to its motivating cause (love of truth and of the object contemplated) and the delight therein experienced, it pertains to the will. (See above, pages 84-85) Hence Gregory was right in regarding the contemplative life as a clinging to the love of God and of our neighbor. (25) (There are two other references to St. Gregory in the treatment.)

Article 2, touching the moral virtues, combines ideas of Aristotle and Gregory. The former taught that actual consideration of truth is the end of contemplative life and that moral virtues are ordered to active happiness; (26) the latter asserted that contemplative life implies abstention from action. (27) St. Thomas concludes that the practice of the moral virtues, while not belonging to contemplative life essentially, does belong dispositively. They check passions and also pacify the agitation of external activity which furnishes obstacles to contemplative union. This article makes clear that St. Thomas, like Gregory, conceives the two lives as stages of progress in the spiritual life. He cites Gregory four times.

Article 4 inquires whether contemplative life consists only in the contemplation of God, or also in the consideration of any truth whatever. The article is based on Gregory's statement (in *Morals vi*, 61, PL 75, 764) that "in contemplation, the principle, which is God, is sought." Thomas states that contemplation consists principally in considering divine Truth. But here below, this contemplation remains imperfect, and we are gradually led to it by considering the divine effects. Such consideration also belongs to contemplative life. Hence four things pertain, in a certain order, to contemplative life: "first, the moral virtues; secondly, other acts exclusive of contemplation; thirdly, contemplation of the divine effects; fourthly, the complement of all which is the contemplation of the divine Truth itself." (28) This arrangement, characteristic of Thomas as it is, is surely in complete accord with many statements of Gregory.

In Article 5 Thomas asks whether the contemplative life here below can reach the vision of the divine Essence. He introduces his own view by quoting once more the Homily on Ezechiel cited above: "As long as we live in this mortal flesh no one makes such progress in the virtue of contemplation as to fix his mind's eye upon the ray of that Infinite Light." (29) Remarkable agreement between the views of the two saints is to be found in the whole explanation. Thomas holds that the contemplation of the present life can attain to the vision of the divine Essence only if the bodily senses and even the imagination are suspended, as happens in rapture, such as that which lifted Paul into a state midway between the present and future life. Article 5 contains four citations from Gregory.

Again in Article 7, "Whether There Is Delight in Contemplation," Thomas introduces his own view by quoting from the same homily Gregory's statement: "The contemplative life is sweetness exceedingly lovable." (30) He remarks that there is a double joy. The first comes from the very delectation experienced in the act of knowing the truth, especially in the case of one who possesses the habits of wisdom and knowledge. The second delectation comes from the object which is not only known but also loved - in this instance God, Source of a joy surpassingly sweet. Thomas' conclusion, similar to Gregory's thought but expressed in chiseled scholastic language, would have pleased Gregory much:

Since, then, the contemplative life consists chiefly in the contemplation of God, of which charity is the motive, ... it follows that there is delight in the contemplative life, not only by reason of the contemplation itself, but also by reason of the Divine love.

In both respects the delight thereof surpasses all human delight, both because spiritual delight is greater than carnal pleasure, ... and because the love whereby God is loved out of charity surpasses all love. Hence it is written (Ps. xxxiii, 9): 'O taste and see that the Lord is sweet .

This theme is further elaborated by continued use of the Homily in Article 8, which emphasizes the everlasting duration of these contemplative joys, thanks to the incorruptible nature of man's soul and the limitless goodness of God. Thomas cites Gregory with approval:

The contemplative life begins here, so as to be perfected in our heavenly home, because the fire of love which begins to burn here is aflame with a yet greater love when we see Him Whom we love. (31)

Question 181: On Active Life

In each of the four articles in this Question, Thomas repeatedly quotes St. Gregory, again from the Homily on Ezechiel II, ii. In Article I Thomas sets up his problem (whether all the actions of the moral virtues belong to the active life) by citing from the definition (given above on page 59), "The active life is to give bread to the hungry," and by using Gregory's assertion that *Lia* signifies the active life and

Regarding the contemplative. Thomas maintains that the moral virtues belong essentially to the active life because they, like it, are directed to external operation. In Article 2, regarding the role of prudence in the active life, he cites Gregory once.

Article 3 anticipates somewhat the material of Question 182; the article relates to the fact that truths contemplated have a part in the action of teaching. Teaching is, by Gregory's definition, one of the works of *vita activa*, yet it obviously touches on *vita contemplativa*. In this article Thomas cites Gregory twice. In Article 4 he treats of the duration of the active life. St. Gregory is quoted as one source of the explanation of its disappearance in eternity, as well as of the transiency of contemplative life here below because of our present weakness. (32)

Question 182: Comparison between Active and Contemplative Life

Here again Aquinas uses the work of St. Gregory in his four articles which prove contemplative life to be more excellent or important (*potior vel dignior*) than the active.

In Article 1 he maintains that in certain respects and in some cases (because of the needs of the neighbor) the active life is the one which ought to be chosen (*magis eligenda*); nevertheless the contemplative life, considered in itself, is more excellent than the active for nine reasons. He introduces his opinion by quoting Luke 10, 42, with the added remark that Mary signifies the contemplative life; in his discussion he points out that Gregory, too, had held this (in *Morals vi*, 37). Thus Thomas accepts Origen's exegesis, the interpretation of this text which had become common in the West. In reply to his own Objection 1, Thomas points out that prelates should excel in both the active and contemplative lives, and that, consequently, Gregory was right in saying in *Pastoral Care* (ii, 1): "A prelate should be foremost in action, more uplifted than others in contemplation." In the reply to Objection 2 he twice quotes Gregory to show that the active life serves the contemplative and also receives direction from it.

In Article 2 he inquires whether the active life is more meritorious than the contemplative. After quoting Gregory three times in the objections, he introduces his own opinion by again citing his words: "Great are the merits of the active life, but greater still those of the contemplative." (33) Thomas' own treatment of the question is delicately shaded and sets forth truths of great importance for the earnest Christian. His premise is that charity is the root of merit. The contemplative life, pertaining as it does more directly to the love of God, is in itself more meritorious than the active life, which pertains directly to the love of the neighbor for God's sake. Nevertheless, it may happen that one man merits more by the works of the active life than another does by those of the contemplative life: when, for example, through abundance of divine love one relinquishes the sweetness of divine contemplation in order to fulfill God's will or increase His glory, as did Paul (*Romans ix*, 3). In all this Thomas' teaching is highly similar to Gregory's, but expressed with greater logical cogency and scholastic precision.

In Article 3 Thomas asks whether the contemplative life is hindered by the active. He builds his second Objection upon Gregorius' Homily on Ezechiel II, ii then goes on to introduce his own treatment by citing *Morals vi*, 37: "Those who wish to hold the fortress of contemplation, must first of all train in the camp of action." Here, too, Thomas gives a prudent, delicately shaded, and lucid treatment of this matter which is a vexing problem for many earnest Christians engaged in affairs. When the active life is regarded as something exterior (the attention to and practice of external works), it does hinder the contemplative, for one cannot be occupied with exterior activities while simultaneously exercising divine contemplation. But when the active life is conceived as something interior (the exercise of the moral

virtues to quell the passions), it is manifestly a help toward the contemplative life. The quotation from Gregory given above is then repeated at greater length to illustrate this conclusion.

Thomas devotes Article 4 to investigating whether the active life is prior to the contemplative. In Objection 2 he cites from the Homily: on Ezechiel II, ii, one of Gregory's passages about the interaction of the two lives: a well-ordered life proceeds from active to contemplative life, but sometimes the soul profits by returning to the active life. In Objection 3 he quotes Gregory (Morals vi, 37) to show that the active and contemplative lives are suitable for different persons. In the order of intrinsic worth, the contemplative life is prior to the active, which it directs. But in the order of time the active life is prior to the contemplative, toward which it disposes one. A passage from Gregory (34) is used to reinforce this point. With the help of further texts from Gregory (35) Thomas also shows the fluctuations possible during the testing-time of life on earth, when God's Will, a neighbor's need, and our own frailty may cause the active life to supersede the contemplative for a time.

Thomas' Treatment of the Two Lives in *Scripta super libros Sententiarum*

We can profitably supplement the exposition of the preceding section by turning next to St. Thomas' Commentary on the Sentences. (36) He wrote this work in his youth; hence this treatise is an earlier draft of what Thomas developed more thoroughly, but without any noteworthy change of opinion, in the *Summa Theologiae*. For example, the division into active and contemplative life is based on the dominant interest (*summum studium*) of a person. The treatment of the two lives is in *Distinctio xx:xv of Scripta super libros Sententiarum III*, and contains more than a dozen references to Gregory.

The Complexity of the Concept of the Two Lives in Thomas

As was pointed out above (pages 61-62), Gregory habitually wrote about the active and the contemplative lives - especially the former - in terms of the exterior or observable activities which sprang respectively from the moral and the theological virtues. The result was a complex concept. Thomas frequently used the same procedure as Gregory. Indeed, it was even more natural for him to use it because the practical intellect, one important factor in his division, tends by its very nature to external works. An example in point is this statement:

The active life may be regarded from two points of view. First, as regards the attention to and practice of external works: and thus it is evident that the active life hinders the contemplative, in so far as it is impossible for one to be busy with external action and at the same time give oneself to Divine contemplation. (37)

The upshot is that Thomas' idea of the two lives is, like Gregory's, a highly complex concept. It led him to speak of each of the lives sometimes as an interior attitude of mind, an interest, and sometimes as the set of exterior actions which flow from this attitude. Hence in his case, too, it has been easy for his readers to overlook his basic meaning of each life as an orientation of the soul or a stage of growth in interior life, and to read into his terms the misinterpretations frequent in later centuries: modes of living religious life in regard to its external occupations.

As the centuries passed, this propensity of his readers became perhaps still stronger, for two reasons. The first was the evolution in the external forms of religious life. In St. Gregory's day there was only one form of it, the monastic. But by St. Thomas' day it had developed into two observably different groups of religious: the monastic type, consisting of monks (such as the Cistercians) who pursued chiefly their own perfection inside a monastery, and the apostolic type (like the Dominicans and Franciscans) wherein the religious pursued their own perfection and also the works of the apostolate. Moreover, the

laws of enclosure were constantly growing stricter from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries. In 1298 Pope Boniface VIII promulgated his Constitution Periculoso by which he imposed cloister on all nuns. In 1566 Pope St. Pius V urged this law still more and even imposed it on the third orders. (38)

The second reason why readers of later centuries misinterpreted Thomas on the two lives lay in the Saint's own terminology in his treatment of the religious state, especially in Questions 186 and 188 of the Summa Theologiae, Ila-IIae. To this problem we shall next turn our attention.

The Exposition of Active and Contemplative Orders in the Summa Theologiae

After dealing with the two lives, Thomas proceeds to discuss the duties and states of men (Question 183), the state of perfection (184), the state of bishops (185), and finally the state of religion (186-189).

Question 186 is worded: "Of Those Things in Which the Religious State Properly Consists." Thomas' Latin is: De His in Quibus Religionis Status Praecipue Consistit. Here the word religio manifestly refers to a state, that is, a stable manner of living. Therefore it means "a religious institute" or "order." (39) Its meaning is altogether different from that of vita, "interior life," in the phrases vita activa and vita contemplativa which recur so often in Questions 179-182.

However, in Questions 183-189 there are many instances where readers or even translators apparently took religio to mean, not "religious institute," but "religious ; thus they took "religious life," or made it easy for others to take it, as a synonym for vita activa or vita contemplativa in Questions 179-182 or elsewhere. Influenced by the terminology current in their own centuries, they missed the precise meaning of St. Thomas' terms and also the sharp distinctions which they contain.

For example, the title of Question 188 is: De Differentia Religio. This means: "Of the Diversity of Religious Institutes" or "Orders" (emphasis mine). However, even our latest and excellent English version of 1947 translates the Latin: "Of the Different Kinds of Religious Life" (40) (emphasis mine). Beyond doubt this rendering of religionum by the English Dominican Fathers can be defended as being current English idiom. Unfortunately, however, it also makes it easy for many readers to equate the term "religious life" of Question 188 with either "active life" or "contemplative life" in Questions 179-182.

Article 1 of Question 188 is titled: Utrum Sit Tantum Una Religio, "Whether There Is Only One Religious Order"; Article 2 is: Utrum Aliqua Religio Institui Debeat ad Opera Vitae Activae, "Whether a Religious Order Should Be Established for the Works of the Active Life"; and Article 6 reads: Utrum Religio Quae Vacat Vitae Contemplativae Sit Potior Ea Quae Vacat Operibus Vitae Activae, "Whether a Religious Order That Is Devoted to Contemplative Life Is More Excellent than One That Is Given to the Active Life."

With this Latin terminology ready at hand, how natural it was that in the centuries after St. Thomas, as Dom Gazeau has written, (41) religious orders came to be classified as "active" or "contemplative" - a distinction somewhat unfortunate because it gave the impression that "active religious" could tend to perfection without orientating themselves toward the contemplative life, and that "contemplative religious" should renounce all apostolic work. Furthermore, there is the case of the many who, instead of carefully studying the terminology in the hundred or so pages filled by Questions 179 through 189, for some passing need merely referred in haste to one or another article. How easy it became for them to take the meaning expressed by the phraseology of Question 188. article 2, Religio ... ad Opera Vitae

Activae, "a religious order instituted for the works [characteristic] of the active [interior]life" (italics mine), and to attach that meaning to the term *vita activa* itself as used in Questions 179 through 182.

Likewise, how easily readers could take the concept of "religious institute" properly evoked by *Religio* in the title of Question 188, article 6, *Religio Quae Vacat Vitae Contemplativae*, and attach it to the term *vita contemplativa* itself in Questions 179-182. It is indeed small wonder that the modern inconsistency in terminology - a sign of unclear thought - has arisen.

Whether or Not St. Thomas Held a *Vita Mixta*

Since St. Thomas was a man of his time and a loyal Dominican, he took a man's part in contemporary religious discussions, upholding the Dominican side with the acuity and perseverance he brought to all else he undertook. It follows that he was eager to justify the existence of the Friars Preachers; they were an innovation, and many conservative Catholics, including some in high places, looked with disapproval upon them. Perhaps one reason for St. Thomas' interest in Gregory lay in the holy Pope's insistence on the high sanctity which ought to characterize preachers who must show forth in their life a union of *vita activa* with *vita contemplativa*. No one knew better than the scion of Aquino's dukes that offensive warfare is the best of defenses; and a cogent rebuttal to the Dominicans' detractors indirectly resulted from Thomas' exaltation of preaching and teaching orders in the *Summa*.

In Question 188, *De Differentia Religionum*, he treats of the diverse kinds of religious institutes or orders within the religious state. He holds that a religious order may be founded for works of the active life (e.g., for soldiering to promote the welfare of the people of God, for preaching and hearing confessions, or for study) because each of these activities can be a means toward the perfection of charity - the goal of the religious state (Article 1).

In Article 6 he asks whether a religious order devoted to contemplative life is more excellent than one given to the works of the active life. His answer is precise; taken in the abstract, an order dedicated to contemplation is more excellent than one attending to the deeds of the active life, since the first is devoted directly to a higher end, God Himself. In concrete cases, however, when work for the neighbor, such as teaching and preaching, proceeds from the fullness of contemplation,

this work is more excellent than simple contemplation, for even as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to give to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate Accordingly, the highest place in religious orders [*summum gradum in religionibus*,] is held by those which are directed to teaching and preaching. (42) The second place belongs to those which are directed to contemplation, and the third to those which are occupied with external actions.

This celebrated passage is often cited to show that Thomas held a *vita mixta*, (43) midway between *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. Is it true that he did?

The solution of the problem seems to lie in the distinction often mentioned in our last three chapters. He held only two lives (*activa* and *contemplativa*) when *vita* is taken to mean interior life; but he did hold three modes of living (*genera vivendi*) in regard to external features: *genus negotiosum*, *genus otiosum*, and *genus compositum*. His terminology itself is explicit in *Summa Theologiae* IIa-IIae, 186, 6, ad 3: *illud autem tertium vivendi genus*.

Many texts bear out this observation. Already in *Scripta super libros Sententiarum*, while treating of the twofold division of life into active and contemplative, he notes that Augustine's *Cit. of God* (xix) refers

to a third kind "ex utroque genere compositum." Here more explicitly than elsewhere in his work, St. Thomas shows that this is no denial of the fact that there are only the two divisions of life considered as the interior life; but in regard to external modes of living, there can be many divisions of the men who interiorly may be in either the contemplative or active stage. He writes:

This third kind is listed by Augustine not in regard to diversity- of life, but in regard to the diversity- of men living the lives. For there are some who carry on principally the exercises of the active life, although they also sometimes perform acts of contemplation. But others, setting less value on the cares of the active, devote themselves chiefly to contemplation. Still others live somewhat of both. (44) (Emphasis supplied.)

These words clearly show that Thomas did not accept any three-fold division of life, and that he found no indication that Augustine had done so in describing the three modes of living. Later in his life Thomas repeated this opinion of Scripta super libros Sententiarum when he wrote in Summa Theologiae, Ila-IIae, 181, 2, ad 3, that Augustine's

third kind of life is intermediate between the active and contemplative life regards the things about which it is occupied, because it is occupied sometimes with the contemplation of the truth, sometimes with external things. (45) (Emphasis supplied.)

Clearly, then, Thomas holds that Augustine's third kind of life, the composite, pertains to the external occupations.

We can observe in passing that a man in the active life, that is, the purgative or illuminative stage, might lead a busy, external life, or a studious one, or have a mixture of the two. So might a man in the contemplative life, that is, in the unitive stage of the spiritual life.

Confirmation from Cayre

What has been said here is confirmed and greatly clarified in Cayre's summary of St. Thomas's exposition of the degrees or stages of spiritual life. (46) He explains that Aquinas uses a double classification in the Summa, one based on charity, the other on contemplation. Then he continues:

It is to charity that the Angelic Doctor relates the classic division of the Three Ways. There are three sorts of Christians: Beginners, in whom charity must be fed and fostered for fear of death, and this by means of avoiding sin and curbing the passions; Proficients, who apply themselves chiefly to strengthening their growth in charity, and for this end strive to make progress in virtue; and, lastly, Perfect Souls, who desire to die and be with Christ, and are concerned to unite themselves to God and to re-joyce in Him. (Sum. Theol. Ila-IIae, 24, 9; cf. 183, 4).

From another point of view, Saint Thomas distinguishes active and contemplative life, but in order to indicate the basic degrees of perfection: formerly, in fact, these terms did not signify states of life characterized by differences chiefly exterior, but states of soul characterized by the predominance of some particular moral or spiritual preoccupation (studium). Active life means imperfect Christian life, in which the soul strives to acquire virtues and devotes itself to works of charity; this corresponds to the two first Ways listed above. Contemplative life does not exclude this practice of virtues, quite the contrary; but it supposes in addition higher lights which draw the soul's attention to God, modify its entire life, and help the Christian to achieve perfection; in a word, it is the perfect life. (47)

Cayre's note on this passage, especially its second paragraph, is even more significant for our purpose. It reads:

The active life precedes the contemplative just as what is common to all precedes in origin what is proper to the perfect In both lives, moreover, there is application to moral virtues and to works of charity for the neighbor; but the active devote themselves to these on account of the very goodness of these works, instead of using them as a means of disposing themselves for contemplation on the contrary. in the case of the perfect, who devote themselves to these works in view of contemplation, these works pertain to the contemplative life...

Thus the distinction between active and contemplative life, which is too often held to be based on the predominance of certain external or interior works, is in reality (Sum. Theol. 179, 1) based solely on the existence of a contemplation which embraces the entire life, either as a contemplative act properly so called, or as a disposition for this act. Furthermore, it is indubitable that certain social forms of Christian life deserve also in a particular way this name of 'contemplative life,' because everything in them is regulated so as to be conducive to contemplation. But there is nothing exclusive about them; more-over, the essential is not there, according to Saint Thomas' principles. The most duty-ridden exterior life can be a contemplative life, if all these works dispose to contemplation or are its fruit (48)

While many Catholics today equate "contemplative orders" with "contemplative life" and "active orders" with "active life," it is commonly assumed that St. Thomas, too, thought this. The dissenting and more correct views of scholars like Cayre are for the most part still hidden away in books of research, and are not known to the general run of Catholics, lay or religious. Some developments consequent upon the misinterpretation of St. Thomas' ideas will occupy us next.

Some Inconsistencies in Abbot Butler's Western Mysticism

In the light of the foregoing pages, occasional inconsistencies or inaccuracies become more easily discernible in Abbot Butler's study of contemplation and the contemplative life. His Western Mysticism is assuredly remarkable for its scholarly penetration and discernment; hailed at its first appearance as a masterpiece, for more than three decades the book has provided a key to understanding Augustine, Gregory, and Bernard. Moreover, readers of the present study cannot but be cognizant of this writer's great debt to him, of which she herself is keenly aware. Nevertheless, as has already been noted (above, on pages 42-43 and 72, n. 73), the esteemed author of Western Mysticism seems not only to overlook the basic meaning of the two lives as successive stages of progress in interior life, but also to have read modern concepts into the writings of an earlier period.

Such appears to be the case in regard to the meaning given to *vita contemplativa* by St. Gregory. At one point in Western Mysticism (49) Butler alludes, but in a negative passing reference, to Gregory's idea of it as a "state of mind"; and with this we are in agreement, since the ancients' view of "life." according to Cayre (see above, note 22 on page 8), is "un etat d'ame," and the contemplative state of soul que l'on croit, trop souvent, fondee sur la predominance des occupations exterieures ou interieures, est en realite (Sum. Theol. 179, 1) uniquement basee sur l'existence d'une contemplation qui embrasse la vie entiere, soit comme acte contemplatif proprement dit, soit comme disposition a cet acte. Du reste, il n'est pas douteux que certaines formes sociales de vie chretienne ne meritent aussi particuliere-ment ce titre de vie contemplative, parce que tout en elles est regle de facon a conduire a la contemplation. Mais il n'y a la rien d'exclusif; bien plus, l'essentiel n'est pas la, d'apres les principes de

saint Thomas. La vie extérieure la plus chargée d'œuvres peut être une vie contemplative, si tous ces travaux sont une disposition à la contemplation, ou bien s'ils en sont le fruit " Ibid., p. 321, n. 1. results in a contemplative state of mind. Later, however, Butler attaches two other meanings to "contemplative life." The first is "an objective meaning: a manner of corporate life ordained with the primary object of facilitating and promoting the exercise of contemplation, by removal or reduction of the usual obstacles." (50) The Abbot rightly states that this is a modern technical sense, exemplified by the Poor Clares or Carthusians. The second meaning is "a subjective or personal" one. According to it, "that man is leading a contemplative life who effectively practices contemplation," whatever be the external circumstances of his manner of living. The test of a contemplative life is not the absence of activity, but the presence of contemplation - for example, in Father Baker's view, practiced for about an hour each day. The works of the active life have their place in this contemplative life. Mystical contemplation may be present, but is not necessary. (51)

This "subjective or personal meaning" of contemplative life is, according to Butler, "the old Western meaning" as defined by St. Gregory and endorsed by St. Bernard." (52) But our analysis of Gregory's teaching in Chapter V yielded an understanding of his doctrine on the two lives in terms of the soul's advance through exercise of moral virtues to increasing degrees of perfection in the theological virtues. For Gregory this was the basic meaning; and Abbot Butler has not mentioned it.

Abbot Butler seems, at least to some extent, to read modern meanings into ancient terms when he analyzes the teaching of Thomas Aquinas on the lives: having assured us that the Saint never uses the term "mixed life," Butler then adds, "He recognizes the thing, however, and says it is the highest form of life." (53) If we note that last phrase - "form of life" - we have a key to the enigma: the highest exterior form of life, or mode of living, or *vitae genus*, is, we contend, held by Gregory and Thomas to be a union of the works of the active and contemplative lives, in so far as they mutually aid each other. The present study has sought to show that these saints were convinced that on earth: 1) the *vita activa* taken alone is imperfect; 2) the *vita contemplativa* taken alone is impossible; and 3) in the union of their characteristic works lies Christian perfection insofar as these mutually interacting stages are both increasing charity, the essence of perfection. But this is not a third life - *vita mixta*: (54) there are just two lives. On the other hand, the manner of external or observable living followed by different men in leading either the active or contemplative life may well be arranged according to several classifications, including a composite of the two.

In summary, then, it appears to this writer that, although in most instances Abbot Butler gave what was for his time an extraordinarily lucid and accurate presentation of the whole problem of the two lives, he nevertheless missed the basic meaning of these as held by Origen, Augustine, and Gregory: stages of growth in interior life. In addition, he misconstrued statements of St. Augustine (55) and St. Thomas Aquinas (56) on the existence of only two lives, regardless of the number of modes of living.

Moreover, while Abbot Butler recognized that for the ancients the term *vita contemplativa* signified more than "a corporate manner of living," he nevertheless fell into the modern fallacy of overemphasizing the seeming opposition between active and contemplative life. To avoid this fallacy, three considerations must be kept clearly in mind. First, when the two lives are understood as successive and interacting stages of growth in interior life, they do not oppose each other at all. Second, when considered in regard to the external activities which issue respectively from the exercise of the moral virtues in the active life or of the theological virtues in the contemplative life, the two lives do present a practical problem of balance for each individual. In this, one often is a hindrance to the other, as St. Thomas points out (see *Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae*, 182, 3; and above, p. 91-92). Third, when the

men living in either stage, the active or contemplative, are divided according to their observable manners of living (*genus vitae negotiosum, otiosum, or mixtum*), they, too, have a practical problem of balance. Such distinctions as these can help much to clarify thinking about the two lives; it is therefore regrettable that Abbot Butler overlooked them.

The Two Lives in Writings since Thomas Aquinas

Dom Roger Gazeau in an article on "Contemplatifs" traces their history from the days of the Desert Fathers. (57) He first explains that the traditional view even for several centuries after St. Gregory was that no opposition existed between active and contemplative life; he then continues:

Concepts grew more rigid with time. For Saint Thomas still, moral virtues, though related to active life, dispose one for contemplation (S. T. IIa-IIae, 180, 2). But, contrary to the teaching of Saint Gregory, from whom he departs by making a distinction between the very intense act of contemplation and the other acts (ibid., 8, ad 2), Saint Thomas admits that man can, even here below, establish himself in the state of contemplative life; for him, in effect, contemplative life is that which is principally ordered to the contemplation of truth, in contrast to the kind of life [genre de vie] suitable for those who devote themselves primarily to external works of zeal (ibid., 179, 1). The distinction between active and contemplative life is thus thenceforth drawn from the kind of life [genre de vie], the occupations of the religious - the various practical ends he can assign for his activity - and no longer from the distinction between the ultimate end he must seek and the means he undertakes to accomplish it. Saint Thomas admits two kinds of life [genres de vie], according as there is predominant preoccupation with contemplation out of love for God (monastic life) or with action out of love for the neighbor (charitable, medical, military orders, etc.). Contemplative life [la vie contemplative] seems to him superior, especially when from the fulness of contemplation there flows forth, for the good of all, the teaching of the Divine Word (Order of Preachers; ibid., 188, 6). (58) (Emphasis supplied.)

The French expression *genre de vie* can mean either "kind or species of life" or "manner of living." In this passage Dom Gazeau seems to use it now in the one meaning, now in the other. Hence he apparently takes, at least implicitly, three successive steps: 1) he treats as synonyms (a) kind of life (*genre de vie* understood as manner of living) based on the dominant exterior occupations of the monks and, (b) contemplative life (*la vie contemplative* which is an interior orientation of the soul); 2) he also uses the term contemplative life (*la vie contemplative*) to designate a contemplative order or species of religious institute; 3) then he says of St. Thomas: "Contemplative life [meaning 'a contemplative order'] seems to him superior, especially when from the fulness of contemplation there flows forth ... the teaching of the Divine Word."

Thus even in so recent and scholarly a reference work as *Catholicisme*, Dom Gazeau seems to fall into the anachronism of reading into St. Thomas' terms the common modern meaning of "contemplative life," namely, a contemplative order. In this way he somewhat misunderstands St. Thomas, and he virtually excludes from contemplative life both the laity and the religious in apostolic orders.

Furthermore, he unfortunately implies that St. Thomas and St. Gregory did this too. At the least, Dom Gazeau fails to bring out clearly the vital distinction, clearly conceived in Augustine and Thomas and implied in Gregory between 1) the active or contemplative life (*vita*) as stages of growth in interior life and 2) the kinds of living in regard to external features (*genus vitae negotiosum, genus otiosum, genus mixtum*), as he might have done by varying his terminology as occasion required from *genres de vie*

[interieure] to manieres de vivre [exterieurement] . Throughout this section of his article, therefore, Dom Gazeau is not accurately reflecting the ancients' minds. Moreover, his false identification slips into his phrasing when he tells us that for Gregory the Great and Teresa of Avila

active and contemplative life are not contrasted to each other as different species of the one state of life, the religious state, but on the contrary they are mutually ordered to each other as successive and complementary moments of the state of religious life. (59) (Emphasis supplied.)

One is tempted to ask the author, "What life is then left for the laity?" However, no writings of St. Gregory or St. Thomas contain the three steps implicitly taken by Gazeau. No one, however, would be likely to deny that readers of St. Thomas did take them in later centuries. And Dom Gazeau is certainly right in saying "Concepts grew more rigid with time."

Moreover, other Catholics besides interpreters of St. Thomas Aquinas manifested this tendency to let terms become rigid, at least in the matter of the two lives. Abbot Butler points out that Benedictine monastic life was profoundly affected by the Cluniacs dominant in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; under them, writes the Abbot:

There was so great an increase in the celebration of mass-es and offices that they took up the greater part of the waking hours, to the exclusion of all other work. And this manner of life, spent mostly in church, came to be looked on as realizing the ideal of the contemplative life. In the curious twelfth-century Dialogue between a Cluniac and a Cistercian, the Cluniac twits the Cistercian, saying that the Cistercians, spending most of their time in manual labour in the fields, live the active life, whereas the Cluniacs live the contemplative life (Martene, Thesaurus A necdoctorem, v. 15 7 4). Owing to the enormous influence of Cluny, this became the currently accepted idea of the contemplative life in Benedictine circles, and beyond them, during several centuries. (60)

Still another factor affected the manner in which Christians understood the "contemplative life." Mystics, notably the Carmelites John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila, unintentionally contributed to popular belief in the extraordinary nature of contemplation and the contemplative life. Treasures of spirituality though they be, such books as *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* and *The Spiritual Canticle* speak so frequently of visions, ecstasy, and other phenomena sometimes (though not necessarily) concomitant to higher prayer, that readers were awed to the point of overlooking the less startling essentials.

No longer did it seem, as in the pages of Augustine and Gregory, that contemplative life, although lived by few at its highest intensity, could be lived at times by most. Instead, in a manner somewhat similar to Cassian and Eastern writers, many authors wrote as if cloistered religious alone would find the intimacy of contemplative union. Often, too, writers gave the impression that contemplative union came about only by way of purifying trials so great as to seem almost soul-shattering; it appeared dangerous presumption for the mere layman to aim at contemplative life at all.

Doubtless there were other causes for a change in the attitude of Christians toward contemplative life; but the influence of Thomism, of the Cluniac system, and of misinterpretations of Carmelite spirituality were surely among the most important. The result today is that Abbot Butler accurately reflected modern opinion when he wrote:

'Contemplative life' has two meanings. It has an objective meaning: a manner of corporate life ordained with the primary object of facilitating and promoting the exercise of contemplation, by removal or reduction of the usual obstacles. And it has a subjective or personal meaning,

according to which, whatever be the external conditions, that man is leading a contemplative life who effectively practises contemplation

The first is the modern technical sense of 'contemplative life': whereby many Orders of women, pre-eminently the Carmelites and Poor Clares, and among men the Carthusians and Trappists, are said to lead a contemplative life. But the second is the old Western meaning, as defined by St. Gregory According to this conception, the test of a contemplative life does not lie in the absence of activity, but in the presence of contemplation; it is a life in which the good works of the active life have their place, provided the contemplation be there as a reality. (61)

Since few people seem aware even of this twofold meaning; since even Abbot Butler himself omitted first, the original and basic Christian meaning of the two lives as stages of growth in interior life, and secondly, the distinction between \square and genus vitae neg:2tiosum, otiosum, or mixtum; and since, as he shows, a spiritual writer of Bishop Hedley' s stature can use one or the other of these dissimilar concepts without preparing his readers, (62) it is no wonder that many are confused today. One of the most unfortunate results, suggested by Abbot Chapman in reference to mysticism, is that many Christians tend to shy away from seeking perfection, or unitive love, in this life because they associate it with extraordinary mystic phenomena. (63) It would indeed be for the profit of souls could they know the teaching on the two lives as given in Augustine, Gregory, and Thomas.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Our age has witnessed what might be called the coming of age of the laymen in the Church. Many have responded with generosity to the "Be ye perfect" that Christ spoke to people in every walk of life. They know that mediocre followers are unworthy of the All -Holy: noth-ing short of sanctity will suffice. Impelled perhaps to greater urgency by the amorality of a world of unleashed atom -splitting power and of schizophrenic misery in indi - vidual souls as well as between the peoples of many lands, Christians are eager for sanctity. They are familiar, too, with theological terms; they are ready to discuss active and contemplative life.

The writer had occasion to question rather informally some two dozen educated Catholics on their opinions about the two lives. (1) These people lived in Oregon, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Indiana; they were sisters, Jesuit and Benedictine priests, and lay members of the Christian Family Movement. Although no two gave the same definition, all felt able to tell in what the two lives consisted. Their interest and their rather confused thinking - this latter no worse than that found in Catholic reference books cited earlier in this study - merit their hav-ing more opportunity to learn what the saints and Doctors of the Church taught for centuries about *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*.

That souls of good will can develop, thanks to grace, into men living by faith, hope, and love in the contemplative life is taught by St. Augustine, for example. In Cayre' s words:

This contemplative life, unified by a simple but enlightened faith, and, in short, the perfect life, is far from excluding good works: on the contrary, it requires them ... The holy Doctor wants contemplatives, out of charity and obedience, to devote themselves also to the external works of the apostolate, and to become men of action, without for that reason giving up their de-light in God and truth. (2)

Could any nation need to know this more than one which has as many souls as our United States who are showing a deep interest in contemplation?

The saints have stated the truth simply, but perhaps not simply enough. It would help to lay aside the debates about classifying life or states of life, and with an uncluttered mind pick up the Gospel. There it is Absolute Simplicity who teaches the lesson.

As they were traveling, He entered a certain village; and a lady named Martha entertained Him at her home. And she had a sister called Mary, who, seating herself at the Lord's feet, listened to His words. But Martha was over-busy with much serv-ing; and standing before Him she exclaimed, 'Lord, is it no matter to Thee that my sister has left me to attend to things alone? Tell her then to help me.' 'Martha, Martha,' the Lord answered her, 'thou art anxious and troubled about many things, while there is need of only a few, or of only one. For Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.' (3)

If, in company with many of the Fathers such as St. Augustine and St. Gregory the Great, we take St. Luke's phrase *τὴν ἀγαθὴν μερίδα* to refer to the problem of the active and contemplative lives, it matters comparatively little for our present purposes how translators have rendered *ἀγαθὴν*: *QP-timam* (the Vulgate), "best" (Douay and Confraternity), "the good" (Spencer, Westminster and Kleist-Lilly). What we ought to observe with most attention is *μερίδα*, "part." Mary's is not a whole, any more than Martha's is. If we unite them, we have, not two lives, but one whole one. This was the life which Christ came to bring us - His own.

The Gospel pericope quoted above was used at least from the time of St. Anselm (1033-1109) until 1950 for the Mass of the Assump-tion.(4) Since then, Rome has replaced it with another passage from St. Luke (L, 41-50) . As this latter culminates in our Lady's Magni - ficat and is the feast's traditional Gospel in a number of Eastern rites, the new selection is both excellent and appropriate. One may, however, ask why the change was made. A possible explanation is that it was at least partly because modern Catholics, unlike medieval writers, failed to see how the Martha -Mary episode was applicable to Mary of Naza -reth, assumed into heaven.

St. Anselm, however, could have told them. For St. Thomas says of him: (5)

Beata Virgo fuit in utraque vita; et ideo secundum Anselmum, Hom. super Luc. x, in Assumptione ejus legitur Evangelium de Martha et Maria quae significant vitam activam et contemplativam.

St. Bernard, (1090-1153), too, could have told them. For he had written of this mystery of Christ's Virgin Mother:

*In hac una et summa Maria,
et Marthae negotium
et Mariae non otiosum otium invenitur. (6)*

Who can capture in English the almost lyric tenderness, the paradox and the pun? "In this, the one and greatest Mary are found both the service of Martha and the far from idle leisure of Mary." The Mother of Jesus did not have to struggle through the active life into the contem - plative life like the majority of mankind envisaged by Origen and St. Augustine . But because of intense love of God she did practice all the activities springing respectively from the moral and theological vir-tues in either the active or contemplative life when these virtues are mutually interacting. Hence the Queen of All Saints exemplifies the union of active and contemplative life - and that in precisely the way in which St. Gregory conceived their being uniteo in an idealized case.

St. Gregory the Great would have understood Bernard and Anselm; these men of the twelfth century thought very much as he had thought about *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. His constant teaching is

that Christians who exercise the moral virtues are good, as their souls live in *vita activa*; that those who, in addition, are motivated by the theological virtues are far more pleasing to God, as their souls live in *vita contemplativa*; and that the highest stage of Christian perfection possible on earth, regardless of one's outward state of life (or social mode of living), consists in a union of the two lives (considered as two *etats* ², two states or orientations of soul resulting in respective attitudes of mind and then in their characteristic external practices) - a union in which the charity of the contemplative life overflows into the active life to motivate, control, and direct its works.

Counsels toward a Proper Balance

For every person, however, there still remains a practical problem of finding a balance proper for himself, suited to his own dominant abilities, propensities, and interests. When his interior life (*vita*, whether it be predominantly active or contemplative) is considered in relation to external or observable features of conduct, he often finds himself confronted with the need of making a choice. Within the limits of his state of life and present contingent circumstances, should he turn himself more toward engagement in affairs (*genus vitae negotiosum*), or toward study and contemplation (*genus otiosum*), or toward what particular proportion in a combination of the two (*genus compositum*)?

What norm is he to use in making this choice? Since the essence of Christian perfection consists in augmenting charity, which grows proportionally with sanctifying grace, this very charity is the most important and decisive factor. Activity, or contemplation, or any combination of them, should be examined as to its value for increasing sanctifying grace. Hence, he has this simple norm. He can take stock of his own personality, temperament, talents, and obligations. Then he can ask himself, as honestly as possible: In which manner of living am I with my personality, likely to increase my sanctifying grace the most, and thus to bring greater glory to God?

In this difficult deliberation he will find guidance in the wise observation of Augustine:

Holy leisure is longed for by the love of truth; but it is the necessity of love to undertake requisite business. If no one imposes this burden upon us, we are free to sift and contemplate truth; but if it be laid upon us, we are necessitated for love's sake to undertake it. And yet not even in this case are we obliged to re-linquish the sweets of contemplation; for were these to be with-drawn, the burden might prove more than we can bear. (7)

He will find counsel, too, in a passage from the *Morals of Gregory* which Thomas Aquinas quotes approvingly. Pointing out that different personalities are more suitable for different pursuits, Thomas writes: (8)

Objection 3 Now the active and contemplative life are suitable to different subjects; for Gregory says (*Morals*, vi, 37; PL 75, 761): 'Often those who were able to contemplate God so long as they were undisturbed have fallen when pressed with occupation; and frequently they who might live advantageously occupied with the service of their fellow-creatures are killed by the sword of their inaction.'

His reply is highly practical and shows his understanding of human nature:

Reply to Objection 3. He that is prone to yield to his passions on account of his impulse to action is simply more apt for the active life by reason of his restless spirit. Hence Gregory says (*Morals*, vi, 37; PL 75, 761) 'that there be some so restless that when they are free from labor they labor all the more, because the more leisure they have for thought, the worse interior turmoil they have to bear.' - Others, on the contrary, have the mind naturally pure and restful, so that they are apt for contemplation, and if they were to apply themselves wholly to action, this would be

detrimental to them. Wherefore Gregory says (ibid.) that 'some are so slothful of mind that if they chance to have any hard work to do they give way at the very outset.' Yet, as he adds further on, 'often ... love stimulates slothful souls to work, and fear restrains souls that are disturbed in contemplation.' Consequently those who are more adapted to the active life can prepare themselves for the contemplative by the practice of the active life; while none the less, those who are more adapted to the contemplative life can take upon themselves the works of the active life, so as to become yet more apt for contemplation.

St. Thomas pointed out one excellent way to combine the pursuits characteristic of the two lives: to let the fruits of contemplation overflow to the benefit of the neighbor by teaching him sacred doctrine (IIa-IIae, 188, 6):

... the work of the active life is twofold. One proceeds from the fullness of contemplation, such as teaching and preaching And this work is more excellent than simple contemplation. For even as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to give to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate. The other work of the active life consists entirely in outward occupation, for instance almsgiving, receiving guests, and the like, which are less excellent than the works of contemplation, except in cases of necessity, as stated above (Q. 182, A. 1)

Reply to Obj. 2. ... In some cases the works of the active life take precedence of contemplation. These words have rightly furnished both inspiration and a truly effective challenge to holiness for many men and women, both clerical and lay, in our era. They are those who have found their vocation in a fully dedicated life. Through the opportunity of their generous volunteering or their being assigned by legitimate authorities, they have devoted themselves to teaching or preaching divine truth, or to other works of mercy in order to bring themselves and their neighbors to the knowledge and love of God.

St. Gregory, too, encourages and inspires them when he teaches that it is neither desirable nor possible now to lead "a purely contemplative life in which the works of the active life are sought to be reduced almost to the vanishing point." (9) To feed the hungry, tend the sick, teach the ignorant, and correct the erring - here below such activities (which spring from the moral virtues motivated by charity) must be practiced by all. The priest and the layman, the religious in an apostolic order and the one in a cloistered institute, each in the manner proper to his own state, should strive to increase his grace and merit. Each should endeavor, according to his own gifts of nature and grace, to mount to ever greater perfection: "The path of the just grows ever brighter, like the light of dawn opening into full day." (10)

Appendix: A Sampling of Contemporaries' Opinions on the Meaning of *Vita Activa* and *Vita Contemplativa*

In the spring of 1958, when the writer was considering research into current and historical meanings attached to the terms *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*, she was struck by the frequently divergent views expressed by scholars whose works she consulted. It soon became apparent that her contemporaries' opinions reflected these discrepancies. Conversation with fellow students at Marquette University revealed that while interest in the two lives was common (for who has not read Merton?), yet at the same time, definitions of these lives were often hazy and occasionally contradictory.

Typical of the situation was the way in which three graduate students, religious from Oregon, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania, described the status of their respective institutes. The Pennsylvanian, a speech correctionist, considered hers an active life; the Oregonian, a zoologist, called hers a mixed one; and the Minnesotan, a high school teacher who in her novitiate had studied Butler's Benedictine Monachism, held that the spirit of monastic life was, ideally at least, contemplative. (1) The fact that all three of these sisters came from American motherhouses, and regulated their day's prayer, work, and rest quite similarly, served to highlight the remarkably dissimilar labels attached to what seemed identical modes of life.

The questionnaire to be discussed here came into being as a result of such conversations. For the purpose of this study, the writer decided to sound out some priests, sisters, and other people as to their views concerning active and contemplative life. Through the good offices of a few friends, who prefer to remain anonymous, she obtained a number of replies which seem worthy of citation. While not purporting to be exhaustive, the data recorded are nonetheless significant samples of the divergent concepts regarding the meaning and importance of active and contemplative life held today by American Catholics whose education may fairly be called better than average.

The answers did not come from one region alone. The questions were sent to people in Indiana, Virginia, and Oregon. Thanks, however, to the mobility of our countrymen, the spread geographically is far wider. Those responding represent one or more of the former students of: Catholic University of America (Washington, D. C.), Xavier (Cincinnati), DePaul (Chicago), San Anselmo (Rome), Laval (Montreal), Apollinaris (Rome), Sorbonne (Paris), Notre Dame (Indiana), Saint Meinrad (Indiana), Mercyhurst (Erie, Pennsylvania), Canisius (Buffalo, New York), Tufts (Medford, Massachusetts), and Loras (Dubuque, Iowa).

The questionnaire itself was simple in its request that, without consulting reference books, respondents briefly state their opinions on the following:

1. What do you mean by the ACTIVE LIFE?
2. What do you mean by the CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE?
3. Which is better? Why?
4. Is there a distinction between STATE and LIFE, as applied to the active and the contemplative person?

The only other question concerned the respondent's educational background.

Some wrote their replies, which were unsigned. Others gave verbal replies to one or more of the above questions; friends forwarded these to the writer. Because they appear valuable indications of conceptions and misconceptions in regard to the two lives prevalent among clerics and laity today in America, they serve to confirm remarks previously made in Chapter I regarding the present state of our central problem. As such, they are cited here.

QUESTION 1: What do you mean by the ACTIVE LIFE?

From Mr. A:

Living in the world and directly with God's Children. Doing His work among them.

From Mr. B:

Active life refers to living in the secular world, meeting and dealing with those with whom we come in contact, and earning a livelihood.

From Mr. C:

Active life is one in which the Catholic acts the part of a Lay Apostle - carrying on Christ's work - helping complete Christ's mission on earth - acts as Christ's hands and feet to carry on the work of saving souls or leading souls to Christ.

From Mr. D:

I relate the terms to the religious life Active life involves working with God's creatures for His greater honor and glory - administering the Sacraments and carrying out the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

From Mrs. E:

Active life is love made visible in work for Christ in His members.

From Father P:

State of action for God among men by one who is not hie et nunc conscious of God's presence.

From Father Q:

State of one who is active in the Christian program of the spread of Christ's kingdom. This does not prevent him from being a contemplative.

From Father R:

In the active life the emphasis is placed upon the many activities among souls to bring about the reign of God in souls.

From Father S:

The active life is living according to the mind of the Church in the active program of the Church's mission to souls and assisting in carrying out this program.

From Father T:

The active life is largely characterized by acts carried out for the Christian Church, but. .. presupposes a firm religious foundation.

From Father U:

The seen apostolate - external activity striving for union with God.

From Father V:

Briefly, I have always thought of the active life as the soul's effort to bring God to creatures.

Taken together, the above definitions of the active life range from equating it with the lay apostle's works of zeal to the ordained priest's administration of the sacraments, and from earning a livelihood to engaging in the mission of saving souls as a religious vowed to evangelical poverty. Perhaps because of

the way in which the question was phrased, most of the answers reflect a subjective view, seeming to imply that there is no objective norm known to the respondent.

QUESTION 2: What do you mean by the CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE?

From Mr. A:

Living apart from the world. The contemplative life is devoted to writings, meditation and prayer - particularly a life of sacrifice and prayer for atonement for the offenses of the members of the Mystical Body against God.

From Mr. B:

Life contemplating God - the intention being to spend as much time as possible in the pure act of adoring Him.

From Mrs. C:

Dedicating one's life to prayer and solitude to accomplish the saving of souls through adoration of God. Mortification, mental prayer, many disciplines are involved in the contemplative way of life - sacrificing the luxuries and all life in the world to earn souls for God in that way.

From Mr. D:

Contemplative life is that of the cloistered religious whose main concern is consideration of God, praying for those in the world; it is a life with a minimum of contact with the secular world.

From Mrs. E:

Contemplative life: the hours we (my husband and I) spend in praying the Office, and in beholding God's Beauty in nature, in literature, in all created beauty.

From Father Q:

State of one truly seeking God, who is conscious of the presence of God, not indeed always, but from time to time.

From Father S:

The chief way of living separated from the world but in close association with the mind of the Church.

From Father T:

Building up the Church by a life of prayer.

From Father U:

Contemplative life - letting grace work within the soul, the unseen apostolate.

From Father V:

The contemplative life is the effort of the soul to go to God.

From Father W:

The contemplative life is the state of building up of self by contemplation and prayer.

From Father X:

No life is all action, nor all contemplation. A combination of the two is the ideal. In the contemplative life there is a predominance given to such activities as prayer, meditation, choir work, where the primary emphasis is upon God and His glory.

From Father Y:

An intimacy with God by grace here on earth that is but a preparation for perfect union above. Hence, a vocation to which all are called theoretically, but practically few can reach amidst activity.

Here the replies seem more uniform, since cloistered life is mentioned or implied in the majority as essential. This is not true, however, of the replies of Mrs. E, or of Fathers Q, U, V, and Y. In all these, consciousness of the Divine Presence and loving intimacy with God are considered primary requisites. Another point of variation is to be noted in that Father Q states that contemplative life is lived "from time to time," apparently; Mr. B says this ought to be "as much time as possible"; while Father X wants to combine it with active life. To Father Y it seems a rare vocation; but the others make no mention of this, and Mrs. E implies that it is to be found among the joys of conjugal love. As occupations proper to contemplative life, there are references to writing, choral prayer, and acts of mortification (Mr. A, Father X, and Mrs. C); on the other hand, solitude and pure acts of adoration are emphasized by Mr. B, Mr. D, and Father S, as if these were the contemplative's sole interest.

Now, it is quite true that many of the elements mentioned above can be harmonized. Moreover, the contemplative life may well be motivated by some combination of adoration, reparation, and zeal for souls. A notable feature of the replies quoted, however, is that each individual tends to emphasize one particular point which he has selected on an apparently subjective basis; and among these are some apparently irreconcilable elements. Even more significant from the point of view of this study is that no concept of the two lives given in these answers to the first two questions bears any similarity to the concept of St. Gregory (pages 73-77 above). But of this we shall speak in the conclusion to the Appendix.

QUESTION 3: Which is better? Why?

From Mr. A:

I believe the active life is better. Why? For the same reason that Christ, in the divine plan for redemption, chose the active life.

From Mr. B:

Objectively the contemplative life is better, but practically speaking - that way is best for any individual to which God has called him. The contemplative is better because the act of constantly loving and adoring God Almighty totally and without distraction is most pleasing to God.

From Mrs. C:

Contemplative life, while very pleasing to God, is only for a select few; when one is called by God, a true vocation, it is possibly more pleasing to God than active life. If active life is your vocation in the world, whether married, single, or clergy, it is for the majority and can be very

pleasing to God. If lived heroically, it can perhaps be better than contemplative life !!,2! lived heroically.

From Mr. D:

Neither is better per se. The state of life which God has intended for each of us is the best for us. However, the contemplative life is of a higher order because it is more spiritual.

From Father V:

Both are part of perfection for Christian souls, I think the contemplative state and the active state are op-posed, since one cannot be perfect in himself and in both states simultaneously. However, I think every active life must have some contemplation. Otherwise, the active life loses its motive force. I also think that every contemplative life _must have some active life. Otherwise, the contempla-tive loses his ability to give forth God's gifts. The pattern of all life is to contemplate and receive up to a certain per-fection. Tlien, if life is not given forth, a selfishness sears the soul. Even the saint in heaven, who contemplates God always, is asked through our prayers to work miracles; and this going towards the creature with God's assistance certainly seems a part of the active life, even though the saint in heaven is in the contemplative life.

Active life versus contemplative: exercises of con-templation will always be necessary, but modern psychology teaches that many temperaments are unable to prolong their contemplation for very long, without resuming contact at intervals with an action, an environment, a concrete reality.

From a religious superior (a sister):

The data on adaptation, the lectures on Sister Formation, and especially the talks by Sister Emil, I. H. M., stress the fact that our apostolate obliges us to be contemplative in action. The question is not either-or, or choose - one: we need both.

The above answers do not lend themselves to any sort of summar-ization. Some are simple, others defy analysis. They serve to bring out the fact that Catholics today can regard the two lives as utterly op-posed or as essentially complementary, yet appear not to be aware of any conflict between such variant views. Moreover, these respondents do not agree as to which of the lives is superior, but imply that this is determined largely on subjective grounds. The fact that few priests specifically mention the superiority of contemplative life (or even reply to Question 3 at all) may be due to their familiarity with the Martha-Mary episode; they expect all to know that Mary's is the better part.(2)

QUESTION 4: Is there a distinction between STATE and LIFE, as applied to the active and the contemplative person?

From Mr. A:

"Life" has reference to the means one chooses for serving God - the surroundings or atmosphere, whether lay or religious.

From Mr. B:

To me the difference is a matter of time. The con-templative life indicates permanency - that is, a person who becomes a religious (or, rarely, a lay contemplative). The contemplative state is something that everyone should strive for - religious or laity. That is, we should all at-tempt to spend a set amount of time each week in a state of contemplating God: an opportunity to think of our relation - ship to God; His eternal love for us; and to love Him with our whole mind, heart, and soul.

From Mrs. C:

The life is one which is given wholly to God in an or-der (Cistercians, for example). State is that to which all Catholics should aspire - true mental prayer, adoration of God. This is not only helpful to, but even at times necessary to, the active life.

From Mr. D:

Contemplative "life" refers to a religious cloistered existence. A contemplative "state" could be attained by a lay person for a period of time.

From Father V:

It seems to me the difference between the active and the contemplative life, and the active and contemplative state is that the life is the conditions with which you sur-round yourself in an effort to assist either the active or the contemplative state in its progress towards perfection.

The replies from Fathers P, S, and Y indicated that it was possible to use "life" and "state" interchangeably. Two of them began: "The contemplative life or state " The same occurred in verbal replies of sisters.

The above answers reveal an interesting pattern, as they fall into three groups. In the first of these there seems to be a distinct prefer-ence for the "contemplative state" as more comprehensive or essential for Christians than "contemplative life." This is expressed by three laymen - Mr. B, Mrs. C, and Mr. D. The second group consists of those who hold that no distinction need be made: these are three priests - Fathers--P, ·S, and Y, and a number of sisters. In the third group there seems to be implied the idea that the term "state" may refer to states of life determined by canons of the Church; respondents indicat-ing this are a layman, Mr. A, and a priest, Father V.

It is interesting to note that all five of the replies given on pages 123-24 seem intended to stress the excellence of prayerful union with God. Oddly enough, however, there is lack of agreement on termino-logy. For Mr. A and Father V, there is the concept of "state" as meaning "canonical status"; but for the other three, "life" is used as the term for clerical, religious, or lay "states of life."

Undeniably, this fourth question was intended to perplex; and a glance at the answers serves to reveal confused thinking. Yet not one respondent stated in his reply to this or any other question that he did not know, or was uncertain, regarding his answer.

Almost equally startling, therefore, are the diversity of the re - spouses on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the readiness of priests, sisters, and laymen to define and distinguish in this matter of the two lives. The results of the questionnaire seem to make three facts fairly obvious in regard to *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*:

- 1) There are noteworthy differences of opinion among our Christian contemporaries;
- 2) Many educated Catholics have an opinion about them that passes for knowledge;

- 3) Such loose concepts are obstacles to intelligent reading of any works that concern the two lives, which are basic themes in the pages of men like Augustine, Gregory the Great, and Thomas Aquinas.

In view of the above-stated facts, it seems we may find in conclusion that the questionnaire substantiates our statement regarding *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* stated early in this study: "If Catholics having such comparatively modern concepts read the works of Gregory, who uses the classic terms in a different sense, there is a danger. Without any suspicion of error the modern readers may read their meanings into St. Gregory's terms and consequently fail to grasp his meaning accurately. They may easily do the same when they read the treatises *De Vita Contemplativa* and *De Vita Activa* of St. Thomas Aquinas." (3)

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Notes

Foreword

(1) In some lecture notes written by one of his students which were kindly shown to me. They were based, it seems, on his *Alte Quellen Neuer Kraft*. Further leads on this problem will be found (by means of the index s. v. *conversatio*) in *The Rule of Saint Benedict in Latin and English*, ed. and trans. by Abbot Justin McCann (Westminster: Newman, 1952), and in the same author's *Saint Benedict, the Story of the Man and His Work* (Garden City: Doubleday Image Books, 1958). Also, see the footnotes in the edition of 1937 (Sheed and Ward) of Chapter xi, "The Life of the Rule."

Chapter 1

(1) *Summa Theologiae*, II-IIae, q. 179-182.

(6) Felician A. Foy, O.F.M., (ed.), *The 1955 National Catholic Almanac* (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony's Guild, 1955), p. 303. It should be noted, however, that in the 1957 edition there was a significant change in the definition of active and mixed communities: both were said to be "devoted to works among men, although elements of the contemplative life are also found among them," p. 432.

A sister who read the 1955 volume asked: "Does this mean that the members of our institute who nurse are in the active life, but the teachers are in the mixed life? And where are those who teach in schools of nursing?"

(7) Robert C. Broderick, (ed.), *The Catholic Concise Encyclopedia* (St. Paul: Catechetical Guild Educational Society, 1957), p. 110. (Emphasis supplied.)

(8) Conde B. Pallen and John J. Wynne, S.J., (eds.), *The New Catholic Dictionary* (New York: Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1929).

(9) *Ibid.*, pp. 252-53. (Emphasis supplied.)

(10) Donald Attwater, (ed.), *A Catholic Dictionary (The Catholic Encyclopedia Dictionary)*, (2d ed. rev; New York: Macmillan, 1949).

(11) *Ibid.*, p. 120.

(12) Ibid., p. 327 (Emphasis supplied.)

(13) Ibid., p. 7.

(14) "Religieux et religieuses: Divisions des religieux, 11 Dictionnaire de theologie catholique, XIII, Part II (1937), 2169.

(15) " ... Cette division en ordres contemplatifs et actifs ne doit pas faire croire qu'il ya entre ces deux genres de vie une cloison etanche; ainsi que le remarque saint Thomas, la vie contemplative doit directement ou indirectement conduire a l'action et l'action, si elle veut n'etre point sterile, doit s'appuyer sur la contemplation," *ibid.*, loc. cit. (Cf. *Sum. Theol. Ila-Hae*, q. 180; 181; 182, I; q. 188, 6.) It is noteworthy that *Bride* here uses the terms "ordres contem -platifs et actifs" and "ces deux genres de vie" as synonyms.

(16) "11 n'est pas rare de rencontrer dans livres de spiritualite un par allele etabli entre la contemplation et l'action, et certaines regles concernant les proportions dans lesquelles doit s'operer l'alliance de ces deux choses en apparence si opposees," P. Lejeune, "Contemplation," *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique*. II, Part II (1923), 1616.

(17) Roger Gazeau, O .S. B., "Contemplatifs," *Catholicisme hier, aujourd'hui, demain*, III (1953), 134.

(18) *Western Mysticism* (2d. ed.; London: Constable, 1926), pp. 65-66.

(19) *Ibid.*, p.171.

(20) *Hom. on Ezech.*, II, ii, in *Migne, Patrologia Latina* (henceforth abbreviated PL) 76, 953. This homily is referred to as *Hom. in Ezech.*, xiv in many editions of the *Summa Theologiae*.

(21) *Butler*, loc. cit., calls it "the classical and standard definition" (emphasis supplied); this will strike many as too strong, in view of the present divergency of opinion.

(22) F. Cayre observes that for ancient writers it is particularly true that the formulas "active life" and "contemplative life" really "designated not states of life characterized by differences chiefly exterior, but states of soul characterized by the predominance of some particular moral or spiritual interest (*studium*). -Chez les anciens, en effet, ces formules ne designaient pas des etats de vie caracterises par des differences surtout exterieures, mais plutot des etats d'ime caracterises par la predominance de telle ou telle preoccupation (*studium*) morale ou spirituelle," *La Contemplation augustinienne; Principes de la spiritualite de saint Augustin; Essai d'analyse et de synthese* (Paris: Andre Blot, 1927), pp. 320-21. This matter, treated by Cayre in his analysis of Saint Thomas, will receive more attention below in Chapter VI, pp. 78-108, which discusses St. Thomas' exposition of the two lives.

(23) Moreover, the prayer itself may be of various sorts, ranging all the way from discursive meditation to the highest earthly counterpart of the Beatific Vision. There is at present much debate among theologians as to the nature of infused contemplation, and whether all baptized persons are remotely called to it; but this does not concern us here.

(24) *Sum. Theol. Ila-Uae*, q. 188.

(25) It seems entirely possible that much of the current uncertainty regarding the word "contemplative" grows out of a tendency to make it synonymous with "cloistered." In the words of a gifted convert of our era, Dr. John C. H. Wu: "... We must not confuse the contemplative state with the contemplative life. Those who are living in the cloister are in the contemplative state --this is, in the environment most conducive to the contemplative life. In fact, the active life of the cloistered can be just as intense as that of anyone outside." *The Interior Carmel: The Threefold Way of Love* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1953), p. 100. The clarity of the distinctions made here seems the more remarkable in view of others' vagueness.

Chapter 2

(1) A. J. Festugiere, *Contemplation et vie contemplative selon Plotin* ("Le Saulchoir Bibliotheque de philosophie," II [2d ed. ; Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1950]) 13. Herodotus (*Historia* 1, 30) uses θεωρία to mean "beholding" and "observing" when he tells of Solon's going abroad to see the world: τῆς θεωρίας ἐκόμησας ὁ Σόλων εἶνεκεν.

(2) Festugiere, loc. cit.

(3) Ibid., p. 42. Diogenes Laertius relates that Anaxagoras, when asked why he was born, replied: For contemplation of the sun, the moon, and the stars εἰς θεωρίαν, ἔφη, ἡλίον καὶ σελήνης καὶ οὐρανοῦ Anaxagoras ii, 10.

(4) Festugiere, QQ• cit., p. 13, note.

(5) "Ainsi, al 'origine, θεωρία designe un modele de sociabilite; au terme, un type d'insociable." Ibid., p. 17.

(6) "Il est sur que notre notion de vie contemplative ne date que des Dialogues qui sont, des lors, un point de depart." Ibid. , loc. cit., n. 1.

(7) Ibid., Passim.

(8) "Now this kind of intellect and of truth is practical; of the intellect which is contemplative, not practical nor productive, the good and the bad state are truth and falsity respectively (for this is the work of everything intellectual); while of the part which is practical and intellectual the good state is truth in agreement with right desire." Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VI, ii, 3 (1139a), trans. W. D. Ross (New York: Oxford University Press, 1942).

αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἡ διάνοια καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια πρακτική, τῆς δὲ θεωρητικῆς διανοίας καὶ μὴ πρακτικῆς τὸ εὔ καὶ καῶς τάληθές ἐστι καὶ ψεῦδος. τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι παντὸς διανοητικοῦ ἔργον, τοῦ δὲ πρακτικοῦ ἡ ἀλήθεια ὁμολόγως ἔχονσα τῇ ὀρθῇ...

(9) Republic 4 72a.

(10) Festugiere, QQ. cit., pp. 42-43. (Cf. Republic 497a-501e.)

(11) Le probleme central de la Republique est d'insérer le philosophe dans la cité. C'est que, au temps de Platon encore, une vie vraiment 'juste' ne peut être une vie en marge de la cité. Justice individuelle et justice sociale sont étroitement liées. La contemplation pure n'est pas de mise. Le contemplatif retourne à la caverne pour le salut de ses frères. Et le but de l'Académie est précisément de former de

tels contemplatifs capables de servir, et de sauver, l'Etat. Peut-etre ne fut-ce pas sans regret qu'ayant goute a ses joies, Platon renon9a la8Eropfo,toute pure [Neanmoins]1a vie theoretique bien entendue demeure toujours, pour Platon, la vie la plus utile a la cite, " ibid., p. 40, n. 1.

(12) John Burnet, *Early: Greek Philosophy* (3d ed.; London: Black, 1920), p. 42.

(13) Cf. *Republic* iv, 436a.

(14) Cf. *Phaedo* 65; *Nic. Eth.* I, vii, 5. These ancient categories are overlapping at times, rather than mutually exclusive: for ex-ample, the men who trade for gain are practical. Hence, this three-fold division, being an early attempt at classification, is somewhat crude and unsatisfying.

(15) Festugiere, *QQ*, cit., p. 41, n. 1.

(16) John Burnet, *Greek Philosophy, Thales to Plato* (London: Macmillan, 1932), p. 42.

(17) Festugiere, *QP.*, cit., pp. 41-42, n. 1, summarizes the discussion, citing both ancient and modern texts.

(18) "To judge from the lives that men lead, most men, and men of the most vulgar type, seem (not without some ground) to identify the good, or happiness, with pleasure; which is the reason why they love the life of enjoyment. For there are, we may say, three prominent types of life - that just mentioned, the Political, and thirdly the contemplative life." *Nic. Eth.* I, 4 (1095b), (Emphasis supplied.)
τὸ γὰρ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν οὐκ ἀλόγως εἰκόασι ἐκ τῶν βίων ὑπολαμβάνειν οἱ μὲν πολλοὶ καὶ φορτικώτατοι τὴν ἡδονήν. διὸ καὶ τὸν βίον ἀγαπᾶσι τὸν ἀπολαυστικόν - τρεῖς γὰρ εἰσι μάλιστα οἱ πρῶχοντες, ὃ τε νῦν εἰρημένος καὶ ὁ πολιτικὸς καὶ τρίτος ὁ θεωρητικὸς.

See also John Burnet, *The Ethics of Aristotle* (London: Methuen, 1900), Index, p. 482, s.v. βίος; p. 486, s.v. θεωρητικὸς βίος; and p. 18, n., where he explains that this classification of the "three lives" was current at the time, and gives references to Plato *Republic*, 581 C; *Isocrates* (*Antid.* #217); and *Iamblichus* (*V. IY.*!;h, #58); p. 443, where he explains that Aristotle took his phrase "the mixed life" (μικτὸς βίος) of pleasure and wisdom (*Ethics* 1172b) from Plato *Phileb.* 22d and 27d (τὸν μικτὸν βίος ἡδοῆς τε καὶ φρονήσεως).

(19) *Public* vi, 505-508.

(20) Butler, *QP.*, Q1., p. 201.

(21) Festugiere, loc. cit.

(22) In the Christian dispensation this is the City of God; and there is no sacrifice of individual justice (holiness) in the perfecting of society- quite the contrary.

Chapter 3

(1) "Contemplation chez les anciens philosophes du monde greco-romain," *Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, II (1953), 1724. See also C. Bigg, *The Platonists of Alexandria* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), pp. 47, n and 118.

(2) F. Copleston, S. J., *A History of Philosophy* (Westminster: Newman, 1946), I, 457, 458, 461.

(3) Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 46, 47.

(4) Philo's Greek, cited from De Miḡ, Ahr. 9 (1, 443) in Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 47, n. 3, is: ἕτερος νηπίων καὶ ἕτερος τελείων χωρὸς ρσιν, ὁ μὲν ὀναμαζόμενος ἄσκησις, ὁ δὲ καλούμενος σοφία

There is one region of the infants and another of the fully developed men. The one is called ascetic training and the other is designated wisdom. (Translation mine.)

The thought and Latinized terminology of this sentence reappear in Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* viii, 4; PL 41, 228, cited below on page 30.

Mention should be made here of the community of Jewish ascetics, the Therapeutae, who in Philo's day were living in the desert near Alexandria. Philo called them "philosophers" (cf. ἡ φιλοσοφία), admired them highly, and described their manner of living in his *De Vita Contemplativa* (Philo, trans. F. H. Colson, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), IX, 104-169, the Loeb Classical Library). Philo begins his treatise thus: "I have discussed the Essenes, who persistently pursued the active life (πρακτικὸν βίον)...I will now proceed ... to say what is needed about those who embraced the life of contemplation (περὶ τῶν θεωρίαν ἀσπασαμένων).

(5) In Psalm cxxxiii, cited by Auguste Soudreau, *The Life of Union with God*, trans. E. J. Strickland (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1927), p. 24.

(6) J. Lemaitre et al. "Contemplation chez les Grecs et autres orientaux chrétiens, .. *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique* II, 1767.

(7) Cf. I Tim. 1, 3-7; Col. 2, 4-23.

(8) Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 118. Similarly to Plato (see above, p. 13) Philo insisted that no one should enter upon the contemplative life before the age of fifty, after years of fidelity in activities as a citizen and head of a family (as Butler points out in *Western Mysticism*, p. 203). Interesting, too, in this connection is St. Thomas' statement:

"Philosophi ultimum tempus vitae suae reservabant, ut dicitur, ad contemplandum divina, praecedens tempus in aliis scientiis expendentes, ut ex illis habiliores fierent ad considerandum divina." *Scriptae in libris Sententiarum* III, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2, solutio iii.

(9) Bigg, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-20.

(10) *Ibid.*, p. 124.

(11) *Ibid.*, p. 129. Note 3 cites the three traits of Gnosis from Clement's *Stromata* ii, II, 46: θεωρία ἢ τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐπιτέλεισις and ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν κατασκευή.

(12) F. Cayre, A. A., *Manual of Patrology: and History of Theology*, trans. H. Hewitt, (Paris: Desclee, 1935), substantially concurs with Bigg's analysis, I, 184; he then prudently shows the flaws in Alex-andrian doctrines, pp. 187 ff., 213 ff.

(13) Saudreau, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

(14) J. Danielou, S. J., *Origen* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), pp. vii, 294. W. Jaeger, *Two Rediscovered Works of Ancient Christian Literature: Gern of Nyssa and Macarius* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1954), p. 72, calls Origen "the father of systematic Christian theology." See also J. Quasten, *Patrology II*, (Westminster: Newman, 1953), II, 94-100.

(15) Danielou, *op. cit.*, p. 336, n.l; also pp. xvi-xvii, and 301.

(16) *Ibid.*, p. 294.

(17) *Ibid.*, pp. vii, 294.

(18) This account is a condensation of Danielou's documented treatment, *ibid.*, pp. 293-314.

(19) *Ibid.*, p. 305, from PG 13, 74 and 75. Some of Origen's own words, extant only in the Latin translation of his original Greek, are so important for terminology that they should be cited here, from the Prologue of Origenis in *Canticum Canticorum*: "Generales disciplinae quas Graeci ethicam, physicam, et theoricen appellaverunt, nos has dicere possumus moralem, naturalem, et inspectivam" (PG 13, 75). Also: "Inspectivum locum in hoc libello [Solomon] tradidit qui habetur in manibus, id est, in *Cantico canticorum*, in quo amorem caelestium divinarumque desiderium incutit animae sub specie sponsae ac sponsi, charitatis et amoris viis perveniendum docens ad consortium Dei" (PG 13, 74B).

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 305.

(21) John Chapman, O.S.B., "Mysticism (Christian Roman Catholic)," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, IX (1924) 91, citing Frag. 80 in Joannem. *Le Dictionnaire de spiritualité* is more certain: "La comparaison qu'Origene a inauguree combien la reprendront," II, trans. and ed. 1769.

(22) Citation from Origen: *The Song of Songs*; *Commentary and Homilies*, trans. and ed. R. P. Lawson, ("Ancient Christian Writers," Vol. XXVI [Westminster: Newman Press, 1957]), pp. 369-70, n.

(23) Jean Leclerc, O.S.B., "Contemplation et vie contemplative du vi au xii siecle," *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité ascétique et mystique*, II (1953) 1931. A slightly different editing of the second Sententia cited here is found in PL 20, 1185; "Plenus scientia, et actor honorum obviaverunt sibi; medius autem utrumque stetit Dominus."

(24) J. Danielou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique* (Paris: Aubier, 1944), p. 7.

(25) Danielou, *Origen*, pp. vii, 293.

(26) See below, p. 31, and the citation in n. 9 from *Collatio XIV*, 2, PL 49, 995; also, see s.v. *actualis A. Blaise*, *Dictionnaire Latin-Français des auteurs Chrétiens* (Strasbourg: Le Latin Chrétien, 1954); J. F.

Niermeyer, *Mediae Latinitatis Lexicon Minus* (Leiden: Brill, 1955); R. Gillet, O.S.B., *Gregoire le Grand* (Sources Chretiennes, 32), p. 102.

(27) In his *Sententiarum Libri Tres*, Liber iii, ¶ut xv; PL 83, 689-691.

Chapter 4

(1) Qp. 91., p. 201.

(2) "Saint Augustin n'est pas un de ces esprits serviles qui se contentent de s'assimiler la doctrine de leurs maîtres. Il a repensé tout ce qu'il a reçu, concernant en particulier cette union de l'âme avec Dieu qu'il a recherchée avec tant d'ardeur passionnée et observée avec tant de finesse. Ainsi a-t-il transformé en sa propre substance ce qu'il a pris à ses devanciers. Il a tellement christianisé ses emprunts qu'il les a faits siens, et que souvent la question des sources de sa pensée devient beaucoup plus une question intéressante - d'histoire qu'une condition indispensable de l'intelligence exacte de ses écrits. C'est le cas pour la contemplation." Cayre, *Contemplation augustinienne* (1927), p. 7.

(3) "Et aliquando intromittis me in affectum multum inusitatum introrsus ad nescio quam dulcedinem, quae si perficiatur in me, nescio quid erit, quod vita ista non erit. Sed recido in haec aerumnosis ponderibus et resorbeor solitis, et teneor et multum fleo, sed multum teneor. Tantum consuetudinis sarcina degravat! Hic esse valeo nec volo; illic volo nec valeo; miser utrobique;" (Confessions x, 40); PL 32, 807. As translator, Vernon J. Bourke noted the resemblance of the words to Plotinus' *Ennead*. 4. 8. 1., and pointed out that they contain "more than a suggestion of mystical experience" on Augustine's part. Vernon J. Bourke, *Confessions* ("Fathers of the Church," XXI [New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953]), 321.

(4) Butler, *QR* cit., p. 206.

(5) *Ibid.*, pp. 157-167, except that Abbot Butler does not recognize a distinction between stages of life and modes of living.

(6) *QIIY. of God* viii, 4, trans. Marcus Dods. (New York: Modern Library, 1950). The Latin, from PL 41, 228, is: *Itaque cum studium sapientiae in actione et contemplatione versetur, unde una pars ejus activa, altera contemplativa dici potest; quarum activa ad agenda vitam, id est, ad mores instituendos, pertinet, contemplativa autem ad conspiciendas naturae causas et sincerissimam veritatem: Socrates in activa excelluisse memoratur; Pythagoras vero magis contemplativae, quibus potuit intelligentiae viribus, instituisse. Proinde Plato utrumque iungendo philosophiam perfecisse laudatur, quam in tres partes distribuit: unam moralem, quae maxime in actione versatur; alteram naturalem, quae contemplationi deputata est; tertiam rationalem, qua verum determinatur a falso: quae licet utrique, id est actioni et contemplationi, sit necessaria, maxime tamen contemplatio perspectionem sibi vindicat veritatis. Ideo haec tripartitio non est contraria illi distinctioni, qua intelligitur omne studium sapientiae in actione et contemplatione consistere.*

(7) *De Trinitate* i, 17; PL 42, 83.

(8) Butler, *Q.R.* cit., p. 27. His basis for the statement is *Collatio* xiv, l.

(9) *Loe. cit.*, an analysis and "compression" of Cassian's teaching on the spiritual life. Cf. "Quisquis igitur ad theoreticam voluerit pervenire, necesse est ut omni studio et virtute actualem primum scientiam consequatur," *Collatio* xiv, 2, "De Spirituali Sapientia," PL 49, 955. (Emphasis supplied.)

(10) Cayre, *Manual of Patrology I*, 702, n. 1. See also A. B. Hakim, "St. Augustine on Man's Ascent to God," *Cross and Crown*, XI, No. 3 (September, 1959), 338-45. See also footnote 29 below, p. 41.

(11) "Duae vitae nobis in Christi corpore praedicantur; una temporalis in qua laboramus, alia aeterna in qua delectationem Dei contemplabimur Admonet nos ad hoc intelligendum illarum etiam nomina feminarum. Dicunt enim quod Lia interpretatur Laborans, Rachel autem Visum principium, sive Verbum ex quo videtur principium. Actio ergo humanae mortalisque vitae, in qua vivimus ex fide, multa laboriosa facientes, ... ipsa est Lia Spes vero aeternae contemplationis Dei, habens certam et delectabilem intelligentiam, ipsa est Rachel." *Contra Faustum* xxii, 52; PL 42, 432. There is an excellent analysis in Cayre, *Contemplation Augustinienne*, (1927), pp. 34-38.

(12) Butler, *Qp. cit.*, p. 160. His remarks are based on what is quoted from *Contra Faustum*, in note 11 above.

(13) "Purgatorio," *Divina Commedia*, trans. E. H. Plumptre (Boston: Heath, 1899), II, 27, 11, 101-108.

(14) *Tractatus in Joannem* cxxiv, 5; PL 35, 1973-1974. Butler, trans., *Qp. cit.*, p. 158. This passage, with context in similar vein, forms the lessons of the third nocturn of the office of St. John in the Roman Breviary for December 27. On this passage, too, see the comment of F.J. Thonnard, A.A., *Traite de vie spirituelle a l'ecole de Saint Augustin* (Paris: Bonne Presse, 1959), p. 293. Augustine sometimes regards our entire life in this world as "active life" and that in heaven as "contemplative life." But in the "active life" here below there begins that contemplation which blossoms into the vision which is heaven.

(15) *De Consensu Evangelistarum* 1, 8; PL 34, 1045-1046. (Translation mine.) The Latin reads: "Cum duae virtutes propositae sint animae humanae, una activa, altera contemplativa; illa qua itur, ista qua pervenitur; Una qua laboratur, ut cor mundetur ad videndum Deum; ista qua vacatur et videtur Deus: illa est in praeceptis exercenda vitae hujus operatur, ista requiescit; quia illa est in purgatione peccatorum, ista in luvine purgatorum. Ac per hoc in hac vita mortali, illa est in opere bonae conversationis, ista vero magis in fide, et apud paucos per speculum in aenigmate, et ex parte in aliqua visione incommutabilis veritatis (I Cor. xiii, 12). Hae duae virtutes in duabus uxoribus Jacob figuratae intelliguntur. De quibus adversus Faustum Manichaeum pro modulo meo, quantum illi operi sufficere videbatur, disserui (Lib. 22, cap. 52). Lia quippe interpretatur, Laborans, Rachel autem, Visum principium. Ex quo intelligi datur, si diligenter advertas, tres Evangelistas temporalia facta Domini et dicta quae ad informandos mores vitae praesentis maxime valerent, copiosius persecutos, circa illam activam virtutem fuisse versatos; Joannem vero facta Domini multo pauciora narrantem, dicta vero ejus, ea praesertim quae Trinitatis unitatem et vitae aeternae felicitatem insinuarent, diligentius et uberius conscribentem, in virtute contemplativa commendanda, suam intentionem praedicationemque tenuisse." (Emphasis supplied.)

(16) *Sermo* cl.xix, 17; PL 38, 925. Butler, trans., *op. cit.*, p. 160. On the modern interpretations of Luke 10, 42, see below, p. 110-11, n. 3.

(17) *Sermo* clxxix, 3-7; PL 38, 967-970. Butler, trans., *op. cit.*, p. 161. Cayre analyses the harmonious contrast here typified in *Contemplation Augustinienne* (1927), pp. 39-40.

(18) *Sermo* civ, 4; PL 38, 617-618. Butler, trans., *loc. cit.*

(19) Butler, op. cit., p. 162.

(20) De Quantitate Animae 74-75; PL 32, 1076. Butler, trans., op. cit., p. 163.

(21) Sermo cclv, 5; PL 38, 1188, 1186.

(22) Cayre, Contemplation Aumstiniennne (1927), pp. 320, 321. See also Thonnard, 2P. cit.; and De Trin. XII, xiv, 22; PL 42, 1009.

(23) "Hoc me delectat, et ab actionibus necessitatis, quantum relaxari possum, ad istam voluptatem refugio. Neque ... invenio tutum locum animae meae nisi in te, quo colligantur sparsa mea, nee a te quidquam recedat ex me," Confessions x, 40; PL 32, 807. Bourke, trans. , op. cit .

(24) Butler, 2R. cit., p. 160, translates Contra Faustum xxii, 57: "It would not be right that the contemplative life should keep in leisure one fit and apt for the administration of ecclesiastical charges, or that those who are worthy of being entrusted with the government of the Church, should, through being inflamed with the desire of pur-suing and contemplating wisdom, withdraw themselves wholly from the troubles attendant on action, and busy themselves in the leisure of con - templation;" (PL 42, 437). See also CitY. of God xix, 19, PL 41, 647- 648, cited below on pages 41-42.

(25) City of God xix, 2. (Translations mine.) The Latin in PL 41, 624, clearly gives Augustine's terminology: "In tribus quoque illis vita² generibus, uno scilicet non segniter, sect in contemplatione vel inquisi-tione veritatis otioso, altero in gerendis rebus humanis negQtioso, ter - tio ex utroque genere temperato, cum quaeritur quid horum sit potius eligendum, non finis boni habet controversiam; sect quid horum trium difficultatem vel facilitatem adferat ad consequendum vel retinendum finem boni, id in ista quaestione versatur. Finis enim boni, cum ad eum quisque pervenerit, protinus beatum facit; in otio autem litterato, vel in negotio publico, vel quando utrumque vicibus agitur, non continuo quis-que beatus est. Multi quippe in quolibet horum trium possunt vivere, et in appetendo boni fine, quo fit homo beatus, errare. Alia est igitur quaestio de finibus bonorum et malorum, quae unamquamque philosopho-rum sectam facit, et aliae sunt quaestiones de sociali vita, de cuncta-tione Academicorum, de vestitu et victu Cynicorum, de tribus vitae generibus, otioso, actuoso, ex utroque modificato; quarum nulla est, in qua de bonorum et malorum finibus disputatur." (Emphasis supplied.)

(26) The two concepts, though related, are not identical, as St. Thomas was to affirm clearly in his Commentary on the Sentences (Scripta SUP.er libros Sententiarum III, d. 35, q. 1, a. 20, ad 5m. Cf. Sum. Theol. Ila-Ilae, q. 179, ad 2m). The Angelic Doctor had read the City of God so carefully that he perceived its author's dis-tinction between the two lives and the three manners of living. Chapter VI (see pages 96-97) will discuss the interpretation given by St. Thomas.

(27) See, e.g., CityofGod viii, 3and4;PL41, 227-228;De Trin. i, 17; PL 42, 831; Contra Faustum xxii, 52; PL 42, 432.

(28) "Augustin (Saint). Sa vie, ses oeuvres, sa doctrine," Dic-tionnaire de theologie catholig² I, Pt. 2 (1923) 2242. See also Thonnard, op. cit., esp. p. 283, "La Purification, l 'ascension vers la charite," and pp. 286-95, "Vie active et vie contemplative." On p. 286 Thonnard succinctly states: "The spiritual life here below consists of two chief and successive states, related to each other as preparation and completion: the 'active life' in which the soul should struggle to purify itself from sin, to overcome the obstacles to its progress, and to advance toward union with God through the energetic practice of the

virtues, and the 'contemplative life' in which the soul enjoys peace in habitual union with God through the blossoming forth of charity." (Translation mine.)

(29) Portalill, in OTC I, Pt. 2, 2433. (Cf. City of God xiv, 28; PL 41, 436.)

(30) "Ex tribus vere illis vitae generibus, otioso, actuoso, et ex utroque composito, quamvis salva fide quisquis possit in quolibet eorum vitam ducere, et ad sempiterna praemia pervenire; interest tamen quid amore teneat veritatis, quid officio charitatis impendat. Nee sic quisquis debet esse otiosus, ut in eodem otio utilitatem non cogitet proximi; nee sic actuosus, ut contemplationem non requirat Dei. In otio non iners vacatio delectare debet; sed aut inquisitio aut inventio veritatis: ut in ea quisque proficiat, et quod invenerit teneat, et alteri non invidet. In actione vero non amandus est honor in hac vita, sive potentia Itaque a studio cognoscendae veritatis nemo prohibetur, quod ad laudabile pertinet otium Quamobrem otium sanctum quaerit charitas veritatis: negotium justum suscipit necessitas charitatis. Quam sarcinam si nullus imponit, percipiendae atque intuendae vacandum est veritati: si autem imponitur, suscipienda est propter charitatis necessitatem: sed nee sic omni modo veritatis delectatio deserenda est, ne subtrahatur illa suavitas, et opprimat ista necessitas," City of God xix, 19; PL 41, 647-648. (Dods, trans.)

(31) QR. cit., p. 205. Perhaps modern usage, in which modes of living are termed "active," "contemplative," and "mixed," influenced Abbot Butler with the result that he unwittingly read the modern concepts into Augustine's words. Abbot Butler's views will be discussed below, pp. 102-103.

(32) Contemplation Augustinienne, (1927), pp. 320-21.

(33) De Quantitate Animae 76; PL 32, 1076. Butler, trans., g:g. cit., p. 166.

(34) "Saint Augustin a mieux que personne montre que cette uni-on de la vie active et de la vie contemplative est possible, par la pre-dominance, de plus en plus marquee, dans la vie interieure, de cette haute connaissance de Dieu, qui est, a proprement parler, la contem - plation," Contemplation Augustinienne, (1927), p. 333.

(35) "Le saint Docteur veut que les contemplatifs, par charite et par obeissance, ce livrent aussi aux oeuvres exterieures d'apostolat, et deviennent des hommes d'action, sans renoncer pour cela a jouir de Dieu et de la verite," *ibid.*, p. 332.

(36) *Ibid.*, pp. 333-34.

Chapter 5

(1) *Morals on the Book of Job*, trans. members of the English Church ("Library of the Fathers," [Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1845]). Vol. II is in two parts; the total work comprises 2500 pp. Unless otherwise noted, this is the translation used whenever *Morals* citations occur in this work.

(2) Cayre, *Manual of Patrology*, II, 243; Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 106. To appreciate the merits of Gregory, one does well to compare him with another disciple of Augustine, Julianus Pomerius. The latter's *Contemplative Life*, purportedly a guide for bishops (and priests), lacks Gregory's freshness and mastery of the subject. ("Ancient Christian Writers," [Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1947]).

(3) "Gregorie est done bien un ecrivain original Si, aux modernes, il le para.it peu, c'est que sa grande figure a domine tout le moyen age, et que les themes gregoriens ont imbibe profondement toute la spiritualite de la chretiente occidentale Nous vi vons sans le savoir sur ses idees et ses experiences, aussi ne nous semblent ils plus neuves." Robert Gillet, (ed.), *Morales sur Job*, 1 et 2. trans. Andre de Gaudemaris, O.S.B. ("Sources chretiennes," [Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1950]), p. 14. Dom Gillet also explains (p. 85) that what purports to be a fragmentary commentary on Job by St. Jerome in PL 23, 1469 - 1480, is in reality the *Moralia* of St. Gregory, who can therefore be safely held the original source of these venerable monastic conferences. Other mss. are attributed to St. Bede and to a priest named Philip. Need for critical editing is evident, but Gregory's authorship seems beyond question.

(4) VI, Pt. 2 (1925) 1777.

(5) Large:ly because Gregory wrote in his *Dialogi*, the first and most important account of St. Benedict's life with a eulogy of his Rule, many have thought that Gregory made this Rule the norm of religious observance in his monastery of St. Andrew in Rome around 575. This would mean that Gregory was a Benedictine; but modern research seems to be veering toward an opposite view. In the opinion of the scholarly Dom Guy Ferrari, O.S.B., there is no evidence that St. Benedict's Rule was observed exclusively in any monastery of Rome before the tenth century, although it was known and followed on some points. In the works of Gregory we are favored with an opportunity to study the evolution, under the pen of a great monk and pope, of that spiritual doctrine which flows in the traditional stream of the universal Church, rather than in the school of any one order.

To treat these matters in detail would be beyond the scope of the present study. But interested readers can pursue the subject in J.M. McCann, O.S.B., *Saint Benedict* (Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1958), pp. 171-73; Guy Ferrari, O.S.B., *Early Roman Monasteries* (Vatican City: Pontificio Instituto di Archeologia Cristiana, 1957), pp. 377-407, and the review of this latter book by M.H. Shepherd in *Speculum*, XXXIV, No. 2 (April, 1959), 263-64.

(6) *Manual of Patrology* II, 245.

(7) *Dialogues*, I, 1. Edmund G. Gardner, (ed.), (London: Philip Lee Warner, 1911), pp. 3-4.

(8) F. H. Dudden, *Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought*. (2 vols.; London: Longmans, Green, 1905), I, viii-ix.

(9) A. Menager, "Les divers sens du mot 'contemplatio' chez saint Gregoire le Grand," *La Vie Spirituelle* LIX, (Supplement juin et juillet, 1939), 161. The study of Menager is scholarly and thorough, and this thesis owes much to his article, particularly the first part, in *La Vie Spirituelle*, LIX (1939), 145-69.

(10) Gillet, *Qp. cit.*, p.10.

(11) *Mor. ERistola missoria* ii and iii; PL 75, 513.

(12) *Epp. v*, 53a, #5, cited by Dudden, *Qp. cit.*, p. 292.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 194.

(14) *Ibid.*, p. 196.

(15) Ibid., pp. 12-13.

(16) Edward Cuthbert Butler, O.S.B., *Benedictine Monachism; Studies in Benedictine Life and Rule* (2d ed. ; London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1924), p. 113. Gillet, loc. cit., holds that Butler goes too far in suggesting that readers of the *Morals* can completely ignore the scriptural text.

(17) "La morale s'inscrirait dans la dogmatique, notamment a pro-pos de la doctrine de la grace. Elle etait le chapitre traitant de la vie chretienne. C'est sous cet angle qu'on envisageait toutes les manifes-tations de la vie surnaturelle: depuis l'etat des commencants dont la vie comporte un melange habituel de vertus et de peches, jusqu'aux degres les plus eleves de l'union a Dieu, " , p. 14.

(18) Epp. xii, 6, cited by Dudden,,_;.....;::;.=•, 195.

(19) Menager, "Les divers sens," pp. 39-46, 145-69.

(20) Ibid., p. 148.

(21) Ibid., p. 149; cf. also PL 76, 407.

(22) Ibid., p. 150; cf. PL 75, 673, n. 66.

(23) PL 76, 760, nn. 55-56.

(24) Menager, "Les divers sens," pp. 161-63; cf. PL 76, 809, n. 8.

(25) PL 76, 809, n. 9.

(26) Menager, "Les divers sens," pp. 161-63; PL 76, 962, n. 7; 985, n. 1.

(27) Ibid., pp. 163-69, 39-51; PL 75, 1002, n. 35; 1091, n. 20; 76, 947, n. 17.

(28) Ibid., pp. 51-53; PL 75, 833, n. 50.

(29) Menager, "Les divers sens," p. 146.

(30) Mor. xxiv, 11; PL 76, 292. Noting that face-to-face vision of God in eternity is the true and perfect *vita contemplativa*, and that Gregory, like Augustine, constantly stresses vision in his description of contemplation, Menager draws attention to the derivation of *contemplari*, *contemplatio*, and *contemplativa*. They are formed of *contemplum*; and this latter once signified a section of the heavens observed, or watched, for the sake of auspices. It is thus singularly appropriate, a fitting companion - word for *speculativa*; (*La Vie Spirituelle*, IX, 148, LX-LXI, 51).

(31) *Benedictine Monachism*, p. 84; *Western Mysticism*, p. 67.

(32) Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 78, citing Mor. v, 52: "the chinks of contemplation, *Rer rimas contemplationis*," in PL 75, 706-707.

In connection with another comparison used by St. Gregory in which he likens contemplation in this life to our vision of the sun through fog or cloud (ct. Mor. v, 53; viii, SO; xvii, 39), Abbot Butler also points

out Gregory's far-reaching effect on mystical thought in the West. He cites Mor. xxxi, 101 (PL 76, 628-629); "Sancti viri in altam se contemplationem erigunt, et tamen Deum, sicut est, videre non possunt .. , . A luce enim incorruptibili caligo nos nostrae corruptionis obscurat; cumque et videre aliquatenus potest, et tamen videri lux ipsa, sicut est, non potest, quam longe sit indicat. Quam si mens utcunque non cerneret, nee quia longe esset videret. Si autem perfecte jam cerneret, profecto bane quasi per caliginem non videret. Igitur quia nee omnino cernitur, nee rursus omnino non cernitur, recte dicitur est, quia a longe Deus videtur."

He then comments: "Here we meet an idea that became classical in the literature of mysticism in the West -with that of the East I am not conversant - that contemplation in this life is as seeing the sun through a fog or cloud. It is based on the verse of the psalm: 'Caligo sub pedibus eius' - 'Darkness is under his feet' (Ps. xvii, 10), thus commented on by St. Gregory: 'By those beneath He is not seen in that brightness wherewith He exercises dominion among those above' (Mor. xvii, 39, in PL 76, 29).

"This is the ground idea of the remarkable English fourteenth century mystical treatise, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and it is a symbol much used by the later mystic writers. I am not in a position to affirm that the conception, so far as Western mystical thought is concerned, originated with St. Gregory; but I do not recollect having met it in the West before him: not in St. Augustine, with whose mode of thought it would not be consonant, for he speaks of St. John as having 'contemplated the interior and eternal Light with steady gaze' - 'fixis oculis' (Tract in loan, xxxvi, 5)." QP.. cit., pp. 88-89.

In a personal letter Father Roland F. Behrendt, O. S. B. , called my attention to the concept of the active and contemplative lives which was presented in this *Cloud of Unknowing* [Justin McCann, O. S. B., (ed.), 6th ed.; Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1952], especially in Chapters 1, 8, and 16. In Chap. 8 (p. 18) the active life and the contemplative life are each divided into two degrees, so joined however that neither may be had fully without at least some part of the other. For, the higher part of the active life is at the same time the lower part of the contemplative life. Living the active life means living at least partly as a contemplative; and living the contemplative life means living at least partly the active life.

In Ch. 21 (p. 36) the unknown author states that "Although there be but two lives, yet in these two lives there are three parts, each one better than the other." The first part consists in bodily works of mercy and charity; this is the first degree of the active life. The second part consists in spiritual meditation. This second part is better, and is simultaneously the higher degree of the active life and the lower degree of the contemplative life. In this part, both lives are linked together in spiritual kinship and made sisters after the manner of Mary and Martha. The third part of the two lives (active and contemplative), which is the higher degree of the contemplative life, is then found in the "dark cloud of unknowing." The first part is good; the second part is better; the third part, that chosen by Mary, is the best.

(33) *Western Mysticism*, p. 87; cf. pp. 55, 58.

(34) QP.. cit., pp. 33-35.

(35) Condensed from Cayr², *Manual of Patrology*, II, pp. 245-51, who gives abundant documentation.

(36) Gerard G. Carluccio, O.S.B., *The Seven Steps to Spiritual Perfection according to St. Gregory the Great* (Ottawa: the University of Ottawa Press, 1949), pp. xii-xv, 5. The role of the gifts of the Holy Ghost looms large in Gregory's theology of the spiritual life. It should at this point be noted that R. Gillet, O. S. B., and A. de Gaudemaris, O. S. B., state in regard to Mor. ii, 78 (in "*Sources Chretiennes*, " 32, p. 236, n.

l) that what Gregory calls the gifts are sorts of virtuous dispositions imparted to us by the Holy Spirit, but not the gifts in the sense of permanent habits such as St. Thomas conceives them to be in Sum. Theol. Ia-IIae, q. 68, 1 and 4. To treat the nature and effects of the gifts in detail is outside the scope of this study.

(37) Western Mysticism, p. 171.

(38) Hom. on Ezech. II, ii, 8. (Butler, Western Mysticism, pp. 171-72.) The Latin text, in PL 76, 952-953, reads:

"Duae etenim vitae sunt, in quibus eos omnipotens Deus per sacrum eloquium erudit, activa videlicet et contemplativa

"Activa enim vita est, panem esurienti tribuere, verbum sapientiae nescientem docere, errantem corrigere, ad humilitatis viam superbientem proximum revocare, infirmantis curam gerere, quae singulis quibusque expediant dispensare, et commissis nobis qualiter subsistere valeant providere. Contemplativa vero vita est charitatem quidem Dei proximi tota mente retinere, sed ab exteriori actione quiescere, soli desiderio conditoris inhaerere, ut nil jam agere libeat, sed, calcatis curis omnibus, ad videndam faciem sui Creatoris animus inardescat; ita ut jam noverit carnis corruptibilis pondus cum moerore portare, totisque desideriis appetere illis hymnicis angelorum choris interesse, admisceri coelestibus civibus, de aeterna in conspectu Dei incorruptione gaudere."

The reader will note that Butler "compresses" the texts he quotes, and occasionally makes some such minor alterations as the use of "us" for the Latin pronoun "eos" in the first line of the citation. This is true of many of the passages quoted in Western Mysticism; but as the sense of the original is scrupulously preserved, we shall forbear calling them to the reader's attention henceforth.

(39) See Cayre, Manual of Patrology, I, 507; II, 246.

(40) In one statement he happens to reveal this terminology, attitude and procedure: "But if anyone is already despising earthly things, and if he is exercising himself through the works of the active life, it is by no means enough for him to be doing great deeds exteriorly, unless he is also able through contemplation deeply to understand the interior things." Mor. vi. 55; PL 75, 761. The Latin is: "Sect quisquis jam terrena despicit, quisquis se per activae vitae opera extendit, nequaquam ei sufficit magna exterius agere, nisi etiam per contemplationem valeat interna penetrare." (Emphasis supplied.)

(41) "Una vita nobis in necessitate est, altera in voluntate," Hom. on Ezech. I, iv, 10; PL 76, 809, cited in Cayre, Manual of Patrology, II, 247.

(42) Hom. on Ezech. II, iv, 4; PL 76, 976: "Tres sunt virtutes sine quibus is qui aliquid operari jam potest, salvari non potest, videlicet fides, spes, caritas . "

(43) Hom. on Ezech. I, v, 12; PL 76, 825-826.

(44) Mor. vi, 57; PL 76, 762 (reference to Matt. 5, 29.)

The Latin is: "Duae quippe vitae, activa videlicet et contemplativa, cum conservantur in mente, quasi duo oculi habentur in facie. Dexter namque oculus vita contemplativa est, sinister activa Cum ad contemplativam vitam idonea discretione non sufficit, solam securius activam tene. Cumque in hoc, quod pro magno eligis, deficiis, eo contentus esto, quod pro minimo attendis; ut si per contemplativam vitam

a veritatis cognitione compelleris cadere, regnum caelorum per solam activam valeas saltem luscus intrare."

(45) *Ibid.*, x, 31, (Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 185); PL 75, 938.

(46) *Ibid.*, 31, 102; PL 76, 629.

(47) *Hom. on Ezech. I*, iii, 9. (Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 175); PL 76, 809.

(48) Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p. 175. A list of types is on p. 174.

(49) *Mor.* vi, 61; PL 75, 764.

(50) "Vitam aeternam omni concupiscentia spiritali desiderare, ff Benedicti S. Regyla, iv. Justin McCann, O.S.B., (trans., ed.), (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1952), p. 28.

(51) *Mor.* xxii, 35; PL 76, 233-234.

(52) "La Contemplation d'apres saint Gregoire, " p. 248.

(53) *Western Mysticism*, p. 176.

(54) *Mor.* xxviii, 33; PL 76, 467. The Latin reads: "... Qui alter angularis lapis dicitur, quia duos in se populos junxit; atque aliter, quia conjunctae utriusque vitae, activae videlicet et contemplativae, in se exempla monstravit. Ab activa enim vita longe contemplativa distat; sed incarnatus Redemptor noster veniens, dum utramque exhibuit, in se utramque sociavit. Nam cum in urbe miracula faceret, in monte vero orando continue pernoctaret, exemplum suis fidelibus praebuit, ut nee contemplationis studio proximorum curam negligant, nee rursum cura proximorum immoderatus obligati contemplationis studia derelinquant; sed sic in utriusque mentem partiendo jungant, quatenus nee amorem Dei praepediat amor proximi, nee amorem proximi, quia transcendit, abiciat amor Dei."

(55) *Manual of Patrology*, II, 245-47.

(56) *Hom. on Ezech. II*, x, 18; PL 76, 1068-1069.

(57) *Ibid.*, iv, 4; PL 76, 975-976.

(58) *Mor.* vi, 56; PL 75, 760. The text is: "Neque enim perfectus praedicator est, qui vel propter contemplationis studium operanda negligit, vel propter operationis instantim contemplanda postponit."

(59) *Pastoral Care*. Henry Davis, S.J., (trans., ed.), ("Ancient Christian Writers" [Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1955]) i, 5; PL 77, 19. (In n. 27, pp. 243-44, Father Davis remarks the significance of these words in Gregory's own regard.)

(60) *Ibid.*, ii, 5; PL 77, 32-33.

(61) *Hom. on Ezech. II*, iv, 10-11; PL 76, 954.

(62) Mor. xx.ii, 2; PL 76, 211.

(63) Ibid., xxx, 48; PL 76, 550.

(64) Pastoral Care, i, 7; PL 77, 20 (Cf. Isa. 6, 8; Jer. 1, 6.)

(65) Mor. vi, 59-60; PL 75, 763. The Latin text is: "Qui igitur culmen apprehendere perfectionis nitantur, cum contemplationis arcem tenere desiderant, prius se in campo operis per exercitium probent, ut sollicite sciant si nulla jam mala proximis irrogant, si irrogata a proximis aequanimiter portant, si objectis bonis temporalibus nequaquam mens laetitia solvitur, si subtractis non nimio moerore sauciat; ac deinde perpendant si cum ad semetipsos introrsus redeunt, in eo quod spiritalia rimantur, nequaquam secum rerum corporalium umbras trahunt

"Actionis namque tempus primum, est, contemplationis extremum."

(66) Hom. on Ezech. I, iii, 11, 12. (Butler, Western Mysticism, p. 183.) "Et plerumque is qui talis est potest ad contemplativam vitam transire, et tamen activam non deserere Quando is qui ad contemplationis pervenit etiam foris actionem boni operis qua prodesse possit aliis non relinquit," PL 76, 810-811.

(67) Mor. xix, 44; PL 76, 126.

(68) Ibid., xxiii, 38; PL 76, 274.

(69) Ibid., vi, 57; PL 75, 761.

(70) Ibid., xxxii, 4; PL 76, 636.

(71) Hom. on Ezech. I, v, 12. (Butler, Western Mysticism, p.184). PL 75, 825-826.

(72) Ibid., II, ii, 8; PL 76, 953.

(73) Western Mysticism, p. 186. It should be noted, however, that here Abbot Butler is scarcely speaking exclusively, or even chiefly, of infused contemplation. Abbot Butler holds that by the term "contemplative life" St. Gregory meant what is today called a "mixed life": periods of contemplative prayer alternating with the performance of good works (p. 207). By thus distinguishing the two lives as characterized on the one hand by prayer (*vita contemplativa*), and on the other, by acts of charity (*vita activa*), Butler interprets Gregory's conception of the two lives, not in terms of stages of spiritual progress, but according to the activity in which a person engages. He similarly interpreted Augustine, as was indicated above, page 61.

The basic meaning of the two lives as stages of interior growth also seems to be omitted in the valuable study of the gifts of the Holy Ghost in St. Gregory: Gerard G. Carluccio, O.S.B., *The Seven Steps to Spiritual Perfection according to St. Gregory the Great* (Ottawa: The University of Ottawa Press, 1949). See especially the definitions of the active, contemplative, and mixed states of life in Chap. xiv, "The Gifts of the Holy Ghost and the Various States of Life," pp. 189-202.

In the summary which follows (pp. 73-77), the writer will set forth what seems to her a more accurate interpretation of Gregory's understanding of the two lives. In this connection, it is interesting to observe that Abbot Chapman in his article on "Mysticism" in Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (cited by Butler in *Western Mysticism*, p. 209) states that Thomas Aquinas "did not simply distinguish the two lives as that of prayer and that of works of charity," IX, 96. This modern distinction (based on the various modes or manners of living religious life), which did not occur to St. Thomas, was all the more remote from the thinking of St. Gregory.

(74) *Western Mysticism*, p. 186.

(75) *Hom. on Ezech. II, v, 19, 20* (Butler, *Western Mysticism*, p.187); PL 76, 996. (Note the recurrence of *saep_§_* in the opening sentence: "Non enim contemplationis gratia summis datur et minimis non datur, sed saepe hanc summi, saepe minimi, saepius remoti. ... percipiunt." Remoti may mean renuntiati, Cassian's term for monks.)

(76) *Mor. xxii, 48*; PL 76, 242-243:

(77) *Ibid.*, xviii, 42; PL 76, 60.

(78) *Ibid.*, vi, 59-60; PL 75, 763-764.

(79) *Hom. on Ezech. II, ii, 8*; PL 76, 953.

(80) *Mor. xxii, 48*; PL 76, 242-243.

(81) "Culmen perfectionis," *ibid.*, vi, 59; PL 75, 763.

(82) Cf. Benedicti S. Refillla, *£!!!:P· vii*: "Gradus humilitatis vel disciplinae Primus itaque humilitatis gradus est, si timorem Dei sibi ante oculos semper ponens oblivionem omnino fugiat [Tum] his omnibus humilitatis gradibus ascensis, monachus mox ad caritatem Dei perveniat illam quae perfecta foris mittit timorem;" McCann, pp. 38,48.

(83) *Hom. on Ezech. II, x, 18*; PL 76, 1068-1069.

(84) *Ibid.*, iv, 4; PL 76, 975-976.

(85) *Ibid.*, ii, 8; PL 76, 953.

(86) *Mor. vi, 56*; PL 75, 760-761.

(87) *Hom. on Ezech. II, iii, 7*; PL 76, 962; v, I; PL 76, 985. In these texts *contemplatio* signifies *vita contemplativa*, as Menager explains in "Les divers sens" p. 162.

(88) *Hom. on Ezech. ii, 8*; PL 76, 953. (Butler's trans.)

(89) See Appendix, pp. 116-25 below.

(90) "Quisquis ergo semetipsum Deo jam sacrificium obtulit, si perfecta desiderat, curet necesse est, ut non solum ad operationis se latitudinem, verum etiam ad culmina contemplationis extendat," Mor. vi, 56; PL 75, 761.

(91) "Lorsque, plus tard, saint Thomas d'Aquin aura a parler de contemplation, ce ne sera pas, pour l'ordinaire, saint Augustin qu'il mettra en avant; il ira chercher ses textes et ses arguments chez saint Gregoire le Grand," "Le divers sens" p. 145.

Chapter 6

(1) Abbot Chapman refers to it as a "famous opusculum" which is "often ascribed to the Dominican Albertus Magnus (d. 1280)," art. cit., p. 95. Abbe Saudreau (The Mystical State, p. 115) credits the book with being the first record of a contrast noted between pagan and Christian contemplation.

(2) "Animadvertenda est etiam in hoc differentia inter contemplationem Catholicorum fidelium, et Philosophorum gentilium; quia contemplatio Philosophorum est propter perfectionem contemplantis, et ideo sistit in intellectu, et ita finis eorum in hoc .est cognitio intel - lectus. Sect contemplatio Sanctorum, quae est Catholicorum, est prop-ter amorem ipsius, scilicet contemplati Dei: idcirco non sistit in fine ultimo in intellectu per cognitionem sed transit ad affectum per amor-em." Albertus Magnus, Omnia Opera, ed. A. Borgnet (Paris: Vives, 1898), XXXVII, 532-33. (Translation mine.)

(3) On this point Dom Gillet (Morales sur Job 1 et 2, pp. 51, 107, fil.P.assim) sharply differs from Abbot Butler, who considers Gregory free from Platonic or Plotinian tinges. For his views see Western Mysticism, pp. 76-92.

(4) Western Mysticism, p. 209.

(5) On Prayer and Contemplative Life (London: R. and T. Washbourne, 1914), pp. 3-4.

(6) The Religious State, the Episcopate, and the Priestly: Office, ed. John Proctor, O.P. (Westminster: Newman, 1950), p. v.

(7) Initiation theologique, 4 tomes (Paris: Cerf, 1952-1954), Tome III, Theologie morale, Ch. xviii, "Les vies contemplative et active," pp. 1109-46.

(8) Ibid., III, pp. 1109-1146.

(9) Ibid., pp. 1119-1120.

(10) Nie. Eth. IX, 12, 1172a.

(11) Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, q. 179, 1. The Latin is: "Vita unius cujusque hominis videtur esse id in quo maxime delectatur, et cui maxime intendit, et in quo praecipue vult quilibet convivere amico." Throughout this article the words inclinatio and intendit occur often. Studium appears in q. 181, 1; q. 182, 3. Citations from Summa Theologiae in this chapter and the following one are taken from Summa Theologica, (Literally translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province) (New York: Benziger, 1947).

(12) Ibid., The Latin reads: "Quia ergo quidam homines prae-cipue intendunt contemplationi veritatis, quidam vero intendunt princi-paliter exterioribus actionibus, inde est quod vita hominis convenien-ter dividitur per activam et contemplativam."

(13) Ibid., q. 180, 2; q. 181, 1.

(14) Ibid., q. 182, 2; also, Camelot, QJ>. cit., pp. 1117-18.

(15) Ibid., q. 179, l; q. 180, 1.

(16) Ibid., q. 180, l, corJ>US and ad 2; 2, corpus ad fin., and

(17) Ibid., q. 182, 2.

(18) Ibid., q. 183, 4 ad 2; q. 184, 3; Cf. Camelot-Menessier, op. cit., III, 1115-16, 1118, 1129.

(19) On the active life, cp. Hom. on Ezech. II, ii, 8; PL 76, 952, cited above on pages 59-60, with Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, 181, l; on the contemplative life, cp. Hom. on Ezech. ibid., with Sum. Theo 1. Ibid. q. 180, 1.

(20) Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, q. 180, 2; q. 181, l, ad 3; q. 182, 4, ad 3.

(21) Hom. on Ezech. II, ii, 8; PL 76, 952-953.

(22) Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, q. 180, 3. See also ibid., ad l, q 179, 1.

(23) Ibid., q. 180, 7, corpus and ad l; See also ibid., q. 180, 1.

(24) Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, q. 179, 2. The Latin reads: "Praterea, Augustinus ponit tria vitae genera: scilicet otiosum, quod per-tinet ad contemplationem, actuosum, quod pertinet ad vitam activam; et addit tertium ex utroque genere compositum. Ergo videtur quod insufficienter dividatur vita per activam et contemplativam."

(25) "Contemplativa vita est caritatem Dei et proximi tota mente retinere, et soli desiderio conditoris inhaerere." On Ezech. II, ii, 8, as paraphrased by Thomas, (180, 1, "Sed contra est"), who alters only the word order of Gregory.

(26) Metaph. I, 993b; Nic. Eth. X, viii, II, iv.

(27) "Contemplativa vero vita est charitatem quidem Dei et proximi tota mente retinere, sect ab exteriore actione quiescere, soli desiderio conditoris inhaerere ... " Hom. on Ezech, II, ii, 8; PL 76, 953.

(28) A French Dominican, A. Lemonnyer, in a doctrinal note on "Christian Contemplative Life" appended to his translation of Ques-tion 180, gives a summary presentation of Thomistic teaching on the role of moral virtues, theological virtues, and gifts of the Holy Spirit in the soul. After showing the harmonious working of nature and grace, as well as the oneness of spiritual life, he concludes: "Let us there-fore assert the living unity of supernatural life in general and of con -templative life in particular. The mode of exercise of the virtues and gifts is dissimilar ... but contemplative life ... is one, homogeneous, continuous. -Affirmons done l 'unite vivante de la vie surnaturelle, en general et de la vie contemplative

en particulier. Le mode d'exercice des vertus et des dons a beau être différent, la vie contemplative ... est une, homogène, et sans véritable discontinuité." Thomas Aquinas, *Somme Théologique* ... (Paris: Desclee, 1926), pp. 547-48.

(29) *Hom. on Ezech. II, ii, 14*; PL 76, 956.

(30) *Ibid.*, 13; PL 76, 956. The Latin is: "Contemplativa vita amabilis valde dulcedo est."

(31) *Ibid.*, 9; PL 76, 954.

(32) *Ibid.*, I, v, 12; PL 76, 824-825.

(33) *Mor. vi, 61*; PL 75, 764.

(34) *Hom. on Ezech. I, iii, 9*; PL 76, 809.

(35) *Mor. vi, 37*; PL 75, 761-762; *Hom. on Ezech. I, iii, 10*; PL 76, 809-810.

(36) Cayre writes in high praise of this "great work of his youth" that: "Points are not lacking on which the *Commentary: on the Sentences* is more explicit than the *Summa*," *Patrology*, II, 543. See also footnote 44, below.

(37) *Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, 182, 3; 4, ad 3*.

(38) See A. M. Henry, O. P., "Les offices, états et ordres dans l'Eglise," in *Initiation theolog.*, III, 1176-80; *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s. v. cloister, IV, 63.

(39) See Ludwig Schiltz, *Thomas-Lexikon* (Stuttgart: Frommans, 1958), p. 704: "Stand der christlichen Vollkommenheit, Ordensstand, kirchlicher Orden." Thus *religio* in the *Summa Theologiae* sometimes has virtually the same meaning which it has in the modern *Codex Juris Canonici* (1918). The Code gives its own definition in Canon 488: "In canonibus qui sequuntur, veniunt nomine: 1° Religionis, societas, a legitima ecclesiastica auctoritate approbata, in qua sodales, secundum proprias ipsius societatis leges, vota publica ... nuncupant, atque ita ad evangelicam perfectionem tendunt."

(40) *Summa Theologica*, ... in Three Volumes, ... Literally Translated by: Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger, 1947), II, p. 1992. See also the edition of 1922 (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne), XIV, 261, which also translates *Religionum* by "of Religious Life."

(41) "Contemplatifs," in *Catholicisme*, III, 134.

(42) This thought also occurs elsewhere; for example, "Sunt nihilominus et quaedam operationes quae utrumque requirunt, sicut praedicatio et doctrina, quae a contemplatione inchoatae in actionem terminant," *Scripta super libros Sententiarum* iii, dist. xxxv, I, 1, ad 5.

(43) For example, by Abbot Butler in *Western Mysticism*, p. 209. On the subject of *vita mixta*, see also I. Mennessier, O. P., in *Initiation théologique*, III, 1123-27.

(44) "Dicendum quod illud tertium membrum apponitur ab Augustino non quantum ad diversitatem vitae, sed magis quantum ad diversitatem viventium. Quidam enim sunt qui exercitiis activae insistent principaliter, quamvis etiam quandoque contemplationis actus exerquantur. Quidam vero sunt qui postpositis curls activae, principaliter contemplationi student. Alii vero qui circa utrumque insistent, "Scripta super libros Sententiarum ed. M. F. Moos, O. P., (2d ed.; Paris: Lethielleux, 1956), iii, dist. xx.xv, l, 20, ad 5.

(45) Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, 181, 2, ad 3. The Latin clearly brings out that the mode of living is in regard to external or observable activities: "Illud autem tertium vivendi genus medium est inter activam vitam et contemplativam, quantum ad ea circa quae occupatur; quia quandoque occupatur in contemplatione veritatis, quandoque autem occupatur circa exteriora."

(46) La Contemplation Augustinienne, 1927, pp. 320-22.

(47) "C'est à la charité que le Docteur angélique rattache la vision classique des trois voies. Il y a trois catégories de chrétiens: "les commençants, en qui la charité doit être nourrie et entretenue pour éviter qu'elle ne meure," ce qui a lieu par la fuite du péché et la résistance aux passions; "les âmes en progrès, qui s'appliquent principalement à fortifier en elles la charité par accroissement, " et dans ce but s'efforcent de progresser dans le bien; enfin les parfaits, qui désirent mourir et être avec le Christ, et ont soin de s'unir à Dieu et de jouir de lui (Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, 24,9; cf. 183, 4).

"À un autre point de vue, saint Thomas distingue la vie active et la vie contemplative, mais pour marquer encore les degrés fondamentaux de la perfection: chez les anciens, en effet, ces formules ne désignent pas ces états de vie caractérisés par des différences surtout extérieures, mais plutôt des états d'âme caractérisés par la prédominance de telle ou telle préoccupation (studium) morale ou spirituelle. La vie active signifie la vie chrétienne imparfaite, dans laquelle l'âme fait effort pour acquérir les vertus, et s'adonne aux œuvres de charité; elle correspond aux deux premières voies indiquées plus haut. La vie contemplative n'exclut pas cette pratique des vertus, loin de là, mais elle suppose, en outre, des lumières supérieures qui attirent surtout l'attention de l'âme sur Dieu, font sentir leur influence sur la vie entière, et aident le chrétien à réaliser la perfection; elle est, en un mot, la vie parfaite. " (Ibid., loc cit.)

(48) "La vie active précède la vie contemplative de même que ce qui est commun à tous précède, dans l'ordre d'origine ce qui est propre aux parfaits De part et d'autre, d'ailleurs, il y a application aux vertus morales et aux œuvres de charité pour le prochain; mais les actifs s'y adonnent à cause de la bonté propre de ces œuvres, au lieu d'en user comme d'un moyen de se disposer à la contemplation; chez les parfaits, au contraire, qui s'y livrent en vue de la contemplation, elles se rattachent à la vie contemplative

"Ainsi la distinction entre la vie active et la vie contemplative que l'on croit, trop souvent, fondée sur la prédominance des occupations extérieures ou intérieures, est en réalité (Sum. Theol. 179, 1) uniquement basée sur l'existence d'une contemplation qui embrasse la vie entière, soit comme acte contemplatif proprement dit, soit comme disposition à cet acte. Du reste, il n'est pas douteux que certaines formes sociales de vie chrétienne ne méritent aussi particulièrement ce titre de vie contemplative, parce que tout en elles est réglé de façon à conduire à la contemplation. Mais il n'y a rien d'exclusif; bien plus, l'essentiel n'est pas là, d'après les principes de saint Thomas. La vie extérieure la plus chargée d'œuvres peut être une vie contemplative, si tous ces travaux sont une disposition à la contemplation, ou bien s'ils en sont le fruit " Ibid., p. 321, n. 1.

(49) p. 207.

(50) Ibid., p. 221.

(51) Ibid., pp. 221, 222.

(52) Ibid., p. 222.

(53) Ibid., p. 209.

54) The term *vita mixta* has a long history which starts from the use of *μικτὸς βίος* by Plato (see footnote 18 in Chap. II, above). In the *City of God* Augustine used many synonyms of *μικτὸς*: *vita temperata*; (8, 8; PL 41, 623); *vitae genus temperatum* (19, 1; PL 41, 623); *genus modificatum* (19, 2; PL 41, 624); *genus compositum* (19, 3; PL 41, 627 and 19, 19; PL 41, 647). As Dom Gazeau points out (in "Con-templatifs," *Catholicisme*, III, 134), St. Thomas did not employ the term *vita mixta*; but Suarez (1548-1617) and the canonists of his day and thereafter adopted it to describe the exterior manner of living of religious who devote part of their day to prayer and part to activities of zeal. See Suarez, *Opera Omnia* (Paris: Vives 1877), Vol. XVI, De- Varietate Religionum, Tract. IX, liber I, cap. vi, pp. 458-61.

(55) *City of God*, xix, 2, 19.

(56) *Scripta super libros Sententiarum* iii, dist. xxx.v, 1, 20, ad 5, cited above on pp. 97-98.

(57) *Catholicisme*, III, 133-34.

(58) "Avec le temps, les concepts se durcirent. Pour S. Thomas encore, les vertus morales, bien que relevant de la vie active, disposent à la vie contemplative (*Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae*, 180, 2). Mais, contrairement à l'enseignement constant de S. Grégoire, qu'il élude par une distinction entre l'acte de contemplation très intense et les autres actes (*ibid.*, 8, ad 2m), S. Thomas admet que l'homme peut, dès ici-bas, s'établir dans l'état de vie contemplative; pour lui, en effet, la vie contemplative est celle qui est principalement ordonnée à la contemplation de la vérité, par opposition au genre de vie qui convient à ceux qui s'adonnent surtout aux œuvres extérieures de zèle (*ibid.*, 179, 1). La distinction entre vie active et vie contemplative se tire donc désormais du genre de vie, des occupations du religieux, des divers buts pratiques qu'il peut assigner à son activité, et non plus de la distinction entre la fin ultime qu'il doit poursuivre et les moyens qu'il met en œuvre pour y parvenir. S. Thomas admet deux genres de vie, selon que prédomine la préoccupation de la contemplation par amour de Dieu (vie monastique), ou celle de l'action par amour du prochain (ordres charitables, hospitaliers, militaires, etc). La vie contemplative lui paraît supérieure surtout lorsque de la plénitude de la contemplation découle, pour le bien de tous, l'enseignement de la parole divine (ordre des Prêcheurs; *ibid.*, 188, 6)." *Catholicisme*, III, 133-34.

(59) Pour Grégoire le Grand et Thérèse d'Avila, "Vie active et vie contemplative ne s'opposent pas comme des espèces différentes d'un même genre d'état de vie, l'état religieux, mais au contraire s'ordonnent l'une à l'autre comme des moments successifs et complémentaires de l'état de vie religieuse." *Ibid.*, loc. cit., (Emphasis supplied.)

(60) *Western Mysticism*, p. 208.

(6) Sermo 2 de Assumptione BVM, 9, in Octava: Breviarium monasticum (3d ed.; Bruges: Desclée, 1941), II, 594; PL 183, 421.

(7) City of God, xix, 19.

(8) Sum. Theol. IIa-IIae, 182, 4.

(9) Butler, Western Mysticism, p. 207. Cp. Pastoral Care, i, 5; PL 77, 19, cited above on p. 57.

(10) Proverbs, 4, 18 (Knox trans.).

Appendix

(1) Cf. Chapter VIII, "Benedictine Life Contemplative: What This Means," pp. 93-121.

(2) See, however, note 3, pages 110-11, above.

(3) See p. I above.

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