

Class 2
The Existence of God and the Call to Holiness

1. The Call to Holiness
 - a. Purpose of Theology is to enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ
 - b. Holiness is the goal of our life
 - i. We become holy by following the Commandments, imitating Christ and having a relationship with Jesus Christ
 - ii. While we are not perfect we can strive for perfection+
 - iii. All of us are called to be saints
 - c. Individual and Corporate
 - i. We are individuals living in a community and so we are called to become saints both as individuals and together
 1. While we must have a personal relationship with Jesus, we stand before God with others at our side
 - a. Importance of being a member of the Church
2. Does God Exist
 - a. The Church holds that the existence of God can be known by reason alone without the aid of faith
 - i. In proving with reason God's existence, we come to learn something of who God is
 - b. Aristotle (384 – 322 BC)
 - i. Demonstrated the need for there to be an “unmoved mover”
 - c. St. Thomas Aquinas' (1225 – 1274) 5 Proofs for the Existence of God
 - i. Motion
 1. There is motion in our world and an object only goes into motion if it is put into motion by another object. Thus, there needs to have been a first mover, who always existed in motion. We call that first mover God.
 - ii. Causality
 1. Everything that exists does so because it was caused by something else. This sequence of causes cannot go back indefinitely, so there has to have been someone or something that always existed. We call that first cause God.
 - iii. Contingency
 1. Nothing comes from nothing, but we know that things exist and everything that exists is created / contingent / dependent on something else. If at one time nothing existed then nothing could ever have come to exist unless there was a being who necessarily always existed. That necessary being is God.
 - iv. Degrees of Perfection
 1. Things are more perfect than others. But we can only say something is more perfect in reference to a standard. Thus there must be someone or something who is perfection. We call that perfect standard God.
 - v. Order

1. Things that happen by chance occur randomly, but events that are ordered toward intelligence fit into regular patterns. There is order in our world so there must be someone who is governing with absolute intelligence. That absolutely intelligent being is God.
3. The Problem of Evil
 - a. Argument
 - i. If God exists and is all powerful and all loving, there should be no evil in the world. Yet evil exists and so God must not exist
 - b. Response
 - i. While God is all powerful it does not mean that He will always exercise His power. Rather at times He permits evil to happen with a greater end in view
 1. God loves us and love does not force itself on someone.
 - a. In order to love we have to be free to choose not to love
 - b. Evil occurs when people in the world decide not to love.
4. Sacred Art
 - a. *Disputa of the Eucharist* by Bonavenura Salimbeni (1595 – 1600)
5. Review
 - a. The Church teaches that the existence of God can be known by reason alone
 - b. Over 300 years before Christ Aristotle proved the need for an unmoved mover (God)
 - c. St. Thomas Aquinas proved God in 5 different ways without the aid of faith
 - i. Motion: There must be a first moved who always existed in motion
 - ii. Causality: There must be a first cause
 - iii. Contingency: Nothing comes from nothing, so there must be someone / something that always existed
 - iv. Degrees of Perfection: There must be someone of something who is the standard by which perfection is judged.
 - v. Order: There must be someone who governs the order of the world
6. Meditation
 - a. What is sanctity? Sanctity is Christ living in me so that his mind possesses my mind and I am governed by his truth. That's sanctity. He's in my will, and all things that are pleasing to him I do. He's in my body, so that my body become a tabernacle. Sanctity is not only Christ in me, it's making Christ know to others. it's being loveable. It's making Christ loveable. When others see u, they see Jesus." Archbishop Fulton Sheen, *Through the Year with Fulton Sheen* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1985), 71.
7. Additional Reading
 - a. Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* accessible at https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html
 - b. Albert Joseph Mary Shamon, *Three Steps to Sanctity*. 2003: CMJ Marian Publishers. **ISBN-13:** 978-1891280184
 - c. G.K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*: 2007: Hendrickson Publisher. **ISBN-13:** 978-0486460369