

ANTONIO ROSMINI
AND
THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

J. Anthony Dewhurst

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Cover back: *St Augustine, meditating and writing* by Benozzo Gozzoli (1420–1497),
S. Agostino, San Gimignano.

Dedication

This book is affectionately dedicated
to the memory of Father Denis Cleary, an
indefatigable protagonist of Rosminian thought.

Contents

	Page
Foreword	7
Abbreviations	9
1. Rosmini's Use of the Fathers	11
2. Rosmini's Studies in Early Life	22
3. The Doctor of Grace	32
4. The Fathers and the Constitutions of the Institute	39
5. The Light of the Intellect	45
6. Rosmini's Moral Philosophy	62
7. The Supernatural Life	82
8. Made in the Image and Likeness of God	95
9. The Gospel of John	105
10. The Suffering Church	121
11. The Election of Bishops by Clergy and People	135
12. Understanding the Mind of the Author	142
Afterword	151
Appendix 1	160
Appendix 2	167
Bibliography	198
Index of Biblical References	204
Index of Persons	207

Foreword

Very little has been written about Antonio Rosmini and the Fathers of the Church. The patristic scholar Antonio Quacquarelli has led the way and his work is an indispensable source for those who wish to do their own research on the subject. He has obviously been a seminal author for others who have written articles on, or referred to, Rosmini and the Fathers. The works which I have studied are included in the Bibliography. A really detailed treatment of this subject would require years of labour and research, and it is to be hoped that one day this will be attempted. A team of research assistants would seem to be a *sine qua non* in order to do justice to the total corpus of Rosmini's works. His vast literary output makes this a daunting task. Maybe individual and specialised studies are the answer. In the meantime this little book, as far as I know, the first of its type in English, may whet somebody's appetite.

It is my pleasant duty to thank those who have assisted in this work: Umberto Muratore and Vittorio Allegra of the Centro Internazionale di Studi Rosminiani, Stresa, who kindly made available to me works which I did not possess here in England; to Gianni Picenardi who allowed me to make use of his thesis on the Fathers; and to the Bernard Collins and Antonio Belsito who helped with their advice. Also I must thank Janet Blackman and Norma Platts for proof-reading the manuscript and making valuable comments thereon; and Edward Murphy and Robin Paulson for helping with the setting-up of the manuscript. Finally, I cannot omit the help given me by the late Denis Cleary, to whom this book is affectionately dedicated.

J. A. Dewhirst
St Mary's, Derryswood.

1 July 2005

Abbreviations

Translations and references to English Translations in square brackets, thus: [.....].

Annali di Antonio Rosmini Serbati	<i>Annali</i>
Antonio Rosmini-Serbati	A.R.
Antropologia soprannaturale	<i>AS</i>
Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale	<i>AM</i>
Archivio storico dell'Istituto della Carità	A.S.I.C.
Charitas, Bollettino Rosminiano	<i>Charitas</i>
Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici	<i>Conferenze</i>
Costituzioni dell'Istituto della Carità	<i>Cost.</i>
Delle cinque piaghe della Santa Chiesa	<i>CP</i>
Dell'educazione cristiana	<i>Educazione</i>
Diario della carità	<i>DC</i>
Diario personale	<i>DP</i>
Edizione Critica	Ed. Crit.
Edizione Nazionale	Ed. Naz.
Epistolario Ascetico	<i>EA</i>
Epistolario Completo	<i>EC</i>
Giornali de'miei scritti	<i>GMS</i>
Il linguaggio teologico	<i>LT</i>
Il rinnovamento della filosofia in Italia	<i>Rinnovamento</i>
Introduzione alla filosofia	<i>Introduzione</i>
La lezione patristica	<i>LP</i>
L'introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni	<i>ISG</i>
Le radici patristiche	<i>RP</i>
Manuale dell'esercitatore	<i>Manuale</i>
Massime di perfezione	<i>Massime</i>
Momenti e valori della spiritualità rosminiana	<i>Momenti e Valori</i>
Nuovo Saggio sull'origine delle idee	<i>NS</i>
Principi della scienza morale	<i>Principi</i>
Rosmini House, Durham	Durham
Scritti autobiografici inediti	S.A.I.
Scritti vari di metodo e di pedagogia	<i>Scritti Vari</i>
Trattato della coscienza morale	<i>Coscienza</i>

(Article = Art.; Book = Lib.; Chapter = c. or cap.; Section = Sez.; Volume = Vol.)

Chapter 1

Rosmini's Use of the Fathers

Antonio Rosmini once said to Father Fortunato Signini, his secretary, 'Signini, if you study my works you will find the Holy Fathers in them. Understand me, I do not mean to say that you will find all that the Holy Fathers of the Church wrote, but you will find the substance of what they taught on scientific subjects and religion.'¹ These words, says Signini, made a deep impression on him because he knew that Father Rosmini was such a humble and truthful man that he would not have said this unless he thought it was justified.

Those who are familiar with Rosmini's works will be astonished at his familiarity with the Fathers and with the Scriptures. They are, so to speak, the air he breathes and he seems to be able to call upon them whenever he wishes. In this book I hope to give readers some glimpse into his extraordinary relationship with the Fathers. In his study, *The Mystical Experience of Antonio Rosmini*,² Remo Bessero Belti says that we shall never understand the thought of Antonio Rosmini unless we understand the mystical aspect of his personality. The same can be said about Rosmini's love and use of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church.

Why the title 'Fathers of the Church'? From the late fourth century the term was applied to past bishops who were cited as authoritative witnesses to the tradition of the Church. But St Augustine extended this terminology to writers who were not bishops. For example, St Justin was simply a priest; it is not certain in the case of Clement of Alexandria; and Prosper of Aquitaine was a layman. We now regard as Fathers those great ecclesiastical writers of antiquity renowned for holiness, orthodox learning, and approved by the Church. We rightly see them as custodians of the Scriptures, which they expounded at great length; and as authoritative exponents of Christian Doctrine. In this group, though, we include Tertullian who began as a Catholic and ended up as a Montanist. In fact it is not easy to discern which of his writings belongs to which period! The language of the Fathers was Greek until c.180 AD. In the East its place was taken later by native languages such as Syriac and Armenian. But it did not take long for Latin to become the universal language of the Western Fathers from the third century.³

A list of the Fathers and biographical notes can be found in Appendix 1 and I recommend the reader to refer to this first before continuing with the book.

It may be surprising that there is little mention of St Thomas. The reason is that a

¹ William Lockhart, *Life of Antonio Rosmini* (= Lockhart), London, Kegan, Paul, Trench and Co., 1886, Vol II, p. 54.

² Remo Bessero Belti, *Esperienza Mistica di Antonio Rosmini*, in *Charitas*, Bollettino Rosminiano, Centro Studi Rosminiani, 1997–1999.

³ Cf. Berthold Altaner, *Patrology*, Herder-Nelson, 1960, Introduction, pp.7–8.

treatment of St Thomas is outside the scope of this work.⁴ The age of the Fathers is considered to have come to a close about the eighth century, whereas Aquinas lived in the thirteenth century. However, something should be said about Rosmini's appreciation of St Thomas. Rosmini admired him above all scholars with the exception of St Augustine. He was only eight years old when his tutor Don Francesco Guareschi, not a perceptive man, found him in the library at home with the *Summa* of St Thomas. He took it from him and tapped him over the head with it, 'saying sharply, "what have you to do with such books as this?"'⁵ His reproof did not seem to make much difference to Antonio's interest in St Thomas even at this early age. During his teenage years he was already absorbed in his works and he recognised St Thomas as a genius. St Thomas had been neglected in ecclesiastical schools and he wished to rehabilitate him and thus, together with the writings of St Augustine, to provide a sound basis for the philosophy and theology of his day. One day when walking with Signini he suddenly said, 'Oh, what would I give to have five minutes talk with St Thomas! I am sure we should understand each other and perfectly agree.'⁶ His works are peppered with quotations of the Angelic Doctor. Rosmini was the first writer of the nineteenth century to appreciate the importance of St Thomas and to be his protagonist.

The Fathers of the Church were a major influence not only on Rosmini's intellectual output, but on his own personal relationship with God. They permeate his ascetical works. Examples are, his *Massime di perfezione Cristiana* [Maxims of Christian Perfection], the *Costituzioni dell'Istituto della Carità* [Constitutions of the Institute of Charity]; and other works such as *Manuale dell'esercitatore* [The Manual of the Retreat Giver], the *Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici* [Conferences on Ecclesiastical Duties] and his sublime *Dottrina della carità* [A Society of Love].⁷ These works were the outcome of a great deal of study and research. Rosmini saw the Fathers as Pastors, united in their teaching and in the life of the Church. He held that the true theologian must be one who is holy as well as intellectual. The Fathers were witnesses and defenders of revealed truths; they clarified doctrine without going beyond the bounds of the deposit of faith.

A good example of the way Rosmini used the Fathers in his preaching is found in his *Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici*. This is a collection of twenty sermons which he gave at various times, some of them to priests and brothers of his own Institute. These were published after his death.⁸

⁴ Likewise, other illustrious saints, such as St Benedict, Cassian, St Alphonsus, and St Ignatius. Indeed these figure in Rosmini's *Directorium Spiritus*, the volumes of quotations and notes compiled as a preparation for his writing of the *Constitutions*.

⁵ G. B. Pagani, *The Life of Antonio Rosmini-Serbatì*, George Routledge and Sons, 1907, p. 8.

⁶ Lockhart, *op. cit.*, Vol II, p.42.

⁷ Antonio Rosmini-Serbatì (= A.R.), *Costituzioni dell'Istituto della Carità*, 1845; *Manuale dell'esercitatore*, 1840; *Massime di perfezione cristiana*, 1830; *Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici*, 1880; *Dottrina della carità*, 1931.

⁸ A.R., *Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici* (= *Conferenze*), Giulio Speirani e Figli, Torino, 1880. [English translation by Mary F. Ingoldsby, *Talks to Priests*, New City Press, 1982.]

An analysis of this work shows that Rosmini mentions 18 Fathers of the Church. Those mentioned, or quoted most frequently, are Augustine, Gregory the Great, and John Chrysostom. Ambrose, and Jerome come next.

It is clear that Rosmini was familiar with the works of these Fathers.⁹ Gregory the Great exhorts priests to recite the breviary worthily. 'When an intermediary has to be chosen to sue for mercy, the choice clearly does not fall on one who is *persona non grata*, since this would only worsen the situation.'¹⁰ 'Genuine prayer is not in the sound of the voice but in the thoughts of the heart. It is not our words but our desires that reach the ears of God.'¹¹ The priest should be humble. 'It is not so difficult for a man to give up the things that belong to him, but it is very difficult for him to give up himself.'¹² Priests are to be *teachers of humility*, but they cannot be such if they are *leaders in pride*.¹³ The priest should give a shining example of virtue, so that in him, as in a mirror, the people can see the course to follow and discover what they must set right.¹⁴ The priest should prefer the hidden life. In his ministry of the word he should eschew worldly preaching and seeking praise. 'To be adulterers of God's word means that instead of drawing spiritual fruits from it we seek vain human applause.'¹⁵ Priests should be zealous preachers. 'One who is not burning will not set fire to others.'¹⁶

Another obligation of the pastor is vigilance and the duty of admonishing and correcting what is wrong. Rosmini quotes *Ezekiel* 13: 5, 'You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel' and quotes the comments of Gregory the Great: '“Going up into the breaches” means going to the defence of the flock and engaging in battle with opposing forces by means of the unfettered word. The pastor afraid to speak the truth is he who runs away, but he who faces the foe in defence of the flock truly builds a wall of the house of Israel against the enemy.' And 'Let a leader be an ally to those who do good through humility, and a bulwark against the wicked through justice; never considering himself better than others, and without

⁹ Regarding Gregory the Great, Rosmini quotes from the *Moralia* [Morals] (or *Expositio in librum Job* [Explanation of the Book of Job]), the *Epistulae* [Letters] and *Liber regular pastoralis* [The Pastoral]. From John Chrysostom he quotes from *De sacerdotio* (On the Priesthood), *In Ioannem homiliae* [Homilies on John's Gospel], *In Matthaeum homiliae* [Homilies on Matthew's Gospel]. From Augustine he quotes from *De verbis apostolorum* [On the Words of the Apostles], *Enarrationes in psalmos* [Explanations of the Psalms], *De doctrina christiana* [On Christian Doctrine], *Epistulae ad Aurelium* [Letters to Aurelius], *Sermones* [Sermons] and *Epistulae* [Letters]. From Ambrose he quotes, *De officiis ministrorum* [Regarding the Duties of Ministers], *Epistulae* and *De sacramentis*; from Jerome, his *Epistulae*.

Unfortunately there is not yet a critical edition of the *Conferenze*. The result is that not all the quotations have references and those which are mentioned are not always precise.

¹⁰ *Conferenze*, Conf., III, p. 48, [p. 53]. Gregory the Great, *Liber regulae pastoralis*, I, XI.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 50–51, [p. 56]. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, XXII, 13.

¹² *Ibid.*, Conf., IX, p. 149, [p. 145]. Gregory the Great, *In evangelia*, Hom. XXXII.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 155, [p. 150]. Gregory the Great, *Epistulae*, Lib. IV, 66, i.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Conf., XI, p. 189, [p. 180]. Gregory the Great, *Liber regulae pastoralis*, L. VII.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Conf., XII, p. 222, [p. 210]. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, II, 17.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 230, [p. 217].

prejudice to his authority, he accepts as equals all law-abiding citizens, but never fails to invoke the law against evil-doers.¹⁷

Speaking of the necessity of prayer for the priest engaged in the pastoral ministry, Rosmini quotes Augustine who names the duties of the priest, 'We admonish the faithful, so that they may reflect; we teach them so that they may be well-informed; we pray that they may be converted.'¹⁸ Again with regard to prayer, 'If the psalmist groans we too must groan; if the psalmist rejoices we must rejoice; if the psalmist asks we too must ask.' And, 'Many cry out not with their own voice but with the voice of the body. The cry that reaches the Lord is your thought. It cries out within you, where God is listening.'¹⁹ As regards preaching, 'We do not employ high-sounding or poetical phrases, nor eloquence smacking of secular speech, but we preach Christ crucified.'²⁰ Rosmini says it is necessary for the priest to make a special study of Scripture 'which St Jerome calls the priest's book.'²¹ Jerome says, 'Those preachers are truly effeminate who use high-sounding words, and in them there is nothing manly or worthy of God.'²² In speaking of learning Rosmini says that the priest should do as Augustine teaches, pick up what is good and true from everyone, even from impious people.²³ Rosmini begins his last conference with a long quotation, 'Make progress, my brothers and encourage one another without fawning or flattery. There is surely no one amongst you, in your house, who makes you ashamed and distressed. But there is one who loves humility and he will test you. Test yourself. Never be satisfied with yourself as you are, if you wish to become what you are not. For where you were happy to be, there you have remained. If you have said "hold; enough", you are lost; always increase, always keep walking, always move ahead. Never loiter on the way, never go backwards, never deviate. He who does not move ahead lags behind. The one who returns to that from which he had turned away goes backwards. He deviates who apostatises. One who limps on course is better than a runner who is off course.'²⁴

Rosmini was familiar with *De sacerdotio* of John Chrysostom. What the author of the letter to Timothy says of the bishop applies also to priests. They should be above reproach. In speaking of the priest's duty to pray, Rosmini quotes Chrysostom, 'The priest stands between God and human beings, invoking heaven's blessing, presenting

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Conf., XV, p. 288, [p. 271]. Gregory the Great, *Liber regulae pastoralis*, L. II, c. IV, and *Ibid.*, c. VI. It is worth mentioning here that Gregory is mentioned twice in Rosmini's *Manuale dell' esercitatore* [Manual for the Retreat-giver], in Meditation VII regarding penance in relation to *Job* 10: 3, (*Moralia in Job* Lib. IX, c. 46) and in Meditation XI regarding the everlasting punishment which the enemy of good must endure (*Moralia in Job*, c. IX). A.R., *Manuale dell' esercitatore* (= *Manuale*), Intra, Paolo Bertolotti, 1872, pp. 248 and 274.

¹⁸ *Conferenze*, Conf., II, p. 23, [p. 30]. Augustine, *De verbis apostolorum*.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Conf., II, p. 31, [p. 37] and Conf., III, p. 36–37, [p. 43]. Augustine, *In Psalm XXX*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Conf., XII, p. 224, [p. 213]. Augustine, Sermo I, *De acced. Ad gratiam*.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Conf., XVI, p. 318, [p. 298].

²² *Ibid.*, Conf., XII, p. 225, [p. 213]. Jerome, *In Ezechiele commentarii*.

²³ *Ibid.*, Conf., XVIII, p. 345, [p. 321–322]. Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, Lib. II, c. 40.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Conf., XX, p. 369, [p. 345]. Augustine, Sermo XV, *De verbis apostolorum*.

our petitions, appeasing God's anger and snatching human beings from his wrath.²⁵ In reciting the breviary the priest is 'a legate interceding for the whole world. He prays that God look mercifully on the sins of all, not only of the living but also of the dead.'²⁶ Chrysostom has hard things to say of the sinful priest who will find it harder than the lay folk to return to a state of grace. And one who approaches the altar aware of his sinful and unrepentant state is worse than a demon.²⁷ Indeed, it goes without saying that the priest should celebrate in a state of purity. Origen believed that only those who had vowed themselves to perpetual chastity should offer the Eucharist. Chrysostom says, 'What purity is ever sufficient in one who enjoys such a sacrifice? The hand that breaks the sacred host must shine more brightly than any ray of the sun; the mouth and the tongue that are reddened by this most holy blood must burn with spiritual fire.'²⁸ Chrysostom also says that the priest should be sincere in his preaching. He says that he should not be seeking the approval of people. Ambrose says that 'Christian preaching does not require ostentation or polished language.'²⁹ Rosmini says we should have an ardent zeal and pray for holiness, so that we do not deserve the title given by Chrysostom to empty preachers of miserable and unhappy traitors.³⁰ Ambrose says that the priest must strive to be like God in holiness so that people will venerate the image of God in him.³¹ Rosmini goes on to say that far from seeking applause, Fathers such as Gregory the Great, Ambrose, Augustine and Chrysostom shrank from the active life of the priesthood and preferred a hidden and private life rather than the honours of public life.³² Ambrose says that pastors should seek out the poor 'Not only must we turn our ears to hear their requests, but also our eyes to see their plight.'³³

Rosmini wrote notes on the Fathers just as he did on the Bible. He collected sayings as a youthful exercise and this became a habit. In 1819 in a letter to Pier Alessandro Paravia he writes about human behaviour and cites sayings and proverbs of St Gregory, St Jerome, Boetius, Cassiodorus and classical authors. These relate to modesty, pride, priestly dignity and preaching.³⁴ It is also interesting that he mentions in this letter "Frate Bartolommeo".³⁵ He is one of his basic sources for Rosmini's *Directorium spiritus*.³⁶

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Conf., II, p. 22, [p. 29]. John Chrysostom, *In Ioannem homiliae*, V.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Conf., III, p. 48 [p. 54]. John Chrysostom, *De sacerdotio*, VI, 6.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Conf., IV, pp. 62–63, [p. 67].

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Conf., VII, p. 115, [p. 115]. John Chrysostom, *In Matthaeum homiliae*, XVIII.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Conf., p. 226, [p. 214]. Ambrose, *In epistula ad Corinthios*.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, John Chrysostom, *Homilia ad populum*, XXIII.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Conf., XX, p. 371, [p. 347]. Ambrose *De officiis*, Lib I, c. XXX.

³² *Ibid.*, Conf., p. 355, [pp. 331–332].

³³ *Ibid.*, Conf., XVI, p. 307, [p. 288]. Ambrose, *De officiis*, Lib. II, cap. XVI, n. 77.

³⁴ A.R., *Epistolario Completo* (=EC), Vol. 1, Appendix, pp. 737–763, in particular pp. 742–745.

³⁵ *Compendium spiritualis doctrinae ex variis SS. Patrum sententiis* R. P. Bartholomaei De martyribus, Paris, 1601.

³⁶ Cf. p. 29.

In 1820 he and his friends founded the 'Accademia di Sacra Eloquenza' (Academy of Sacred Eloquence). Rosmini gave the inaugural discourse in which he said the preacher must imitate Jesus Christ. They should consult the Greek and Latin Fathers and avoid preachers who hand out flowers instead of the Gospel and they should value the teaching of the Fathers of the Church. He admired the Fathers for their insatiable love of Scripture and their insistence that it should be read.³⁷

Alfeo Valle makes some interesting comments when speaking of Rosmini's use of the Fathers.³⁸ He states that the religious works of Rosmini up to 1826 are clearly distinguished from those which follow. The former are characterised by research, quotation and presentation of Scripture and the Fathers. Texts regarding the spiritual life are nourished by these sources. Later, we have re-elaboration and development of previous investigation into the original works. So there are two phases of Rosminian spirituality, the scriptural-patristic phase, of imitation, study and comment on those great models, and the other phase which is creative but which employs the same models. In the former, Scripture and the Fathers of the Church are on the first level, they represent the direct ideal, the material of religious writings. Later they are the inner substance, the sources of inspiration and development. Valle does not mention works prior to 1826 but presumably they would include *Il giorno di solitudine* [The Day of Solitude] and *Dell'educazione cristiana* [On Christian Education]. As for the second period he mentions the *Massime di perfezione cristiana* [Maxims of Christian Perfection].³⁹ Valle points out that these Maxims include genuine scriptural and patristic themes such as, perfection, charity, justice, the Church, the call of God, Providence, the acknowledgement of our own nothingness and the spirit of intelligence. In 1840 Rosmini published the *Manuale dell' esercitante* [Manual for the Retreat Giver]. This was an updated meditation on the Exercises of Saint Ignatius. The material is evangelical and Ignatian but developed and enriched by the introduction of the patristic element. He quotes Lactantius, Cyprian, Gregory, Augustine and others.⁴⁰ It is important to note that Rosmini's influence is present, the fruit of his meditation on Scripture and the Fathers, because this is where his thought was rooted and nourished. The other work which Valle mentions is the *Constitutions of the Institute of Charity*. This will be discussed in chapter 4.

Rosmini had access to his Father's library till 1826 and he also borrowed books from it when he was in Milan and Piedmont. The library he bought in Padua included works of Augustine and Jerome. Rosmini had a predilection for these two authors. He

³⁷ The discourse is unedited and preserved in the Archives at Stresa. In his *Dell'educazione cristiana*, Rosmini quotes St Basil who exhorts his readers to study the Bible especially the New Testament. As for the Old Testament he recommends to the people of Caesarea to pay particular attention to the Psalms, and the Book of Proverbs. *Dell'educazione cristiana*, (= *Educazione*), Edizione Critica (= Ed. Crit.) (31), Roma 1994, Lib. I, c. 2, nn. 13–14, pp. 44–45.

³⁸ Alfeo Valle, *Momenti e valori della spiritualità rosminiana* (= *Momenti e Valori*) [Themes and Priorities of Rosminian Spirituality], Città Nuova Editrice, Roma, 1978, p. 34.

³⁹ This last work is readily available in English.

⁴⁰ See Appendix 2, Table 2.

translated Augustine's *De catechizandis rudibus* [Catechism for Beginners] (1821) and annotated a translation of the life of St Jerome, *Volgarizzamento della vita de s. Girolamo* [Translation of the Life of St Jerome] (1824). Antonio Quacquarelli⁴¹ states that he knew the greater part of the works of St Jerome especially his commentaries and letters. As for Augustine we shall have more to say about him in due course. Augustine was the Father *par excellence* in Rosmini's eyes. Of the Latin Fathers, Rosmini was familiar with the *Pastoral Rule of St Gregory*, on which he meditated, and also his homilies. He was quoting Lactantius as a teenager, and Tertullian figures often in his works and also Vincent of Lerins. But he evidently had a preference for the Greek Fathers even from his young days. 'For example the use of the Greek Fathers is amply present in Rosmini's unedited theological notes written with the help of his fellow students in the classes of dogmatic theology in the academic year 1816–1817. Valsecchi, Tommasoni's teacher, made great use of the Greek Fathers in his works.'⁴² In his *Scritti vari di metodo e di pedagogia* [Various writings on Method and Pedagogy] Rosmini says, 'As for Sacred Authors, the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church must be the chief sources and exemplars which we must always have before us and among these, St Basil, St John Chrysostom, St Cyprian and St Augustine.'⁴³ He was also partial to the Cappadocian Fathers, St Gregory Nazianzen and St Gregory of Nyssa. He mentions the latter as being 'so venerated for his acuteness and faith that in his old age he was called the Father of Fathers.'⁴⁴

Rosmini had a love for the Alexandrian school and wished to write a book on it. He quotes Clement of Alexandria frequently and he greatly esteemed Origen whom he called the 'most splendid light of the Church' and 'the great moulder of bishops and martyrs', 'the great Origen'.⁴⁵ He valued his allegorical–spiritual interpretation of the

⁴¹ Antonio Quacquarelli, *La lezione patristica di Antonio Rosmini* (= LP), Centro Internazionale di Studi Rosminiani, Stresa, 1980, p. 13.

⁴² Gianfranco Ferrarese, *Ricerche sulle riflessioni teologiche di A. Rosmini negli anni 1819–1828*, Marzorati Editore, Milano, 1967 c. II, p. 54. Antonio Valsecchi (1708–1791) was a theologian and taught at Padua from 1758–1791. Tommaso Tommasoni (1752–1826) was born at Bassano. He was a Dominican priest and taught dogma at Padua during the years 1815–1826.

⁴³ A.R., *Scritti vari di metodo e di pedagogia* (= *Scritti Vari*), Torino, 1883, p. 265.

⁴⁴ A.R., *Antropologia soprannaturale* (= AS), Ed. Crit. (39, 40), 1983, Vol. II, Book IV, Part II, c. III, Art II, p. 299. Maria Bettetini and Alberto Peratoner in their article *Linee per uno studio sull'uso delle fonti patristiche nelle opere di Rosmini*, Rivista Rosminiana, Stresa, III–IV, 1987, pp. 483–519, give other titles bestowed on some Fathers for whom Rosmini showed special esteem: 'the distinguished Father St Cyprian', *Sopra le elezioni vescovili a Clero e Popolo*, Lettere I, p. 223; the 'great Bishop and Martyr of Carthage' *Delle Cinque Piaghe della Santa Chiesa*, [The Five Wounds of the Holy Church] (= CP), Ed. Crit. (56), 1981, III, n. 48; 'the holy and great Pope Leo' *Sopra le elezioni*, Lettere III, p. 244; 'the great Pope' (St Gregory the Great) *Trattato della coscienza morale* (= *Coscienza*), Edizione Nazionale (= Ed. Naz. (XXVI), 1934, Lib. III, n. 329, and *Sopra le elezioni*, Lettere I, p. 217, n. 15); and St Jerome 'the greatest Doctor' *Coscienza* Lib. III, n. 305, p. 204, [n. 305, p. 150]. But no one outdoes St Augustine whom Rosmini quotes as representing 'the great tradition of the Church which proclaims unceasingly and unanimously to human beings: "Do not think that you yourself are the light"'. A. R., *Nuovo saggio sull'origine delle idee*, [A New Essay concerning the Origin of Ideas] (= NS), Ediz. Crit. (5), 2005, Vol. III, Sez. VI, c. II, n. 1111, p. 70 [n. 1111, p. 60].

⁴⁵ A.R., CP, *Sopra le elezioni vescovili a Clero e Popolo*. Lettere, I, p. 221, [p. 166], c. 2, n. 31 note 7, p. 43, [p. 197] and c. II, 28, n. 4; p. 41, [196].

Bible. He thought he was a great saint whose knowledge flowed from his sanctity. Today Origen has been re-valued as an obligatory source in Biblical studies. With Origen is associated Pantaenus who preceded him and Gregory Thaumaturgus who followed him. Quacquarelli says that, in order to follow Origen's method Rosmini must surely have read Gregory's *The Discourse on Reasoning in Origen*.⁴⁶ If he was asked to suggest spiritual reading for young clerics he recommended the *Confessions* of St Augustine. For the clergy he suggested *De sacerdotio* of St John Chrysostom, the *De officiis* of St Ambrose and the *Regula pastoralis* of St Gregory the Great. He often returned to the *Confessions* as a book to savour. He recommends it together with the *Meditations of St Augustine*, the *Imitation of Christ* and the *Spiritual Combat*, and the works of Francis of Sales, to a correspondent seeking help for a friend, as means for fighting against the spirit of pride. 'I would advise him to make use of suitable books, trying to savour them with the eagerness of someone who is intent on becoming humble...Reading the *Confessions* is likely to excite sorrow for one's sins, if it is done with a suitable disposition.'⁴⁷

Rosmini was not professedly a patristic scholar and did not set out to write books on patrology. As we see, he revered the Fathers, was familiar with them and used them but this was governed by the work he was doing. Rosmini would be quite disciplined in this and not simply quote the Fathers unless he had good reason to do so. We must beware of 'reading back' into Rosmini's work a specific patristic aim which is not paramount. Quacquarelli says that Rosmini has given us a vast amount of patristic material but not very well organised. Often it is hard work to trace the sources. A good example of this is a small work, *Alcuni salmi con annotazioni cavati dai Santi Padri* [Some Psalms with Notes drawn from the Holy Fathers] which appears in his *Operette spirituali*.⁴⁸ There are no references to sources. This is frustrating from the point of view of research, but Rosmini was more interested in the spiritual value of the work rather than providing us with his references. Today's critical editions do help us to make the updating of the references possible.⁴⁹

An important problem regarding Rosmini's use of the Fathers is to know whether he is directly drawing on the work at first hand or whether he is quoting at second hand through reference works. Umberto Muratore who has edited the Critical Edition of the Supernatural Anthropology states in his introduction, 'Nevertheless I am convinced that Rosmini does not always draw directly from the texts; a trace of this is left where, for example, he quotes in the same order and way in which the Author, with whom he is dealing at the time, quotes them; or where the source errs, and

⁴⁶ Greg. Thaum. *Orat. in laud. Orig.* Cf. Quacquarelli, *Le radici patristiche della teologia di Antonio Rosmini* (= RP), Edipuglia, 1991, c. II, p. 52.

⁴⁷ A.R., *Epistolario ascetico* (= EA). Vol. III, Letter 809, pp. 73–75 [The Ascetical Letters of Antonio Rosmini, Translated and edited by John Morris, Volume V, pp. 8–9].

⁴⁸ These two little volumes were published in 1849. *Alcuni salmi con annotazioni cavati dai Santi Padri* has been published in the Critical Edition of Rosmini's works, Vol 48, *Operette spirituali*, edited by Alfeo Valle, pp. 123–184.

⁴⁹ Quacquarelli, LP, Preface, p. 11.

especially where he quotes the author without giving any indication of the source.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, Muratore does not give examples but, of course, this leads to another question which is, how familiar was Rosmini with the texts themselves of the Fathers? It would be naive to imagine that he knew at first hand all the works he quotes. I think it fair to say that such a colossal achievement would have been beyond the capability even of Rosmini, on top of his other work and his relatively short span of life. Moreover, Rosmini's preoccupation with the Fathers needs to be seen in the context of his whole intellectual output. Antonio Staglianò makes the point that Rosmini does not draw his teaching from the Fathers (except for some passages from Augustine), but on the basis of doctrinal affirmation offered, he searches in the works of different Fathers for those passages capable of documenting and proving that a particular topic belongs to the conscience of Christian faith, simply because the Fathers speak of it.⁵¹ Staglianò goes on to mention two other authors, E. Bellini, and V. del Prete who believe, in the words of Bellini, that in his early formative period Rosmini's reading of the Fathers 'was very restricted and done in strict connection with his study of recent authors'; in fact 'he could find many quotations of patristic texts in the theological works of the seventeenth and eighteenth century which he read in great quantity especially through his interest in apologetics.'⁵² Rosmini would surely have had recourse to the best minds of his time. However we must take into consideration several other points. Rosmini was naturally averse to compendia and manuals. He says that Origen did not use manuals but read the works of the major philosophers in order to discern truth from error by means of thorough research.⁵³ After such a preparation he set about reading and explaining Sacred Scripture. The *Discourse* of Gregory Thaumaturgus did not escape him in which the former praises Origen who used a valid and valuable method. He maintained that compendia could be useful to abridge what great authors have explained at length 'but by themselves they will not set students on the highway of true knowledge.'⁵⁴ Rosmini openly criticises the manuals which are used in seminaries.⁵⁵ As I have said, Rosmini had a very high opinion of Origen. A painstaking and thorough research and analysis of Rosmini's works needs to be done before pronouncing definitively on his direct and indirect use of the works of the Fathers.

Quacquarelli states that the 18th century brought out many versions of the work of the Fathers. The *Bibliotheca Graeco-Latina veterum Patrum* by Gallandi appeared in Venice in 14 volumes between 1765 and 1781. This would be the basis for those who wished to study patristic texts for the whole of the first half of the 19th century.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ A.R., *AS*, Introduzione, note 48, p. 21.

⁵¹ Antonio Staglianò, *La "teologia" secondo Antonio Rosmini*, Morcelliana, 1988, Part I, c. II, pp 130–131.

⁵² E. Bellini, *I padri nella tradizione cristiana*, Jaca Book, Milano, 1982, pp. 135–136; V. del Prete, *Per una teologia dei sacramenti. Riflessioni sulla teologia sacramentaria di Antonio Rosmini*, Napoli, 1981 pp. 35–39.

⁵³ A.R., *CP*, p. 118, n. 44, note 3 [c. 2, n. 44, note 37, p. 202].

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. XI, pp. 143–144. Cf. *CP*, n. 40 ff, p. 56 [n. 40 ff., p. 40 ff.].

⁵⁶ Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. IV, p.81.

Wherever he was Rosmini tried to keep himself up to date with the Fathers. If he was not satisfied with the existing translation, he made one himself and adapted it to his writings. His learning was always on the increase. 'Patrology is for him a historical foundation which provides sound principles for development.'⁵⁷

Quacquarelli goes on to say that 'In Europe in the eighteenth century there was intense work being done on patrology. Fifteen years earlier, Le Nain de Tillemont had finished publishing his work, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des six premiers siècles* in 16 volumes, which appeared in Paris between the years 1693 and 1712, when the monk Remi Ceillier published, also in Paris, his *Histoire générale des auteurs sacrés et ecclésiastiques* in 23 volumes between the years 1729 and 1763. Ceillier was a devoted and hardworking Benedictine. In Germany another Benedictine monk, Domenic Schramm, in 1780, published the first volume of his *Analysis operum SS. Patrum et Scriptorum ecclesiasticorum* at Augsburg. This was continued up to Epiphanius of Salamis in seventeen others and was completed in 1796. Yet another German Benedictine, Gottfried Lumper had the *Historia theologico-critica Patrum* which, even today, has something to tell us about the Latin authors of the III century. The publishing of the work began at Augsburg in 1780 and was finished in 1799, and the author himself died in 1800.

In Italy the Theatine Cardinal Giuseppe Maria Tomasi published, between 1709 and 1711, the *Institutiones theologicae antiquorum Patrum quae aperto sermone exponunt breviter theologiam sive theoreticam sive practicam*. It was a trend which continued to enlarge the path of patristic theology. In the *Institutiones* of Tomasi are found the works of Augustine, Epiphanius of Salamis, Gennadius of Marseilles, Theodoret of Cyrus and Fulgentius of Ruspe. A new edition was brought out in Rome by another Theatine, Antonio Francesco Vezzosi (1708–1783). It was very fortuitous that this work formed Giuseppe Zola and Giovanni Prosdocimi Zabeo, the master of the Athenaeum of Padova which Rosmini frequented. Angelo Cigheri also wrote a similar work in 13 volumes in quarto at Firenze from 1789 to 1791. Cigheri (1739–1793) was parish priest at Colonia di Pistoia.

Between 1761 and 1781 the *Bibliotheca graeco-latina veterum Patrum* in 14 volumes in folio were printed under the patronage of Francesco Foscari (1704–1790) in Venice. There were also a fair number of Italian translations of the Latin and Greek Fathers.⁵⁸ Eighteenth century Italians had also planned an encyclopaedia of knowledge which would research the origins of Christianity. This project was also taken up by Antonio Rosmini as I have already said.

The interesting thing is that there is no mention of any of these authors in Radice's *Annali*,⁵⁹ so there doesn't appear to be any record of Rosmini referring to these major sources, certainly up to 1837. Of course this does not mean that he did not use them;

⁵⁷ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. XI, p. 136.

⁵⁸ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. 11, 137–138.

⁵⁹ Gianfranco Radice, *Annali di Antonio Rosmini Serbati* (= *Annali*), 8 Vols. 1967–1974, Milano/Genova. These volumes consist of a detailed research into the life, events and work of Antonio Rosmini.

we should beware of jumping to conclusions. Another point to take into account is Rosmini's interest in manuscripts and his access to libraries, not least his own. In his unpublished thesis *'Fonti patristiche del "Homo Imago Dei" in Antonio Rosmini'*,⁶⁰ Gianni Picenardi lists works of the Fathers among which are those preserved at Rovereto and Stresa. It is therefore indisputable that Rosmini had direct access to the Fathers and difficult to accept that he would not have used them and preferred source books, except for special reasons.

⁶⁰ Gianni Picenardi, *Fonti patristiche "Homo Imago Dei" in Antonio Rosmini*, Istitutum Patristicum "Augustinianum", Roma, 1989.

Chapter 2

Rosmini's Studies in Early Life

Rosmini's mental development was extraordinary. He recalled at the age of two wondering why his nurse had put a night light where he could not see it. He began his studies at the early age of six under a tutor called Runck. His first reading book was the Bible, and he was given the Acts of the Martyrs and the Lives of the Saints to read. He was nurtured on the Scriptures and on 9 November 1820 he wrote on the cover of his Bible 'I have begun to read, for at least the third time, this divine book in an orderly way.'¹ Even at an early age he had an outstanding love of learning and his mother often had to take books away from him in case he injured his health by too much study.² And at night she had to put the light out to try to get him to sleep. It would seem that Rosmini had a photographic memory. He once said to Signini, 'I feel I am beginning to get old (he was then 47); before these last few years my mind was always as clear as the sunlight. There was no cloud before it. I saw the truth clearly; no obscurity disturbed my vision. But now a cloud sometimes comes up before me. I am obliged to stop a while in the effort to get at the direct vision of the truth.'³ In later life he allegedly lamented that he could not remember a quotation which he had read some years previously. He must also have been a rapid reader with great powers of concentration. 'His formative period is characterised by an intense zeal for study, research, sketches and notes. He shows an extraordinary capacity for application and an enthusiasm to embrace all knowledge.'⁴ It was a period of vast assimilation and solid foundation.⁴ If he was interrupted in his work he could continue later from the previous word in his dictation.⁵

¹ Archivio Storico dell' Istituto della Carità (= A.S.I.C.) A.2 51/A, fgl, 66r. Cf. Valle, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27.

² This actually happened later when he was at Milan. He wrote to his friend, Tommaseo, 'I wish I could put a brake on my overwork. My health is obviously suffering because of it. I can see this plainly but I am driven along. How much greater than the pleasure of the body is that of the mind!' *EC*, Vol. I, Letter 268, 6 August 1823, p. 467. And in a letter to Maurizio Moschini the following year, 'I wish I had four eyes for reading and two heads for thinking, and that the rest of the body might go away, for it is too distracting.' *EC*, Vol. I, Letter 308, 23 February, 1824, p. 519.

³ Lockhart, Vol. II, p. 52.

⁴ Valle, *op. cit.*, c. II, p. 25.

⁵ The same phenomenon occurred in the life of St Augustine who completed his *De doctrina christiana* thirty years after he laid it aside. 'With an outstanding mental alertness, and with no trace of a "join", the bishop carried on as if time had been suspended between the interruption of his text — in III, 35, right in the middle of a development on the interpretation of the Scriptures — and the resumption of his writings thirty years later. It is from an event like this that we can grasp, as if in real life, Augustine's quite exceptional intellectual capability, that aptitude for mobilising ideas, immediately and effortlessly summoning from his memory texts that would support his demonstration to illustrate it...' Serge Lancel, *St Augustine*, SCM Press, 2002, c. XXXIV, p. 461.

The unstable political situation in Rosmini's youth was not exactly conducive to study, but the public schools of Rovereto, which had shut during the revolution, opened again about 1804 and it was decided to send Antonio to the local Elementary School.⁶ He had no difficulty in walking off with the first prize although not completing the first year. In 1808 he entered secondary school, but he did not do well in his second year there and was made to repeat it. He was bored with grammar and had his mind set on higher things. The books his uncle gave him were more congenial to his enquiring mind. It was at this time, when he was 12 years old, 'that I entered the first Latin school of the Ginnasio [secondary school]. I resolved to make a resolution not to waste time but to be wholly involved with useful things. In this year also, or in the preceding one, I resolved to read constantly. The first book which I read, following on this resolution, was the *Riflessioni sull'Antico e Nuovo Testamento* [Reflections on the Old and New Testaments] by Rayemont; and after that the whole of the *Storia romana* [Roman History] by Rollin, from which I began to take notes. From then on I continued this method of noting down what seemed useful or interesting from my reading.'⁷

Thus, Rosmini's interest in the Fathers arose at a very early age and never left him. He had direct access to the works of the Fathers in his father's library until 1826; and it is important to note that his love of the Fathers impelled him to go direct to the sources. In the years 1811–1812 he compiled his *Note della carità cristiana* [Notes on Christian Charity] in six parts and in the second part dated, 1 January 1812, wrote down more than a thousand quotations from Scripture, philosophers, Greek and Roman historians, the Fathers of the Church and St Thomas.⁸ These would embellish his later writings. At this time, the list of books Rosmini consulted, or read, increased by leaps and bounds. In the scholastic years 1810–1812 he read or consulted some forty works, including Augustine's *Enchiridion*,⁹ Jerome's *Letters*, and Gregory the Great's *Moralia*; not bad going for a 14 year old.¹⁰ The next year, at the age of 15, he was learning different forms of literature, figures of speech, and the elements of rhetoric and having to compose these for himself. Added to this was the composition

⁶ In 1808–1809 Rovereto was under the Austrians; but in 1810 it came under the French. Naturally the French imposed a study of their language. Cf. *Annali*, Vol. I, p. 71. In October 1813, the Austrians reoccupied Rovereto and a certain stability ensued. These years entailed a variation in the syllabus of studies. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁷ Scritti Autobiografici inediti (= S.A.I.). Ed. Naz., Roma, 1934, *Diario Personale* (= DP), 1809, p. 418. The full title of Rayemont of Sombrenes book was *Riflessioni morali sopra l'istoria del Vecchio e Nuovo Testamento, cavate da' Santi Padri, per regolare i costumi de' fedeli d'ogni condizione; con un breve Ristretto nel fine della Sacra Scrittura*. It was written in French and translated into Italian in Trent by Giovambattista Monauni in 1799. The author, Charles Rollin, 1661–1741 wrote '*Histoire Romaine*' 8 Vols. and an '*Ancient History*' from 1738–1741, completed after his death by his pupil Crecier. *Annali*, Vol. 1, p. 45, note 38.

⁸ Rossi (Pagani-Rossi), *La vita di Antonio Rosmini scritta da un sacerdote dell'Istituto della Carità*, Arti Grafiche R. Manfrini, Rovereto 1959, Vol. I, p. 52. Cf. *Annali*, Vol. I, p. 55–56.

⁹ Or *Treatise on Faith Hope and Charity*. In the Archives at Stresa are two pages of notes on the book which he wrote in 1812.

¹⁰ *Annali*, Vol. 1, pp. 60–65.

of Latin verse, catechism, geography and spelling in Tuscan. Then there were history, mathematics, physics, natural history and, in the second year, Greek. In this year (1812–13) Rosmini's reading list had expanded to 90 books including two works of Augustine, of Jerome, and Gregory the Great, and works of Ambrose, John Chrysostom, Lactantius, and Origen.¹¹ By 1814 when Rosmini was seventeen the books he consulted or read in the scholastic year had risen to a phenomenal 428. Included in this vast reading list are 25 works of St Augustine, and the works of some 20 other Fathers.¹² It would be simplistic to imagine that Rosmini actually read all these works. Even he would not have had the time over and above his regular studies. But he did have source material, and using this together with direct reference to works, his quick and alert mind would have had no difficulty in organising his studies in such a way as to have availed himself of the works recorded and to have assimilated them. This in itself reveals his genius.

1813 'was, for me, a year of grace. God opened my eyes to many things and I learnt that there was no true wisdom but in him. I decided to write a little work called *Il giorno di ritiro*' [The Day of Retreat] and in 1814 he decided to recast it, giving it the new title *Il giorno di solitudine*' [The Day of Solitude].¹³ It contains praise of religion, philosophy and friendship and is written after the manner of Boethius and in the style of the 14th century! In this he shows an erudition well beyond his years.¹⁴

In spite of the fact that there was now some stability after the defeats of Napoleon, families in Rovereto preferred to have their children taught privately rather than send them to the Imperial lyceum¹⁵ at Trent. Also, Don Pietro Orsi had been approved in

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96–106.

¹² Appendix 2, Table I offers an overview of the works of the Fathers read or consulted each year until 1837. Table II lists the early and later major works of Rosmini and the works of the Fathers mentioned or quoted in them.

¹³ A.R., DP, p. 419. Giuseppe Lorizio, in his book, *Un manoscritto giovanile rosmينiano IL GIORNO DI SOLITUDINE, Trascrizione e Interpretazione*, P.U.L. Roma, 1993, remarks that *Il giorno di ritiro* was begun on Rosmini's sixteenth birthday. Rosmini writes, in his *Giornale de'miei scritti*, '1813, 24 marzo—*Giorno di ritiro*', and on the following line, '1814, 16 febbraio—*Giorno di ritiro*, cominciato a rifondere (began recasting)'. A.R., *Giornale de' miei scritti*, [Diary of My Writings] (= GMS.) S.A.I., Ed. Naz., Roma, 1934, p. 291. Lorizio points out that the manuscript is dated two days later. But goes on to say that not just the coincidence of the dates but the manuscript itself leads to believe that we are dealing with the same pages, but with a different title. In fact 'on the frontispiece of the first draft, we read, "Here begins the II book of the compositions of Simonino Ironta Roveret. A' di 24 marzo M.DCCC.XIII" and, entitled, "Il giorno di Ritiro", where the last word is crossed out with a stroke of the pen and substituted with "Solitudine". A.S.I.C., A. 2-61/C, 205r. Lorizio, *ibid.*, p. XLVII. Simonino Ironta is an anagram of Antonio Rosmini which the author used in his youthful works. There is a charming story of Uncle Ambrosio and a friend visiting Rosmini in a little house, which the Rosmini family owned, on a hill nearby and surprising the young man engaged on writing this little work. B (= G. Bertanza), *Rosmini, Rimembranze giovanili* (Memories of the Young Rosmini), in *Bollettino rosmينiano* 2, p. 12, Rovereto, Grigoletti, 1887. Cf. Lorizio, *ibid.*, p. XLIV.

¹⁴ Details of the Fathers used are mentioned in Appendix 2. We shall just mention here that the names of the Fathers which recur most frequently are, Augustine, Lactantius, Jerome, Tertullian, Justin, Eusebius, Origen and Clement of Alexandria. Lorizio, *ibid.*, p. LXIII.

¹⁵ Senior secondary school.

1810 by the University of Innsbruck to give private tuition on theoretical and experimental physics, theoretical and practical philosophy and pure and applied mathematics. All these were subjects taught by the lyceum. Orsi began the History of Philosophy in November 1814 and found Rosmini was already advanced in higher studies. Rosmini thrived on Orsi's teaching and would later say, in his book *Introduzione alla filosofia*,

In my youth, when I knew nothing of what had been thought and written, I plunged enthusiastically — the way the young do — into philosophical questions. I was introduced to them by Pietro Orsi, whose name is virtually unknown but whom I shall never forget. Night and day, my mind ranged to and fro over the vast field of philosophy — it was like wandering in a garden. I experienced the delight that comes with one's first scientific glimpse of truth. I was full of almost arrogant self-assurance and the limitless hopes so characteristic of the young, when nobly and in full awareness, they apply their minds to the universe and its Creator and seem to take them in as easily as breathing. I was not awed by any difficulty I encountered, but stimulated. I considered every difficulty to be a mystery designed to awaken my curiosity, a treasure to unearth. Each day I wrote down the results of this ingenuous and still amateurish philosophical freedom, aware that I was sowing the seeds for the life's work which God had assigned to me. In fact, all the works published when I was older sprang from those seeds.¹⁶

On 31 December 1815, we find him writing to Don Luigi Sonn and Don Simone Tevini speaking competently of the Fathers of the first three centuries, commenting on Lactantius and quoting from Hauteville's *Discorso Storico-Critico*.¹⁷

In the autumn of 1816 when his *Il giorno di solitudine* was far from finished Rosmini entered the University of Padova and postponed his work on it until July 1817, in order to write two other works. On the last page of the manuscript he says, 'I left off writing anything for a year, I have taken up my pen again on 15 July 1817 and I have not written anything.'¹⁸ Eventually he quietly abandoned this work in the face of more important commitments. His education in Rovereto had had its drawbacks as his

¹⁶ A.R., *Introduzione alla filosofia*, (= *Introduzione*) Ed. Crit. (2), 1979, I, II, II, n. 52, pp. 100–101. [*Introduction to Philosophy. About the Author's studies*, Durham, 2004, n. 52, pp. 101–102].

¹⁷ 'It is useful to observe, first of all, the words of St Paul which I like very much *'Omnia probate quod bonum est tenete'* [test everything; hold fast to what is good 1 *Thess.* 5: 21], St Jerome quotes this, as I do, in a letter to Tranquillinus, speaking of the Fathers of the ancient Church, and who had no difficulty in not giving his full approval to everything in Lactantius in other passages. In fact Lactantius himself reproves Tertullian for obscurity and other little defects. In disapproving, therefore, of some opinions of the Fathers, I mean always particular minor ones, a distinction which Hauteville makes very well at the end of his *Considerations* of the Fathers of the first three centuries in his *Discorso Stor.Crit...* EC, Vol. I, Letter 46, 119–120.

¹⁸ A.S.I.C. A.2–61/C, 146v. Cf. Giuseppe Lorizio, *op. cit.*, p. XLVIII.

teachers were mediocre and he had come away with defects in style and a mediaeval style of writing which would appear even in his mature works. His natural taste was for the writers of the 14th and 16th centuries and he believed that these writers should be imitated in their language and style. He tried to model himself on Boccaccio and Bembo.¹⁹ Fortunately, in later years, his friend, the great writer, Alessandro Manzoni, (1785–1873) straightened him out a bit. But Rosmini's Italian is still not easy to read.

Rosmini's reading lists for the years 1815–1821 show a sharp decline in his reading and/or consultation of the Fathers.²⁰ There would seem to be at least three reasons for this. Firstly he had embarked on his studies for the priesthood, and the course of studies laid down for him would have taken priority; secondly his reading list for 1818 does not include a library of books which he acquired from a bookshop in Padua which belonged to a family called Venier who had come from Venice. Venier had acquired codices and books from the monastery of Santa Giustina despoiled by the French. Not many people knew about this new bookshop and Rosmini was fortunate enough to set eyes on the books which were going for a song. At once he saw how valuable they were. He lost no time in writing to his mother, and also enlisted the help of his friend Don Pietro Orsi, whom he knew had great influence with his family, to persuade her to speak to his father, to whom he also wrote directly saying that this was a worthwhile venture. 'Seventeen ancient manuscripts, all in vellum, with most beautiful miniatures in clear characters; among which are some works of St Augustine and St Jerome and other famous authors, certainly written with immense labour by the patient and indefatigable monks of the early centuries.'²¹ Rosmini was successful in his familial machinations and his father duly sent him 800 florins to buy the books. A third reason for the decline in his consultation and/or reading of the Fathers was that he would also have been preparing for his doctoral examinations which he sat on 23 June 1822, after his Ordination (1821).²² However it is worth noting that Rosmini's inquisitive mind could not just confine itself to the university curriculum during these years. We know that in 1820 he was giving lessons in sacred eloquence in his home at Rovereto, and in one of these exhorts those in the ecclesiastical ministry especially to draw on those 'to whom, because they excelled in their doctrine, not less than in their life, the Church gave the name of Fathers.'²³ His friend Niccolò Tommaseo informs us that when Rosmini was in Padua before 1820 he was always immersed in reading the Fathers appropriate for his researches, as well as the classics, Plato and Kant.²⁴

¹⁹ Giovanni Boccaccio, 1313–1375, writer of the *Decameron*. Pietro Bembo, 1470–1547, Italian scholar and Cardinal.

²⁰ See Appendix 2.

²¹ A.R., *EC*, Vol. I, Letter 91, p. 214. For some of the correspondence referring to this venture, see Claude Leatham, *Rosmini, Priest, Philosopher and Patriot*, Longmans, Green and Co., 1957, pp. 18–20.

²² He obtained his doctorate in both Canon Law and Theology. His theological thesis was *On the Sybils*.

²³ A.S.I.C., A. 2, 69A, f. 17v.

²⁴ N. Tommaseo, *Degli studi filosofici e degli istituti d'educazione nel Veneto e nelle provincie attinenti a Venezia tra la fine del passato e i primi anni di questo secolo*: *Rivista Universale*, Vol. 16, 1872, pp. 245–262. Reference is p. 257. Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. II, p. 24.

However, in addition to his studies for the priesthood, Rosmini did find time to write two small volumes. In his *Giornale de'miei scritti*²⁵ for 1821 he mentions a work *Storia dell'amore* [History of Love]. And he also mentions it in his *Diario personale*. '1821 I think that, on the recommendation of Bassich, I wrote the *Storia dell'Amore* in this year, which was later published at the expense of Monsignor Sardagna in 1834.'²⁶ On 20 November 1821 he wrote to his friend Giuseppe Brunati, 'Today I have completed two little works, one will be entitled *Dell'educazione cristiana*, [begun in 1820] for a house of orphans, and the other, a longer one, *Del fine delle Scritture*.' He goes on to say that neither is an erudite work. It would seem that the latter work was published later as *Storia dell'Amore*.²⁷ Only six Fathers are mentioned in *Storia dell'amore*, but in *Dell'educazione cristiana*, fourteen Fathers figure. He wrote this book for his sister Margherita who had opened the orphanage, mentioned above, for poor children at Rovereto. Rosmini also sent it as a gift to Alessandro Manzoni who declared 'that it was written according to the spirit of the ancient Fathers because, permeated by fragrance, gentleness and charity, it transports one to the first ages of Christianity, and makes us relive them.'²⁸ Though this book was written in the somewhat tortuous early style of the author, it was not unpleasant and Manzoni was very pleased with it.

Rosmini refers to and quotes the Fathers, and it is noteworthy that his references and quotations of Augustine are approximately two fifths of the total. Here are one or two examples. He cites Origen, Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian in his preface where he says that the early Church did not give up its daily tasks but brought to them its Christian witness. In Chapter 1, discussing the importance of books, he quotes St John Chrysostom who says 'It would be better if we could do without the help of reading matter and so order our lives that the Holy Spirit might himself supply the place of books; and as books are written with pen and ink, that he might inscribe himself in our hearts. But as we have rejected so great a grace, we must take the second means of guidance. God has certainly shown us by words and works that the first course is the most excellent. For he did not speak to Noah, Abraham, to his descendants, to Job and Moses himself through writing, but he spoke to them himself. He found them to be pure of heart. It was only because the whole Hebrew people fell into the depth of wickedness that he was obliged to correct them by using writing and stone tablets...I would like you to note what a great evil this is, that while we should live lives so pure as to not require books but allow ourselves to be taught by the Holy Spirit; since we have lost so great an honour and been reduced to needing books we do not even use this second remedy correctly.'²⁹ St Augustine echoed this thought in the first book of *De doctrina christiana* where he says that the perfect Christian does not even need the Scriptures except for instructing others because he lives by charity

²⁵ S.A.I., *GMS*, p. 291.

²⁶ A.R., *DP*, p. 422.

²⁷ See, A.R., *Storia dell'amore*, Ed. Crit. (52), 2002, Editors' Introduction, p. 11.

²⁸ Rossi, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

²⁹ A.R., *Educazione*, Ed. Crit. (31), 1994, Lib. I, c. I, n. 7, p. 40. John Chrysostom, *Commentarius in S. Matthaeum*, Proemium, Homilia, I.

which alone persists when prophecy ceases etc.³⁰ Later in the book Rosmini states that everything we do should be imbued with the life of the Spirit just like the devout Christians of the early Church, and he quotes Clement of Alexandria who says that every day is a feast day for us, because God is everything to us, we praise, adore and celebrate his holy name in everything.³¹ A final example is when, speaking of the practice of virtue, he recalls the incident of Emperor Theodosius being refused communion by St Ambrose until he did penance for the massacre of the Thessalonians who had gravely offended him. Ambrose preached his funeral oration. 'I loved a man who preferred to be reprimanded than flattered. He laid down all his regalia on the floor, wept publicly in Church for his sin with sighs and tears, and asked pardon for what had happened to him through the deception of others. Private people are ashamed to do public penance, not so the Emperor. From then on, not a day passed on which he failed to deplore his error.'³² Thus, we can see Rosmini calling on his knowledge of the Fathers weaving this into his ascetical and spiritual writing.

It is astounding that as early as 1820 Rosmini was writing on the priesthood of the laity. He is speaking of baptism.

Let us now look at what is this new man that comes to life when the old man dies. As the old man is evil and inherits the sin of Adam, so the new man is the consort of virtue and the inheritance of Christ. Jesus Christ has taken on the priesthood and become a victim. As the fruit of his sacrifice he was crowned king over all hostile powers. Now every Christian is called on to share in his priesthood and his kingdom. Because of this the Church anoints everyone who is baptised on the forehead, according to the ancient custom with kings and priests. Before baptism she anoints the person on the breast and between the shoulders in the figure of a cross, as athletes of old were anointed. This is a sign of that combat with which the candidate will conquer with the weapon of the Cross, and through which he will be crowned. The person is given a lighted candle, pointing out to him that he must shine with the fire of charity as a continual holocaust to his God. He is covered with the white garment which symbolises resurrection and glory, the beauty and purity of this priesthood and this realm. The priesthood we receive dedicates us to divine worship, impressing on us this indelible character of being persons destined to serve the divine glory forever. This kingdom provides us with his grace with which we can overcome our adversaries, thus sanctifying ourselves and receiving glory. This destiny or character which consecrates us to the worship of God can never be lost. But we can lose the grace which entitles us to glory and the crown. Each Christian will always be a priest because he

³⁰ *Educazione*, n. 8, 41. Augustine, *Della dottrina cristiana*, Lib. I, cap. XXXIX.

³¹ *Educazione*, Lib. II, c. II, n. 71, p. 70. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, Lib. VII, c. VII. (Rosmini paraphrases a quotation).

³² *Educazione*, Lib. III, c. XI, n. 248, p. 150. Ambrose, *De obitu Theodosii Oratio*, 34.

is consecrated once and for always to divine worship. But he will lose his kingly crown received in baptism if he does not fight strenuously. What we have, we have in Christ, that is, as a part of his body, because the priesthood and kingdom is his only, in which we are called to share. This is expressed by the Church with that ceremony in which the priest places his stole on the child he is baptising, as a sign that he is covering him with the same immortal garment of priest and king that is worn by Christ. In this royal and priestly mantle is comprised all the dignity possible to man which external evils do not diminish. The Lord has not taken away human miseries in baptism. Without these our dignity or nobility would not have been enhanced.³³

No wonder Quacquarelli could write, 'It is here (in *Dell'educazione Cristiana*) that we find the seeds of the great theses on public worship and the priesthood of the faithful.'³⁴ This thought would come to fruition in the *Cinque piaghe della santa chiesa* which Rosmini would eventually publish in 1848.

From 1822–1823 Rosmini was writing his *Metafisica* but he realised that it would not be welcomed at that time and he switched to politics until 1828, a momentous year in which he retired to Monte Calvario to write the *Constitutions* of the Institute of Charity. In a letter to Don Albertino Bellenghi Rosmini himself seems to ascribe this sudden change to divine inspiration.³⁵ But there were possibly other more mundane reasons. Political Science was part of the general plan of his research, and we should take into account the political climate of the time. He was eighteen when Napoleon was defeated and Europe was still getting over the French Revolution. He also read the great work *Restauration der Staats-Wissenschaft...* of Carlo Lodovico von Haller. Rosmini wrote furiously in these years and made himself so ill in the process that by 1827 he had been ordered by his doctor to cease study. This went very much against the grain with him and he complied for the most part, but did continue with his *Directorium spiritus*, which he compiled mainly in the years 1826–1828. This was his source book for the *Constitutions* and was comprised of a collection of various themes on the spiritual and religious life. Some are detailed, others are in note form and others just titles, but follow lengthy passages from the Fathers and Founders of Religious Orders. As might be expected Augustine is mentioned and also Basil, Jerome, Athanasius, Gregory, Cyprian, John Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzen. As for the Religious Orders, well known names include Benedict, Cassian, Anthony the Abbot, Bernard, Thomas, Alphonsus de Liguori, Francis de Sales, Teresa of Avila, and Brigid. Rosmini made a particular study of St Ignatius, separately, as the teaching of St Ignatius was to take a prominent part in the *Constitutions* of the Institute of Charity.

³³ *Educazione*, Ed. Crit., Lib. III, c. XX, n. 304, p. 174.

³⁴ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. 1, p. 22.

³⁵ A.R., *EC*, Vol. I, Letter 405, p. 635.

Rosmini quotes from the *Codex Regularum*,³⁶ by Lucas Holste a great deal. This is a valuable manual of religious life from its origins. He also quotes from the *Compendium Spiritualis doctrinae ex variis SS. Patrum sententiis*, [A Compendium of Spiritual Doctrine taken from the Opinions of the Fathers] Paris, 1601, of the Dominican Bartolomeo de Martyribus. This book is a vast collection of patristic material. A third author was Thomassin, a 17th century theologian and jurist. Rosmini knew his work *Ancienne et Nouvelle Discipline de l'Eglise*, Parisiis [The Ancient and Modern Discipline of the Church] 1678–1681. He uses it to show the different ways in which the priesthood has been united with the religious life in the history of the Church. In such a work as the *Directorium*, consisting as it does of extracts, quotations etc., it is not possible to give a developed account of the thought of the Fathers present. However we can mention some titles in the three volumes together with one or two of the Fathers to whom Rosmini refers and give some examples.

Augustine's Rules, both authentic and attributed, are mentioned several times. Rosmini also includes references to his *Confessions*, *De doctrina Christiana* and his *Meditations*. In his *Meditation on Death* St Augustine reminds us that in the morning we should not expect the evening and in the evening we should not count on the next morning! In his *Meditation on Sin* he tells us that the one chief good is God and the one chief evil is sin. He is also quoted regarding 'an ardent love of justice', 'religious indifference', 'using one's reason in a holy manner', 'humility', and the 'elective state of contemplation.' 'Let us sing with the voice to encourage each other, let us sing with the heart to give praise to God', he says. In volume II of the *Directorium* Augustine's *Rule for Virgins* is mentioned several times.

Basil, the founder of Eastern monasticism, figures prominently in the *Directorium*. His rule is mentioned several times and Rosmini quotes him regarding, 'fraternal correction', 'charity to one's neighbour', 'anger', 'the acceptance of young and old aspirants', 'humility', 'the vow of poverty' and 'the relationship between this Society and other Societies.' In volume II he quotes him, amongst other things, 'regarding the love of the truth', 'the Common Life and the perfect life', 'the purification of our spirit', 'the use of time', 'authentic virtue', 'moral behaviour', 'compunction of heart', 'voluntary meditation', 'the necessity for an upright intention', 'obedience', 'works of charity' and 'remedies against pride.' In this volume there are 54 mentions of St Basil, far outdoing those from St Augustine (10 and 3 attributed).

The Rules of Caesarius of Arles and his letters are mentioned frequently. In the first volume he is mentioned regarding 'spiritual emulation', 'the holy fear of God', 'our life on this earth', and 'silence and conversation.' But it is in the second volume that he comes into his own. He is mentioned 25 times, second only to St Basil. Topics include 'obedience', 'the conduct of superiors', 'the correct way of praying', 'holy indifference', 'the desire for penance and humility as the defence of chastity.' In volume III he is quoted more than Augustine and Basil regarding divers matters such as, 'hatred and the persecution of the just', 'circumstances in which we can suggest Christian

³⁶ *Codex Regularum in sex tomos digestus* [A Codex of Rules in Six Volumes], Augustae Vindelicorum, 1759,

humility', 'decorum and courtesy in comportment', 'goodness and malice in actions', 'jobs for monks', 'love for parents', and 'the resolution of doubts through activity.'

An exhaustive analysis and commentary on all the Fathers in the *Directorium* is beyond the scope of this small book. Let it suffice to mention one more Father, namely, St Athanasius. He appears to be mentioned only twice in the first volume, namely, with regard to the priesthood and holy conversation! But in the second volume he is mentioned 18 times. The works which are most quoted are his *Book on Monastic Observance* and his *Exhortations to the Spouses of Christ*. Under Rosmini's heading of *Austerity of Life* Athanasius speaks about fasting. Under the heading of *Individual Activity in the Society* he exhorts us to hope and trust in God. Under the heading of *Genuine Virtue*, Athanasius tells us that pretending to be holy rather than actually being so is a double fault because we pretend to be other than we are and do not possess what we should. Under Rosmini's heading of *Moral Comportment* he speaks of three virtues necessary for entering the kingdom of heaven, namely chastity, disdain for the world and justice. As for *Christian Calm and the avoidance of Murmuring* it is necessary to be tranquil in order to allow God to dwell in us. He knows everything about us so we should be careful not to do or think anything that is unworthy. A final example is under the heading of *Communion of Goods* where Rosmini quotes him saying that all the members of Christ's body should work together for the good of the whole. Needless to say there are quotations from St Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians, chapter 12.³⁷

On 18 February 1828 Rosmini left Milan for Monte Calvario, Domodossola where, in the little deserted sanctuary there, he would write the Constitutions of the Institute of Charity. '20 February 1828. I was at Sacro Monte Domodossola. Loewenbruck had not come. I waited for him a few days and then began to write the Constitutions which I finished, with God's help, on 23 April of the same year, 1828.'³⁸

³⁷ The *Directorium spiritus* has been printed electronically for the Institute of Charity and is printed in Latin and Italian.

³⁸ A.R., S.A.I. *Diario della carità* (= DC) [Diary of Charity], p. 298.

Chapter 3

The Doctor of Grace

Rosmini preferred St Augustine to all the other Fathers. He has his equal only in St Thomas. He called them ‘the two pillars on which to build any knowledge.’¹ Rosmini calls Augustine ‘one of the two luminaries whom I have taken as my guide’; the other is St Thomas.² And in his *Psicologia* [Psychology] he refers to Augustine as ‘one of my two great masters in philosophical as well as theological speculation’, the other being St Thomas.³ It would be interesting to know what sparked off Rosmini’s interest. Maybe it was his study of St Thomas from a very early age. The thought of Thomas is entwined with that of Augustine. Rosmini thought that St Thomas was one of the most faithful interpreters of the Fathers because ‘he was always especially careful to harmonise his thought with that of ancient Christianity and the teachings of St Augustine.’⁴ In his *Theodicy* Rosmini mentions ‘these two great authorities’ and even that Augustine was the master of Thomas.⁵ As we have seen he was reading Rayemont di Sombrenses’ Moral Reflections on the Bible taken from the Fathers when he was eleven or twelve years old, and he wrote three half pages of notes on Augustine’s *Enchiridion* when he was 14.⁶ The first mention of Plato in Rosmini’s reading lists is recorded at the same time.⁷

In this year he began a six part compilation of notes in the form of an acrostic, A. R. D. E. R. E. The first part deals with ‘Love, Friendship and Charity’, a distinction which would appear to be Rosmini’s own.⁸ He returned to this theme in a little book of December 1813 called *Zibaldone: Amore, Amicizia, Carità* (Miscellany: Love, Friendship, Charity). This is twenty four pages divided into three parts. And in the same year there is his *Dialogo fra Cieco e Lucillo* (Dialogue between Cieco and Lucillo) 40 pages long. In this work he refers to the chapter *De cohabitatione clericorum* of *Regula ad Servos Dei* of St Augustine. Rosmini says that there are three species of love. The first is profane love, of a woman, the second, friendship, and the third, is spiritual love,

¹ A.R., *Pro-memoria per la Società degli Amici di Udine*. Cf. *Annali*, Vol. III, p. 184.

² A.R., *Introduzione*, I, III, II, p. 208.

³ A.R., *Psicologia*, Ed. Crit., (9–10A), Roma, 1988–1989, Lib. I, c. X, n. 117, p. 88 [*Psychology*, Durham, 1999, Vol. 1, n. 117, p. 75].

⁴ A.R., *AS*, Casale Monferrato 1884, Lib III, c. VIII, Vol. II, p. 206.

⁵ A.R., *Teodicea*, Ed. Crit. (22) 1977, Lib. III, n. 616, p. 363 and n 939, p. 542 [*Theodicy*, Longmans, Green and Co. 1912, Vol. II, p. 97 and Vol. II, p. 394].

⁶ See p. 23.

⁷ *Annali*, Vol. I, 1967 p. 64 mentions among the books read or consulted Plato’s *Phaedo*; see p. 60 for Augustine’s *Enchiridion*.

⁸ He also made use of a book of which he was particularly fond, *Della carità cristiana* by Lodovico Muratori, 1751.

which is divine love.⁹ At this time, ‘there are observations and notes — tentative attempts at development and personal statements. But already persistent trends are appearing; the theme of charity is clearly pre-eminent and the influence of Augustine is gradually asserting itself.’¹⁰ In the years 1812–13 St Augustine’s *Confessions* is listed. Augustine is cited thirty four times in his *Il Giorno di solitudine*. This research would lead to his own characteristic attitude to and treatment of the subject. His first systematic work on charity was his *Storia dell’ amore*, 1821. An impelling statement of Augustine was responsible for this youthful study on Sacred Scripture. ‘Whoever, then, thinks that he understands the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this twofold love of God and our neighbour, does not yet understand them as he ought.’¹¹ If we add to all this the well known incident in 1815 when, on a walk, he discovered the importance of the idea of being, we can see how all these factors would have contributed to the impact of Augustine on Rosmini’s intellectual and spiritual development.¹² Picenardi points out that Rosmini owed the theory of the idea of being and feeling to this great Father.¹³

Hugh Honan shows the link between Plato, Augustine, Thomas and Rosmini, in his study *Agostino, Tommaso, Rosmini*.¹⁴ In 1829 he wrote from Albano to the Jesuit P. Tapparelli ‘Regarding the first question which you put, I agree with you entirely. I believe that it is totally impossible to remove from philosophy those ideas which the ancient philosophers and the Fathers of the Church (especially St Augustine in the last three books of the *Confessions*) attach to the words *matter* and *form*. I say that if one wished to do this, *metaphysics* would no longer exist, and consequently neither would philosophy.’¹⁵ More moving is his comment in a letter to Don Bortolomeo Oliari ‘I was also pleased to hear about your various occupations, and how you now possess the greatest work of the greatest among the Fathers, *The City of God* of my St Augustine. Valerio Fontana is translating it with my encouragement.’¹⁶ He also called him among other things ‘that man wonderfully formed by heaven to enlighten the Church.’¹⁷ And ‘the finest genius of the Church.’¹⁸ Bettetini and Peratoner list the many epithets which Rosmini gives to Augustine.¹⁹

⁹ *Annali*, Vol. I, pp. 55–56 and pp. 93–94; Cf. Valle, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

¹⁰ Valle, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

¹¹ Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, I. 36, 40. Cf. Valle, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

¹² See Francesco Paoli, *Della Vita di Antonio Rosmini-Serbatì, Memorie di Francesco Paoli*, Torino, 1880, c. III, pp. 20–21. Cf. Lockhart, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, c. V, pp. 45–46.

¹³ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁴ Ugo Honan, *Agostino Tommaso, Rosmini*, Sodalitas, 1955.

¹⁵ A.R., *EC*, Vol. III, Letter 1009, p. 117.

¹⁶ *EC*, Vol. III, Letter 1082, p. 216. Unfortunately, owing to the death of Fontana the work was never completed.

¹⁷ A.R., From the *Introduction* to the Academy of Sacred Eloquence, Cf. *Annali*, Vol. II, 1820, p. 284.

¹⁸ A.R., *Dell’ ecclesiastica eloquenza*, Pogliano, Milano, 1832, p. 4. Cf. *Prose*, Lugano, Francesco Valdini, 1834, p. 279.

¹⁹ Bettetini-Peratoner, *op. cit.*, p. 493.

The number of books by Augustine which Rosmini read or consulted is far greater than those of the other Fathers (See Appendix 2). A quantitative survey of quotations to establish a scale of preference of the Fathers could be misleading, because this would depend on the nature of the work and whether Rosmini sees a particular Father's work as suited to his particular argument. For instance Augustine is quoted less than some other Fathers in the *Cinque piaghe*, losing his priority in this respect, because of the historical context of the work and the topics dealt with. But certainly Rosmini's preference for Augustine is incontrovertible, not simply because of the number of quotations, but because Rosmini explicitly refers to him as the source from which he draws doctrinal statements. He and St Thomas are the two authorities which he used to illustrate doctrines, especially controversial ones. In 1821 he published his *Del modo di catechizzare gl'idioti*, his translation of St Augustine's work *De Catechizandis rudibus*, [Catechism for Beginners]. Apropos of this he wrote, 'So there are very many opportune things which are appropriate even for our day and his whole method, as I see it, would be still very suitable, as it draws on Sacred Scripture, the character of Christianity, and imitates the way with which Divine Providence teaches the world.'²⁰ Rosmini wrote a charming letter to Alessandro Paravia in this year, 'Thank you for the cheerful face you put on my two little works (the other one is presumably *Delle lodi di S. Filippo*) riddled as they are, from top to bottom with enormous errors. This is not the fault of the very careful proof-readers and printers, but through the defective manuscript. To tell you the truth, it was written very hastily, as is customary with the author, and for this reason almost in hieroglyphics. At least regarding St Augustine who is the more mangled, I will send you a list of errors and corrections.'²¹

Rosmini was not professedly a philologist but he was totally trained in the subject. He was discussing questions regarding language, philology and the study and interpretation of the classics in his teenage years.²² He was well versed in this when he was in Padua which he called 'the inn of letters and the Latin muses.'²³ Before he discussed any text he would have critically studied it. He said 'the eloquence of our ancient authors will be more reasonable when they have been cleansed of the mud with which the copyists and publishers have dirtied them.'²⁴ He wished to get back to the untrammelled text. Rosmini's capacity for philology did not escape his contemporaries. Rosmini was preoccupied with the philosophical language of his time.²⁵ The German philosophers were using obscure language and clarity was lacking. In a letter to Don Pietro Orsi Rosmini says: 'but how many evils originate from the misuse of words? Firstly ambiguities, equivocations, uncertain and vague texts which

²⁰ A.R., *Del modo di catechizzare gl'idioti*, Venezia, Giuseppe Battaglia, 1821, *Preface* p. 7.

²¹ A.R., *EC*, Vol. I, Letter 206, to Pier Alessandro Paravia, Rovereto, 9 October 1821.

²² Rossi, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 60.

²³ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. I, p. 16. Cf. Paoli, *op. cit.*, c. V, p. 32.

²⁴ Quacquarelli, *ibid.*, Rosmini here refers to the *Volgarizzamento della vita di S. Girolamo emendata* [Emended Translation of the Life of St Jerome], Marchesani, Rovereto, 1824, for which Rosmini wrote the critical notes. (This quote p. 110).

²⁵ Quacquarelli, *ibid.* Cf. Rossi, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 258–259.

do not convey the idea to the mind of someone else, even if the person writing in this way had at one time the precise idea in his head which he could communicate. Since, as Socrates says, and he fought strenuously against the Sophists, he who thinks well, speaks well. The one who has clarified things in his mind knows how to put these to others clearly and correctly. For the connection between words and ideas is so strict that without the words, that is, without having received them from society, they can scarcely have the corresponding ideas.²⁶ The value of a word which is not sanctioned by use is worthless like money which is not in circulation. Rosmini says, 'Pastors of souls should consider how St Augustine was concerned that everything done in the Church should be clearly stated and explained to the people. What use are sacred rites if Christians do not understand them? How can they understand them if they are not given an explanation?'²⁷

Rosmini had studied rhetoric at school and had the highest regard for Augustine who was himself a great teacher of rhetoric. He also had a high opinion of dialectics because it makes people experts in disputes and is a very great help in penetrating all the questions presented in Sacred Scripture. Rosmini says that 'this art shaped the Fathers of the Church and the ecclesiastical writers, and made them cogent thinkers and indomitable defenders of the truth of the Gospel.'²⁸ Augustine had a great mastery of language and wrote with great clarity. It pained him to be misunderstood and to be accused several times of being difficult to understand in spite of his trying to adapt himself to the understanding of the faithful, and even of sacrificing the purity of language which he valued. He wrote to Julian of Eclanum, 'Certainly whether you like it or not I am understood. But you will not be able to argue to the contrary. Of course you do not want what I have written truthfully and firmly to be understood.'²⁹

Rosmini enjoyed reading book IV of Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* because of Augustine's teaching on eloquence and wisdom. Augustine says, that when wisdom leaves home eloquence immediately follows in its steps as its faithful handmaid.³⁰ If a preacher is eloquent so much the better, but wisdom is more important. 'For eloquent speakers are heard with pleasure; wise speakers with profit.'³¹ Another concept of Augustine dear to Rosmini's heart is that a man speaks with more or less wisdom as he has made more or less progress in the knowledge of Scripture and it is necessary to memorise Scripture. This will supply for poverty of the preacher's own speech.³² Rosmini was impressed by this grasp of the value of biblical language and its effectiveness. Augustine states that St Paul was not trained in any school of rhetoric but he expressed his thoughts in elegant prose; and Augustine's knowledge of rhetoric

²⁶ Cf. A.R., *Introduzione*, p. 372.

²⁷ A.R., *Del modo di catechizzare gl'idioti*, p. 96.

²⁸ A.R., *Logica*, Ed. Crit. (8), 1984, n. 18, p. 29.

²⁹ Augustine, *Contra Iul. (Opus imperfect.)* Lib. III, 138. Cf. *Il linguaggio teologico* [Theological Language] (= *LT*), Ed. Crit. (38), 1975, c. III, p. 31 [Theological Language, Durham, 2004, chapter 3, p. 13].

³⁰ Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, L. IV, c. 6, n. 10.

³¹ *Ibid.*, c. 5, n. 8.

³² *Ibid.*, nn. 7, 8.

enabled him to demonstrate this by analysing two passages from St Paul.³³ The sacred authors, he says, who were inspired by God, had a special eloquence combined with wisdom. Another passage Augustine analyses is *Amos* 6, 1 ff. He says, 'Nor was it composed by man's art and care, but it flowed forth in wisdom and eloquence from the divine mind... Therefore let us acknowledge that the canonical writers are not only wise but eloquent also, with an eloquence suited to a character and position like theirs.'³⁴ Thus, Augustine, as also Cyprian and Lactantius, rebutted the pagan classical authors, who deemed apostolic preaching to be crude because they were not written according to the rules of rhetoric. Rosmini said, 'And do not the Fathers of the Church show their disdain when they combat that common and ancient prejudice that apostolic preaching was devoid of oratorical value.'³⁵

In his *Conferenze sui doveri degli ecclesiastici* Rosmini deals with preaching. He quotes St Paul, 'And my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power.'³⁶ It is the Spirit who is the source of eloquence. Sacred eloquence is different from secular eloquence. A priest who is not holy will not preach Christ crucified in spite of all his high-flown oratory. Rosmini then quotes Augustine, 'We do not employ high-sounding or poetical phrases, nor eloquence smacking of secular speech, but we preach Christ crucified.'³⁷ Christ crucified is a treasury of wisdom. Rosmini wanted to establish a school of ecclesiastical eloquence at Sacra di San Michele, near Turin. He recommended as principal sources and exemplars Saints Basil, John Chrysostom, Cyprian and Augustine.³⁸ He wrote to Father Signini in England on how to preach well and edify his listeners. Just as eloquence and wisdom should be united, so should word and action. He says that the Fathers of the Church teach that we cannot be perfect theologians if study is not joined to sanctity.³⁹ Again we see the influence of Augustine here. In fact writing to Fontana he makes the point that to be effective, a preacher must live and witness to what he prays about.⁴⁰

From what I have just said, it will not be surprising to read that it was Augustine who made Rosmini reflect most on the meaning of biblical passages and the light of reason. We have said something about Augustine and Scripture. As regards philosophy, it was Rosmini's opinion that Plato was the greatest philosopher to appear before Christianity, but he 'was unable to ascend from ideas to the reality of absolute being.'⁴¹ He lacked the exact classification of essences. The basic ambiguity in Plato's philosophy lay in the confusion between the idea and the reality. This, Rosmini says, is

³³ *Ibid.*, c. 7, nn. 11–13. The two passages are *Rom* 5: 1 ff, and 2 *Cor* 11: 15 ff.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 21.

³⁵ A.R., *Prose ecclesiastiche*, Vol. I, *Predicazione, Discorsi Vari*, Milano, Boniardi-Pogliani 1843, p.241.

³⁶ 1 *Cor* 2: 4.

³⁷ Augustine, *Serm I, De acced. Ad gratiam*, quoted in Rosmini, *Conferenze*, p. 224, [p.213].

³⁸ A.R., *Scritti vari*, p. 265.

³⁹ A.R., *EA*, Vol. III, Letter 1010, p. 354, [Morris, Vol. VI, January 22 1847]

⁴⁰ A.R., *EC*, Vol. I, Letter 281, p. 481, Cf. *De doctrina Christiana*, Lib. IV, c. XXVII.

⁴¹ A.R., *Introduzione*, III, n. 71 note 31 p. 137, [n. 71c, note 92, p. 144].

the 'parent of all errors and heresies, and ended in alienating it from the Christian Schools'.⁴² For Rosmini the Platonic ideas, not being determinations and limitations of an indeterminate and unlimited idea, ended up being divinised in themselves, producing a species of polytheism. In his *Rinnovamento della filosofia in Italia* [Renewal of Philosophy in Italy] Rosmini says that Plato was corrected by the Fathers and especially St Augustine. 'Augustine rejected the erroneous part of Plato's teaching and retained what is true in it. He summarises this, saying that our spirit understands because it is united to things which are not only intelligible but immutable. Now one can definitely say that ideas understood in this sense are the common teaching of the Fathers of the Church. But the Fathers made other improvements in the teaching on ideas. And this is briefly their thought. These ideas being immutable, eternal necessary beings, as revealed through intuition, would be so many deities if they existed isolated in themselves; now this is absurd. Therefore it is necessary to say that they are in the divine mind. And indeed our intuition of the essences of things tells us that they are eternal, infinite etc., but it certainly does not tell us that they have an existence outside the divine mind. So they corrected this platonic teaching of the many and purged it of the most infamous sin of idolatry.'⁴³

In Rosmini's philosophy, ideal being, the idea of being, and the light of reason are equivalent expressions. It is an objective light shining before the mind and the condition of knowledge. It is *per se* intuitable and if it were removed any other idea or thought would be impossible. In fact we would cease to be intelligent beings. All people have this light of reason in common. In his *Introduzione alla filosofia* Rosmini says, 'We are given by nature an initial light, co-created with us so to speak. This light is the first form which renders us intelligent, and it grows with us in infancy, childhood and youth. It continues to develop even when our bodily growth ceases, and remains with us throughout maturity, old age and death.'⁴⁴ It is a spark of the divine. Just as the light of the sun illuminates things for us and enables us to see without our being the sun itself, so this divine light enables us to know and reason, without ourselves being divine.

In his *Il linguaggio teologico* Rosmini has quite a lot to say about the light impressed on us by God and Augustine's teaching about it. Consentius had written to Augustine, being persuaded that truth should be perceived through faith rather than through reason and asking him to explain the teaching on the Trinity. Augustine replies that his request is not unreasonable, but it is not consistent with what he had first said in his letter. He goes on to say 'that, with faith, presupposed as an inescapable and immobile foundation, it is highly praiseworthy to apply the faculty of reason, and natural reasoning itself, to revealed dogmas in order to draw from them greater light for the understanding. This is very pleasing to God. "It cannot be that God hates in

⁴² *Ibid.*, n. 72, note 34, p. 139, [note 95, p. 146].

⁴³ A.R., *Il rinnovamento della filosofia in Italia*, (= *Rinnovamento*) Ed. Naz., Milano, 1941, Vol. II, Lib. IV, c. 2, nn. 460–461.

⁴⁴ A.R., *Introduzione*, II. I. n. 24, p. 51, [n. 24, p. 46].

us the very things by which he has made us more excellent than other living beings. It cannot be, I say, that we believe in such a way that we neither accept nor seek what is rational. We could not even believe unless we had rational souls.”⁴⁵ Rosmini says that in our mind and intelligence Augustine distinguishes the lower part made up of ourselves who use the mind, from the higher and superior part which is the light, impressed upon us by God himself, by means which we know and judge all things. This is the light infused by him ‘who enlightens everyone coming into this world.’⁴⁶ This, he says, is the starting point of all sound philosophy in its application to divine matters. ‘According to Augustine, this light, corresponding to the *principium quo* of the Scholastics, is the source from which man draws all ideas and knowledge; it is that in which and through which true judgements are formed about all things, and finally it contains the principle of certainty, and is itself most certain.’⁴⁷

Another aspect of Augustine’s influence on Rosmini needs to be considered, namely, in the formulation of the *Constitutions* of the Order. We shall consider this in the next chapter in the context of the Fathers in general.

⁴⁵ Augustine, *Epistula*, 120. Cf. A.R., *LT*, c. IV, pp. 36–37, [n. 18, pp. 17–18].

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, c. IV, p. 39, [n. 20, p. 20], *Jn* 1: 9.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, c. IV, pp. 39–40, [nn. 20, pp. 20–21.]

Chapter 4

The Fathers and Constitutions of the Institute

The Constitutions of the Institute owe their originality to long and continuous reflection which, little by little, developed Rosmini's Christological reading of the Bible. He says 'with the rest of the faithful we have the Gospel of Christ as our great common codex. We must use it day and night. Our Constitutions taken from the gospel, must lead us back to it. Hence the members of this Society should not set themselves apart from other people, but rather unite with all in the one body of Christ.'¹ But the Fathers who help us to understand the Christological values of the Bible so that we can follow Christ better, are not neglected either. 'Hence the reference to St Basil,² St Ambrose,³ St John Chrysostom,⁴ and St Gregory the Great.⁵ But the greatest stress is on the rule of St Augustine which totally pervades the *Constitutions*. St Ignatius is present but there is much of St Augustine. It cannot be otherwise if we look at the insistence of Rosmini in looking for a balance between the community and the priestly life.'⁶

Valle describes the importance of this for Rosmini regarding the renewal of the Clergy and the Church.⁷ His works and unedited papers show how he wished it to be a constitutive part of the Institute. Even in 1817 before the founding of a religious order had entered his head, he wrote to Don Luigi Sonn, 'If there could only be a house of priests living a common life, what a fine thing that would be! As you know, this is what St Augustine wanted to see; and anyone who has at heart virtue and friendship — well I believe he could no other than conceive such a beautiful desire. Studying peacefully together, united in prayer, souls closely united together — what more could anyone wish for? Christ in our midst, all of us one in Christ. What things we should accomplish together!'⁸ A few years later in 1826 in reply to St Maddalena di Canossa who pointed out that St Gaetano and St Ignatius had distanced themselves in their Institutes from the burdens of the priestly ministry, he replied that 'not all holy men have regarded religious life as incompatible with the pastoral ministry: indeed St Augustine and St Eusebius aimed to combine the two, as did St Charles Borromeo *with his oblates*⁹ in the sixteenth century. Furthermore, it was the work of these three saints and their imitators which was responsible at various times for the reform of the

¹ A.R., *Costituzioni dell'Istituto della Carità* (= *Cost.*), Ed. Crit. (50), 1996, 464 D [The Constitutions of the Institute of Charity, Durham, n. 464. E.]

² *Ibid.*, n. 72 D.

³ *Ibid.*, n. 563 D; n. 746 D 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 762 D.

⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 746 D 2; n. 790.

⁶ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. V, p. 60.

⁷ Valle, *op. cit.*, c. V, pp. 229–238.

⁸ A.R., *EC*, Vol. XIII, Letter 7911, p. 25, To Don Luigi Sonn, 1817, [Morris, Vol. I, p. 4].

⁹ Words in italics missing in translation.

clergy — in other words, of the Church itself.¹⁰ Rosmini also wrote to Loewenbruck in the same vein in 1827, ‘You will notice that there is nothing new in this notion. Rather, it was always the spirit and the wish of the Church. St Augustine, as a bishop, led a life in community, and was the superior of the religious whom he had founded, according to the same principle. St Eusebius of Vercelli also founded a similar body in the West, and we read of him, ‘he was the first to establish in the Western Church monks who were also priests; so that these men combined contempt of worldly goods with pastoral care. You know already that in those days clerics were attached to churches either as pastors or as assistants to pastors. Later on another bishop, St Norbert, had the same object in view when he founded his Premonstratensian Canons — so this body was more than once established or revived by holy men in the Church in various places.’¹¹ In his *Description of the Institute of Charity* Rosmini develops this point. ‘In the case of Jesus Christ and his Apostles the pastoral and religious life were united, since on the one hand they were pastors of the Church and on the other they professed the evangelical counsels which form the essence of the religious life. It is also noticeable how the discipline of the Church has always referred to this excellent and desirable union as a model *par excellence*.’¹² In his *Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici* Rosmini deals with other aspects of the same topic. ‘What injurious ignorance it is to separate religious life and priestly life and almost place one in opposition to the other, as if the former were not a means and the latter an end in itself. What a grievous division we set up between secular priests and religious by this ill-conceived thought!’¹³ Contrasts between secular priests and ecclesiastical priests vexed Rosmini because they are the source of quarrels, divisions and rows.¹⁴

‘The Church in all ages and through many of her Councils, the Fathers in their writings, the saints by their great efforts, especially St Augustine, St Eusebius of Vercelli, St Gregory the Great and innumerable others, have invariably endeavoured to unite these two states. This was precisely because they realised that the priest’s life had absolute need of those spiritual activities and means which religious cultivate in a special manner.’¹⁵ For Rosmini, religious life is a means to an end, namely, the priestly life for its fullness and effectiveness.

This preoccupation of Rosmini is enshrined definitively in a manuscript from which the following is taken and inserted in the *Constitutions*: ‘All works of charity concerned with piety towards God and the salvation of souls must be directed by provosts of the society through their own immediate attention to the work. This applies with greatest force to provosts who have accepted a pastoral charge. Let them imitate Christ with

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, Letter 548, pp. 125–126, To Marchesa Maddalena di Canossa, 24 January, 1826, [Morris, Vol. I, p. 16].

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, Letter 641, pp. 261–262, to Don G. B. Loewenbruck, 25 June, 1827, [Morris, Vol. I, pp. 52–53].

¹² A.R., *Descrizioni dell’ Istituto della Carità*, Pane, Casale, 1885, pp. 79 ff.

¹³ A.R., *Conferenze*, c. III, p. 41, [p. 47].

¹⁴ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. V, pp. 60–61.

¹⁵ A.R., *Conferenze*, *ibid.*

the utmost watchfulness. He cared for the people in one way, and for his apostles and disciples in another, shepherding them both. This was the source of that wonderful union between pastoral and religious life which so many fathers, and so many councils of the Church, especially after the time of saints Eusebius, Augustine and Gregory the Great, tried so often and with so much energy to establish or restore in accord with the example of our Lord and the primitive Church. In harmony with its own desires, the whole Society endeavours to renew this state.¹⁶ This document is an extended sketch of a study planned by Rosmini with the title *De unione vitae pastoralis et religiosae* found in volume one of the *Directorium spiritus*.¹⁷ Rosmini uses the French writer Louis Thomassin (1619–1695) author of *Ancienne et nouvelle discipline de l'église*, singling out Augustine, Eusebius of Vercelli, Basil and Gregory the Great. Augustine had established in his church a community of religious and ecclesiastics with whom he himself lived according to the model and rule of the apostolic communities. In one of his discourses¹⁸ he gives an account to his people of the establishment and the discipline of the monastery of his clerics in the Bishop's house with everything in common in imitation of the holy people of which the Acts of the Apostles speaks. He had also laid down as a general rule that no cleric would be ordained if he did not profess poverty. Thomassin notes that obedience, stability and continence were ecclesiastical obligations. From various letters of Augustine and Paulinus we gather that various bishops had imitated Augustine in living in religious community with their priests. Thomassin states, quoting Ambrose, that Eusebius of Vercelli was the first in the West to establish the state and monastic profession in his Church. Later other saints did the same. In the life of Epiphanius we read that with him some 80 monks were elevated to the Episcopate. Sozomen narrates that when some religious were elevated to the episcopate, clerics of their churches lived with them a common life not owning anything personal. Also Basil, in the principal church, united the monastic life with the priestly life. As for Gregory the Great he was the founder of six monasteries in Sicily and a seventh at Rome and when he became Pope he lived in his palace as in a monastery with a community of clerics and holy monks.

Earlier I mentioned the quotation from Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* regarding the two fold nature of charity which impressed Rosmini, 'Whoever, then, thinks that he understands the Holy Scriptures, or any part of them, but puts such an interpretation upon them as does not tend to build up this twofold love of God and our neighbour, does not yet understand them as he ought.'¹⁹ It is clear that his early formation now bore fruit. He explicitly said, 'There are three founders of our Institute: St Augustine, whose spirit must be ours, shows us the practice of twofold charity in his works; St Ignatius, as regards the government of the Institute; and St Francis of Sales as regards the spirit of special mildness and pleasing conversation.'²⁰

¹⁶ A.R., *Cost.*, n. 790.

¹⁷ *Directorium spiritus*, Vol. I, pp. 147–168; pp. 191–208, Vol. III, pp. 259–263.

¹⁸ Augustine, *De diversis serm.* 49.

¹⁹ See p. 33.

²⁰ Rossi, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 826. Cf. Paoli, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, *Delle sue virtù*, Part I, c. II, Art. III, p. 64.

As Dino Sartori says in the Critical Edition of the *Constitutions* “The influence of St Augustine is fundamental. The spirit of charity with which Rosmini imbued the Institute dedicating it to the twofold love of God and neighbour is typically Augustinian.”²¹

‘Personal perfection’, Rosmini says, ‘includes the exercise of charity towards one’s neighbour also. This may truly be called the great element in personal perfection according to the word of our Lord Jesus Christ: “He who does these commandments and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (*Mt* 5: 9). For this reason the Society has a special love for all works of charity towards its neighbour... This is why we name the Society after *Charity*, as characteristic of Jesus’ disciples.’²² Pre-eminent among works of charity is pastoral care. But there is a place for laics as well. Writing to Giuseppe Roberto Setti, Rosmini said that the Institute was neither a Society of clerics nor laics; it was a mixed society. This quality sets it apart and distinguishes it from other religious Institutes. The reason is that, having as its end universal charity, this charity can be exercised by both laics and ecclesiastics. Whereas the principal and integrating part is that of ecclesiastics, it is not the essential part. In another letter to Setti he says that the Institute must comprise the best of other religious orders regarding their different ends and works which they are accustomed to use in the active, contemplative and mixed life which they propose.²³ It was the tradition of the Church at the time that new religious orders should take on, as a fundamental text, one of the great rules, adding their own specific rules and constitutions. But Rosmini was having none of it. His Institute demanded its own specific form. Again, writing to Setti, he says,

As for the mention of our subjecting ourselves to the Rule of St Augustine, this is a mere trifle. We are not going to entertain it. If the Sacred Congregation or the Pope wishes us to submit, there would be no difficulty in our subjecting ourselves to the rule of St Augustine, but it won’t happen because it is not fitting... Many recent religious orders have not had to submit to any of the *four rules*, and among these, that of the Jesuits and St Francis of Paola. Believe me, there will be no difficulty, especially as no Rule suits our Institute; not that of the monks (St Basil and St Benedict); not that of the Canons Regular or the Eremites (St Augustine); nor that of the mendicants (St Francis), which are the ones we are dealing with. We are not even regular clerics. We are a mixed Institute of clerics and ordinary faithful who profess perfection in the exercise of charity to their neighbour. Ours is a new Institute and there is no existing rule which is totally adaptable.²⁴

²¹ A.R., *Cost.*, Introduzione, p. 27.

²² *Cost.*, n. 3 and 3E, pp. 61–62, [p. 2].

²³ Letters to Roberto Setti, 31 July, 1838, A.S.I.C., A.G. 2/422. Cf. *Cost.*, 4E; 27 August, 1838, A.S.I.C., A. G. 2/448. Cf. Valle, *op. cit.*, c. IV, p. 66.

²⁴ Letter to Roberto Setti, 1 October 1838, A.S.I.C., A.G. 2/481. Cf. Valle, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

[Rosmini tells us that], If this society were to include laymen only, or ecclesiastics without priestly orders, it would be established at its lowest level of perfection but even then would have its own kind of independent existence.²⁵

Valle reminds us that as far as the Scriptures are concerned there are not only references and quotations but also sections which are exegetical. This makes the Rosminian Constitutions different from the Ignatian ones. As for the Fathers, Rosmini's reference to the Fathers is frequent and he exhorts his members to study them. A characteristic which he sees in the Fathers is their fidelity to Scripture and their continual reference to it as a primary source. 'The ancient Christians were insatiable for it. The Fathers are never so eloquent as when they teach the reading of this precious letter written by the Almighty to men.'²⁶ He would repeat this in his *Cinque Piaghe* quoting Clement of Alexandria, 'Scripture enkindles fire in the soul, and simultaneously directs the mind's vision fittingly towards contemplation, broadcasting its seeds within us and bringing to germination the seed we already possess' (*Stromata* Lib. I).²⁷

It is known that Rosmini often quotes the Fathers without mentioning the source. His knowledge of the Fathers, being second nature to him, would influence his writings without explicit references and quotations. They were part of the rich tapestry of his teaching. There are examples in the *Constitutions* as Valle explains.²⁸ The *Rule of St Augustine* 1.3. states 'Among you there can be no question of personal property. Rather, take care that you have everything in common. Your superior should see to it that each person is provided with food and clothing. He does not have to give exactly the same to everyone for you are not all equally strong, but each person should be given what he needs. For this is what you read in the Acts of the Apostles: "Everything they owned was held in common, and each one received whatever he had need of" (*Acts* 4: 32; 4: 35).' Rosmini speaking of clothing says, 'Clothing should be kept in a common room, and someone should be appointed to distribute it after the pattern set by the Apostles: "So as to distribute to all as each has need" (*Acts* 2). He should not be at pains to give the same clothing to the same individuals... He must pay attention to health, however — the clothes of the sick should not be given to those who are well. And in each case, individual needs are to be taken into consideration.'²⁹ The reference above to the Gospel as the great common Codex recalls the recommendation of Athanasius to consecrated virgins to meditate assiduously on the scriptures so that the rising of the sun sees them with the Scriptures in their hands (*De Virg.* 12). St Jerome says, 'let sleep overcome you with

²⁵ *Cost.*, 4E, p. 62, [p. 3].

²⁶ A.R., *Educazione*, Lib.I, c. II, n. 11, p. 44. Cf. Valle, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

²⁷ A. R., *CP*, c. II, n. 38, p. 52, [n. 38, p. 34].

²⁸ Valle, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–37.

²⁹ A.R., *Directorium spiritus*, Vol. I, *Il Vicario della Carità temporale*, Grimlaico, *Regola dei Solitari*, cap. XLVII, n. 747–748. Cf. *Cost.*, n. 514 D, [n. 514 E].

your book in your hand, let the holy pages receive your drooping face' (*Ep.* 22, 17). Other aspects of Patristic influence in the Constitutions are 'the union of the religious and pastoral life', 'contemplation', 'work in religious life' and 'obedience'. Rosmini refers particularly to St Augustine's *De opere monachorum* in saying that work is necessary for everyone to avoid laziness and exercise humility. It is the basic law of the human race. So, Rosmini says "There will be two occupations in this life: prayer and one's avocation, either academic or technical."³⁰ And with regard to obedience, 'Obedience has always been described by the Fathers as the safest and royal road.'³¹

In conclusion: although there are few explicit quotations from the Fathers in the Constitutions there are many expressions which echo them and we can recall the vast amount of work recorded in the *Directorium spiritus* which shaped their final outcome.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 495.

³¹ *Ibid.*, n. 526.

Chapter 5

The Light of the Intellect

Our Knowledge

Before showing the influence of the Fathers on Rosmini's philosophical thought it is necessary to give a short explanation of Rosmini's answer to the problem of knowledge for those readers who are not conversant with his philosophy. It is important to note that Rosmini's reasoning is based on observation and takes nothing for granted. He saw philosophy as being compromised by the German school (Kant, Hegel, Fichte and Schelling) and by British Empiricism (as represented by Locke, Hume and Reid). Reflection on experience leads us to seek reasons for why things happen. We have all heard children asking "why" this and "why" that. It is endemic in us as intelligent beings. The answers we receive lead us to a more universal explanation and so on. Rosmini saw knowledge as being like a pyramid 'a pyramid in the form of a tetrahedron. Its base is immense and made up of countless individual truths, like so many stones. On top of these is laid another row consisting of the universal truths closest to individual truths. There are a large number of them but not as many as in the first row. As one gradually ascends to the tiers above, each stratum has a smaller number of truths with ever greater potentiality and universality until, at the summit, number itself disappears into unity. At this stage, universality has reached its full, infinite potential in the last tetrahedron at the summit of the pyramid'. 'It is the task of philosophy to determine the principles or primary reasons of all knowledge and to describe in precise language this high point of the huge pyramid of human knowledge'.¹ Rosmini goes on to say that a series of more elevated truths carries within itself every lower order of truths. It is not difficult to understand that in this pyramid of knowledge the most general ideas towards the summit contain within them potentially the more determinate ideas of the lower orders. But what is the source of this knowledge?

The Source of our Knowledge

We can begin our investigation with two obvious facts, we feel and we think. Common sense, never mind philosophical demonstration, tells us that these two activities are totally different. We have sensations and ideas and these are contrary experiences. There is a world of difference between thinking of a glass of beer and actually drinking it. We learn languages so that we can understand the ideas expressed by words which are foreign to us. If we do not know the language we simply hear sounds. A basic difference between sensations and ideas is that our sensations are totally private to us. We can discuss them with other people and we can agree on what they signify. We do this through our ideas. But I can't feel your toothache. I can feel

¹ A. R., *Introduzione*, n. 8, pp. 25–26 and p. 28, [n. 8, pp. 19–20, and 8b, p. 22].

my toothache and you will understand what I mean. When either of us has toothache we will probably end up at the dentist who puts things right. But you do not know what my toothache feels like by experiencing it. You can experience only your own toothache. If we both look at a bluish-green book we might argue whether it is blue or green, because our sensations are *subjective* to us. We can discuss the colour because our *idea* of colour is the same. My sensations correspond with the idea of blue or green. But I simply do not know whether your sensation of green is the same as mine, the book may look yellow to you! I know only that we share our ideas in common. If we know this, of course, we realise immediately that our ideas are not *subjective*. They must be *objective* even though our private sensations play some part in their formation. ‘...*sensation* means simply some modification in us, while *idea* means *mental conception of something that exists*, independently of any modification or experience in another being’.² Indeed common sense also tells us that we increase in knowledge through observing the world around us and absorbing real experiences fed into us through the senses. Our bodies and minds are constantly being fed external data. Any school girl or school boy will understand this only too well especially when they are cramming for examinations! What we sense, therefore, plays a part in our knowledge, in the formation of our ideas.

The Problem

Any thinking depends on making judgements and judgements are made up of ideas. For instance in order to say, ‘this stone is white’ we must have the idea of the subject ‘stone’ and the abstract idea of the colour ‘white’, which is the predicate. Moreover the predicate must always contain an element of universality. ‘White’ can be applied not simply to ‘this stone’ but any stone which has this quality and not only to stones, but to sheets of paper, animals and so on. Now where does this element of universality come from? How does it arise in the mind? It could be shown that all judgements demand that the mind must possess some universal simply by examining them all but to save time we can accept this as a fact. We can define a judgement as, ‘an intellectual operation of the mind by which we join a given predicate with a given subject’. Now this joining of a predicate with a subject implies that we firstly know the predicate distinct from the subject otherwise we could not join them together. In the above example I must already possess the idea of ‘stone’, applying it to this object (‘this is a stone’) and have the idea of ‘whiteness’ applying it to this particular stone (‘this stone is white’).

But a difficulty now arises. If no judgement can be made without ideas, where do these ideas come from?

Two ways present themselves, 1) abstraction 2) judgement. In the first case we can separate the common element in the particular idea from the proper element in it. We can fix our attention on the common element in this idea and disregard what is proper. For example I have an idea of ‘man’ (rational animal) but I can disregard what

² A.R., *NS*, Ed. Crit. (4), 2004, Vol. II, parte. I, c. III, n. 416, pp. 30–31, [n. 416, pp. 20–21].

is proper to 'man' (rationality) and fix my attention on what he has in common with other beings, namely 'animality'. But the problem here is that *we already have the idea*, which is common and universal, in this case 'man'. Otherwise we could not perform any abstraction on it. All we are doing is to fix our mind on an element of it. This leaves the second way. But every judgement presupposes a universal idea. A judgement is an operation of the mind in which a universal idea is applied to a subject, thus placing it in the class of things designated by the predicate. 'This mountain is high' places this mountain in the category of high mountains. This reasoning applies to all judgements. If then we cannot explain the formation of universal ideas by abstraction or judgement then we are forced to the conclusion that some universal idea pre-exists all judgements in human beings enabling them to judge and then through their judgements gradually to form other ideas.

The Solution — The Existence of the Idea of Being

Rosmini begins the solution to this conundrum by stating that we think of being in a general way. This means 'thinking of the quality common to all things, while ignoring all other qualities, generic, specific or proper'.³ We, here, concentrate our attention on *being*, the quality common to all things.

Father Francesco Paoli recalls that Rosmini told him:

When I was studying philosophy at Rovereto I was walking one day along the Viale della Terra⁴ totally wrapt up in my thoughts turning my attention to one thought and then another, when I suddenly saw each of them was not simple but appeared to me as a group of many objects. Examining this more carefully I saw that, rather than being many objects, they ought to be called many determinations of a more universal and less determinate object, which contained them all. When I analysed this object in the same way as I had the preceding ones, I noticed that the same conditions applied to it, and that when those less definite determinations, which it still retained, were removed by means of abstraction, it appeared as a new object, even more universal and less determined than the previous one. I say *new* in reference to my intuition of it (because I had not yet looked at its new aspect) but not new in itself for it contained not only the object resulting from my analysis but also the others which I had analysed previously. Continuing this process, no matter from where I started I found I always arrived at the most universal object *ideal being* (idea of being) divested of all determinations so that it was no longer possible to abstract anything from it without annihilating thought. I saw at once

³ A. R., NS, Vol. II, parte I, c. I, n. 398, p. 21, [n. 398, p. 10].

⁴ This is a street in Rovereto. It used to run through the castle estate, when Rovereto was simply a village, and was known as Terra or Estate Road. It has kept the name even though Rovereto has since expanded into a town.

that it contained all the objects which I had already contemplated. I then verified this process. This consisted in seeking to discover what were the first possible determinations of *indeterminate being* and then which came next and so on to the last. By this synthesis I found again all those objects which had disappeared from my intellectual attention through my previous analysis. I then became convinced that *ideal indeterminate being* must be the first truth, naturally known and the first thing known through immediate intuition and the great means of all knowledge that is, whether perceived or intuited.⁵

The reader will probably recall to mind Rosmini's pyramid of thought.

In the *Nuovo saggio* Rosmini gives an example which may help to clarify the above analysis.

To give an example. Let us take the concrete idea of a particular person, Maurice. Now when I take away from Maurice what is particular and individual to him, I am left with what is common to human beings. Next, by a second abstraction, I remove the human elements such as reason and freedom, and now I have a more general idea, that of an animal. Abstracting animal qualities I am left with a body that has vegetable life without feeling. After this I take away all physical organisation and vegetable life, fixing my attention on what is common to minerals; my idea is now that of something material. Finally I withdraw my attention to what is proper to matter; my idea is now of anything that exists. But during this process of abstraction my mind has dealt with something, and has never ceased thinking; it has always had the idea as object of its action, although this idea has consistently become more universal until my mind arrived at the most universal of all ideas, the idea of *being* undetermined by any quality known or fixed by me. I can finally think that this being is a being solely because it has *being*. Abstraction can go no further without losing every object of thought and destroying every idea in my mind. The idea of being therefore is the most universal idea, and remains after the last possible abstraction; without it all thinking ceases and all other ideas are impossible.⁶

The Origin of the Idea of Being

So far we have shown that the idea of being exists, but where does it come from? How does it 'get into our mind'? Rosmini demonstrates that the idea of being does not come from *corporeal sensations*, nor from the *feeling of our own existence*, nor by *reflection on our sensations*, nor does it begin to exist with *the act of perception*. Therefore the idea of

⁵ Francesco Paoli, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–21. Cf. Lockhart, Vol 1, pp. 45–46.

⁶ A.R. *NS*, Vol. II, parte I, c. II, n. 411, pp. 27–28, [n. 411, pp. 16–17].

being *must be innate*. It constitutes the light of reason and is ‘breathed into us by the creator’.⁷ Space does not permit us here to show the steps by which Rosmini demonstrates that the idea of being is innate in us.⁸ We are born with the vision of possible being but it is only much later and with the result of much reflection that we advert to it.

Apropos of this, Rosmini says that Plato noted that our ideas of things contain some universality and necessity and concluded that our ideas had to be innate because these characteristics cannot come from sensation. But he did not break down ideas to find out what is formal in them and what is material. If he had examined the matter further he would have seen that these two characteristics were present in that most general of all ideas, the idea of being. He would thus have avoided positing a multiplicity of innate ideas or essences.⁹ We also touched on this in chapter three.¹⁰

Il rinnovamento

In 1835 Rosmini wrote his *Il rinnovamento della filosofia in Italia del Conte Terenzio Mamiani della Rovere esaminato da Antonio Rosmini-Serbati* [The Renewal of Philosophy in Italy by Count Terenzio Mamiani della Rovere examined by Antonio Rosmini-Serbati]. This was in response to Mamiani’s book *Del rinnovamento della filosofia antica italiana*. Rosmini’s book is a defence of his own ideology. In his *Giornale de’miei scritti* for 1835–36 he simply says, ‘At Rovereto, the *Rinnovamento*, against Mamiani.’¹¹ But in his personal diary he is a little more specific, ‘Having resigned as Archpriest of San Marco I wrote the *Rinnovamento* at home during the winter.’¹² Radice says during the three months from October to December he collected an imposing amount of material and analysed not only the chapter referring to himself but Mamiani’s whole book. Rosmini found Mamiani’s treatment of the *Nuovo saggio* to be inaccurate and set about putting things right! He says, ‘It will be helpful, at the beginning of this work to mention the material and order of this discussion. Note that four things must be examined in the book of the *Rinnovamento*. They are:

1. Whether the question regarding the certainty of cognitions is independent of the origin of ideas;
2. Whether those things which our author reasons about regarding the origin of ideas are valid;
3. Whether he gives a solid foundation for the certainty of human cognitions;

⁷ A. R., *Principi della scienza morale* (= *Principi*), Ed. Crit. (23), 1990, c. I, Art. II, p. 57, [Principles of Moral Science under the title of *Principles of Ethics*, Durham, 1988, n. 7, p. 8].

⁸ I refer the reader who wishes to study this in depth to volume two of the *Nuovo saggio*, Vol. II, sez. 5, parte I, c. III, nn. 413–472, pp. 29–71, [nn. 413–472, pp. 19–50].

⁹ NS, *ibid.*, c. III, n. 432, pp. 37–38, [n. 432, pp. 27–28]. Rosmini defines ‘essence’ as ‘that which is understood in any idea’. NS, Vol. II, parte V, c. I, n. 646 p. 201, [n. 646, p. 173].

¹⁰ See pp. 36–37.

¹¹ A. R., *GMS*, S.A.I., p. 292.

¹² A. R., *DP*, S.A.I., p. 425.

4. Finally the conclusion which is also the beginning of the whole treatment, what is the nature of ideas.¹³

Originally Rosmini divided his work into three books but towards the end of his life revised it and the work is now divided into four.

This is hardly the place to analyse the whole book, but Book IV c. II is pertinent, for it is here that he cites the support of the Fathers of the Church for his own theory on the origin of ideas. In chapter I he has pointed out that the immutability of ideas is found in ancient philosophy and that, although their teaching was defective, we should not reject everything they taught but rather accept whatever was true.

Rosmini mentions Augustine who read Plato's philosophy and benefited from what was good in it. In his *De civitate Dei* Augustine says that the Platonists have gained a prestige and authority beyond that of other philosophers as, no matter how far they are from the truth, they are closer to it than any of the others.¹⁴ Rosmini believes it useful to consider the corrections that other teachers of Christianity have made to Plato's doctrines. Augustine knew that Plato held that there were immutable essences which were responsible for our knowledge of things through the union of these essences with the human soul. But he saw that Plato's error was his belief that the soul had pre-existed the body and had received this knowledge in another world. According to him this knowledge entered the body on occasion of sensations with the recollection bit by bit of what the soul already knew. This did not correctly explain how we come to know things on the occasion of sensations, but Plato sought for an answer in the heavens. Knowledge for him was the recalling of these innate essences. On the other hand the other part of his theory, namely, that essences or ideas were totally incorporeal is a fact and necessary for knowledge, because their necessity and eternal existence is a *sine qua non* for all human cognitions. So Augustine rejected the erroneous part of Plato's teaching while accepting what was true viz. that our soul understands because 'it is joined not only to intelligible, but also to immutable things.'¹⁵

Rosmini states that ideas, understood in this corrected sense, were taught by the Fathers and he refers to Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesarea and Boetius.¹⁶ But the Fathers made other improvements. They saw that these ideas, being

¹³ A. R., *Rinnovamento*, Ed. Naz., Vol. I, n. 4. p. 4. Cf. *Annali*, Vol. VI, p. 160 ff.

¹⁴ *De civitate Dei*, Lib. XI, c. V. Cf. A.R., *Rinnovamento*, Vol. II, Lib. IV, c. II, n. 459, p. 201.

¹⁵ 'A statement I made in this book [*De quantitate animae*]: "It seems to me that the soul has brought all the arts with it and that what is called learning is nothing else than remembering and recalling", should not be interpreted as if, according to this, I agree that the soul at some time, has lived either in another body or elsewhere in a body or outside a body, and that, previously, in another life, it has learned the responses it makes when questioned, since it has not learned them here. For, as we have already said above in this work, it can happen that this is possible, since the soul is intelligible by nature and is joined NOT ONLY TO INTELLIGIBLE BUT ALSO TO IMMUTABLE THINGS.' Augustine, *Retractiones*, Lib. I, c. VII, 2. Cf. *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 60, p. 29. (Capitals, Rosmini's).

¹⁶ *Rinnovamento*, *ibid.*, n. 461, note 2, p. 202. St Augustine shows clearly the distinction between truths and the mind which intuit them. "You would in no way deny, then, that there exists unchangeable truth that embraces all things which are immutably true. You cannot call this truth mine or yours, or anyone else's.

immutable, eternal and necessary, if they existed isolated in themselves would constitute numerous deities, which is absurd. So we must say that their existence is in the divine mind. Our own intuition of essences tells us that although they have divine characteristics, such as immutability, eternity etc., they can never exist outside the divine mind. Augustine makes this clear. 'As for these reasons, they must be thought to exist nowhere but in the very mind of the Creator. For it would be sacrilegious to suppose that he was looking at something placed outside himself when he created in accord with it what he did create. But if these reasons of all things to be created or [already] created are contained in the divine mind, and if there can be in the divine mind nothing except what is eternal and unchangeable, and if these original and principal reasons are what Plato terms ideas, then not only are they ideas, but they are themselves true because they are eternal and because they remain ever the same and unchangeable. It is by participation in these that whatever exists in whatever manner it does exist.'¹⁷

The Fathers, then, investigated *how* these ideas could be in God and how this could be reconciled with his divine nature. They came up with the following conclusions:

1. These ideas in God cannot be different from the divine Word.
2. There cannot be any distinction between them in God otherwise there would be a multiplicity in God. They must be present in a single idea indistinct from the Word himself and thus reduced to a single unity.
3. And since the Word is not really distinct from the divine essence, this idea also which is not divided from the Word must not be distinct from the divine essence either, because the divine essence is God's intelligibility.

Rosmini quotes St Thomas, 'God is the similitude of all things according to his essence; therefore ideas in God are identical with his Essence.'¹⁸ and goes on to say that these truths were discovered by Christian writers not just by the light of reason but also in revelation. Both Augustine and Thomas say that it is a truth of faith, and it is heretical to deny that the idea is in the divine mind.¹⁹ Rosmini concludes that it is part of our religious belief that the essences of things or ideas, exist, that they are eternal, necessary etc., and that they exist in the divine mind.

The next thing the teachers of the Church investigated was the origin of these ideas in the human mind because no one ever thought that there were two essences one in the divine mind and one in the human mind. So where did they come from? They were superior to the human mind and therefore belonged to God, subsisting in him

Rather it is there to manifest itself as something common to all who behold immutable truths, as a light that in wondrous ways is both hidden and public ...you would never say that the things which each one of us perceives in common with his own mind, belongs to the nature of either of our minds.' *De libero arbitrio*, Lib. II, c. XII. Cf. The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 59, pp. 142–144. See note 2 above for full quotation. Justin, *Lib. contra gentes*; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, VI; Eusebius of Caesarea, *Praeparatio evangelica*, lib. XI; Boetius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, L. III, metr. IX.

¹⁷ Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus*, XLVI, The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 70, p. 81.

¹⁸ *S.T.*, I, Q. XV, Art I, ad 3.

¹⁹ Cf. St Thomas *De veritate*, Q. III, Art 1, c.1.

alone. These ideas then were identical to the divine ideas. So they could not help but conclude that ideas in man must be a hidden communication of divine ideas, or man saw the ideas in God. God, the divine intelligibility, the divine Word ‘enlightens everyone coming into the world’, not in a platonic way, meaning coming into this world from another one, but that everyone pre-exists in the mind of God, that is, in the divine idea.²⁰ We must understand all this in a balanced manner, not in the way Malebranche understood it, but as the Fathers saw it, in a moderate manner. Augustine who greatly explained this teaching, says, in his *Retractions*, ‘Again, in a certain place, I said “that without a doubt, those well versed in the liberal disciplines bring out, in learning, the knowledge buried in oblivion within them, and, in a common sense, dig it out.” But I disapprove of this also. For it is more credible that even those who are ignorant of them, when properly questioned, reply truly concerning certain disciplines because, when they have the capacity to grasp it, the light of eternal reason by which they perceive those unchangeable truths is present in them. But this is not because they knew these things at some time or other and have forgotten them, as it seemed to Plato or men like him.’²¹ Rosmini says it is clear that although Augustine says that the light of eternal truth, that is, the light of God, is present to the human soul, there is a limitation placed on it, regarding how much can be understood, and in this natural life man does not understand enough of this light to be able to call it God.²² The divine intelligibility, the divine Word was ‘he who enlightens every man who comes into the world.’ But we must be careful here, as was St Augustine. Clearly we do not see God in this life. We do not understand enough of this light to be able to say that it is God.

It is not just Augustine who distinctly teaches this, but other Fathers expressly teach it as well. Ambrose, master of Augustine, explaining that God creates the first day, through the light of the mind, says, ‘that it was God himself in the light, who inhabits inaccessible light, and was the true light which enlightens every man coming into the world.’²³

But this was most thoroughly dealt with in the well known books of the *Celestial Hierarchy* and the *Divine Names* by Dionysius, the Pseudo-Areopagite. This writer says that the exemplars are the essences of things, effective reasons, which were at first united with God.²⁴ God in communicating these ideas or lights which are in himself,

²⁰ Rosmini quotes the letter to the Hebrews, ‘...the world was framed by the word of God; that from invisible things visible things might be made’ II: 3 (Vulgate).

²¹ Augustine, *Retractiones*, Lib. I, c. IV. p. 18.

²² *Rinnovamento*, *ibid*, n. 464 note 1, p. 206.

²³ *Ibid.*, n. 465, note 2. Ambrose, *Hexameron*. Cf. *Fathers of the Church*, First Homily, c. 9, p. 38.

²⁴ Rosmini says that reasons or ideas are not separate from God but are all included eminently in the divine essence. ‘With his decree of creating things these essences come to be distinguished by means of the relationship of limited creatures with the unlimited essence of the Creator, and in this essence the Creator saw the multiplicity of creatures with his act of creating them. Now seeing them in himself with this creating act, it can be fittingly said that he produced from eternity the individual essences of things in so far as the term of the creating act would not have been seen by God, if the act itself had not been posited by him for he could not see what would not have been in any way. In this sense I understand,

to creatures, renders them rational. This is why God is called 'reason' in Scripture. It is certain that God does not communicate to man divine light in its totality otherwise we should see the divine essence even in this life. The light, then, of the divine idea, or properly speaking, the light of the divine Word communicated to man is limited by the will of the Creator. This is incontrovertible.

Rosmini goes on to say he has arrived at the same results by another way. The theological school started by meditating on God, he starts by meditating on the human being and has come to the same conclusion. He considers the matter and form of cognition and intellectual perception.

Individual subsistent real beings form the matter of cognition. But the species alone (the idea) is the object of the intellect. The subsistence of contingent things does not enter the intellect and is not per se knowable. It is perceived by an act totally different from that by which the species or idea is intuited. This act belongs to the real world. We perceive real things through their actions in us, that is, the sensations in us resulting from impressions which they make on us and to which we are passive. But, of themselves, sensations are simply modifications of the fundamental feeling we have of ourselves. They are not knowable in themselves, so how do we know them? The answer is that the perception of real subsistent things occurs in **me**, the subject. **I** perceive sensations and **I** intuit the idea. We compare, the actions done in us with the idea intuited by us and say to ourselves 'this perception is a realisation of the ideal intuited by me'. The subsistence is enlightened by this *intellectual perception*. The latter is a judgement which I make. The idea is not changed, but I am persuaded of the subsistence of the reality acting in me by applying the idea and seeing the existence of something which I know already in the idea. The reality of things constitutes the *matter* of cognitions but it is the ideal that constitutes the *form*.

In his examination of ideas Rosmini realised that some were more determinate than others and were thus contained in others less determinate. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter Rosmini draws an analogy with a pyramid whose base consists of the most determinate ideas and at whose apex stands the most general of all ideas, *the idea of being*, the source of all that is knowable.

Rosmini now compares his philosophical theory with that of theology and draws some conclusions.

- 1) There is no fear of falling into platonic idolatry which would be inevitable if we said that all ideas were really distinct. But from the one idea of being which includes all others it is easy to demonstrate the existence of one God *a priori* as he explained in his *Nuovo saggio*.²⁵
- 2) The multiplicity of ideas is no danger to the divine simplicity; because they are all reduced to one, it is a sole and most simple light which shines on everything manifested divinely.

how wisdom was the first created, that is, that term of the will of God, which he saw in himself which he established to create and which he did create.' *Rinnovamento, ibid.*, , n. 465, note 3, p. 207.

²⁵ *NJ*, Vol. III, parte V, c. VI, nn. 1456–1460, pp. 314–318, [nn. 1456–1460, pp. 304–309].

- 3) This one idea which is eminent above all, true and pure light, is *knowable being itself*. And the divine essence lies precisely in *being* according to the scriptures and theologians. Now because *being* has this property of being *knowable* in itself, *per se light*, as the divine scriptures call it, one sees that all knowability of things lies ultimately in the divine essence.
- 4) There are two primordial *forms* or *modes* of being, which Rosmini calls *reality* and *ideality*, real being and ideal being, (he does not intend to speak here of the third mode, moral being), nothing prevents ideal being, essential knowableness, in so far as one finds it united and essentially identical with absolute reality, being called the *Word of God*.

Having examined the *idea of being* and finding that it manifests divine characteristics, Rosmini concluded that it originates only in the divinity. But he noticed at the same time that our natural mode of intuiting intelligible being was limited and restricted. So he investigated in what degree it was manifested to us *per natura*. As a result of his investigations he concluded:

- 1) It is not correct to say that we see God (the divine essence) in this present life because God is not only ideal being but is inseparably real-ideal.
- 2) What we now see is an *appurtenance of God*, which, if completed, would be the form of God. In this life a reflection of God is manifested to us, and it is *being* in so far as it is purely intelligible (VERITÀ) and even this in a limited degree.
- 3) This limitation of being seen by us is totally subjective, arising from us, and not from the being itself of God.
- 4) For this reason it seems more correct to say that being, in so far as it is seen by us in a limited way, is created rather than uncreated light. But considered solely in that part which we see and not in its limitation, it is objective, uncreated, absolute and truly divine. Another way of putting it is that we can consider this light as shared in by the soul or in itself. In itself it is the sun, as shared it is the light from the sun. St Thomas says as much.²⁶

The source of the dignity in intelligent beings is universal being, 'present to rational natures and enlightening them with its own spark of divine fire... The presence of this idea in human beings produces an extraordinary paradox in nature, causing us to marvel at the obvious limitations and the infinite greatness found in the human being who is indeed formed of finite and infinite elements that alone explain the essential struggle in which human nature is perpetually involved. Seen from the point of view of man-as-subject, there is nothing weaker or more miserable than human nature; seen from the point of view of being-as-object, there is nothing greater or more noble than human nature whose intellect beholds in being its essential light from which it receives the intellectual vision of the intelligible, essential notion common to all that the subject understands. Moreover, that universal

²⁶ St Thomas, *Quaestio disputata de spiritualibus creaturis*, a. 10, c.

being which activates thought can only be the *absolute* itself, not, however, in the state of possibility in which it now presents itself to the human mind, but in the state of perfect actuality, as it would be if the mind were to see being no longer in its initial state, as it does now, but in its subsistence as final term. Then the intellect would be perfectly replete, enraptured and enthralled: it would see God.²⁷

The above survey reminds us that the author to which Rosmini owes most for the idea of being is Augustine. He ‘indicates the path we should follow and the principle from which we should start if we do not wish to labour in vain. We have to begin by meditating and understanding the *light* of our intelligence, wherein lies the origin of our ideas and the certainty of our judgements.’²⁸

This is the light with which we know all things and in it appears plainly what we believe without knowing it, and that which we hold as known, the form of the body which we call to mind or imagine with our thought, what the sensation of the body perceives and what the soul imagines similar to the body, what the understanding contemplates as certain and totally different from what is corporeal. The light, then, with which we judge everything, is not the splendour of the sun or any other luminous body which is diffused everywhere through space to shine on our minds as a visible light, but it shines invisibly and ineffably and yet intelligibly. And for us this light is as certain as are the things which we consider by means of it’. From this light arise the ideas and doctrines of mankind. It is the light of true judgements about all things, the light which, through being absolutely certain contains the principle of certainty.²⁹

Nuovo saggio

In the *Nuovo saggio* Rosmini deals with pure ideas which derive nothing from our feeling and which, being the natural characteristics and natural qualities of ideal being, are contained within it. Two of these are unity and number. Without going into an explanation, it is enough for us simply to note that he quotes a long passage from Augustine ‘the dialogue with Evodius’, from his *De libero arbitrio* in support of his theory.³⁰

Section VI of the *Nuovo saggio* deals with certainty and error. Speaking of truth and certainty Rosmini states that the most extensive use of meaning of ‘truth’ is that of *exemplar*. Truth is the idea considered as the *exemplar of things*. The concept of exemplar involves a relationship with that which is drawn from it, namely, the copy. When a

²⁷ *Principi*, c. IV, Art. VIII, pp. 114–115, [nn. 103–104, p. 60].

²⁸ A.R., *LT*, c. 4, p. 40, [n. 20, p. 21].

²⁹ Augustine, *Epistulae*, 120, 10. Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. VII, pp. 82–83.

³⁰ *NS*, Vol. II, parte IV, c. I, nn. 575–582, pp. 138–147, [nn. 575–582, pp. 110–119].

copy is perfectly similar to its exemplar we say that it is true. Things are true or partake of truth in proportion to their conformity to the exemplar. The exemplar is an idea with which things can be compared. The one universal absolute truth by means of which we know all things is the *idea of being*. It is this idea which is the universal exemplar.³¹ Augustine defines truth as that which shows us being, that is to say, the idea of being in so far as it is the idea which makes known to us and which indicates to us that which is.³² Rosmini also attributes the same position as Augustine to Hilary (in actual fact the definition is from St Thomas). 'Truth is being in so far as being indicates and manifests.'³³ The intuition of being is the source of all certainty and truth cannot come from ourselves. It is objective and independent of human nature. In reviewing his arguments Rosmini reiterates that they are contained in Christian tradition. Once again he calls on Augustine and Thomas showing that they agree that the characteristics of the idea of being cannot come from feeling but are inherent in it prior to any sensations coming from real beings.³⁴

In the *Nuovo saggio* Rosmini goes on to demonstrate how we can be certain about the perception of ourselves.

There is a poster of an ape saying 'I think therefore I am, I think.' This is poking fun at Descartes' principle of universal doubt but it also reminds us that there are sceptics who are never satisfied with demonstrations from common sense. Our consciousness tells us that we perceive ourselves. We say 'I exist.' 'If the perception of myself were not granted, I could not ask whether I was certain.'³⁵ In fact I simply affirm the feeling I have of myself. Thinking and feeling are primary data, which we readily recognise as basic to all experience. Rosmini goes on to say that Augustine used this undeniable principle and deduced many other truths from these basic facts in his *De Trinitate*.³⁶

Rosmini distinguishes between *direct* and *reflective* knowledge. Direct knowledge is independent of the will. Such are the first principles of thought, for example, the principle of cognition, '*the object of thought is being*' and the principle of contradiction '*that which is cannot not be*.' These principles are derived directly from the idea of being, or perhaps more correctly are inherent in it. But we are only too aware that we can make mistakes on the reflective level. Rumours abound on the existence of the Loch Ness monster and mistaken sightings; similarly with the 'big cats' which are rumoured to stalk the British Isles. We say, 'I was sure that it was a puma but my senses deceived

³¹ *Ibid.* Vol. III, parte II, c. II, nn. 1113–1122, pp. 71–79, [nn. 1113–1122, pp. 62–69]. And see my *Rosmini's Theory of Ethics*, Rosmini House, Durham, 2000, chapter 6, p. 60 ff.

³² Verum est qua ostenditur id quod est, [Truth is that which manifests what is], *De vera religione*, 36, 66. Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. VII, pp. 83–84.

³³ Verum est declarativum aut manifestativum esse. *ST*, I, *Quaest.* XVI, art I.

³⁴ A.R., *NS*, Vol. III, parte II, c. I, nn. 1066–1112, pp. 24–54, [nn. 1065–1111, pp. 25–60], especially, n. 1107, [n. 1106] ff.

³⁵ *NS*, *Ibid.*, parte III, c. III, n. 1198, p. 128, [n. 1198, pp 117–118].

³⁶ Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Lib. XV, c. 12. Cf. *NS*, *ibid.*, n. 1201ff., p. 106 ff., [n. 1200ff., p. 118 ff]. Descartes presupposed the knowledge that what thinks must exist. He did not distinguish between the *simple* perception of *myself* as feeling with the *intellectual* perception of *myself*. *NS*, Vol. II, parte V, c. XV, nn. 980–981, pp. 408–409, [nn. 980–981, pp. 356–357].

me. It was a large black dog', or rather 'I judged wrongly that it was a puma, whereas in fact it was a dog'. For the senses do not deceive. It is my interpretation that is at fault. 'St Augustine and others say that the understanding errs because it takes something similar to what is true for the true thing itself.'³⁷ Rosmini says that all error comes from the will.

Rosmini devotes a part of Section VI in the *Nuovo saggio* to a treatment of error and a chapter to the cause of human errors.³⁸ We can refuse to admit metaphysical and moral truths which are necessary for us. Rosmini quotes the scriptures and explains how the teaching of the Fathers derives from it.

Perhaps the most familiar and best expressed of St. Augustine's opinions is that human beings without the truth have only themselves to blame. The truth replies to everyone of us because we carry it within, where we can all consult it.

'Everywhere, O Truth, you preside over those who consult you, and you reply to all, even when they seek knowledge of different things. You reply clearly, but not all hear clearly. All ask about whatever they want, but not all hear what they want to hear. Your best minister is the one who no longer pays attention in order to hear from you what he wants, but rather wants what he hears from you.'³⁹ According to Augustine we can find the truth within ourselves if we want to. We have the innate light of truth and direct knowledge which is free from error. Reflecting on this we can acknowledge the great metaphysical and moral truths. Rosmini goes on to consider Augustine's teaching on idolatry 'a capital, universal error' which consists in loving and serving 'the creature in preference to the creator', to the point of 'taking for God the things most unlike God.' This is an example of error in popular common knowledge. Augustine then goes on to speak of 'the error of disbelief', a good example of error in philosophical knowledge. Augustine concludes that there could have been no error in religion if human beings had not given their affection and worship to the spirit, or the body or their own phantasms instead of to God.⁴⁰

A final example of Rosmini's recourse to Augustine in the *Nuovo saggio* can be found in Augustine's analysis of the materialists' error in maintaining that the soul is corporeal when it is self evident that it is spiritual.⁴¹

A review of Rosmini's constant reference to Augustine and the use he makes of Augustine's teaching demonstrates how Rosmini had absorbed his teaching integrating it with his own unique contribution to ideology. Bettetini and Peratoner see this use of Augustine in the *Nuovo saggio* as an example of Rosmini's procedure. They say that he never uses the Fathers as a starting point or basis of his theories but rather as confirming the position he has arrived at. He uses them to clarify the significance of what he has said, or to state the theological implications or, again to

³⁷ *NS*, Vol. III, *ibid.*, n 1287, p. 195, [n. 1287, p. 181].

³⁸ *Ibid.*, parte IV, nn. 1245–1362, pp. 162–240, [nn. 1245–1362, pp. 151–226].

³⁹ Augustine, *Confessions*, c. X, XXVI. Cf. *NS*, Vol. III, parte IV, c. III, n. 1316, p. 211–212, [n. 1316 pp. 197–198].

⁴⁰ *NS*, *ibid.*, nn. 1321–1324, pp. 215–219, [nn. 1321–1324, pp. 201–204].

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, parte V, c. I, nn. 1363–1371, pp. 240–246, [nn. 1363–1371, pp. 227–232].

enrich what he has said.⁴² But I believe that there is another and more basic aspect. As I have said above, Rosmini had clearly assimilated St Augustine's and St Thomas's teaching from an early age and his philosophy appears inevitably to be interwoven with these two great masters. A glance at Bettetini and Peratoner's article⁴³ shows just how much Rosmini quoted or referred to *De Trinitate* and to a lesser extent *De vera religione*. There are few references to other Fathers.

Psicologia

In Rosmini's *Psicologia* [Psychology]⁴⁴ Augustine's *De Trinitate* again is predominantly mentioned amongst his works. Quacquarelli says that 'It remains to be ascertained how much Rosmini owes to St Augustine on questions pertaining to psychology. He himself tells us that he has translated into modern language Augustinian speculation.'⁴⁵

St Augustine distinguishes between the soul's *knowing itself* and its *thinking* of itself. To know itself, the soul needs only to *perceive itself*; but to think about itself, it must reflect. Through perception the soul knows itself as *present*; through reflection it seeks itself as if *absent* because the scientific reflection of which we are speaking deals with the universal, objective concept of the soul. However, says St Augustine, mistakes do not arise in *perception*, but through the work of *reflection*; they do not come about through simple self-knowledge, but as a result of thought about oneself. He warns that the soul should think of itself as present if it is to avoid errors; it should not seek itself as though it were absent. In other words, pay attention to what perception of self provides, and do not abandon this for what reflection affirms about the soul, as if the soul were an object alien to itself: "Let not the mind, therefore, seek itself as though it were absent, but let it take care to discern itself as present". We should not reason about our own soul as though it were some third unknown thing; we should presuppose ignorance of ourselves. On the contrary, we should realise that knowing ourselves already, all we have to do is to distinguish the SELF that knows from other things: "Let it not know itself as though it did not know itself, but how to distinguish itself from that which it knows to be another thing".⁴⁶ The characteristic of perception for St Augustine is certainty, and no one can doubt what

⁴² Bettetini–Peratoner, p. 495.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Cf. p. 497–499.

⁴⁴ A.R., *Psicologia*, Ed. Crit. (9. 9A, 10), 1988–1989. [*Psychology*, Vols. 1–4, Durham, 1999].

⁴⁵ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. VII, p. 85. Cf. *Psicologia*, Vol. I, Lib. I. c. X, n. 117, p. 88, [Vol. 1, n. 117, p. 75].

Rosmini here calls Augustine 'one of our two great masters in philosophical as well as theological speculation.'

⁴⁶ *Psicologia*, Vol. I, Lib. I, c. X, n. 118, p. 88, [n. 118, pp. 75–76]. '*non igitur velut absentem se quaerat cernere, sed PRESENTEM de curret discernere.*' 'Nec SE quasi non novit, cognoscat, sed ab eo quod alterum novit, dignoscat.' Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Lib. X, c. IX, 12.

perception tells us of the soul. All admit that the soul is the principle of feeling and understanding, which shows that the information is found in perception.⁴⁷

In this work Rosmini cites many Fathers alongside Augustine in the development of his own research, for instance, Ambrose, Cassiodorus and Athanasius on the immortality of the soul; and he calls again on Athanasius, and also Athanagoras and Prudentius on the origin of the human soul, which is transmitted through generation but was received through the divine breath at the creation of Adam. He did this for all human nature when he infused a soul into Adam in whom human nature was contained. After this human nature had only to multiply into many individuals by means of generation. Just as God, at the beginning, gave fixed laws to all created things, so he gave this fixed law that every time human beings multiplied individuals through generation, being was present to these new beings in such a way that it drew and bound to itself their intuiting gaze.⁴⁸ He cites Clement of Alexandria who proves against the Platonists that the human soul is not sent from heaven. If this were the case God would make it pass from a more to a less perfect state, which is not fitting. “The soul is not sent from heaven to those things which are inferior. GOD MADE ALL THINGS ACCORDING TO WHAT IS BETTER.”⁴⁹ Bettetini and Peratoner point out that Clement is cited *after* Rosmini had developed his argument.⁵⁰ It seems to me that they are on surer ground here with their comments on Rosmini’s use of the Fathers.

In his proofs for the immortality of the soul Rosmini has recourse again to the Fathers, Lactantius, Prudentius, Irenaeus, Aeneas of Gaza, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Origen, Leontius,⁵¹ and Athanasius. Bettetini and Peratoner make an interesting and important point that, in addition to this immediate use of the Fathers, there is also in this work a frequent use of their testimony in a documentary sense, that is, a list of citations or mere references. The same authors state that this use of the Fathers occurs in Rosmini’s work *Del divino nella natura* [On the Divine Nature].⁵² This is an important point in assessing Rosmini’s use of the Fathers and the care needed not to measure the importance of the Fathers merely quantitatively.⁵³

⁴⁷ *Psicologia, Ibid.*, n. 119, p. 89, [n. 119, p. 76]. Cf. Quacquarelli, *op. cit.*, c. VII, p. 86.

⁴⁸ *Psicologia*, I, Lib. IV, c. XXIII, n. 652, p. 305, [n. 652, p. 306]. See also c. XIX, n. 609, p. 288, [n. 609, p. 287], c. XXIII, n. 659, p. 307, [n. 659, p. 308]. Cirillo Bergamaschi defends this theory of Rosmini against his opponents succinctly in his *Grande dizionario antologico del pensiero di Antonio Rosmini*, Vol. 2, Città Nuova, 2001; 2. *Generazione umana*, pp. 334–335.

⁴⁹ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, L. IV. Cf. *Psicologia, Ibid.*, Lib. V, c. V, n. 675, note 7, p. 318, [n. 675, note 360, p. 320].

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 675. Cf. Bettetini–Peratoner, p. 500.

⁵¹ *Psicologia*, Vol. I, Lib. V, c. XIV, nn. 720–726, pp. 344–348, [nn. 720–726 pp. 350–354].

⁵² A. R., *Del divino nella natura*, Ed. Crit. (20), 1991. See Appendix II of this book for a list of the Fathers.

⁵³ Bettetini–Peratoner, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

Teodicea

The *Psicologia* and *Del divino nella natura* belong to the metaphysical section of Rosmini's works. There is a third work we can consider, namely his *Teodicea* [Theodicy],⁵⁴ a term coined by Leibniz. In the Preface to the work Rosmini tells us that *Theodicy* comes from the Greek meaning *justice of God* and his work has 'no other purpose than to vindicate the equity and goodness of God in the distribution of good and evil in the world.'⁵⁵ Rosmini tells us that the work consists of three books. The first is *logical* in nature and lays down rules 'which the human mind must follow in its judgements regarding the dispositions of Divine Goodness in order not to fall into error.' This was necessary in order to remove the first cause of errors regarding God's dispositions which is the want of *logical cognitions*. People rush to conclusions. In such a book by its very nature the Fathers are not called on. The second book is, he says, *physical*. It is a continual meditation on the laws of nature, on the essential limitations of created things, on the interlinking of causes. This combats the error of the want of *physical cognitions* and the lack of consideration of the limitations of created things. Finally the third book is *hyper-physical*. This is intended to combat the want of *theological cognitions*. People complain against divine providence 'why does God let this happen?' They believe that God should intervene to prevent calamities even those which they have brought upon themselves.

In Book II, chapter III, Rosmini confronts the question 'How is the existence of any evil possible under a God who is infinitely holy and perfect?' Should not the perfection of God fill the whole universe and exclude any evil from it? The objection can be re-formulated as follows: 'Since an infinitely perfect being necessarily exists, evil is impossible.'⁵⁶ This was very difficult to answer before Augustine came on the scene though Epictetus had known that evil is not a nature. Athanasius says that evil is a privation of good but people gave it a positive form.⁵⁷ Basil commenting on the book of Genesis also saw this, 'Do not, therefore, contemplate evil from without; and do not imagine some original nature of wickedness, but let each one recognise himself as the first author of the vice that is in him'; and, using this work, Ambrose commented in a similar fashion.⁵⁸ Another Latin Father, Jerome in his Commentaries on Jeremiah says, 'Evil is not, of its own nature, any of the things that subsist, and is not created by God.'⁵⁹ It was Augustine, says Rosmini, who finally discussed and cleared the matter up. He proved indisputably that evil is not a subsistent and positive entity.⁶⁰ Finally Prosper of Aquitaine echoed the teaching of his master.⁶¹ Rosmini

⁵⁴ A. R., *Teodicea*, Ed. Crit. (22) 1977. [Theodicy, Vols. I–III, Longmans, Green and Co., 1912].

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Preface, 1. 13 [1. v].

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Lib II, c. III, nn. 181–182, p. 141, [nn. 181–182, p. 189].

⁵⁷ Athanasius, *Oratio contra gentes*, *Oratio in Idola*.

⁵⁸ Basil, *Hexaemeron*, Homil. 2. Ambrose, *Hexaemeron*, Lib. 1, c. 1, Homily 8.

⁵⁹ Jerome, c. III. This quotation has not been traced but expresses the thought of Jerome. *Teodicea*, Lib. II, n. 184, p. 142, [n. 184, p. 190]. See, *Teodicea*, p. 646, c. III, note 9.

⁶⁰ Augustine deals with this matter chiefly in his, *Confessions* II, 20; *Enchiridion* IX–XIII, *De libero arbitrio*. III, 5, VIII–XV; *Tract. in Joannem*. I, and in all his writings against the Manicheans.

concludes this chapter by explaining in more detail that evil is a privation of good. A privation, he says, arises either from defective formation so that a being does not fully attain its nature, or from weakness or slackness in an action of a being. It is obvious that neither of these defects can occur in God. But the substance of creatures is always finite. The act of existence is not necessary for them so they receive it in an imperfect degree. Moreover their power and their second acts being different from their existence may fall short of the right mark. Evil then is not found in the essence of beings but in their natural constitution, or action and passion. The failure of an action to attain the end demanded by its nature is the evil, not the entity, of an actual action.⁶² A fruit is not evil but if it decays before reaching maturity the evil lies in the disorder of not attaining its expected end.

Bettetini and Peratoner add that in his work *Risposta al finto Eusebio Cristiano* [Reply to the so-called Eusebio Cristiano]⁶³ Rosmini concluded his treatment of origin of evil, and dealt with the evil act as 'sin' making a very sweeping use of Augustinian sources especially *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* and *Contra Iulianum*. He treated of the relationship between liberty and grace; the origin of evil in the free will, and therefore that God is not to blame when man commits evil; the role of concupiscence before and after baptism; and the state of babies dying without baptism. These were all topics supported by references to Augustine.

⁶¹ *Epigrammata*. 97. Cf. *Teodicea*, Lib. II, c. III, nn. 184–185, pp. 141–142, [nn. 184–185, pp. 189–192].

⁶² *Ibid.*, nn. 186–187, pp. 143–145, [nn. 186–187 pp. 192–194].

⁶³ A. R., *Risposta al finto Eusebio Cristiano*, Boniardi–Pogliani, 1841. This was in reply to a work by Eusebio Cristiano *Alcune affermazioni del Signor Antonio Rosmini prete roveretano con un saggio di riflessioni scritte da Eusebio Cristiano* [Some affirmations of Antonio Rosmini, priest of Rovereto, with a few reflections written by Eusebio Cristiano] written in April 1841. This was a virulent attack on Rosmini's *Trattato della coscienza morale* [Treatise on Moral Conscience]. As it was under a pen name, Rosmini had no idea who his adversary was and could not reply to him personally. It was a fierce polemic and Rosmini did not mince his words! It turned out that the author was a Jesuit who had left his Order and the priesthood but he was reconciled to the Church by a Rosminian and eventually died in London. His funeral was attended by Rosminian priests. Cf. Claude Leetham, Rosminian Notes, Vol. 5, n. 20, Sept. 1964, *Rosmini*, XIII, *Treatise of Moral Conscience, Seminaries, Sisters of Providence*, p. 107.

Chapter 6

Rosmini's Moral Philosophy

In the 1830s Rosmini published four important works on moral philosophy. The first to emerge was his *Principi della scienza morale* [Principles of Moral Science]. On 7 March 1831 he wrote to Count Giulio Padulli, 'The theory of the origin of ideas contains the seeds of natural right. Being, the first idea, *formal principle* of all the others, considered as the principle of logic, that is as the supreme rule of all judgements, is called *truth*. Considered as the supreme rule of particular species of judgements, it is called the *first law*, and constitutes the principle of morality. Note that *being*, *truth* and *good* are the same thing considered under different aspects. When one considers this thing in itself without any relationship it is called *being*; when it is considered in its relation to the intellect it is called *truth*; when it is considered in its relationship with the will it is called *good*. Good, the object of the will, is either subjective or objective. Subjective good is the subject of Eudaimonology, that is, the science which deals with happiness; objective good is the subject of Ethics or Morals because objective good willed by the will is precisely moral good.'¹ This is a neat resumé of the work. It followed quickly on the heels of Rosmini's *Nuovo saggio*, which, he said, 'is a work of difficult and very speculative research' but which will provide 'practical and enlightening consequences' and which will provide a firm foundation on which to build 'the edifice of the good life and therefore human happiness.'²

For Rosmini, the human being is a knowing and feeling subject whose will, as supreme principle of activity, provides the basis of the incommunicable individuality that constitutes each human being as a person. Morality is concerned with personal activity.³ Lesser human activities might better human beings in certain ways, but not touch them as persons. A musician may be a good pianist, or a good painter but not necessarily a good person. Caravaggio has a bad track record morally speaking but he was a great painter. Richard Wagner was not exactly inspiring morally but his great music lives on. 'Morality...commands and obliges without compromise or promise. Although it brings human beings to perfection as persons, it does not present this perfection in the guise of something subjectively beneficial (although morality in one sense will always be beneficial); it offers only obligation which binds the person irrespective of any effect it may produce in him. Morality, therefore determines human actions with the force of obligation.'⁴ Important ethical debates revolve round whether subjective good should supersede morality. 'Should a person be allowed to

¹ A.R., *EC*, Vol. III, Letter 1378, pp. 665–666. Cf. *Principi*, Umberto Muratore, *Introduction*, pp. 14–15.

² A.R., *EC*, Vol. III, Letter 1323, to Michele Parma, 1 January, 1831, p.572; Letter 1330 to Monsignor Scavini, 6 January 1831, p. 580. Cf. *Principi*, *Introduction*, p. 14.

³ Denis Cleary, *Antonio Rosmini: Introduction to His Life and Teaching*, Rosmini House, Durham, 1992, p. 26.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 26–27.

commit suicide in order to end suffering?' 'Should a person have an abortion to avoid having a handicapped child or to preserve health?' Very often in less important issues pragmatism and pleasure prevail over the moral good both of the individual and society. An act is moral not because it pleases me, but because it conforms to the truth. Ethics can never be based on pleasure and self interest but only on the adherence to objective good irrespective of whether I like it or not, or whether I believe that is good or not for me. When St Gianna Molla gave her life for her unborn child rather than having an operation which would result in the child's death, she performed a heroic moral act which was irrespective of her own health and well-being. The latter would have increased her own subjective perfection but at the loss of moral virtue and integrity. The pursuit of happiness and pleasure leads us into judging what is good for me. But when this clashes with morality, what is good in itself, I must choose the moral path. Ethics can never be based on pleasure and self interest. To do this would be to confuse ethics which deals with duty and obligation with happiness which has the human subject as its foundation.

The moral law is a notion of the mind which we use for making a moral judgement on our human actions. I am forbidden to harm my neighbour, but how do I know whether this action is harmful or not. Obviously I must compare it with the notion of harm which I possess in order to make a judgement. A notion or idea is always the principle or rule of judgement, for judgements, as we saw earlier, cannot be made without ideas. Now what is the first law on which all others depend? This is the same as asking what is the first notion of the mind on which all others depend. We have already said that this is the *idea of being*. We have also seen that this idea is objective, it is the light of the intellect and presents an objective criterion of truth and morality. The most general moral law *is to follow the light of reason* in all that we do. Moral good only becomes such when it is desired by the will. The person must *will* the good which he or she knows speculatively. The will is the power by which people become authors of their own actions otherwise they can remain mere spectators.

We can see how a disregard for objective truth entails a lack of regard for objective morality. In fact it leads to situation ethics, to what suits me at the time. 'It doesn't matter what I do as long as it doesn't harm anyone.'⁵ To sum up: 'That which is, is good, that is to say, it is desirable. But it may be desirable in itself according to its place in the whole economy of being or it may be desirable for me, the subject, because of the satisfaction it brings me when I possess it. In order to conform with the moral law, I must acknowledge things not in so far as they are good for me, the human subject but in so far as they take their place in the order of being.'⁶

By the time Rosmini published his second edition of the *Principi della scienza morale* he had another work ready entitled *Storia comparativa e critica de' sistemi intorno al principio della morale* [A Comparative and Critical History of Systems regarding the Principle of Morality]. As early as 1832 his friend, don Luigi Polidori, had asked for some thoughts

⁵ Cf. My *Rosmini's Theory of Ethics*, Rosmini House, Durham, 2000.

⁶ Cleary, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

on moral systems, and in December he sent him an outline of twenty points, with attached notes, under the heading *Systems regarding the Principle of Morality*. 'I am sending you the points which you asked for on moral systems. If the notes are not sufficient, write to me and I will fill them out. But you can work it out for yourself.'⁷ Now, in 1837, his *Storia comparativa* was published with the *Principi della scienza morale*. Whereas the latter work deals with principles of ethics, as its title says, the former deals with 'the sources on which he had drawn in propounding his own teaching. This he evaluates and clarifies in the light of the deficiencies or excesses inherent in moral systems prior to his time.'⁸

The ultimate conclusions of moral science are explained in a third book, published in 1839, *Trattato della coscienza morale*. The fourth book which completes the main body of Rosmini's moral philosophy (with the exception of his *Filosofia del diritto* [Philosophy of Right] 1841) is his *Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale* [Anthropology in the Service of Moral Science], published in 1838.⁹ This deals with the subjects of morality, the human beings governed by its laws. In the introduction to the *Antropologia* Rosmini says, 'In the book of the *Principles of Moral Science* I presented the theory of moral law and obligation. But the theory has to be applied, and we must be very careful not to err in its application. Consequently we have to know intimately the subject, the human being, to which the theory is applied. Hence the necessity... for an anthropology which provides us with knowledge of human nature relative to morality.'¹⁰

A survey of Rosmini's use of the Fathers in the above works shows us that only three Fathers are used in the *Principi della scienza morale*, namely Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome. These Fathers are not used extensively but merely quoted in support of a principle Rosmini is stating. As we have said, Rosmini holds that the moral law is present to us by nature. 'We have, within us, the first law as the principle and source of all other laws and the guide to what is right and just.'¹¹ He says that is traditional teaching both before and after Christianity and he quotes St Jerome, 'There is a natural holiness impressed on our souls by God. It resides in the highest part of the spirit, where it judges between what is right and what is wayward.'¹² This fact is all important to Rosmini who teaches that the supreme law of morality is the idea of being. In stating that the human spirit receives the moral law and does not form it, Rosmini quotes St Ambrose. 'And, indeed, the creature does not impose the law but accepts it and keeps it.'¹³ Finally St Augustine is quoted in support of Rosmini's statement that 'being is the source of all good' and later in the book where he says that

⁷ A. R., *EC*, Vol. IV, Letter 1842, 17 December 1832, pp. 455–457. Cf. *Principi*, Introduction, p. 16.

⁸ A.R., *Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale* [Anthropology as an Aid to Moral Science] (= *AM*), Durham, 1991, Foreword, vii.

⁹ *AM*, Ed. Crit. (24), Roma, 1981.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Introduction, n. 1, p. 17, [n. 1, p. 1].

¹¹ A. R., *Principi*, c. I, Art. III. p. 57, [n. 8, p. 9].

¹² Jerome, *Epistula ad Demetriadem*, cap. IV. Cf. *Principi*, *ibid.*, pp. 58–59, [n. 11, p. 10].

¹³ Ambrose, *Hexameron*, Lib. I, cap. VI, n. 22. Cf. *Principi*, c. I, Art. IV, p. 64, [n. 18, p. 15].

even on earth we possess a certain intellectual sense, different from corporeal sense, with which we enjoy the concepts of good.¹⁴

Storia comparativa

There is more use of the Fathers in the *Storia comparativa* but here, too, it is limited compared with some of Rosmini's other works. A brief summary of the contents of this book will help in a contextual appreciation of his use of the Fathers.

After having outlined the principle of morality which consists in the 'practical judgement' or 'the practical recognition of beings' carried out by the free will, and therefore meritorious, Rosmini proceeds to a critical comparison of moral systems according to the principles which he holds. He does not deal with those who deny any morality. Others accept it, but make it impossible by denying some of the elements which form its essence, that is, truth, knowledge, free will or absolute being. Rosmini proceeds from the less perfect to the more perfect moral systems. He first deals with those who have not known how to grasp clearly the essence of morality, and have confused it with the order of nature, either animality or rationality. Morality, in fact consists in the relationship between the objective truth which shines before us and our subjective will, between object and subject, between the ideal and the real. Those who place morality in the subject end up depending on subjective values, such as power, health, reason, or what is good for me, for example, happiness, prudence, pleasure, perfection, sociability, utility, interest. Another group of thinkers has understood that the moral element is distinct from all the others, but have made of this principle another human faculty, not passing from the subject to the object. They speak of 'obligation' and 'moral imperative' but when they try to define it they confuse it with 'moral sense', or a generic 'moral faculty' or with 'rational nature.' Kant comes in for a detailed critique, and his system is deemed immoral by Rosmini.

Those who see that the source of law (obligation) is an object and not a subject have taken an immense step forwards to the correct solution of the principle of morality. Some confuse this object with authority (divine and human), others with objective reason. But authority must have a reason which justifies the respect for this authority, so it cannot be the supreme principle. Others, such as the Stoics, Socrates, and Plato arrived at the noble qualities of the objective light of the mind or ideal being or reason and they ended up confusing it with God. But ideal being, although divine, is not God. It is a principle which dwells in man without being confused with man himself. It is contemplated by him.

The bulk of patristic quotations comes in chapter VIII where, Rosmini says, the truth of the supreme principle of morality proposed by him is confirmed

He says that the principle of morality must have six characteristics present to the mind before we perform any other intellectual operation whatsoever regarding moral matters. Its six characteristics are: 1. That it expresses moral essence, the essence of

¹⁴ Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus* LXXXIII, n. 21. Cf. *Principi*, c. III, Art. VII, p. 94, [n. 61, p. 41] and Augustine, *Retractiones* Lib I, cap I, n.2. Cf. *Principi*, c. IV, Art. II, p. 102, note 1, [n. 75, note 36, p. 48].

obligation, 2. It is totally simple; one simple concept, 3. That it is evident, that is, an evident necessary principle, 4. That it is universal; it must be universally applicable, 5. That it must be supreme otherwise there would be something else superior to it and it would no longer express the supreme moral law, 6. That it is the first thing knowable in moral matters. The last five characteristics are contained in the first because essence is that which is contained in any idea and this idea is the most universal of all. We could not judge a thing good if we did not know what goodness was. We could not judge a thing beautiful if the mind were deprived of all knowledge of beauty.

He goes on to say that this principle of morality is not his discovery; it comes from the fact that it is experienced by everyone though it has been broken up through the disputes of wise people. He says that there are traces of what he has expounded in both ancient and modern writers. He acknowledges in his examination of different schools of thought what is of value. In mentioning other authorities Christian or not, it is first necessary to mention some truths which are presumed by the moral principle he lays down and then to see how much of them was known and taught by wise people. He mentions seven truths but we need only touch on two of them

One of these truths is 'that the essence of virtue is one only; moral essence is one, in which all human acts share.'¹⁵ He goes on to quote Clement of Alexandria, 'Consider this: virtue is single in power, but the fact is that when it is realized in one form of action it is called *prudence*, in another *temperance*, in others *magnanimity* or *justice*. In the same way, *truth* is one, but there is a truth of geometry found in geometry, of music in music; and one can say that there is a Greek truth in the best philosophy... Each virtue, each truth, has a common name; but each has its proper and unique effect, and only from a union of all comes the blessed life.'¹⁶

Good becomes moral good when desired by the will. *Morality* is 'a relationship between what is good and the intelligent nature which wills the good.'¹⁷ If we tend towards being, love being, or desire being we perform a morally good act. The will can be defined as 'an active power operating according to reasons present to the mind and proposed by the human subject to itself.'¹⁸ It follows that it must depend on prior knowledge to act. Ideas serve as reasons, and must be present for the human beings to deliberate, to choose and to will. This knowledge is present to the human being before the will acts; and it is formed instinctively. This is called *direct knowledge*. This, then, becomes the object of reflection. Reflection is the work of the will. Rosmini calls the knowledge obtained by reflection, *reflective knowledge*, and it is in reflection that error can make its appearance.

Another truth in Rosmini's list is, then, that there are two types of cognitions, one is involuntary (direct knowledge, formed through intellectual perception) and the other is subject to the human will (reflective knowledge). This second type consists in a

¹⁵ A.R., *Storia comparativa*, c. VIII, Art. III, p. 399.

¹⁶ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, I, Lib. 20. Cf. *Storia comparativa*, c. VIII, Art. III, p. 400.

¹⁷ A. R. *Principi*, c. V, Art. I. p. 117, [n. 114, p. 64].

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Art. II, p. 119, [n. 118, p. 65].

practical judgement on the value of things. The difference between these types of cognitions was well known in the ancient world though some got confused as to the difference and few saw the importance of it. Socrates, for instance, made virtue dependent on speculative knowledge and, as a result said that it did not depend on the human will. But he *did* see that the truth must be free from corporeal passions and that occupation and obsession with material things prevented one having an appetite for spiritual things. Augustine praised him for seeing this. 'To Socrates goes the credit of being the first one to channel the whole of philosophy into an ethical system for the regulation and reformation of morals ...Socrates realised that his predecessors had been seeking the origin of all things, but he believed that these first and highest causes...could be comprehended only by a mind purified by passion. Hence his conclusion that he must apply himself to the acquisition of virtue, so that his mind, freed from the weight of earthly desires, might, by its own natural vigour, lift itself up to eternal realities....'¹⁹ The Platonists taught the necessity of this purification and this was in conformity with what the Fathers taught, one of whom is Isidore of Pelusium. He likens a person who is absorbed in earthly things to one 'who is bleary-eyed and cannot fix his gaze on the sun, or if he does it, he does it in vain'; and, again, one 'who suffers a disease of the tongue vainly tries to taste pleasant flavours because his tongue is full of saltiness and bitterness.'²⁰ St Paul said the same thing, 'Mere man with his natural gifts cannot take in the thoughts of God's Spirit.'²¹ All this means that this purity of life is within our free will.

The ancient philosophers never saw clearly that morality depends on a reflective judgement assented to by the will. Rosmini explains that the principle of Christian morality is the Word of God. As we have seen, the supreme principle of morality is the idea of being, the light that shines before the intellect. The intellect is generated when God unveils before the soul ideal being. It is the life of the Word that is our light. 'In him was life, and the life was the light of men.'²² Rosmini comments as follows, '...we are not dealing with a dead word, but with the living God, in fact a God-life, and that he is 'light'. We are not dealing with a purely sensible life but an intellectual one; and finally he says that the life which is in the Word is light to men, thus showing how men and women are made to be intelligent through the Word.

In the generation of the Word, life and light are of a different order from that which they have in creation and the formation of human beings. Generation is made through an intellectual pronouncement of the Father, with whom the Father pronounces his subsistence: this becomes object or light. This pronouncement being full and complete has the power of making the object pronounced subsist as subject or person (the Word). We say that the Word is *generated* by the Father because it makes a person subsist who has the same subsistence as the generator and pronouncer. As we humans

¹⁹ *De civitate Dei*, Lib.VIII, c. 3. Cf. *Storia comparativa*, c. VIII, Art. III, p. 408.

²⁰ *Epistulae*, Lib. I, Epist. 304. *Storia comparativa*, Art. III, c. VIII, p. 409.

²¹ 1 *Cor* 2: 14. (Knox version). *Storia comparativa*, *Ibid*.

²² Cf. *Jn* 1: 4.

see it, logically speaking, there is first object or light, then object or light subsists as life, that is, a person living *per se*. On the contrary in the creation and formation of human beings they receive first (logically, not chronologically) life and then the object or light renders them intelligent.²³ ‘...the feeling subject necessarily becomes intelligent when the intuition of being is added to it....the existence of the intellective subject is created by the object, [that is, the light of being] when this manifests itself to the subject...intelligence is necessarily conceived and arises contemporaneously with the vision of being.’²⁴

So the Scriptures place justice, virtue and sanctity, which is given to man, in sharing the light. Light is virtue, darkness is sin. He quotes the first Letter of John, ‘...God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth.’²⁵ To have this fellowship supposes an intellective act, and to live in accordance with the truth (which is the object of the intellect) is to act virtuously. Christ taught that the whole of virtue in man depends on purity of the eye, that is the pure and clear glance of the understanding. But, he says, Christ taught that not every cognition is voluntary and free; there is a necessary part and a free part. Apprehension is necessary, but practical assent is free. So Christ said about the Hebrews that ‘they saw and they were blind.’ They saw through the direct and apprehensive cognition which they had, but they were blind through the recognition and assent which they lacked. They freely denied the truth. Christ added that their blindness was blameworthy, because they were not blind. ‘Jesus said, “For judgement I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind”. Some of the Pharisees near him heard this, and they said to him. “Are we also blind?” Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say ‘we see’, your guilt remains”.’²⁶ He said likewise that the will took part in this cognition when he said, ‘...if any man’s WILL is to do his will, he shall KNOW whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.’²⁷ The principle of virtue, according to the Gospel teaching, lies in voluntary and practical cognition. The full reward of virtue lies in *complete* knowledge, coming to us partly from God and partly from our will adhering to it, as we read ‘And this is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.’²⁸ So, just as an intellective act of recognition is the principle of morality in general, so faith, that internal assent, is the special principle of religious and supernatural morality.

²³ A.R., *L’ introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni*, [Commentary to the Introduction of the Gospel according to John] (= *ISG*), Ediz. Naz., Padova, 1966. Lib. II, lez. XLIII, pp. 107–108.

²⁴ A.R., *AM*, Lib. IV, c. 5, n. 816, p. 452, [n. 816, p. 442].

²⁵ 1 Jn 1: 5–6. *Storia comparativa*, c. VIII, Art. III, p. 412.

²⁶ Jn 9: 39–41. *Storia Comparativa*, *ibid.*, p. 413.

²⁷ Jn 7: 17 (capitals are Rosmini’s). *Ibid.*, p. 413.

²⁸ Jn 17: 3. *Ibid.*, p. 414.

I have quoted these scriptural passages and Rosmini's application of them as they are a good example of his exegesis. This is what makes him unique among the philosophers of his time.

He goes on to quote from the book of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus. 'Wisdom *will go before* her children in the way of justice.'²⁹ This expressly means, says Rosmini, that all the just acts of human beings start from an intellectual act, since the text says that wisdom precedes him on the way of justice, as if paving the way and giving the direction to all a person's acts. In another place the same book teaches expressly that 'the word is the beginning of every work.'³⁰ Now what does the 'word' mean in the sense that the Scriptures use it? It means the interior word which persons utter to themselves, so the text teaches us that the beginning of all our acts is an internal judgement that we make. This is what Augustine has to say, 'The following likeness in this enigma to the Word of God is also to be noted: just as it was said of that Word: "All things were made through him", where it is declared that God made all things through his only begotten Word, so there are no works of man which are not first spoken in the heart, and, therefore, it is written: "The beginning of every work is the word". But even here when the word is true, then it is the beginning of a good work. But the word is true if it is begotten from the knowledge of working well, so that here, too, the admonition may be preserved: "Yes, yes; no, no". If it is "yes" in the knowledge by which one must live, it is also "yes" in the word by which the work is to be fulfilled; if it is "no" there, it is also "no" here. Otherwise such a word will be a lie, not the truth, and consequently a sin and not a right work.'³¹ This passage, Rosmini says, clearly teaches that every human act begins with an interior judgement, or word, which is conformed to the truth, rendering the act good. If it strays from the truth it is bad. It follows that every sin is reduced to a lie, not indicated in words or signs, but uttered interiorly to ourselves. This is born out by the expressions in Scripture. Christ says that this judgement is true when it comes from God, that is, from the truth, but it will be a lie if it comes from man himself and not from the truth, when he pronounces it according to his subjective inclinations. 'He who speaks on his own authority, (whose words, whose judgements come from himself, the subject not from God, the objective truth) seeks his own glory (his own interest); but he who seeks the glory of him who sent him is TRUE, and in him there is no falsehood.'³² Basil says that 'we should act, so diligently, that in the hidden forum of our thoughts, we should rightly judge things, and have a mind like scales which, without any bias, weighs everything we do, and gives the victory to the law of God over sin.'³³

²⁹ *Ecclesiasticus*, 4: 12 (Douai). *Ibid.*, p. 414.

³⁰ *Ecclesiasticus*, 37: 20 (Douai). *Ibid.*, p. 414.

³¹ Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Lib 15, c. XI, 20. *Ibid.*, note 45, p. 414–415.

³² *Jn* 7: 18. Words in brackets are Rosmini's; capitals are Rosmini's. *Storia comparativa*, c. VIII, Art. III, p. 415.

³³ Basil, *Homilia in principium proverborum*, n. 10. *Ibid.*, p. 415. See also A.R., *Coscienza*, Lib. III, c. II, Art. III, n. 286, pp. 193–194, [n. 286, p. 141].

This rather long exposition from the *Storia comparativa* provides us with another good example of Rosmini's use both of the Fathers and of the Scriptures in his works.

Treatise on Moral Conscience

“Conscience is a judgement by which we come to know the morality of our action” ...[It] is not itself a feeling but the reflection upon the moral worth of our action or actions.³⁴ Conscience evaluates the morality of what we have done or are about to do. Is this action in keeping with the moral law? We know that we must do what is morally good and avoid what is morally evil and we have seen that the most general moral law of ethics is to follow the light of reason in all that we do. We speak about acting against our conscience. This means that we have evaluated an act as evil and yet do it and sin. Conscience is only an adequate guide when it informs me uprightly about the morality of an action by judging according to the objective order of being. If my conscience is flawed, in other words if I am making an erroneous judgement on the worth of my actions, then I have a duty to correct it. That is why we say that we need to have an informed conscience, particularly when we find we disagree with Church teaching. The unease which sometimes may accompany this could be telling us that this clash arises because our conscience is false. The so-called ‘doubtful conscience’ means really that we have a doubt about the morality of an action and are unable to evaluate its true worth. This means that our conscience has not yet been formed and has been suspended. The doubt must therefore be resolved before we can act.

Rosmini's *Trattato della coscienza morale* [Treatise on Moral Conscience] is comprised of three books. It is studded with patristic quotations and / or references but these occur mainly in Book III. Analysis shows that the majority of references in Book I are made to Augustine (seven). There is one reference to Leo the Great. In Book II there are three references to Augustine and one to Tertullian. In Book III there are nineteen references to Augustine and there are twenty two references in all to other Fathers.³⁵ Bettetini and Peratoner see these references as taking on the role of a confirming authority to back up Rosmini's argumentation, thus proving his fidelity to Church tradition rather than entering into the argumentation itself.³⁶

Two examples of Rosmini's citing Augustine in Book I will suffice to illustrate this. In chapter 5 Rosmini is dealing with the relationship between deliberate and indeliberate morality. As regard our actual sins, he points out that two conditions are needed for an immoral act. 1. That it is contrary to the law, and 2. That it originate from the will. The will may either be *free*, or subject *necessarily* to evil because of previous sins and the formation of bad habits. Then he quotes St Augustine, ‘An evil will gives rise to evil desire; surrender to desire causes habit; and unresisted habit

³⁴ Cleary, *op. cit.* p. 30.

³⁵ See Appendix II, Table 3 for the Fathers and their works.

³⁶ Bettetini-Peratoner, *op. cit.*, p. 512.

produces necessity.³⁷ We are only too well aware that we still suffer even after baptism from the effects of original sin and are inclined to sin or, as we put it, are subject to concupiscence.³⁸ Opposition to the latter has to be learnt from childhood. Our parents teach us self control and encourage us to do good even when this might be against our natural instincts. Speaking about moral defects in infancy before we have learned the free use of our own will, Rosmini quotes a passage from Augustine's *Confessions*. It pains the saint to write about his childish 'sins': 'But if I was conceived in iniquity, and in sins nourished by my mother in the womb, tell me, O my God, I beg you, tell me Lord, when and where was I ever innocent?'³⁹ But Augustine knows that these were not personal faults because they were not done freely. Rosmini quotes Augustine's *De libero arbitrio* [On Free Will], 'Who sins when his act can in no way be avoided?' Rosmini also quotes St Thomas to the same effect, 'Sin consists essentially in an act of free will.'⁴⁰ Rosmini brings in the authority of Scripture, saying, 'Our original stain is called *sin*. We are said to be conceived in sin; to be sinners before we have lived a single day on earth' and refers to a Sermon of St Leo and Augustine's *Confessions*.⁴¹

Bettetini and Peratoner refer to a passage at the beginning of Book II which deals with the effect on moral conscience from the view of violation of the law. Rosmini has been explaining how we come to have an abstract idea of law and get to know ourselves *vis-a-vis* the law and then he quotes Augustine in a note saying 'It will be helpful to refer to a very perceptive passage of St Augustine who *confirms* what we say here.'⁴² This, they say, is a prime example of how Rosmini is using his sources.

As I have just said there is much more use of the Fathers in Book 3. A few passages will have to suffice to indicate Rosmini's use of them in his argumentation.

Book 3 chapter 2 deals with an erroneous conscience. In discussing all this Rosmini quotes St Thomas, who draws a distinction between those who reject the truth because they cannot be bothered to conform to it in their actions and those who turn away from contemplating it through the force of passion. Those under the force of passion, says Rosmini, are much less guilty.⁴³ Rosmini then quotes Isidore of Pelusium 'There are those who sin from ignorance and those who sin knowingly. There are others who do not want to know in order to excuse their ignorance. These however deceive rather than defend themselves. Not knowing is simply ignorance; not wanting to know is stubborn pride....'⁴⁴ Rosmini quotes Tertullian in support of his

³⁷ *Confessiones*, Lib. 8, c. 5. Cf. A.R., *Coscienza*, Lib. I, c. V, Art. II, n. 81, p.91, [n. 81, p. 44].

³⁸ Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1264.

³⁹ Augustine, *Confessiones*, Lib. 1, c. 7. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*, n. 102, pp. 101–102, [n. 102, pp. 54–55].

⁴⁰ Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, Lib. 3, c. 18, n. 40. *S.T.* I–II, art 6, ad 7. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.* n. 103, p. 102, [n. 103, p. 55].

⁴¹ *Job* 14: 4 in St Leo, Sermon 1, *De Nativitate Domini*. Augustine *Confessiones*, Lib. I, c. VII. Cf. *Coscienza*, Lib. I, c. VI, Art. II, n. 108, p. 105, [n. 108, p. 57].

⁴² Augustine *Serm. 154, de verb. Apost., Rom 7, 1: 1*. Cf. *Coscienza*, Lib. II, c. I, Art. II, n. 130, note 1 p. 117, [n. 130, note 92, p. 69]. Italics Bettetini-Peratoner. Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 512.

⁴³ A.R., *Coscienza*, Lib. III, c. II, Art. III, nn. 312–313, pp. 210–211, [nn. 312–313, p. 155].

⁴⁴ Isidore, *Levit* Lib. 2. 17. *Coscienza*, *ibid.* n. 313.

proposition that culpable erroneous consciences are principally connected with the rational law. The latter says, 'Everyone grants what is against nature is monstrous; amongst us it is also termed "sacrilege" because it is against God, the Lord and creator of nature. Are you searching for the law of God? You will find it as the common law of the open universe, written into nature....'⁴⁵ Rosmini quotes Augustine, 'The person who sins *without knowing* could suitably be said to sin *without willing*, although that which he does without knowledge he does in fact with his will because even this person's sin cannot be void of will...He does it, therefore because he wills to do it; he sins although he does not know that it is a sin. The sin, therefore, cannot be void of will: the fact is willed, although the sin is not, and the fact is a sin. It is the fact itself that should not be done.' Rosmini points out that this passage deals with intrinsically evil acts. In these cases the fact itself is a sin. 'Sins committed in ignorance or by people under pressure are said to be involuntary, but cannot be said to be done without the intervention of the will. Even people who sin through ignorance act of their own will in judging that they should do what ought not to be done.' Augustine here presupposes that the will has power to judge uprightly or evilly about the probity of an action. This is true in the case of the rational law, or the rational application of the law.⁴⁶

Further on, Rosmini states that if we have a culpably erroneous conscience it is possible to sin without adverting to the fact in following it because it leaves us unaware of the unlawfulness of our action, but makes us believe that it is lawful. Of course we must know the action and will it freely but this is different from *adverting* to it. This requires *reflective* knowledge. Gregory the Great says, 'Our "hidden path" has another meaning because we do not know if the things that seem upright to us will present the same appearance when subject to examinations by the severe judge. Often what we do, as we said above, is a cause of damnation to us although we think it an advance in virtue. Often what we imagine placates the judge rouses him rather to wrath. As Solomon says: "There is a way which seems upright to man, but the end thereof is death". Holy people, even when they overcome evil, fear their good actions lest while desiring to do good they are deceived by the appearance of good in what they do.'⁴⁷ There is a sense, then, in which we must work out our 'salvation with fear and trembling, for God is in work at you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.'⁴⁸ Augustine says: 'It is just punishment of sin for a person to lose what he did not want to put to good use when he could easily have used it if he had wanted. I mean if someone does not act uprightly when he knows how to, he may lose this *knowledge* of what is upright; and if he does not want to act uprightly when he is able to do so, he may lose the *power* of doing so even when he wants to.'⁴⁹ Rosmini quotes Gregory again, 'Holy people fear even their good deeds. While they desire to do good,

⁴⁵ Tertullian, *Lib. de corona, militis*, c. 5, 6. Cf. *Coscienza, ibid.*, n. 314, p. 212, [n. 314, p. 156].

⁴⁶ Augustine, *Retract. Lib. 1*, c. 15. Cf. *Coscienza, ibid.*, n. 313, pp. 211–212, [n. 313, pp. 156–157].

⁴⁷ Gregory the Great, *Moralium, Lib. V*, 7. Cf. *Coscienza, ibid.*, n. 324, p. 219, [n. 324, p. 164].

⁴⁸ *Phil* 2 12–13.

⁴⁹ Augustine, *De libero arbitrio*, III, 18. Cf. *Coscienza, ibid.*, n. 328, p. 222, [n. 328, p. 167].

they may be deceived by what they see outwardly. What looks healthy may sometimes disguise a festering sore.⁵⁰ And in a letter to Paulinus, Augustine actually accuses himself of sin, 'As far as I am concerned, I confess that I sin in these matters, and do not know when and how I can fulfil the commandment "In the presence of all, correct those who sin". Oh, Paulinus, holy man of God, what terror and darkness envelops these matters! Surely it is of these things that it is written: "Fear and trembling are come upon me: and darkness has covered me".'⁵¹ St Augustine's words, says Rosmini, show clearly the danger of sinning without advertence.

A final example of Rosmini's use of the Fathers in his *Treatise on Moral Conscience* is found in an article where he deals with objections by those who wish to decide all moral cases on the sole authority of modern moralists.⁵² Rosmini expresses the value of the authority of ecclesiastical writers and the necessity of discernment, and he also states the absolute primacy of Scripture. He says, 'We can see the same teaching reduced to practice by the most celebrated writers in the Church's history. For example St Augustine, after speaking of the infallibility of the sacred scriptures in a letter to St Jerome, goes on to describe the degree of reverence he has for other writers, "When I read others, I do not think that what they say is true, however holy and learned they are, simply because they feel it is true, but because they have succeeded in persuading me of its truth on the authority of canonical authors or on the basis of a good reason which reflects the truth".'⁵³ As for himself, 'I do not want anyone to accept everything I say for the sake of following me. Let him accept those opinions in which he recognises clearly that I have not erred. This is why I am presently engaged in writing books which provide corrections to my previous works. It will be seen that I have not even followed myself in everything.'⁵⁴ Gregory Nazianzen refuses to make others bear the burden of probable, fallible human authority saying that others have a *duty* to use their own reason. 'You will say that others think differently. But how does that affect me who love the truth more? It is the truth that will condemn or absolve me.'⁵⁵ John Chrysostom, too, does not think that we should obey vague probable opinions, 'Let us not be content with the *opinions* of many, but investigate things themselves, that is, the effective truth. If we are dealing with money, we do not think it absurd to count it ourselves rather than rely on what others say. Surely we should act the same way in more important matters and not simply be content with what others decide, especially if we have for our norm, measure and rule what the divine laws assert? I beg you all, therefore, to put aside human opinions and seek your answers in the study of the holy scriptures.'⁵⁶ Cyprian

⁵⁰ Gregory the Great, *Moralium* lib. V, 7. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*, n. 329, pp. 222–223, [n. 329, pp. 167–168].

⁵¹ Augustine, *Ep. CCL*, *ad Paulinum*. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*

⁵² *Coscienza* Lib. III, c. V, Art. 1, n. 743 ff, p. 411 ff, [n. 743 ff, p. 348 ff].

⁵³ Augustine, *Epistula LXXXII*, *ad Hieron.*, I, 3. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*, n. 747, pp. 414–415, [n. 747, pp. 350–351].

⁵⁴ Augustine, *De dono perseverantiae*, 21; Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*, n. 747.

⁵⁵ Gregory Nazianzen, *Oratio XXVII*. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*, n. 748, p. 415, [n. 748, p. 351].

⁵⁶ John Chrysostom, *Homilia XIII in Ep II ad Corinth.*, 4. Cf. *Coscienza*, *ibid.*, n. 749, p. 416, [n. 749, p. 352].

says, 'Your written law should not depart in any way from the natural law. Condemnation of evil and right choice is divinely impressed in the rational soul in such a way that no reasonable person can offer lack of knowledge or of strength as an excuse for ignoring it. We know very well what has to be done, and we can do it.'⁵⁷

A final quotation from John Chrysostom reminds us that there is a difference in how we apply the rules of conscience to ourselves and others, 'Be austere in your own life; but gentle with others.'⁵⁸

Anthropology in the Service of Moral Science

The last of the books to be considered is Rosmini's *Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale* [Anthropology in the Service of Moral Science]. He originally intended to write the one work *Antropologia* to be divided into two parts, one *rational* the other *positive*, thus studying man in the order of nature and in the order of grace. The *Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale* and the *Antropologia soprannaturale* are therefore two parts 'which although different, cannot be separated, just as the limbs of a human being differ from one another without being separated from the body.'⁵⁹ This oneness of human knowledge from the point of view of the human being dominates the drawing up of the work which lasted from 1831–1838. A comparison of passages from the *Giornale dei miei scritti* [Diary of My Writings] and the letters of the same period, as well as notes in the margins of his *Antropologia soprannaturale*, shows that there is a variation in words. At one time Rosmini speaks of *Antropologia morale* at another time of *Antropologia soprannaturale* and again simply as *Antropologia*. The draft of the *Antropologia morale* begun in 1831 appears well advanced by the end of the year. In March 1832 the fourth part was essentially drafted. But in May he began to write his *Antropologia soprannaturale* and continued this till 17 October; at the same time he finished the *Antropologia morale*. The discussions which arose from his original theories caused him to modify his early plans. There is no further mention of the *Antropologia morale* until the revised work was published six years later 29 March 1838. On the other hand there are plenty of references to the continuation of the *Antropologia soprannaturale* from 1832 to 1836. It is during the period 1834–1838 that the author talks simply of his *Antropologia* saying that he very much wished to publish it. Three years later 30 November 1837 he announced that he was sending the editor the manuscript of the *Antropologia*. We can deduce that it is the *Antropologia morale*. This would have been written from 1831–1832. It is important to note that Rosmini had published his *Principles of Moral Science* in 1831 and at the same time was working on his *Treatise on Moral Conscience* and the *Anthropology in Service of Moral Science* even though these were completed and published in different years. The whole corpus of this work was germinating at the same time.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Cyprian. No reference given. Cf. *ibid.*, n. 750, pp. 416–417, [n. 750, pp. 352–353].

⁵⁸ John Chrysostom, In Can. Cf. *ibid.*, c. V, Art. IV, n. 798, p. 443, [n. 798, p. 379].

⁵⁹ A.R. *AM*, Introduction n. 8, p. 24, [n. 8, p. 9].

⁶⁰ Cf. *AM*, pp. 523–525. Muratore neatly summarises the dates of composition and publication of these books, see *AM*, p. 518. See also *Annali*, Vol. IV, p. 486.

The *Antropologia morale*, then, deals with the whole human being from the point of view of human nature with all its activities. "The title itself indicates the purpose for which it was written, namely, to study man in all his aspects in relation to the moral law present within him. But this moral concern does not prejudge the outcome of the work. It is only at the end that one grasps how everything has been arranged to highlight what part the human subject takes in the totality of moral doctrine. The term *Anthropology* is understood in its etymological meaning, the knowledge of man, of the whole man."⁶¹ The work is not concerned with human beings as the subjects of God's grace. "The human being is "an animal subject endowed with the intuition of indeterminate, ideal being and with the perception of its own corporeal, fundamental feeling, and operating in accordance with animality and intelligence" (23). On the basis of this definition Rosmini is able to order his work by examining in turn the constitutive elements of human nature — the corporeal term, the feeling principle, the fundamental corporeal feeling, instinct, intelligence, ideal being, will, reason — and of person, the high point of human existence. He does this under three main headings: animality, spirituality and the human subject."⁶²

As might be expected Augustine has the lion's share of references. Fourteen other Fathers make their appearance.⁶³ This is in Book 3, more specifically Section 2, which deals with the spirituality of the human being and also in Book 4 which deals with the human subject. In the former Rosmini deals with the passive and active faculties of human understanding. The passive faculties are *intellect* and *reason*, the active faculties are *will* and *freedom*. The latter receive extensive treatment as would be expected. Rosmini analyses at length, the human act, the willed act, the moral act, the act of choice, the free act and the intellective act.

All the last part of Book 3 is devoted to *freedom and the will*. Picenardi in his thesis sums this up well. "We have seen how the intuition of being, and the determinations which it has received from feeling constitute the intellectual perception [of real things external to me]. From this faculty comes that of the intellectual sense which is the inclination of the intelligent spirit to the act of understanding. This is a subjective and passive faculty. A subjective and active faculty corresponds to it. This is the intellective or rational spontaneity which carries out an action analogous to that carried out in the order of animality by the instinct. This primary volition of rational spontaneity "the cradle of the will" is an *affective volition*, in which the movements of the instinct, which have now been perceived intellectually, are willed and commanded without any intervention of judgement on the value of the act."⁶⁴ Such volitions would be found in young infants sucking at the breast. When animal instinct moves the baby to seek food it is the whole subject which wishes to receive satisfaction. But the will depends on the instinct and wants the good without judging that it is good."⁶⁵

⁶¹ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

⁶² *AM*, Foreword, p.viii, trans. Cleary and Watson.

⁶³ See Appendix 2.

⁶⁴ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, p. 78. Cf. *AM*, Lib. III, c. IV, nn. 536–540, pp. 311–313, [nn. 536–540 pp. 294–296].

⁶⁵ *AM*, Lib. III, c. VIII, Art. I, nn. 614–616, pp. 346–348, [nn. 614–616, pp. 330–331].

But once the faculty of *abstraction* begins to be used by means of reflection, reflective judgements are possible through the formation of abstract ideas, and *evaluative volitions* follow. I can now make a judgement about the worth of a thing for me. Rosmini gives the example of a loaf of bread. I might *desire* it (affective volition) but this is not the same as *evaluating* that it is good. To judge that it is good for me I must have an abstract idea of nutrition as good, and know that bread is something to eat and is nourishing. Then I can make an evaluative judgement. So this evaluative volition is composed of a) the *evaluative* or *value* judgement, b) the spiritual instinct that draws beings towards good as soon as they have valued it, and c) the decree of the will that decides that it wants to satisfy this instinct.⁶⁶ The evolution of this volition generates the choice or faculty of election. The effect of the choice is the forming in the subject of habitual opinions concerning the value of things.

The human spirit, then feels with its feeling and knows with its intellect and with the will adheres to that which it has felt and understood. But man lives in society with other beings similar to himself and notices that many of the things which he judges as good for him are also good for others. He discovers that to realise his good he must also consider the good of others and that his own happiness depends on the happiness of others. A new order, superior to those he knew previously is revealed to him, this is the moral order or the objective and absolute order of being in which he shares.⁶⁷ This law of 'the order of being' gives rise to a new faculty, the *moral* faculty. This faculty allows him to esteem and evaluate 'all things *objectively* that is, as they are, rather than only as related to him.' The human being must seek the happiness of others as well as his own happiness. We are only too aware that our subjective evaluation and our objective evaluation sometimes clash. We can follow two ways: a *subjective* esteem of things and an *objective* esteem of things. When we choose the second we follow the order of this objective and absolute world (in which we share). When instead, we choose our subjective esteem, and this clashes with the second, immorality ensues. For instance I might be starving and my neighbour has food. If I decide on my own well-being and kill my neighbour to get the food I reject objective good expressed in the law 'thou shalt not kill' and prefer my own subjective survival. Rosmini says that the moral faculty now presents to the will the possibility of deciding on a volition or one contrary to it; it is the birth of the faculty of free will.⁶⁸

Our faculties lead to relevant acts whose general characteristic is that of being human acts and these are determined and specified by the various faculties; we have the voluntary act, the moral act, the elective act, the free act.⁶⁹ These acts are subordinate to that supreme one which dominates and coordinates all of them, namely, the liberty of deciding for one volition or its contrary. But they can also move themselves spontaneously and independently. In such a case the dominion of liberty

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, c. IV, Art. III, nn. 544–545, pp. 313–315, [nn. 544–545, pp. 296–298].

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, nn. 560–563, pp. 319–321, [nn. 560–563, pp. 302–304].

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, nn. 564–566, p. 321, [nn. 564–566, pp. 304–305].

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Sez. II, cc. I–V, nn. 568–585, pp. 322–330, [nn. 568–585, pp. 306–314].

fails and the will acts or consents to act through the powerful impulse of the lower faculties. This disorder of the human spirit is the result of original sin which resulted in the insubordination of both the instincts and the intellectual faculties, and has weakened the will, bending it to the subjective order.

Rosmini defines the will as 'the power by which the human being tends to a known and pleasing object.'⁷⁰ The inclination can be free or spontaneous. The faculty of *liberty* is distinguished from, the faculty of *choice*. The first always refers to the will, the second regards the exercise of that freedom. Rosmini reminds his readers that 'freedom' signifies the ability to act without any determining necessity, and is at pains to explain that if Augustine sometimes uses 'freedom' or 'free will' to mean the will's spontaneous but *necessitated* action, his meaning must be interpreted according to context and parallel texts.⁷¹ In discussing the kinds of freedom appropriate to the human will Rosmini again states Augustine's teaching in the light of his own and refers to several works of Augustine.⁷²

Freedom, then, means that we have the power to bend our will one way or the other, for instance to choose to do good or evil. Rosmini quotes St Paul 'Not having necessity but having POWER over his WILL',⁷³ that is, over his own volitions. According to St Paul, he says, freedom consists in this power to bend one's will one way or the other. Rosmini also quotes the very early book, attributed to Pope St Clement, where the power of the will, or free will, is called 'a certain feeling of the soul which has the energy capable of directing it to those acts which it wishes.'⁷⁴ Here we see *volition*, the act by which the soul wills, distinguished from the principle that determines it to one or other of these acts of the will. Justin calls the faculty of *choice* between volitions, 'a force or power to turn oneself one way or another.' He says, 'No created thing would be worthy of praise unless it had been given the power of directing itself towards something other than itself.'⁷⁵ Rosmini adds that authors are not satisfied with speaking about the will or the judgement directed by the will without qualification and consistency, without adding that the human being has dominion over his or her will or the judgement directed by the will, or that the judgement directed by the will is free, or some such. So the faculty of *volition* is different from that by which we direct ourselves to one or the other volition. This second faculty is that of *freedom*. He quotes Tertullian, who speaks of 'the free power of the will' and 'In my opinion human beings have been made by God free in their will and in their power to act' and 'All freedom over the will has been given him in

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, c. II, n. 571, p. 323, [n. 571, p. 307].

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, c. VI, Art. II, nn. 592–593 pp. 333–334, [nn. 592–593, pp. 317–319]. Rosmini refers to Augustine, *Contra secundam Iuliani responsionem, imperfect. Opus*, Lib. VI, c. XI, XII, and XXVI.

⁷² *Ibid.*, Art. III, nn. 601–603 pp. 337–341, [nn. 601–603, pp. 321–324]. The works referred to are, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* c. XV; *Liber de corrept. et gratia* c. XI and XII; *Op. imp. Contra Iul.* L. I, LXXXII and IV, X; *De peccatorum. meritis et remissione*. Lib. II, c. XVIII.

⁷³ 1 Cor 7: 21. Cf. *AM*, Lib. III, c. IX, n. 641, pp. 361–362, [n. 641, p. 346].

⁷⁴ Clement, I, Rom. Pont., *Opera Dubia, Recognitionis*, Lib. III. Cf. *ibid.*, n. 642 and note 62, p. 362, [n. 642, p. 346 and note 271].

⁷⁵ Justin, *Oratio ad Graecos*. Cf. *ibid.*, note 63, [note 272].

both directions so that he may consistently remain master of himself by spontaneously doing good and avoiding evil.⁷⁶ Arnobius says, 'Freedom of will has been posited in the will of the one who wills.'⁷⁷ He quotes Hilary, 'Although he left us free will to merit goodness.'⁷⁸ Gregory of Nyssa says, 'It is indeed in the power of our free will to take the form a person wishes;'⁷⁹ and Theodore of Ancyra: 'God constituted human beings masters of their free decision and of their will'⁸⁰ and finally Boetius, 'Freedom of the will remains intact in mortal beings.'⁸¹ Some writers note that human beings can abandon their hesitation in an instant to make a decision, Cyril of Alexandria says, 'Humankind which is both its own master, and free and in possession of its own will, moves in an instant to do what it wishes for good or for evil.'⁸²

In Book 4 Rosmini deals with the human subject. He defines a human subject as 'a subject that is simultaneously a principle of animality and intelligence.'⁸³ I feel and I think. I intuit being and I feel my body acting on my soul. This feeling is the fundamental feeling.

Rosmini analyses his definition of subject in great detail and then goes on to analyse and explain how we come to a consciousness of 'myself'. This takes place by reflection on the fact that I think and feel and by recognising that both activities are united in the subject. *I feel and I think*. He then proceeds to comment on human generation. He says 'We took subsistent, animate reality as a basic fact explained only by Genesis, not by philosophy. The subsistence of a human being is another fact also explained in Genesis where we read: "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being".'⁸⁴ *Animal reality* and the *human being*, therefore, are facts. The difference between the two, and the source of the human being's superiority over the animal, lies in intelligence, that is to say, the fact that the *intuition of being* is given to the human, feeling subject but not to a brute-feeling subject. It is in the act of being given the vision of ideal being that the intelligent subject arises, is created. Now, how is this being which is one and the same for all intelligent beings, propagated in many individuals of the same nature? It is sufficient that many individuals are propagated because *being* will then shine before each new individual belonging to human nature. Rosmini holds that God constituted the law from the beginning, namely, that 'being in general is always visible to every new individual issuing from human nature by means of animal generation.' This, he says, is fully in accord with the words of Genesis and

⁷⁶ Tertullian, *De anima*, XXI. *Adversus Marcionem*, Lib. II, V. *ibid.*, Lib II, VI. Cf. *ibid.*, note 64 [p. 347, note 273].

⁷⁷ Arnobius, *Adversus gentes*, Lib. II. Cf. *AM*, *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Hilary, *In Psalm II*. Cf. *AM*, *ibid.*

⁷⁹ Gregory of Nyssa, *in cant Hom.* IV. Cf. *AM*, *ibid.*

⁸⁰ Theodore of Ancyra, *Hom in Natal. Salvat.* Cf. *AM*, *ibid.*

⁸¹ Boetius, *De Cons. Philos.* Lib. V, Pr. VI. Cf. *AM*, *ibid.*

⁸² Cyril of Alexandria, *Contra Iul.* Lib. VIII. Cf. *AM*, *ibid.*, n. 643, p.363 and note 65, [n. 643, p. 347 and note 274].

⁸³ *AM*, Lib. IV, n. 767, p. 427, [n. 767, p. 418].

⁸⁴ *Gen 2: 7*. Cf. *AM*, Lib. IV, c. V, n. 816, p. 452, [n. 816, p. 442].

Church tradition. God not only gave origin to an individual but in that individual instituted the whole of human nature and the human species. "This must apparently be understood to mean that "God, in the first operation and formation of the human being, constituted the laws which govern all human nature and the human species".⁸⁵ Rosmini says this is the way we should understand the words of Genesis in the Vulgate 'breathed into his face the breath of life.' This is in conformity with the Hebrew text which says in the plural the 'breath of lives.' Thus the spirit infused into the first human being was intended to communicate life to others too.⁸⁶

Rosmini believes that this interpretation is consistent with the constant expressions of the Fathers, and that they apply to the origin of our soul everything God did in creating the first human being. He quotes Lactantius, '(God) formed the body and infused the soul BY WHICH WE LIVE.'⁸⁷ Athanasius, describing the creation of the first human being says: 'God, maker of the world, formed through his Word the human race in his own image and gave it (the human race) understanding, and knowledge of his eternity.'⁸⁸ And a little further on: 'Hence, the maker of things wished that the *human race* which he had founded should continue as he founded it.'⁸⁹ According to these passages, says Rosmini, 'God imparted the light of the intellect not only to Adam when he created him but at the same time and with the same act to all Adam's descendants.'⁹⁰ St Basil also speaks of the creation of the first ancestor as the foundation constituting human nature. 'The human being is certainly a wonderful thing; he has received something of great value from his natural constitution. Amongst the things we see on earth, what else was made in the image of the Creator?'⁹¹ 'Human being' here means human nature. Not just one individual. Gregory of Nazianzen also sees the whole of humanity in Adam: 'Because the Creator-Word wishes to demonstrate this, he makes the human being a unique animal by uniting visible and invisible nature.'⁹² Gregory of Nyssa wrote a treatise on the making of the human being. We see how little he deals with the creation of the individual. The main object of his meditations is human nature instituted in the first individual.⁹³ John Chrysostom applies to all human beings the words, "Let us make man to our image and likeness": "Just as he said *image* because of our source, he also said *likeness*, in order that we might render ourselves like God according to human forces".⁹⁴ Cyril of Alexandria also speaks of Adam as human nature. 'This animal, completed by God the creator with all the conditions proper to its own nature, was immediately endowed with the divine likeness.' And a little further on, 'After losing the grace of God and

⁸⁵ *AM, Ibid.*, nn. 823–824, pp 454–455, [n. 823–824, p. 445].

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 825.p. 455, [n. 825, p. 445].

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, n. 826, p. 455, [n. 826, p. 445]. Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones*, I, II, 12.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, [p. 446]. Athanasius, *Oratio contra Gentes*.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, n. 826, [n. 826, p. 446].

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 455–6, [p. 446].

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 456, [p. 446]. Basil, *Homilia in Ps. XLVIII*.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Gregory Nazianzen *Oratio XLV*, which is *Oratio II de Pascha*.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio*.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, John Chrysostom, *Homilia IX in Genesim*.

being despoiled of the good with which it had been enriched at the beginning, *human nature* was banished from the paradise of delights and became deformed.”⁹⁵

‘St Augustine says expressly that the human race was “as it were radically instituted in Adam.”⁹⁶ We were all in Adam, we were the single Adam, because “if the form in which we lived as individuals was not yet individually created and distributed, nevertheless the seminal nature from which we were propagated was present.”⁹⁷ Once again, Adam was certainly a human being, but this human being “was the whole human race.”⁹⁸ Finally, all were in Adam’s loins by means of the seed.”⁹⁹ Rosmini quotes other authors including the letter of St Paul to the Romans, who sees human nature founded in the first human being, in whom all have sinned and all have died. ‘It was through one man that guilt came into the world; and, since death came owing to guilt, death was handed on to all mankind by one man.’¹⁰⁰ Rosmini quotes from Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite and also from Justin, ‘the human race...fell through Adam into death and the deception and seduction of the serpent.’¹⁰¹ Rosmini cites also three further passages from Augustine where he comments on this passage of St Paul, and which he says are the clearest statements relative to his explanation, ‘Moreover, this clear and fully authoritative opinion is contained in the sacred canonical books. The Apostle proclaims: “Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned.” Thus, it cannot be said that Adam’s sin did not harm sinners, when Scripture says “because all men sinned.”’¹⁰² ‘For sin came into the world through one human being, and death through sin, and so death spread to all because all sinned. Through the evil will of one human being all sinned in him when all were that one human being. From him therefore they have each contracted original sin.’¹⁰³ ‘Cease to proclaim vain things. All those who were not yet born could certainly do neither good nor evil through their own wills, but they could sin in the one human being in whom they were present by reason of the seed. When he with his own will perpetrated the great sin and disorder, he changed and damaged both himself and human nature. Understand if you can, but if not, believe.’¹⁰⁴

So, Rosmini concludes, if all human beings perished in Adam, ‘why should not we believe that all are founded in him and begin to exist in virtue of that act of creation

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Cyril of Alexandria, *De adoratione. in spiritu, et veritate*. Lib. I.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 456–457, [p. 447]. Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, lib. XI, XI, 19.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XIII, 14. Here Rosmini quotes the whole passage from Augustine, Cf. p. 457, note 36, [p. 447, note 381].

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, n. 826, [p. 447]. Augustine, *In Joannis evangelium tractatus*, XI, II.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, note 38, p. 457, [note 383, p. 447]. Augustine, *Op. imperf. Contra Iul.*, V, XII. And II, LXVII. Rosmini quotes two passages from this work..

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 829, p. 458, [n. 829, p. 448]. *Rom* 5: 12. (Knox Version).

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, note 43, p. 458, [note 388, p. 448] Justin, *Dial. Cum Triph.*.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, [pp. 448–449]. Augustine, *De peccatorum. meritis et remissione.*, III, VII, 14.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, *De nuptiis. et concupiscentia.*, II, V.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, *Contra secundum Iuliani responsionem, imperfect. opus*, IV, CIV. Cf. *De peccatorum. meritis et remissione.*, I, X.

by which God made and gave life to the first parent? We are not saying that all human beings existed at that time; we are saying that they come into existence by that first act. I believe that the law I am discussing was established in the act (the single breath of life) mentioned by Genesis when it says God breathed the breath of life into the figure formed of earth. By this law, ideal being, the intellectual light, is united to every individual of human nature. Here we have the origin of intelligence, the creation of all the intelligent souls that inform new individuals at the moment of their generation.¹⁰⁵

The Fathers see this too. Basil says, 'Human beings possess a power by which they can know and understand their Creator and Maker. The Creator *breathed into them*, that is, added to the human being a part of his own grace so that by means of this likeness formed in him the human being might know him to whom he had been made alike.'¹⁰⁶ Gregory of Nazianzen says that the breath of life is the intellectual light added to human nature, 'When the maker wished to manifest the Word, therefore, he formed this single animal into a human being from visible and invisible nature. The body of the human being is formed from matter previously produced, and the Creator breathes into it the breath which the Scripture calls the image of God and the intellectual soul. He places a large world, as it were, on our little earth.'¹⁰⁷ Gregory of Nyssa observes that the *matter* of human nature was instituted when God made the figure from earth, and the *form* was given in the breath. 'The MATTER of the creature is first prepared and his FORM designed to show an exemplar of outstanding beauty, the proposed end for which he would be created. Then the Creator makes a nature similar to himself and like him in its actions.'¹⁰⁸ Finally St John Damascene explains the material and spiritual parts of the human being in the same way.¹⁰⁹

Rosmini concludes this part of his work by repeating that when God breathed the breath of life into the first human being, he simultaneously enacted the law that ideal being should be manifested to every new individual of the human species. 'The human being posits the animal, and God creates the intelligent soul at the very moment the human animal is posited. He makes the soul intelligent by enlightening it with the splendour of his face and sharing with it part of himself, ideal being, sight of all intelligent creatures.'¹¹⁰

'In the moral anthropology, Rosmini is bent on making it clear that we argue from Sacred Scripture that:

1. with the creation of the first man, God placed all the constituents of human nature and did this in one unique act;
2. one of the constituents given in the "breath of life" is that every individual human being intuitively ideal being, the likeness of God.'¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 829, p. 458, [n. 829, p. 449].

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 830, p. 459, [n. 830, p. 449]. Basil, *Homilia in Psalmum.*, XLVIII.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, note 46, p. 459, [note 391, p.450]. Gregory of Nazianzen, *Orat.* XLV, quae est orat. 2 de Pascha.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, note 47, [note 392]. Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio*, c. III.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, note 48, [note 393]. John Damascene *De fide orthod.*, Lib. II, c. XII.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 831 p. 460, [n. 831, p. 450].

¹¹¹ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

Chapter 7

The Supernatural Life

In chapter 6 we saw that Rosmini was writing the *Antropologia soprannaturale* at the same time as the *Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale*, and that he saw the latter as the first part and the former as the second part of one work. In fact, he does not use the title *Antropologia soprannaturale* on his manuscript. For this work he uses the title *Antropologia morale* but then underneath adds *parte teologica* [theological part]. However the title we give the work is, in fact, a Rosminian expression.

In the *Diario de' miei scritti*, for example, he writes '1831 and 1832–1833 — At Domo, Trent and Milan, *Antropologia Naturale and Soprannaturale*', and '1834–35 — *Discorsi Parocchiali* [Parochial Discourses], *Catechesi* [Catechesis] (Rovereto) and I continued the *Antropologia Soprannaturale*' and again, '1837–1838 — At Domodossola. Recast the *Antropologia Soprannaturale*.'¹ The title is also used on certain sheets on which Rosmini made notes for use in the revision and division of the work. Rosmini indicates in the manuscript the dates when he worked on the book. So we can trace its progress. The work was begun at Trent on 4 May 1832 and Rosmini worked on it regularly till 7 November. He had already the first book and three chapters of the second book. He took up the work again on 23 March 1833 and continued writing it at intervals until 23 June 1834. By this date he had finished the second book, written the third and almost all the first section of the fourth. He resumed writing on 24 November 1834 at Rovereto at intervals of about two months up to 20 June 1835, finishing the first two chapters of the second section of the fourth book. In March 1836 he took up the writing again at Milan with the third chapter on the Eucharist and continued it until 27 April, the last date on the manuscript.

He envisaged the work being composed of six books: I. *The Limits of Philosophical and Theological Doctrine*; II. *Man in his Perfect State*; III. *Man, a Sinner by Nature*; IV *Man Sanctified*; V. *Man the Redeemer*; VI. *The Woman, Mother of the Redeemer*. So the present work is less a work than a large fragment, because two books were never written and the fourth book was not completed as Rosmini never dealt with four of the sacraments, and his treatment of the third sacrament was not finished. This is not to belie the value of the work but rather a matter of regret that such an ambitious and learned project was left incomplete. Rosmini appears to have finished correcting the first three books of this work on the 7 April 1834, which was the date on which he received approval from the Milanese Curia for its publication. There are no additions to Book IV indicating that the work was in a state of development.² This explains the present inaccuracies in the text and quotations made at times from memory. Also sometimes there are references without verification of author, and at other times

¹ A.R., *GMS*, S. A. I. p. 292.

² A.R., *AS*, *Introduction* by Umberto Muratore, pp 14–16.

incomplete and inexact ones. The different dates at the bottom of the work show that this was dashed off by Rosmini.³ Rosmini's last mention of the *Supernatural Anthropology* is in his *Giornale de' miei scritti*, 1837–1838.⁴ One year later, 18 October 1839, Rosmini began a new work, the *Introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni commentata* [The Commentary to the Introduction of the Gospel according to John]. One can argue that Rosmini left his former work to concentrate on this one, dealing as it does with the Word.⁵ But this work, as we shall see, suffered its own vicissitudes.

The *Supernatural Anthropology* is one of the first treatises of theology of modern times indicating the level reached in patristic research of the time. Rosmini intended (and this always motivated him) that philosophy should be the guide of theology and, in fact, it underpins his theological thought but as a servant of theology and not its master; the latter can result in heresy.⁶ Quacquarelli says, "The *Supernatural Anthropology* is a theological work that overturns official past positions and those contemporary to him. As he stated in his *Rinnovamento della filosofia* he did not proceed from considering God in order to reach man, but from considering man in order to reach God. The *Supernatural Anthropology* is written according to this principle, as are the rest of his major works. And it is always the contribution of this method, the originality of his system, which makes him so modern and acceptable."⁷

Rosmini makes great use of the Fathers in this work. Augustine is mentioned about 140 times. Next on the list is Ambrose, with 42 references, then Cyril of Alexandria, 39. John Chrysostom, Basil and Jerome follow next. Twenty four other well known Fathers make their appearance. I give these statistics as they go some way to explaining how a detailed treatment of Rosmini and his use of the Fathers in the *Supernatural Anthropology* is beyond the scope of this present small book. But one can deal with some of the important themes to illustrate Rosmini's use of the Fathers in this work.

The first book of the *Supernatural Anthropology* deals mainly with the doctrine of the supernatural life of man, that is, *the life of grace*. Rosmini points out that on the natural level we can have only a negative idea of God with the light of reason alone. This is because we have no positive experience of God as we have of real contingent beings which act upon the senses. We can know that God exists and we can affirm certain characteristics of his essence such as justice and goodness, but we cannot know them positively. 'Hence the theologian who speaks of God on the basis of natural reason alone is like a person blind from birth who speaks of sight: different arguments allow him to affirm the existence of sight, but without his grasping positively the reality of what he can affirm.'⁸ Theologians call this 'a negative idea of God'. To have a real

³ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

⁴ *GMS*, p. 292.

⁵ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

⁶ A.R., *AS*, Vol. I, Lib. I, c. VI, Art. VI, p. 234, Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. V, p. 55.

⁷ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. V, p. 62.

⁸ Cleary, *op. cit.*, chapter 3, pp. 55–56.

perception of God is quite beyond our natural powers and can only be given to us by God himself, offering it to us by acting in the human spirit. This action freely given on God's part is called 'grace'. This is a real efficacious action in us. It operates in the intellective essence of our soul because 'the supreme being can communicate only with what is most noble in the human being.'⁹ This real immanent action of God in the human spirit produces a supernatural feeling which is passively received but produces in the human being an action corresponding to the nature of the feeling, a new principle of action which Rosmini calls an 'instinct of the Holy Spirit' arising in the essence of the soul and allowing us to speak of a 'new creature' able to enter the kingdom of heaven.¹⁰

Deiform Grace

Rosmini calls grace 'a *deiform* operation'.¹¹ What does he mean by this? He states that God performs many operations which are obviously divine since they come from him, for instance, creation and the government of created things. But these operations begin in God and terminate in something different from God. We know that God is in his creatures and they are in him. 'Yet he is not far from each one of us, for "in him we live and move and have our being".'¹² St Paul said these words to the pagans. But this does not constitute the intimate action of God in his creatures which Rosmini calls *deiform*. He defines a *deiform* operation as 'an operation which not only has God for its principle, but the operation itself and its term is God.'¹³ He is the cause and the effect. The prime *deiform* operation is the incarnation of the Word, the cause and principle was the Holy Trinity, the effect and term is the incarnate Word. The gift of grace implies the gift of the divine substance which can only be communicated to beings endowed with feeling and intellect. The only way to know this divine action is to perceive it and experience it. 'We must feel God, feel him acting in us. We must feel in ourselves something which cannot be confused with any creature and something which is evidently something beyond any partial being, which can only be God himself. Those who feel within themselves an operation as great as this, which is comparable to nothing else...an operation which is *All Being, All Power*, have within them a certain perception of the Supreme Being....'¹⁴

Rosmini goes on to explain that the Fathers prove that the action of grace is *deiform*, from the feeling that we experience. They say that we cannot be content except with

⁹ *AS*, Vol. I, Lib. I, c. IV, Art. V, p. 80 Rosmini quotes St Augustine to this effect, *De Genesi. ad litteram*, L. III, c. 20.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, c. V, Art. IV, p. 91.

¹¹ Rosmini uses a term which comes from Dante who speaks of the kingdom of the saints as *deiforme regno* [deiform kingdom] because there the form of the blessed is God. (*Paradiso*, canto II, v. 20). He says that the Fathers of the Church interpreted it as the kingdom of God, through the Holy Spirit reigning by grace in souls. Rosmini refers to Maximus, Cyril of Alexandria *De SS. Trinitate*, Dialogus VII and Gregory of Nyssa *De oratione dominica*, orat III: *Spiritus autem sanctus regnum est*.

¹² *Acts* 17: 27–28.

¹³ *AS*, Vol. I, Lib. I, c. V, Art. XVI, p. 113.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

complete and infinite good, that is, God himself. But upright people in a state of grace feel that they possess something within which does satisfy and fully content them. Therefore they have within them God, they possess God. However, this real perception of God is incipient and imperfect, it is *indistinct*. We perceive something in our feeling which contains *all being, all good* without our being able to distinguish any particular good, similar to the other real goods we perceive. This is supported by philosophy. We know that on the purely natural level we have a desire for infinite good because we intuit ideal being which is unlimited, so we are never satisfied by any finite good. Our natural appetite for good is never satisfied by any particular good on this earth. Only the perception of *Being itself* will satisfy us. But this is what we find in the spiritual life. We feel we have a perception of the plenitude of being which is God. Didymus of Alexandria notes that in Scripture we hear of people being filled with the Holy Spirit and says ‘Some men are said to be filled with the Holy Spirit. But no one either in Scripture or in common speech is said to be filled by a creature. For neither in Scripture nor in common speech is it allowable to say that anyone is filled by an angel, or by any one of the Thrones or Dominations. Certainly such a phrase belongs to the Divine Nature only.’ And ‘The presence of an angel or some other excellent nature which has been made, does not fill the mind and the feeling of man, because this very nature itself has to seek outside of itself for its own fullness. Hence when anyone receiving into himself from the plenitude of the Saviour is made full of wisdom, fortitude and justice and of the word of God, so he who is full of the Holy Spirit is filled immediately with all the divine gifts of wisdom and knowledge, faith and other virtues. He, therefore, who fills all creatures who thereby are enabled to receive virtue and wisdom is not one of those things whom he fills. Therefore we infer that he must be another substance different from that of which all creatures consist.’¹⁵

In the *Nuovo saggio* Rosmini shows that the idea of being exhibits divine characteristics, for example, immutability, eternity, universality, etc.¹⁶ But we know that the action of grace is *deiform* from its impressing on our souls signs that are wholly divine because it imparts a feeling of God himself. So the objection can be raised why does this not happen in the natural order through our intuition of the idea of being?

We have seen earlier that the confusion comes about through identifying the idea of being with real being...¹⁷ This was the mistake of the Platonists and even of some of the Fathers who followed the Platonists’ doctrine. However Rosmini has made it clear that the idea of being (which is object and can never be confused with the mind which is subjective) is not God, It is in fact an *appurtenance* of God or, as Rosmini also calls it, a similitude of God. But in the *light of faith* we perceive and feel God himself and not a similitude. We perceive a real and subsistent being, not an idea.

Rosmini goes on to quote the Fathers in support of what he says. Cyril of Alexandria in his *De Trinitate* speaks about men commended in the Holy Scripture as

¹⁵ Didymus, *Liber De Spiritu Sancto*, n. 8. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁶ See *NS*, Vol II, parte I, c. III, nn. 414–437, pp. 29–41, [nn. 414–437, pp. 19–32].

¹⁷ See Chapter 5, above.

possessing divine grace who are called; ‘temples of God’ and sometimes even ‘Gods’. He argues from this that God must act really and with his substance in those souls and not simply by way of ideas. He says, ‘We are called and we are in truth “*temples of God*” and “*Gods*”. I ask our adversaries why they say that this is true, namely, that we partake of a naked grace deprived of SUBSISTENCE. But this is not so. God forbid! For we are temples of the EXISTENT and SUBSISTENT Spirit, and it is for this reason, that we are called “*Gods*”, because we have been made partakers of the *ineffable nature* by means of union with it.’¹⁸ Basil notes expressly the difference between the idea and the real being which acts in us and impresses what he calls the *divine character*. Here is the passage, “If men do not know how to make known various matters according to certain similitudes except by making them partakers of their ideas, how can the creature rise to the similitude of God except by being made partaker of the divine character?” And because this divine character should not be taken for a pure idea, he adds, “Now the *divine character* is not something *human* (as is the idea): but it is a LIVING and TRULY EXISTING effective image, by which all things that partake of it are constituted images of God”.¹⁹ Didymus distinguished the ideal order from the real order to which the Holy Spirit belongs and shows the difference between our participation in them. He says that we are accustomed to saying that someone is filled with *knowledge* in proportion as he is filled with the *Holy Spirit*. He goes on to show the difference between the participation of these two things. ‘Seeing that the Holy Spirit can be imparted as wisdom and discipline may be imparted, we must observe that it possesses a substance that does not consist in empty words of science, but the self-same good SUBSISTS with such a nature that it sanctifies and fills all things with good, according to which nature some are said to be filled with the Holy Spirit, as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles (*Acts* 2: 4) “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the words of God with confidence”.’²⁰

Finally Origen, who, Rosmini says, was one of the Platonists who tended to confuse the ideal with the real does not fall into this error here. He distinguishes what *really subsists* from what is simply an *idea or knowledge*. He says that God is shared by human beings as they share in a science, for instance medicine (they share formally in knowledge which objectively informs the spirit). But there is a difference. God is also a *substance* whereas the science of medicine is nothing but an *ideal being*.

Since many saints share in the Holy Spirit, it is clear that the Holy Spirit cannot be taken as a body which is divided into many parts and shared in by each of the saints. But it is undoubtedly a sanctifying power, of which all must share who are to be made holy by its grace, and in order that you may more easily understand what I wish to say let us take an example, although it is from inadequate things. There are many who take part in the discipline and art of medicine, yet we are

¹⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, *De Trinitate dialogus* VII. Cf. *AS*, Vol. I, Lib. I, c. V, Art. XVI, p. 117.

¹⁹ Basil the Great, *Adversus Eunomium* Lib. V. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 118.

²⁰ Didymus of Alexandria, *De Spiritu Sancto*, Lib. I, n.8. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 119.

not to suppose that all these take as it were, particles of a certain body commonly used, which is called the art of medicine and that in this way they partake of the medical art. But we are rather to understand the thing as if all those are said to partake of medical art who, with prompt and well-disposed minds, acquire knowledge of this art and discipline...But these examples, as compared with the Holy Spirit, must not be supposed to be perfectly equivalent. They avail only to prove that we must not believe that to be a body which is shared in by many. For the Holy Spirit differs greatly from the concept or science of medicine in this, that the Holy Spirit is an INTELLECTUAL SUBSTANCE and properly subsists and exists: whereas nothing of this kind can be said of the medical art.²¹

By grace God is formally united to human beings raising them to a supernatural level. We thus say that God is the formal cause of the modification of the soul. In saying that he is the form of the understanding it might seem that Rosmini leaves himself open to pantheism. But Rosmini holds that God is the *objective* formal cause. He 'is present to the [human] spirit without being part of it (just as light allows us to see without its becoming part of ourselves).'²² But it is important to note that God is not present to the spirit in the way that ideal being is present to it in the natural order. Ideal being allows us to intuit being in an initial form only. Through this (idea of being) we perceive intellectually only real contingent things. The idea of being is indeterminate and can only be determined by external things modifying our feeling. But through grace we *do* perceive God (Being in its term) so that the substance of God becomes the form of our supernatural reality. 'Moreover, grace is not the final action of God in the human spirit. The supreme Being reveals himself through grace indistinctly, not clearly. The certainty of the interior presence of the ALL is not accompanied by a perception which is total: *totum sed not totaliter*, as the theologians say. Faith begins with the indistinct perception of God, and draws us on to what remains hidden of God.'²³ 'The perception of God is not only difficult to notice, but it is also indistinct. We perceive ALL Being, ALL Good, but we do not succeed in perceiving any particular good; we find nothing with which to compare this perception. By grace God does not communicate himself openly to human beings. He is satisfied to infuse into them the certainty that the true Good is hidden in that mysterious and secret ALL, and to increase in them the desire to behold this Good one day unveiled.'²⁴ This mysterious presence is the object of faith in this present life drawing us on to an ever closer union. But when God is perceived distinctly in the next life we pass from a state of grace to a state of glory. 'For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to

²¹ Origen, *De principiis*, Lib I, cap. I. Cf. *AS*, *ibid*.

²² Cleary, *op. cit.*, p.57.

²³ *Ibid*.

²⁴ Umberto Muratore, *Conoscere Rosmini*, Edizioni Rosminiane, 1999, *La Teologia*, p. 185. (Capitals mine).

face.²⁵ Rosmini points out that grace acts through our negative idea of God (faith) reinforcing it and rendering it effective. In the meantime we feel God operating in us, though we might not always be aware of this, and then only with difficulty. But the *effects* of grace, the fruits of the Spirit are easily recognised.

Rosmini refers to the Fathers to confirm his teaching that God is the objective form of man through grace. Firstly he says that the expression ‘*to see God*’ in Scripture is very apt because, although God unites himself to the soul, he is not confused with it but remains distinct from it as the object is distinct from the subject. It thus expresses the fact that God is not just the formal cause but the *objective* formal cause of grace.

The Fathers said that God is formally united to the soul by regenerating grace. Basil observes that in the Scriptures the Holy Spirit is said to be *in us*, ‘as the form is in the matter, as virtue is in him who has the capacity for it, or the habit is in the person who is affected by it and so on. Therefore, the Holy Spirit, in as much as he brings rational creatures to perfection and completes their perfection, corresponds to *form*. For he who no longer lives according to the flesh, but is led by the spirit of God, and called a son of God, and has become conformed to the image of the Son of God, is called spiritual. And, as the power of sight is in the healthy eye, so is the operation of the Spirit in the cleansed soul.’²⁶ Athanasius comments on the saying of St Peter that we are made partakers of the divine nature. Taken literally these words imply that God becomes the form of our spirit. He says, ‘The Spirit is an ointment, a seal which anoints all things and stamps the impression of the Word’ and ‘in this way we, having received the impression as St Peter says, are justly made partakers of the divine nature. And thus the whole creature becomes partaker of the Word, and by the Spirit we are said to be all partakers of God. For do you not know, he said, that you are the temples of God and the Holy Spirit dwells in you? If anyone defile the temple of God, God will destroy him, for this temple, which you are, is holy.’²⁷ ‘St Cyril of Alexandria says the same, “How shall those be partakers of the divine nature according to the saying of the saints, to whom the Holy Spirit is communicated, if this Spirit is to be numbered among things created and does not rather proceed to us from the divine nature; nor does he pass into us from the divine nature as from something alien to us, but rather that he is in us, after the manner, so to speak, of a certain quality of divine being (this is the formal union) and inhabits the saints and remains with them perpetually, if, indeed, they purge the eye (of their soul) with all diligence and preserve the grace with the unwearied labour in every virtue”.’²⁸ Cyril also compares the ‘quality of the divine nature’ which man receives by grace, comparing God to gold and man to a gilded statue; for in being gilded we have the same gold and not something else produced only by the action of the gold.

²⁵ 1 *Cor*, 13: 12.

²⁶ Basil, Lib. *De Spiritu Sancto*, c. XXVI. Cf. *AS*, Vol. I, Lib. I, c. V, Art XVI, p. 128.

²⁷ Athanasius, *Epistula I ad Serapionem*, nn. 23–24. Cf. 2 *Peter* 1:3, and Paul, 1 *Cor* 3: 16. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 129.

²⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, in *Joannis Evangelium*, lib. IX. Cap. unicum. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*

‘In fact if God were not formally united with man in virtue of grace these expressions of scripture could not be true: *man being made partakers of the divine nature*,²⁹ *being deified* or as those most effective words approved by Christ indicate: *You are Gods*.³⁰ Whereas, if this union between man and God is a formal one these ways of speaking are absolutely true and correct. This is a common opinion of the Fathers especially the Greek ones to whom I have referred many times.’³¹ Rosmini adds another passage from Cyril. ‘I ask whether a nature which is formed and made can possess the power of making into Gods those who are not Gods? Certainly you cannot say this. To God alone can be attributed such a power, who, by his Holy Spirit, places within the souls of the saints the participation of that which is proper to him, and by which we also are made conformed to him, who is his Son of nature, by which we are made Gods like him. For it is God who sends the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father, for this very reason that we are sons of God. And therefore the power of deifying others by his own proper power is a greater and more excellent thing than any power of the creature. And who will number the Holy Spirit among creatures unless he has a corrupted mind: for how can it be said that the creature can make Gods.’³²

Rosmini explains further his teaching on grace by saying that the Fathers not only attest that God becomes the form of the soul but that this action of God does not mean that we react on God. He refers to Didymus of Alexandria who says that God has the property of being received but not of receiving anything from the souls in which he dwells. God renders those souls good to whom he gives himself but is not rendered good by them. Rather he subsists in himself as good. So the Holy Spirit is extraneous to both corporeal and incorporeal creatures. Creatures receive from him the substance of sanctity but he does not receive sanctity from another, but is himself the Creator and giver of it.³³ God cannot be confused with his creatures because he is their *objective* form and his creature is the *subject*.

The mode of God’s operation in man is described in Scripture and the Fathers under the likeness of a seal impressing its image on wax. It is united with the wax by contact but it is always distinct in its own nature. In his letter to the Ephesians Paul says, ‘and do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.’³⁴ Jerome says, ‘We are sealed by the Holy Spirit of God in order that our spirit and our soul may receive the impression of the signet of God and that image and similitude, according to which we were informed in the beginning. The signet of the Holy Spirit, according to the words of the Saviour is impressed and

²⁹ 2. *Peter* 1: 4. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, p. 129–130.

³⁰ *Ps* 82: 6. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

³¹ *AS, ibid.*

³² Cyril of Alexandria. *De SS. Trinitate*, Dial, VII. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, note 209.

³³ Didymus of Alexandria, *De Spiritu Sancto*, Lib. I. nn. 5, 4. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, pp. 130–131.

³⁴ *Eph* 4: 30.

impressed by God himself.³⁵ Basil uses often the same simile of a seal and calls God 'an image that effects an image.'³⁶ Rosmini says that this agrees principally with the Word who is the image of the Father, and who, by uniting himself to us, is felt by our soul and thus our souls receive the impression and image of him. When we, the subject, contemplate an object, the Word, it is this object in which our action terminates. But the subject has received a modification from the perception of the object and this is the image produced in us and which we may call subjective. Rosmini also quotes Cyril again to show that he considered that the object of the intelligent spirit impressing the divine image in the soul like a seal is God himself.³⁷

In keeping with his teaching on the intellect and its operations Rosmini shows that the Fathers 'describe the participation of the Word of God by man by means of divine grace under the similitude of the participation of knowledge and the ideas in the natural reason ... For if the intellect is the basis of knowledge and ideas and the Word of God acts in the intellect, this action takes place precisely through the ideas and in the ideas, or, to speak more generally, it happens in virtue of the intellectual perceptions, with this difference: that the intellect, so long as it has simple ideas sees no more than a beginning of *being* (ideal being) whereas when it has the Word it has not just an idea, but at the same time the substance and completeness of being (real being).'³⁸ Rosmini refers to passages already quoted from Didymus, Origen and Basil and then quotes Didymus again, that is, a passage of his quoted by Jerome. '[The Holy Spirit] will not instruct as the teacher or doctor of a discipline which he had himself learned elsewhere; but as the art itself, the doctrine and wisdom itself, the spirit of truth invisibly instils the knowledge of divine mysteries.'³⁹

'Since the *form* of the human spirit is the *idea of being* taken universally, the Fathers say that the Holy Spirit perfects the *form* in us and it takes the place of *form*. St Basil says, "In as much as the Holy Spirit has the virtue of perfecting the creatures that are endowed with reason, completing their ultimate perfection, he has the concept of FORM."⁴⁰ 'St Augustine, speaking of the intellect of the natural man uses the same expressions as when he speaks of the mind of the supernatural man. In the Book of the LXXXIII Questions he says that the mind of man in its natural state "is the mind which IS FORMED by truth itself without the interposition of any other nature."⁴¹ I have already shown that this *truth* of which Augustine speaks is the idea of being. Now how does the holy doctor express himself when speaking of man in the supernatural state? In the third book of *De Trinitate* he says: "the mind of the just is formed by God

³⁵ Jerome, *Commentaria in Epistolam, ad Ephesios*, Lib. II, cap. IV verse. 30. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 131. Rosmini says that usually spirit refers to intelligent life and soul to animal life but the latter is affected by the spirit's communication with it.

³⁶ Basil, *Adversus Eunomium*, Lib.V. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*

³⁷ Cyril of Alexandria, *De SS Trinitate*, Dialogus VII. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 132.

³⁸ *AS*, p. 133.

³⁹ Didymus of Alexandria, *De Spiritu Sancto*, Lib. I, n. 31. Jerome, *Interpretatio libri Didymi de Spiritu Sancto*, n. 5. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*, cap. XXVI, n. 61. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, note 221, p. 135.

⁴¹ Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, LI, 4. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*

by justifying it.”⁴² So in the natural order the *form* of man is the *truth* or ideal being, the idea of being; in the supernatural order the *form* of man is *God himself*, determinate, subsistent, real being.⁴³ Rosmini concludes by saying that the form which is superadded to man when he partakes of the divine grace may be said to be simply that which formed his nature, but completed, elevated, transformed into the divine substance. We can see this by comparing the two passages from Augustine. In the first, the principle of *natural* intelligence is *truth*, in the second the principle of *grace* is God.⁴⁴

A final point in Rosmini’s treatment of Deiform grace deals with the fact that we do not have an idea of God but only a perception of him. Real beings inform the human mind by means of *ideas*, that is, *ideal being*. We conceive them independently of their reality. When I affirm that a glass of beer really exists, I do not have the actual glass of beer in my mind but only the idea of it together with the persuasion that the reality corresponds with my idea! But in God the real mode of being is so united with the ideal mode that we cannot imagine any division without destroying the concept of God. In other words we cannot have the idea of God (ideal mode) without having the perception of the substance of God himself (the real mode). God cannot inform our mind with the idea of himself without informing us of himself. We do not have a positive idea of God but only the perception of his substance.

God is *subsistent* being, he exists by necessity and by essence. In order that we may know God we must know his subsistence. But by pure ideas we know only the *possibility* of things so it is impossible to know God by pure ideas. In God there is no distinction between subsistence and essence (the ideal mode of being), whereas in all other things we can distinguish between its essence and its existence. We can distinguish the idea of a glass of beer (in our mind) and a real glass of beer. In conclusion we must accept that the human spirit, elevated to the state of grace, has an immediate perception of God, that is, God himself with his own proper substance makes himself the objective form of the soul.

Cyril of Alexandria says that ‘man cannot partake by means of any creature in that which is superior to any creature.’⁴⁵ And, again, when we are made partakers of the Holy Spirit, ‘we are not made partakers of a creature but of the Divinity. For if the creature dwells within us we are truly made sharers of creatures but not of the Divinity.’⁴⁶ According to him, then, we do not know God by a pure idea (because this is just a creature, it is limited, it is a created light) but by God, subsistence itself. The Greek Fathers repeat that the communication of God to just souls is direct. ‘They recognise in God a certain essential relation with creatures different in mode in each of the three persons of the Trinity. They say that the eternal Word is, as it were, the

⁴² Augustine, *De Trinitate*, Lib. III, cap. VIII, 14. The exact words are ‘Therefore, just as in life itself, no one except God can form our soul so as to justify it....’ Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴³ *AS*, *ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* and note 225.

⁴⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, *De SS. Trinitate*, Dialogus VII. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 137.

⁴⁶ Cyril of Alexandria, *In excerptis dialogis de Spiritu Sancto*, Dialogus VII. *AS*, *ibid.*

thought of the Father, by which he not only has thought of himself, but all creatures as well and thus, thinking them, he has by that self-same act of the eternal generation, created them. Also they say that by the self-same act of eternal spiration not only have the Father and Son loved one another, but have also loved and infused that love and sanctified the souls of the just, so that the same substantial person of the Holy Spirit is one identical thing with the sanctifying virtue of the just. Cyril says, “What need have we of elaborate and astute comments? We say plainly that the same sanctifying virtue which proceeds from the nature of the Father and perfects all imperfect things is the Holy Spirit. For God himself by his mercy comes even to the smallest things and sanctifies by his own Spirit”.⁴⁷ Just as the name of *image* belongs to the Son, so the name of *gift* belongs substantially to the Holy Spirit. Rosmini concludes by repeating the quotation from Basil, in which he says that Basil distinguishes things known by ideas and God who is known only by perception which Basil calls a living and effective character “an image that effects an image and all things which share in it are made images of God.”⁴⁸

Triniform Grace

God unites himself to us formally through grace. But God subsists in three persons each of which is the divine substance itself with a relation which constitutes it a person. Therefore it follows that the three persons of the Holy Trinity unite themselves formally to the just person. Rosmini calls this operation by which such a person has this threefold feeling a *triniform* one. The deiform operation is experienced through the feeling it produces, and in the same way, according to the Fathers of the Church, we experience the triniform operation that is a feeling of the Most Holy Trinity which makes us perceive and experience the Holy Trinity, though in an imperfect way in this life. It is not necessary that we should always be conscious of this feeling. It exists often without people reflecting on it. Sometimes also it is not a distinct and developed feeling but hidden in the soul and unknown to the person possessing it. Rosmini quotes Augustine. ‘Lest anyone should suppose that it is the Father and the Son alone who abide with those who love them let us remember what is said about the Holy Spirit. The world cannot receive him because it does not see him or know him: but you know him. He shall dwell with you and be in you. Note, therefore, that the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling in the saints together with the Father and the Son: interiorly, indeed, as God in his own temple. God the Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit, come to us when we go to them: they come to help us, we go by obedience: they come to illuminate us, we go by contemplation: they come to fill us, we go to receive them: so that there is in us a vision of them, not external, indeed, but an INTERNAL VISION and that they may dwell in us, not in a transitory way, but in an eternal one.’⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate*, L. XXXIV. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 138.

⁴⁸ Basil, *Adversus Eunomium*, L. V. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 139. Cf. p. 73, above.

⁴⁹ Augustine, *In Iohannis Evangelium tractatus* LXXIV, 5. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, Art XVII, p. 156.

Even though this feeling is indistinct it is a force acting in us and which fills us perfectly and satisfies and contents us completely so that we feel (and are sometimes conscious of perceiving) *all being, all good*. This totality has three forms or modes. The first mode is that of feeling a *power* or *force* which acts in us. It is invisible but a supreme creating force which pervades our personality. In the greatness of this force we feel *all being* and this force is the source of our fear of God.

The second mode of feeling *all being* is by means of a knowledge of God, an idea which, though negative, constitutes faith. 'In this notion and thought of God we see such beauty, that it ravishes and overwhelms our intellect: we feel that this idea is superior to all else because it is at once substance and food for the soul, which it so satisfies and fills that nothing remains for it to desire except to plunge deeper and deeper into that ocean of light, more and more to grasp this knowledge and so enter into full possession of it This overwhelms us with happiness.'⁵⁰

The third mode of *all being* is when this knowledge diffuses and spreads in us a light which draws to it our will and love by its ineffable beauty. 'We experience a love so great that it has a plenitude of substance, a manna which nourishes, a wine that exhilarates; it is the food of the soul of incomparable delicacy which it finds intoxicating, in which it drowns, as in an ocean of love, where it reposes, satisfied in all its desires, feeling that no more remains for it to desire and that in this love alone it possesses all.'⁵¹ This feeling then is a feeling of *force*, a feeling of a *truth* (a subsistent truth which illuminates), and a diffusing *love*.

Rosmini refers to the Scriptures in support of his doctrine and also says that Scripture and Tradition teach that in the grace of Jesus Christ there is the communication of all three persons. 'Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.'⁵² And 'And I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever....'⁵³ Cyril of Alexandria writes, 'As he who receives the Son who is a most exact image of the Father receives the Father also; so he that receives the image of the Son, that is to say, the Holy Spirit has thereby the Son likewise, and in the Son the Father also.'⁵⁴ Ambrose says, 'The Holy Spirit comes in the same way that the Father comes; for where the Father is, there is the Son and there is the Holy Spirit.'⁵⁵ Athanasius, 'As he who sees the Son sees the Father; so he who has the Holy Spirit, has the Son, and he who has the Son is a temple of God. As St Paul writes: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 157–8. I have retained Rosmini's own words here as they reveal his own mystical appreciation of union with the Blessed Trinity.

⁵² *Jn* 14: 23. (NRSV).

⁵³ *Jn* 14: 16. (NRSV).

⁵⁴ Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus*, assertio XXXIII. Rosmini says that Cyril calls the Holy Spirit the *image*, not in a proper sense, but in a certain way because he partakes of the same essence and nature. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 162 and note 299.

⁵⁵ Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto*, Lib. I, cap. X. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*

from God?”⁵⁶ Finally Basil says that one divine person draws the other with him. ‘...just as he who has grasped one end of a chain also draws along with him the other end... Therefore, for example, he who has truly received into himself the Son will also have the Father and the Holy Spirit who the Son draws with him. For he who is always in the Father cannot withdraw from him neither will he ever be separate from his own Spirit which in him worketh all things. So also he who admits within him the Father, by this very fact, admits the Son also, and the Holy Spirit. It is impossible even to think of any schism or division so as to understand the Son to be without the Father or the Son without the Holy Spirit: but in these things we find an inexpressible and incomprehensible union and distinction.’⁵⁷

Rosmini goes on to say that the *trinitiform* operation of grace belongs to the time of the Gospel and that before the time of Christ the operation of grace was *deiform* only. Human beings who are in a state of grace partake of God in varying degrees though, of course, never fully. This degree does not depend on God but on the part of us human beings, that is, on our own capability. So we partake of *all* God in a more or less complete way *totum sed non totaliter* as I said above. The unity of the Divine nature was the basis of the Jewish revelation and that of the evangelical revelation is the Trinity in which knowledge given by God to man has been completed. So ‘it is clear that the grace which sanctified man before the coming of Christ may properly be called *deiform*, the title of *deitritiform* grace being reserved for the grace of the Redeemer. The grace of the Old Testament ‘manifested itself in man by a divine power which made the law of God superior to all other things in his heart, and by a feeling of expectation, a feeling of hope which promised him the possession of the *totality of being* and gave him a certain pledge of that possession.’⁵⁸ Not all the Jews served God through a base fear. Some were influenced by a reasonable fear and through love, being made free through grace, as Augustine says.⁵⁹ We know from the New Testament that the saints of the Old Testament acted through faith, Abraham ‘our father in faith’,⁶⁰ and ‘ “Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness”. So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham...those who are men of faith are blessed with Abraham who had faith.’⁶¹ Those holy men acted through faith and faith is a feeling of God. But not faith in three distinct persons subsisting in the divine nature. This would come with the Christ’s revelation. Gregory Nazianzen sought a reason why the person of the Holy Spirit was not expressly mentioned in the Old Testament and concluded that Christ has to be known first and Christ was not clearly known in the Old Testament.⁶²

⁵⁶ Athanasius, *Epistula III ad Serapionem*. Cf. *AS, ibid.* (1 Cor. 3: 16).

⁵⁷ Basil, *Epistula* 43, n. 4. *AS, ibid.*, pp. 162–163.

⁵⁸ *AS, ibid.*, Art. XVIII, p. 171.

⁵⁹ Augustine *Epistulae*, LXXXIX, 15 and XCV. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

⁶⁰ Eucharistic Prayer I.

⁶¹ *Gal* 3: 6–7.

⁶² Gregory Nazianzen, *Carmina*, Lib I, sectio I, carm III, vv 10–22. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, note 322, p. 172.

Chapter 8

Made in the Image and Likeness of God

In book 2 of the *Supernatural Anthropology* Rosmini speaks of human beings made in the image and likeness of God. It will not be surprising to see that he recapitulates what he has said about grace, and he expounds at length his teaching that the idea of being is a likeness of God. Things are alike when they have a common quality. But a common quality can exist only in the mind. For instance, if I see two red books and say ‘these are both red books’, I must have an abstract idea of ‘redness’ in order to attribute it to the books. The reason is that I do not perceive ‘red’ by itself. I perceive the objects of which it is the quality. There is no such thing as a ‘red’. I perceive ‘two individual red books’ with the quality of “redness” tied to each. But I can compare each with my idea of redness which is an abstract idea existing only in the mind and see that each has this quality. Therefore they are alike, similar, in colour. Considering the idea of being, we know not just creatures through the vision of being which we intuit, but also God. So this *being* that we use to know God must be a likeness or similitude of God. In fact this being, the light of our mind, has more likeness to God than creatures because God is being. The idea of being is pure being and the same may be said of God. Rosmini quotes St Thomas, Dionysius the Areopagite, Bonaventure, John Damascene, Augustine and other Fathers in support of his teaching.¹

Because the understanding is formed by the idea of being it has no limit. It does not matter how many finite beings we know, there are always others we can think and imagine; no matter how good they are, and no matter how many we conceive, we can always imagine others. They will never reach universal being. No amount of finite goods will satisfy our desire. Our will unites itself to a good by means of a *real* union. We are never satisfied simply by ideas. We would certainly save a lot of money if our desire for material goods was satisfied merely by thinking of them! In the natural order our intellect and will are never satisfied because we could never have a *real* union with infinite being. We have a natural desire and hunger for God. It is therefore fitting that we should be constituted in the *supernatural* order in which, as we have seen, through grace, we are granted a perception of God in his reality.

‘Grace perfects in man and completes *being* which is present to his intellect. Being, seen naturally by man, constitutes a likeness of God. When it is completed by grace, it receives a new nobility, a new character which we may fittingly and properly call an *image* of God.’²

Rosmini is at pains to explain exactly what he means by *image*. He quotes St Thomas, who says that every *image* is a *likeness* but not every likeness is an image. The image is

¹ *AS*, Lib. II, c. I, Art. 2, pp. 279–296.

² *Ibid.*, Art. IV, p. 298.

the most perfect likeness, but for this to be so it must regard the *essence* of the thing, not just a part of it. If things were alike in some part which did not pertain to the species a thing would not be the image of another. In the case of corporeal things, we normally take the figure of the thing not just its qualities, of colour, height etc. Also it includes the concept of *origin*. For instance, a head painted from an idea would not be called a portrait of anyone. It might have a likeness to a human face, but a true portrait requires a sitter. Strictly speaking, of course, even a portrait is not an image because a portrait has no soul. It is not the same as saying that a daughter is the image of her mother. But in the case of a portrait we take the sign for the thing signified.³ Now grace in human beings is a true image of God.

But the idea of being, although a *likeness* of God, is not an *image* of God. It can only be called an image by analogy or potentiality (because it lacks realisation). 'It is a light only which precedes the image, and makes it possible, which prepares the way and, as it were, the bare design or outline in man, but which omits the hand of the eternal artist for its completion in reality.'⁴ The natural cognition of God is only a negative idea. It is not like God *in species* and it is not a sign of the divine species. God is infinite reality, not an idea and there are no natural signs adapted to represent God. The figure of a man or an animal represents them, their substance. We can tell which animal is a giraffe and which is a lion. The figure is common to all the animals of a certain species. Cyril of Alexandria says, 'It is clear and admitted by the common sense of mankind that no one can see in any nature, a nature different from itself. If we have seen a horse we cannot say to ourselves that we have seen a man, because we see things similar in beings which are of the same nature, not in them that are different in essence.'⁵ John Chrysostom observes 'that a person who does not know gold could not see the nature of this metal in silver, because one nature is not seen by means of another nature.'⁶ But God has nothing in common with his creatures. We do not see the substance of things but the accidents which can represent the substance, for instance the long neck of the giraffe! But God has no accidents, he is pure substance. So there is no image of God unless this image of God is God himself. The true, proper and perfect image of God 'is the eternal Word, who possesses in common with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the whole and entire divine nature received eternally from the Father.'⁷ Hilary says that, 'of the living God there is one living image, which would not be a true image if it has not the perfect form of the paternal beatitude, and were not the absolute and complete *species* of the whole divine nature.' And 'The apostle did not proclaim his Son image in part or form of God according to

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 298–299. Cf. St Thomas, S. I. XXXV, I.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 299–300.

⁵ Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus*, assertio X. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 301.

⁶ John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Joannem*, LXXIV. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*

⁷ *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 301.

a portion only, but says that he is the image of the invisible God and form of the *invisible God*.⁸

Rosmini also quotes an ancient author found among the works of Athanasius. 'If the Son is different in substance from the Father how can the Father be seen in the Son? For if a statue in wood cannot be known in a statue of stone because they are not of the same substance; and if, by reason of the diversity of substance, we cannot see the stone in the wood, nor the wood in the stone, it follows that God, the king of the universe, is known in his consubstantial Son; because when things are of the same species, no sooner have we seen one, than we know also those we have not seen, because they are all consubstantial.'⁹

The consequence of all this is that it is the divine image which is impressed on human beings through grace, as we saw previously, where Rosmini says that grace is communicated by a real action of God on the soul and that he is formally united with us so that we are temples of God. The divine Word becomes, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the principle of sanctification and grace. The work of the Holy Spirit is to give light and fire, as it were, to the action of the divine Word in our souls. The Spirit is compared to a signet ring which imprints the divine Word in the soul, through the faith which it enkindles. 'In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit...', and "... do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption'.¹⁰ Didymus of Alexandria says, "The Son being the image of the invisible God and the form of his substance, all who are imaged and formed after that image or after that form are brought to the likeness of God; and they themselves obtain this image or form according to the force of their human perfectibility. Similarly, as the Holy Spirit is the signet of God, those who are sealed by him receive the form and image of God, they are brought in him to the image or seal of Christ, of wisdom and knowledge, and are moreover filled with faith".¹¹

Some of the saints teach that the image of God in man is imparted only by the Holy Spirit because grace and the sealing of souls by the communication of the Word is attributed to the Holy Spirit. So St Cyril says, 'By partaking of the Holy Spirit we are formed to the image of the Creator. Hence it is clear that this likeness to God can only be obtained by him who partakes of the Holy Spirit. And our redeemer, in order to restore that state in man who was made in the image of God, breathes once more towards his disciples saying, "receive the Holy Spirit". It is right, therefore, to think that what has taken place in the renovation of man, must have been also in that primitive state; and therefore that the perfect expression of the image of the divine

⁸ Hilary, *De Trinitate*, lib. XI, n. 5. Rosmini also quotes the Letter to the *Hebrews*, 1: 3, 'He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature'; and *Jn* 14: 9, 'He who has seen me has seen the Father.' Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, pp 301–302.

⁹ Author of the dispute of St Athanasius with the Arians. Athanasius, *Disputatio habita in concilio Nicaeno contra Arium*, n. 30. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 302.

¹⁰ *Eph* 1: 13, and 4: 30.

¹¹ Didymus, *De Spiritu Sancto*, L.II, n. 22. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 303.

substance is given to man only by the participation of the Holy Spirit.¹² Rosmini takes a parallel from Augustine to signify the image impressed by God on our souls. The *image* of God is not the human being, but it is in the human being as the image of Caesar is on the coin but is not the money itself.¹³ Grace impresses the image in our souls and this image is a sharing of the one true image of the divine substance which is the eternal Word. Rosmini adds a quotation from St Paul, 'For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the *image* of his Son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.'¹⁴ In other words we become *images of God* by being made Christ's brothers and sisters. We speak of being Christened.

Life Before the Fall

The traditional teaching of the Church is that our first parents before their fall were constituted by God in the supernatural order. In such a state there was no reason why there should have been any interval between their natural and supernatural state. There is no repugnance in God bestowing natural and supernatural life at the same time. Firstly, the light of grace united to the light of nature does not make two lights or two lives. The supernatural light is the same *being* that we see by nature, but this is now seen more clearly and endowed with a stronger light so that we perceive in some way its *substance*. It is very probable that since God willed to give man *light and life* he would give it in the measure that was needed instead of by instalments, so to speak. Secondly, Scripture confirms this teaching, that Adam received from God the gift of grace and the gift of intelligence at the same time. God 'formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.'¹⁵ In the *spiraculum vitae* (breath of life) intelligence and grace were combined.¹⁶ The natural and supernatural light are one and the same, because they are one and the same being. Thirdly this truth is proven from the principle laid down by St Thomas, following St Augustine, who says that all those things that come in process of time by the operation of divine providence which produces them, were created by God in their primitive condition according to certain seminal reasons.¹⁷ In other words, God plants the seeds and lets time develop them. An obvious example is the development of plants from seeds, and, of course, this is strikingly evident in the case of animals. We wonder at the

¹² Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus assertio*. XIII. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, pp. 303–304.

¹³ Augustine, *Sermones*, serm. IX, *De decem Chordis*, c. VIII, n. 9. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

¹⁴ *Rom* 8: 29.

¹⁵ *Gen* 2: 7.

¹⁶ Rosmini here lists some Fathers who believed that man received intelligence first and then grace or even the Holy Spirit signified by the words '*spiraculum vitae*.' Origen, *De Principiis*, Lib.I, cap. III; Tertullian, *Liber de Baptismo*, cap. V; Cyprian, *Epistula ad Pompeium*, VII; Cyril of Alexandria, *In Joannis Evangelium*, Lib. IX; Basil, *Homilia in Psalmum XLVIII*, n. 8; Ambrose, *De Paradiso*, cap. 5. These Fathers thought this because they believed for certain that Adam was endowed with grace but they could find no place in Genesis in which we are told how it was given by God. Rosmini adds that Augustine did not approve of their opinion. Cf. *De Civitate Dei*, L. XIII, c. XXIV. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, p. 306, and note 87.

¹⁷ ST.I, q. LXII, art. 3. Thomas refers to Augustine *De Gen. Ad. Litt*, Lib. VIII. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, Art. V, p. 306.

perfection of a tiny baby and realise that the perfection was there from the moment of conception. In the book of Genesis we have the refrain that ‘God saw that it was good’ and on completion of his work ‘behold, it was very good’. This mode of God’s action is in keeping with the divine wisdom and his use of the least means necessary to produce the maximum good.

Rosmini discusses the meaning of the words ‘Let us make man to our image and likeness’.¹⁸ He understands ‘likeness’ to refer to intelligence, and ‘image’ as referring to grace. This seems to be confirmed by the words of Genesis ‘So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him.’¹⁹ The word *likeness* is not repeated again as though it were contained in the word *image*, and instead the word *image* is used twice, as if to express that the force and perfection of human dignity was contained in it.

Rosmini mentions Fathers of the Church who have distinguished the two words and points out that some take the opposite view, namely, that image signifies natural intelligence and likeness signifies grace, thus giving the latter a greater value. But they agree with him in the substance of what he teaches. Basil says, ‘By the image impressed on my soul I obtained the use of reason; but by being made a Christian I became truly like to God.’²⁰ Jerome says, ‘we must observe that the image was made by creation only; the likeness is completed by baptism.’²¹ John Chrysostom,²² Augustine,²³ and John Damascene²⁴ express the same thought. All these Fathers take the word *likeness* as an addition to the word *image*, distinguishing, as it were, two images, one similar to the original and the other dissimilar. Rosmini thinks this may be confirmed by the Hebrew translated by the Latin as *image*, which signifies *umbra*, a shadow, and therefore an obscure and imperfect image, like a shadow cast by a person. So the word *likeness* may have been used to increase the force of the expression.

Rosmini is not saying that his interpretation is certain. In fact, if anyone takes the opposite view it would suit him just as well, or perhaps even better if the words were not distinguished, as they could be seen as expressing the superlative, saying, as it were, *an image perfectly like*. In other words it would express ‘not a simple likeness of God that he placed in man but an image which was a perfect likeness, namely not intelligence only in which the likeness consists, but also grace which makes this likeness a true and living image, through the participation of the Word, who is the first and only perfect image of the divine substance. In this interpretation we see excellently expressed that kind of unity which, as we have said, exists between the

¹⁸ Gen 1: 26 (Douay Version).

¹⁹ Gen 1: 27.

²⁰ *Homilia IX in Hexaemeron*. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 307 and note 92.

²¹ *Commentaria in Ezechielem prophetam*, Lib. IX, c. XXVIII, vv. 11 ff. Cf. *ibid.*

²² *Homiliae in Genesin*, hom. IX, n. 3. Cf. *ibid.*

²³ *Contra Adimantum Manichaei discipulum*, c. V. Cf. *ibid.*

²⁴ *De Fide Orthodoxa*, Lib. II, cap. XII. Cf. *ibid.*

natural and the supernatural light, and that the latter is a certain perfection of the former. For this reason I prefer this latter interpretation to the former one.²⁵

Considering the image and likeness as one and the same thing it follows that the impression on the soul is never entirely eradicated even by sin because even after sin human nature remains and, of course, the light of intelligence, as Augustine observes. But it would no longer be fully correct to call this impression ‘the *image of God*.’²⁶

Rosmini concludes this section on image and likeness by reverting to his original interpretation, that is, that *likeness* refers to the natural light of reason and *image* refers to the supernatural light. The Word alone is the image of God and we are the image of God by sharing in the Word. In this more accurate sense Ambrose says ‘Only through the image of God (*that is, by the Word*), can you be the image of God.’²⁷ Cyril says much the same, ‘We who bear the image of the earthly man cannot put off corruption in any other way than by being impressed with the beauty of that heavenly image. This takes place when we are called to the adoption of the sons of God. For being made sharers of that adoption we are sealed by the Holy Spirit to the likeness of him (namely the Word) and thus ascend to the EXEMPLAR FORM of that image after which the Holy Scripture attests that we are made.’²⁸ He expresses the same thought in other places. For instance in his *Dialogues* he says that ‘we are sealed by the Holy Spirit according to the figure and likeness of the Father, that is to say, of the Son.’ Again, ‘We receive in ourselves the divine character, and we are enriched by it. For by this we are conformed to God, when that supreme species of all things, namely the Son is impressed by the Holy Spirit in our souls.’²⁹ And ‘the Son is the character by which God has sealed us, which Son is called also the face of God.’³⁰ Cyril distinguishes the potential image which we have by nature from that actual image which we receive from our incorporation into Christ. The latter is the realisation of the former which, is, as it were, a sketch. He says, ‘the Son is the *signet* by which we are re-formed to God by faith and made conformed to the Son who is the image of the Father, in order that it may be verified in us that we are made to the image and likeness of our Creator.’³¹ Athanasius says, ‘We are called to the image and glory of God: but not through ourselves, but through the true image and glory of God that dwells in us and which is the Word of God who, for our sakes, was made flesh; and we have attained the grace of being called by the same name as he himself.’³² Basil calls the Son ‘the image that effects an image’ because he who is the true image of God produces in us the same image by communicating himself to us. He speaks of the

²⁵ *AS, ibid.*, p. 308.

²⁶ Rosmini refers to Augustine *De Genesi ad Litteram*, lib. VI, capp. XXIV, XXVII and *Retractionum libri duo*, Lib. II, cap. XXIV, n. 2 and explains what he believes is St Augustine’s meaning. Cf. *AS*, p. 308.

²⁷ Ambrose, *De Fide*, Lib. I, c. IV; Lib. V, cap. III. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, p. 309.

²⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, *In Joannis Evangelium*, Lib. III. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, and note 97.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, *De SS. Trinitate*, Dialogus V. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, *In Joannis Evangelium*, Lib. III. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, Lib. III. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

³² Athanasius, *Oratio quarta contra Arianos*. Cf. *AS, ibid.*, pp. 309–310.

‘*spiraculum vitae*’ breathed on the face of man by God and says expressly that with the same breath both soul and grace were infused into man and not separately. He compares the breathing of God on Adam with the breathing of Christ on the Apostles, saying that ‘God then gave the inspiration of the Holy Spirit with the soul; now by a second breathing into the soul.’³³

‘The Son is, therefore, like a *signet* in respect of our soul and it is the Holy Spirit that makes use of that signet in order to impress on us that figure which is called also the face of God. Hence the force of the words of Christ, when speaking of himself he says, “for on him has God the Father set his seal”³⁴ in other words this is the seal imprinted by God the Father who, in sealing souls, produces the divine image.’³⁵

This section of Rosmini’s work is admittedly long and rather involved but it does repay careful reading. It is a good example of Rosmini’s use both of the Scriptures and of the Fathers. It also shows his philological/exegetical approach and how he sees his theory borne out by the text. It demonstrates his confidence in his own interpretation in face of the different opinions of the Fathers.

The Sacramental Character

In the Old Testament the Covenant of God with man began with Adam after he sinned and was successively renewed as his descendants violated it. For instance, it was renewed with Noah, Abraham and the Israelites in Egypt and then on Mount Sinai. Accompanying these renewals of the Covenant, consecrating people to the divine worship, there were outward signs, such as circumcision and the paschal lamb, and the priesthood of Aaron. These accompanied the development of divine revelation and the faith of the chosen people which was becoming more explicit. But this faith was defective regarding the communication to the soul of the divine Word because the Word had not yet taken on a human nature which would be the way he communicates with other human beings. God’s promises were consummated with the incarnation. The spiritual promises of the Old Testament were fulfilled, and prefigurations gave way to reality. The incarnation inaugurated the New Covenant sealed with the blood of Christ. ‘The essence of the New Covenant as distinct from that made with Abraham is wholly interior, it is not bound up with external apparitions and external demonstrations of power and majesty, as on Mount Sinai; but it took place in the secret of the spirit by a real and personal union of the Word with human nature in the first instance, and afterwards by the communication of the Word to others through grace.’³⁶ Everything exterior is an effect of this Covenant and does not lead up to it as in the Old Covenant.

³³ Basil, *Adversus Eunomium*, Lib.V, p. 116. Cf. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 310 and note 99.

³⁴ *Jn* 6: 27.

³⁵ *AS*, *ibid.*

³⁶ *AS*, Vol. II, Lib IV, c. VII, Art IX, p. 212. Rosmini quotes from Isaiah ‘I have given you as a Covenant to the People, a light to the nations’ *Isaiah*, 42: 6, and ‘I have kept you and given you as a Covenant to the people and to establish the land to apportion the desolate heritages’ *Isaiah*, 49: 8. And also from Jeremiah 31: 31–34, regarding the promise of the New Covenant.

In the New Covenant man is truly re-united to God and brought back to the primitive state of moral perfection in which he was dedicated to worship by his very constitution. The New Covenant has not the same need of external signs as the Old Covenant though it has the sacraments. A sign which is necessary to the New Covenant is totally interior and impressed on the soul, which we call the indelible character. Rosmini quotes Theophylact, who says that the Jews were signed by circumcision of the flesh but we, as children of God, receive the sign of the Spirit. Pope Clement I calls the character 'SIGNACULUM PACTIONUM (the sign of the Covenants).³⁷ It would seem that Augustine introduced the term 'character' as used and approved by a General Council in his Sixth Book chapter 1 *De baptismo* (On Baptism). Rosmini quotes Isaiah again, 'I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory. And I will set a *sign* among them...' ³⁸

Now what is this sign? Grace is an intellectual communication of the Word revealing himself to the soul and this vision of the Word is the supernatural light, the source of all supernatural activity. This communication can be *transient* or *permanent* (or, as we say, *habitual*). Sanctity only comes about with our co-operation with grace, so not every impression of the Word which takes place in the intellectual part of our soul constitutes grace, but only when we do not resist its influence. However, the impress of the Word may remain in the soul, in its intellectual part, even if we refuse to obey it and this happens in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and holy orders, which confer an indelible character. This character consecrates us to the Word and calls us to supernatural worship. The character endows us with this power. Whether we respond depends on us. Rosmini goes on to say that all this is confirmed by tradition and, as is his wont, goes first to the Scriptures, pointing out that St Paul speaks of the character when he says, 'In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit', and again, 'And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption',³⁹ namely, in your baptism. The impress of the character is thus an action of the Holy Spirit.

The Fathers of the Church constantly agree with this. Cyril of Jerusalem says, 'In the time of baptism the Holy Spirit seals your soul' and again, 'This (Holy Spirit) even to this day seals the soul in baptism.'⁴⁰ John Chrysostom says, 'The Israelites have been signed but with the mark of circumcision, which may be given even to cattle. We, as sons, are signed by the Holy Spirit.'⁴¹ We see here the difference between the external sign of the Covenant of the Old Testament between God and the Hebrews and the

³⁷ Theophylact of Bulgaria, (Archbishop of Ochrid), died 1107. *Expositio in Epistulam ad Ephesios*, c. I, v. 13; Clement, *Epist.* IV. An analogous expression is found in *De constitutionibus Apostolicis*, Lib. VII, c. 23. It calls the oil of baptism *sigillum pactionum*. *AS, ibid.*, p. 214 and note 627 (303).

³⁸ Isaiah, 66: 18–19. *AS, ibid.*

³⁹ *Eph* 1: 13 and 4: 30. *AS, ibid.*, p. 216.

⁴⁰ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis IV*, *De Decem Dogmatibus*, dogma VII, De Spiritu Sancto; and *Catechesis XVI*, De Spiritu Sancto, c. XXIV. Cf. *AS, ibid.*

⁴¹ John Chrysostom, *Homiliae in Epistulam ad Ephesios*, hom. II, n. 2. Cf. *AS, Ibid.*

internal and spiritual sign of the Christians. Before Christ came the ancient sacraments could not give the indelible character because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. The grace and character are distinct but both proceed from the Holy Spirit. The Fathers call the character the *seal of Christ* and attribute to it, as its principal effect, the configuration of the soul to Christ. Since Christ is the image of the Father, ecclesiastical tradition teaches that in the indelible character we receive the image of God. Ambrose says, ‘As we die in Christ, so in like manner we are signed in the Spirit in order that we may have within us the SPLENDOUR and the IMAGE and the grace of him which is the spiritual character. For, although in appearance we are signed in the body, we are in truth signed in the heart, in order that the Holy Spirit may express in us the likeness of the heavenly IMAGE.’⁴² Rosmini comments on this passage, saying that Ambrose distinguishes between the *splendour* and *image* of the Word, and grace.

He calls them both the *signaculum spirituale* (spiritual seal), attributing both to the Holy Spirit. Now the *splendour* and *image* is properly that which constitutes the indelible character distinct from grace. We are also sealed by grace but in a different manner from that which is called character. St Thomas says, “Now the faithful are deputed to a twofold end; firstly and principally to the enjoyment of glory. And for this purpose they are marked with the seal of grace...Secondly, each of the faithful is deputed to receive, or to bestow on others, things pertaining to the worship of God. And this, properly speaking, is the purpose of the sacramental character.” Ambrose does not distinguish these two sealings because in the soul there is one impression of the Word, which considered simply in the intellect is character but considered relative to the will which does not oppose it, it is *grace*. Rosmini quotes Robert Bellarmine to this effect.⁴³

In conclusion: I have taken examples of Rosmini’s use of the Fathers from Book I, namely his treatment of *Deiform and Triniform Grace* and an example from Book II, *Man made in the Image and Likeness of God*. Finally from Book IV we looked at Rosmini’s theory on the *character* bestowed in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Order. There are other subjects in Book IV which we could investigate, such as, the Institution of Baptism, the way the Fathers spoke of Confirmation and the mode in which the bread and wine are converted into the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist.⁴⁴ However, it seems to me that enough has been said regarding the *Supernatural Anthropology* to give the reader an insight into Rosmini’s teaching and his use of Scripture and the Fathers. I am also aware of the fact that Rosmini never revised Book IV and indeed never completed it. So we can hardly say we have his last thoughts on the matters he expounds. Moreover, writing to Father Giovanni Maria

⁴² Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto*, Lib. I, cap. 6. *AS*, *ibid.*, p. 217–218.

⁴³ Thomas, *ST*, III, LXIII, III. Cf. *AS*, p. 217, note 642.

⁴⁴ *AS*, Lib. IV, Parte II, c. I, Art VII, pp. 250 ff. c II, Art X, pp. 282 ff., and c. III, Art II, pp. 299 ff.

Caroli from Caserta 5 July 1849, he said 'I do not intend to publish the major works, that is, the *Teosofia* (Theosophy) and the *Antropologia Soprannaturale* (Supernatural Anthropology) for the time being, seeing that unfortunately this age is not yet ready to accept them. It needs milk and, in fact, is not capable of taking solid food.'⁴⁵ It is time for us to move on.

⁴⁵ *EC*, X, Letter 6365, p. 568.

Chapter 9

The Gospel of John

There is no mention of the *Introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni*¹ [The Commentary to the Introduction according to John] in any other writings of Rosmini, not even in his *Giornale de' miei scritti* [Diary of my Writings] nor in his Letters, both of which sometimes give many dates for his other works. We have to go to the manuscript in the Biblioteca Rosminiana at Stresa itself to get a clue. On the first page we read 'Stresa 18 October MDCCCXXXIX' [1839]. But the writing is interrupted after thirty nine pages and it was only taken up some ten years later. The place and date is 'Napoli 26 January 1849.' Twenty one dates follow, the last being '12 July 1849, Santa Lucia sopra Minerva.'² Rosmini intended to divide the work into three books but the work suffered a final interruption after Book II Reading 93.³ The two books which we have are entitled: I. *Della generazione eterna del Verbo* [Concerning the Eternal Generation of the Word] and II. *Della creazione fatta pel Verbo* [Concerning Creation made through the Word]. We can conjecture that the third book would have been *The Incarnation of the Word*. As I said earlier this would have fitted into the scheme of the *Supernatural Anthropology* where Rosmini intended to treat of *Man, the Redeemer*, but this is mere conjecture.⁴ The work is predominantly theological and contains some of the most sublime pages in the whole of Rosminian literature. They were written during the time when Rosmini was under attack from his adversaries, his writings regarded with suspicion and he himself being kept from approaching the Pope.

In his Preface to the Commentary, Remo Bessero Belti quotes three authors, Francesco Paoli, Agostino Tagliaferri and Silvestro Candela who describe the work. Paoli calls it a work of the highest philosophy and theology; Tagliaferri, states that it is a sublime Commentary, which is historical, theological, mystical, ascetical and philosophical. It is based on Scripture and the exegesis thereof, and developed with philosophical, mystical and ascetical considerations. Candela says that the general plan and development of the Commentary are theological according to the method of the Fathers of the Church.⁵ As Gianni Picenardi says, 'the Commentary is not a work of

¹ A.R., *L'introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni*, (= ISG), Ediz. Naz., Padova, 1966.

² The work consists of a bound volume of 470 pages with the writing on alternate pages leaving space on the other pages for notes. There are very few crossings out or corrections and the work was never revised. Cf. *ISG, Premessa* [Preface], Remo Bessero Belti, pp. IX–X, note 1.

³ I have translated *Lezione* [Lesson], as *Reading*. Alas, the translation of the *Introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni* remains in electronic files at present.

⁴ See p. 81–82.

⁵ *Bibliografia Rosminiana* per Francesco Paoli, Rovereto, Grigoletti, 1855, p.258; *Il prof. B. Labanca e il Commento di Antonio Rosmini sull' Evangelio di S Giovanni*, in "Il Nuovo Risorgimento", December 1894,

modern exegesis but analogous to the great patristic commentaries...It is a reading of the Prologue of John according to the method used by the Fathers in order to gather the *sensus plenior* of Scripture and draw from it the doctrine of the word which he wanted to expound.⁶ Finally it is a work in which Rosmini exercised his capacity as a philologist for which he was known among his contemporaries. Quacquarelli states, 'For Rosmini, perfection of language is perfection of thought. This was the teaching of ancient rhetoric of the Fathers. Language is the means of communication and at the same time the instrument of thought.'⁷

Concerning Rosmini's contribution to exegesis, the same author says, 'The place of Rosmini in biblical exegesis of the 19th century has not received the importance it deserves because no one has known about his teaching on the Fathers. Also he did not possess the refined tools of modern day criticism; he guessed them. Starting from the established reading in its most certain form, and his philological theories are worthy of note, he arrived at the most profound typological sense, an achievement of particular historical acuteness. He knew the different exegetical trends of his time and criticised them in following his own point of view. His familiarity with the works of St Augustine had stirred up in his own mind many problems of interpretation and of biblical communication. Augustinian exegesis was typological as was that of Origen which Rosmini understood well and esteemed. The catalogue of books in Rosmini's home at Rovereto is rich in texts regarding the Bible.'⁸ In 1818 he wrote to Don Luigi Sonn, endeavouring to give his interpretation of the Song of Songs 4: 16. It reflects his knowledge of Gregory the Great's homily. He also wrote his commentary on the Magnificat in the same year as he wrote his commentary on the introduction to St John's Gospel.⁹ In his *Teodicea* he gives a long dissertation on the Book of Revelation.¹⁰ He was very engrossed in biblical studies and philology while he was at university. 'At Milan Rosmini worked with Moschini and Abbate Vannucci "to collate codices in order to print wholly or partially a text containing an ancient translation of the Bible"'.¹¹ He thought it indispensable to have a brief history of the sacred books with a study of codices for the accuracy of the texts and therefore of the translations.¹²

p. 105; P. Silvestro Candela, *L'Introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni commentata, da Antonio Rosmini*, Napoli, Giannini, 1955, p. 189. Cf. *ISG*, *Premessa*, p. XI.

⁶ Picenardi, *op. cit.*, pp. 65–66. *Sensus Plenior* is defined as 'the deeper meaning intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, that is seen to exist in the words of Scripture when they are studied in the light of further revelation or of the development in the understanding of revelation.' *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Ed. Raymond E. Brown, S. S. et al., Geoffrey Chapman, 1997, Article 71, Section 50, p. 1157.

⁷ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. V, pp. 62–63.

⁸ *Ibid.*, c. IV, p. 47–48.

⁹ Rosmini, *Operette spirituali*, Rovereto, Antonio Caumo, Tipog., 1860, Vol. I, p. 135 ff., [*Religious and Moral Discourses*, James Duffy and Sons, London, 1882, p. 227 ff.].

¹⁰ Rosmini, *Teodicea*, Lib. III, XXVIII, n. 787 ff, p. 468, [*Theodicy*, Vol. II, n. 787 ff, p. 274].

¹¹ U. Pellegrino, *Sebastiano de Apollonia e Antonio Rosmini*, Milano, 1973, Vol. I, pp. 398–399.

¹² Quacquarelli, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

Rosmini has an especial fondness for the Psalms. He wanted to research what the Fathers had said about them, for a typological-spiritual redevelopment regarding Christ. It would have been the greatest outcome of his patristic work. It was not written but there is the small work: *Alcuni salmi con annotazioni cavate dai Santi Padri*.¹³ There is also an unfinished work of which there are only a few pages in the Archives of the Institute of Charity in the Centre at Stresa: *Considerazioni rivolte a cavare dai libri santi il frutto per cui sono stati scritti* [Fruitful Reflections on the Holy Scriptures]. With the few pages which we possess there is an index of 92 topics which makes us realise how much he had thought about these things which he wanted to develop in time. Another work which he would like to have written was *La scuola alessandrina*, [The School of Alexandria] which, as we know, was very important in the development of ancient scriptural exegesis.¹⁴

The Fathers of the Church are quoted or cited mainly in the first 40 Readings of the *Commentary*. Thereafter, Scripture, which is quoted throughout the work, abounds. Picenardi mentions the Fathers Rosmini follows. They are mainly St Augustine and St Thomas with their great commentaries on St John. An analysis of the work shows that Augustine is mentioned approximately 33 times. Others are: Jerome (10), Athanasius (7), John Chrysostom (19), Clement of Alexandria (9), Ambrose (8), Hilary of Poitiers (8) Origen (6), and Basil (6).

As I have done with the other works of Rosmini, let me take some examples of Rosmini's arguments which exemplify his use of Scripture and the Fathers. As I have just said, the commentary on St John's gospel, as well as being profoundly theological and philosophical, is mystical and exegetical. If the reader finds the texts difficult to follow I suggest that he/she concentrate on the factors I am trying to demonstrate, namely, Rosmini's use of the Fathers together with Scripture and his expertise in exegesis in the manner of the Fathers. The Fathers have to be placed in the context of the argument for the demonstration to have any meaning at all. It would be as well to bear in mind the first verses of John's Gospel in the Douai-Rheims translation, for Rosmini was using the Latin Vulgate.¹⁵

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 50. Cf. p. 18, a bove..

¹⁴ He often mentioned the School of Alexandria in his works and especially in the *Antropologia soprannaturale*, Vol II, Ediz. Naz., Roma, 1956, Lib. III, *Appendice Prima*, p. 382 and note 1. 'Basilides and his contemporary Cappocrates were from Alexandria, the city in which were united the oriental traditions, Hebrew doctrines, especially through the Greek translation of the Sacred Books, and the doctrines of Plato. From these elements the School of Alexandria arose. Hence the doctrine concerning the angels as creators of the world and authors of all evil became, in the hands of these heresiarchs, clothed in more philosophical and especially Platonic forms...' Rosmini quotes St Augustine in the relevant footnote.

¹⁵ 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men' (*Jn*, 1: 1-4).

In the beginning was the Word.¹⁶

Rosmini says that some Fathers understood *beginning* to relate to the Father who is the principle (principio) of the Word. So, 'The Word was in the Father.' This could be right if it were not for the fact that *was*, in this context, expresses a completed action in the past, and it would not have been used if *beginning* indicates the Father. The words would have been 'the Word *is* in the Father' not 'the Word *was* in the Father' as if he had ceased to be in the Father. He lists some of the Fathers who interpreted the phrase in this wrong sense. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Theophilus of Antioch.¹⁷ But he says that Athanasius means by *in principio*, in God.¹⁸ Other Fathers understand *principio* to mean eternity 'as that from which all things and our very thoughts begin...Certainly in the beginning of things there were not yet any things, not even time. So eternity is to be understood as the beginning (principle) of time and the world.'¹⁹ He goes on to list Fathers who support this view: Gregory of Nazianzen, Ambrose, Basil, John Chrysostom, among others.²⁰

Rosmini concludes that 'In the beginning was the Word' means that the Word existed *before* the world. He refers to Hilary, Augustine and Bede.²¹ He goes on to refer to the words of Christ in the Gospel of John 'because thou hast loved me before the creation of the world'²² and the Old Testament 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made anything from the beginning. I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made;²³ and 'In the beginning God created heaven and earth.'²⁴ An analysis of these quotations shows that the Word already was in the beginning of time, and was therefore before time, meaning in eternity. Rosmini quotes St Thomas who says that 'Significantly John, whenever he mentions something eternal says 'was' (*erat*). Where he mentions something temporal he says was (*fuit*).'²⁵ Rosmini says that before St Thomas's time the Fathers, among whom were John Chrysostom, Basil, Cyril, and Theophilus observed that the word *was* (*erat*) here signified eternity, and so was used by St John in preference to *was* (*fuit*).²⁶ Elias of

¹⁶ ISG, Lib. I, Lezione III (= Lez.), pp. 11ff.

¹⁷ Clement, *Protrepticus ad gentes*; Origen, *In Ioannem commentarii* Tract I; Cyril, *In Ioannem commentarius*, 1. I, c. I; Gregory, *Oratio ad Simplicium*, Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VI, II; Theophilus, All., 1. IV. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*, and note 1, p. 11.

¹⁸ Athanasius, *Adversus Arianos orationes*. Rosmini thinks that Origen could be understood in this sense (*in Ioann.* 1. I, c. I). Cf. ISG, *ibid.*

¹⁹ ISG, *ibid.*

²⁰ Gregory Nazianzen, *De Filio*, Orationes II; Ambrose, *De Incarnationis dominicae sacramento* III; Basil, *Homiliae* in h. I; Chrysostom, *In Ioannem homiliae*, Hom. II. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*

²¹ Hilary, *De Trinitate* 1, II; Augustine, *In Hom.* 1 and in qq. *Ex vet. Novoqu. Testam.* q. CXXII, Bede, in h. 1. ISG, *ibid.*

²² Jn 17: 24 (Douai).

²³ Prov 8: 22–23 (Douai).

²⁴ Gen 1: 1 (Douai).

²⁵ Thomas, *In Jo.*, lect., I. ISG, *ibid.*, p. 12 and note 3.

²⁶ John Chrysostom, *Hom.* 3; Basil, *in hom.* 1; Cyril of Alexandria, *in Ioannem commentarius* c. I. 1.I; Theophilus, in h. 1. ISG, *ibid.*

Crete observed that this *was* is substantive not signifying that it is *this or that* but simply that it *is*, which is proper to God.²⁷ The Council of Nicea used this passage of John to refute the Arians who said there was a time when the Son of God did not exist. Ambrose also used the same argument when he wrote against the heretics 'In the beginning *was* the Word and the Word *was* with God, and the Word *was* God; he *was* in the beginning with God. *Was, was, was, was*; where does the impious man find what was not?'²⁸

The Divine Word²⁹

What is the Divine Word? Obviously in such a small work it is not possible to do justice to Rosmini's profound reasoning on the subject but we can give some indication as a lead up to our next example of his use of the Fathers in the present work.

Rosmini says that to have some understanding of the Word we must proceed from human understanding. In the human mind the *idea* and the *word* are different things. With our *ideas* we know the essences of things, what they are. But we only know that they subsist if we make an affirmation to this effect. I know *what a dog is*; but to say that it *really exists* I must be persuaded of its existence. I must affirm by a judgement that it exists. I affirm that my idea of this dog really subsists in fact because I already know what a dog is, and here is a living example of one. I sensibly and intellectually perceive it and I am persuaded that it really exists and is not simply an idea or a memory. All our ideas are *objective*. That is to say, they are determinations of the one idea of being which I intuit and which is innate. But *I* make an affirmation. An affirmation is the product of my mind. This affirmation of subsistence is called the *word*. These two things (idea and affirmation) are different because real contingent things (limited beings) do not *necessarily* exist. They can or cannot be. Ideas, on the other hand, are necessary. They cannot not be. So we apprehend these two things by different acts, namely intuition (ideas) and affirmation (subsistence of contingent realities). Logically speaking ideas precede subsistence because we do not know the subsistence of a being unless we first know its essence. Another important fact is that we cannot know the subsistence of a thing *per se* but only through the idea we have of it. We know a thing exists because we feel it acting in us and perceive it as an instance of the being we already know in the idea. In the case of contingent, finite things their *essence* is completely different from their *subsistence*. They do not subsist through their own essence but because God has made them subsist. But suppose there was a being whose existence was known *per se*, that is, at the same time both essence and existence. It would be known through one act only of the spirit and it would also be a necessary being because essence is necessary. Such a being is God.

God subsists through his own essence; God is *absolute being*, real and essential being.

²⁷ Elias of Crete, *Com. in Orat. de Theolog. Greg. Naz.* ISG, *ibid*.

²⁸ *De fide ad Gratianum* 1. I, c. V. ISG, *ibid*.

²⁹ ISG, Lib. I, Lez. VIII, p. 22.

John calls the Divine Word in Greek, *logos*. Jerome, writing to Paulinus says that '*logos* has many meanings in Greek. It signifies word, reason, reckoning and cause of individual things by which those which are subsist. All these meanings can be rightly understood of Christ.'³⁰ Obviously no human word can be fully suitable to signify something divine but the Latin *Verbum* or *Word* expresses the second person of the Blessed Trinity more accurately than any other. We have just seen above that the judgement or affirmation of the subsistence of any thing can be also called the word. This is not a mere idea but the 'persuasive adherence of the spirit to the real object. Therefore the term of this affirmative act is not a mere *idea* but a *subsistence*.'³¹ Therefore, says Rosmini, it is admirably suited to the second person of the Blessed Trinity who is absolute and subsisting Being, manifested through himself in virtue of his own act. He goes on to say that many Fathers of the Church say that the Son is called Word because he is the knowledge of the Father. He mentions, Dionysius of Rome, Athanasius, Eusebius, Hilary, Augustine, Fulgentius, Cyril and John Damascene.³² The word *reason* very often indicates an *idea* used in reasoning. But what we first observe in the Son is not of being the reason for things but being generated by the Father. *Reason* is also used of our *subjective* faculty of reasoning so it is not suitable for designating the Son except for the fact that he is the origin of this faculty in us.

Some Fathers observe that the word *logos* belongs to the Son because he proceeds from the Father not with passion or corruption but as knowledge proceeds from the mind. Rosmini here mentions Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Ambrose, John Chrysostom, and Theophylact.³³ Rosmini points out that not all knowledge proceeds from the mind because ideas proceed from the idea of being (determinations of it) which is given to the mind which intuitively it. But the interior word, that is, the affirmation of subsistent things does proceed from the mind and therefore the expression of Word is more suitable for the Son.

In Lezione XXII Rosmini addresses the fact that all special truths are reduced to one, namely the Word who is Truth. 'All revealed truths are reduced to the Word as to their principle in which they are eminently contained and they are simply so many partial applications to created things....'³⁴ Undoubtedly the people of the Old Covenant would have known this because they received special revealed truths, and their knowledge of the Word, though not positive or perceptive, was negative and symbolic and an object of faith. Jewish theology would have sprung from reflection

³⁰ Jerome, *Epistula LIII, ad Paulinum. De studio scripturarum*. Cf. ISG, Lez. XVI, pp. 35–36.

³¹ ISG, *ibid.*

³² Dionysius of Rome with Athanasius, *Ep. de Sententia Dionysii*; Athanasius, *De definitione*; Eusebius, *De praeparatio evangelica* and *De demonstratio evangelica*; Hilary, *De Trinitate*; Augustine *In Joannis evang. Tractatus* and *De Trinitate*; Fulgentius, *Ad Monimum* and *Ad Thrasmundum regem*; Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate* and *De Trinitate*; John Damascene, *De Fide*. Details in ISG, *ibid.*, p. 36.

³³ Gregory Nazianzen, *Orationes IV, De Theologia*; Basil, *Hom. in b.1*; Ambrose, *De Fide*; John Chrysostom, *Hom II in Joann.*; Theophylact, *in b.1*. Cf. ISG, Lez. XVI, p. 37.

³⁴ ISG, Lez. XXII, p. 55.

on such truths. The thinking of the early Church regarding the divine Word gives us a plausible clue as to how the name of Word applied to God was used in the Old Testament. St Paul, commenting on the words of Deuteronomy 'But the word is very near to you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it',³⁵ interprets them of Christ according to the Spirit of Christ who had enlightened him. The word used here in Deuteronomy is '*sermo*'. He says, 'But what does it say? The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved.'³⁶ Now we know that the gift of faith is infused into us in Baptism and we are given the perception of the Word through an indelible character and through grace. So we can pronounce externally what we feel internally, something which the people of the old dispensation could not do.

The word '*sermo*' of Deuteronomy, then, signifies a doctrine revealed by God objectively considered, whereas for us it means Christ himself, the Word, the revealing subject and person in the knowledge of whom all that doctrine is understood. So the Fathers who translated and used the word '*sermo*' instead of the word '*Verbum*' were not universally followed. Rosmini mentions the Fathers who use the word '*sermo*'. Tertullian, Cyprian, Hilary, Lactantius, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and one or two others.³⁷

The word '*sermo*' is not unsuitable for expressing the internal Word of the Father but it was not suitable for expressing the personal revelation of the Word to human beings, because this does not signify just the doctrine, but the teacher, Christ himself.

Rosmini quotes several passages from Scripture among which is one from John 'The only Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known',³⁸ and Paul 'for I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified'.³⁹ And in the Book of the Revelation, 'And from Jesus Christ the faithful witness',⁴⁰ and 'Then I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse! He who sat upon it is called faithful and true, ... and the name by which he is called is The Word of God'.⁴¹ 'What was simply a doctrine prior to Christ now with the Incarnation becomes also a person *per se notum* (known through himself), and the ancient writings received a new interpretation in the light of this. This interpretation is mentioned by Christ himself when he said to the pilgrims of Emmaus "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken... And beginning with Moses and

³⁵ *Deut* 30: 14. Cf. *ISG*, *ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

³⁶ *Rom* 10: 8–10. Paul uses here the word '*sermo*' (the Greek *rhema*) not 'logos' presumably because he was using the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy which happens to use 'rhema.' Cf. *ISG*, *ibid.*

³⁷ Tertullian, *De Trinitate* and *Adversus Hermogenem*; Cyprian, *Adversus Jud*, l. II, c. III and VI; Hilary, *De Trinitate* l. II; Lactantius, *Divinae institutiones* (?), l. IV, c. 8 and 9; Ambrose, *De Fide contra Arianos*, c. II and *Hexameron* l. I, c. 9 and l. II, c. 2; Jerome, *In Isaiam commentarii* c. II, and *In epistula ad Ephesios comment.* c. I; Augustine *In Joannis evang. Tractatus*, Tract. 54 and 108. (Question mark, mine).

³⁸ *Jn* 1: 18.

³⁹ *1 Cor* 2: 2.

⁴⁰ *Rev* 1:5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 19: 11–13.

all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself”,⁴² and after his resurrection, ‘then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.’⁴³

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.⁴⁴

Having stated that the Word was in the beginning St John now tells us *where* the Word was, that is, *with* God (apud Deum). Rosmini points out that we come to know the Father through the Word. This is a logical progression, not a temporal one. As soon as the Son reveals himself he reveals the Father: ‘Philip, he who has seen me has seen the Father.’⁴⁵ This is in the order of understanding. But in the order of generation, the Father precedes the Word. In natural philosophy, too, we are rendered intelligent by the notion of *ideal* being which shines before our mind and is the first thing we know. We then pass to the relationship it demonstrates with *real absolute* being. But ideal being comes to us from real absolute being.

When we say ‘the Word was with God’, God signifies the Father. Rosmini mentions several Fathers of the Church who mention this, namely, Origen, John Chrysostom, Basil, Athanasius, Hilary, and also the medieval bishop, Theophylact.⁴⁶ With these words John shows the distinction of persons. Rosmini adds that when we use the word God we apply this firstly to the Father as that person of the Trinity who is the principal source of the other two persons, to whom he gives his identical divine nature. The Father who is divine subsistence, subsistent Being by his proper act renders himself *per se* known (the Word) and loved (the Holy Spirit) which is the procession of the other two persons. The word *God* is suited to that person who is first of all subsistence and has not received it, because to have received it is not expressed in the word *God*. When by God we wish to signify the Son or the Holy Spirit, we add the relationship indicating the procession of the persons.

That the Word *was* with God indicates that the Word was present to God his Father from all eternity. Rosmini quotes the book of Ecclesiasticus, ‘All wisdom is from the Lord God, and hath been always with him, and is before all time.’⁴⁷ The author, he says, is not content with ‘was with him always’ adding ‘and IS before all time’ in the present tense to signify eternity.

As regards the Word being *with* God (apud Deum), Rosmini points out that creatures cannot be with God, strictly speaking, because of God’s transcendence, but the Word must have a divine nature to be *with* God, so the Evangelist adds ‘*and the*

⁴² Lk 24: 25–27. Cf. ISG, Lib. I, Lez. XXII, pp. 59–60.

⁴³ Lk, 24: 45.

⁴⁴ Jn 1:1, In principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum. Cf. ISG, Lib. I, Lez. XXV, p. 64.

⁴⁵ Jn 14: 9.

⁴⁶ Origen, *In Joannem commentarii*; John Chrysostom, *Hom II*; Basil, *In Hom. I*; Athanasius, *In oratione, quod Deus de Deo sit Verbum*; Hilary, *De Trinitate*; Theophylact, *In Hom.1*.

⁴⁷ Eccl 1: 1 (Douai). ISG, Lib. I, Lez. XXVI, p. 66.

Word was God. We are dealing with an absolute, therefore necessary, therefore eternal Word who cannot stand alone but who requires as a necessary relation HE WHO pronounces him. So “*with*” primarily signifies nearness of place then relationship of nature. Rosmini states that human language cannot explain with one expression how the Son is with the Father. He enumerates four expressions from Scripture denoting the connection of Christ with the Father: a) the Word was *with* the Father; b) ‘I am *in* the Father and the Father is in me’;⁴⁸ c) ‘...the only Son who *is in the bosom of the Father*, he has made him known’;⁴⁹ and d) ‘he is *seated at the right hand of the Father*’.⁵⁰ This last expression is used of the humanity of Christ who, by his hypostatic union with the Word, is placed at the right hand of God. We use ‘*with*’ to signify nearness because we have no example of two things with the same substance but diversity of persons. The nearest we can get is to say the *accidents* are in the *substance*, for instance ‘colour is in the body.’ Clearly the word ‘in’ cannot be applied to God in this accidental fashion. The third expression cannot be taken strictly because God has not got a bosom. But it is the best one because it best expresses the in-existence of the persons and we have a simile of a baby in its mother’s womb and the generation of the child. So all these expressions help each other provided we exclude everything which cannot be applied to the Divine Nature.

Some Fathers, namely Irenaeus, Athanasius, Augustine, Fulgentius, and Victorinus said that the expression *apud Deum* (with God) signified the same as *in Deo* (in God).⁵¹ They wished to say that both expressions signified the in-existence of the persons and the unity of substance and this is correct. But from another point of view the expressions differ in value as the following Fathers observed: John Chrysostom, Cyril of Alexandria, Theophylact, and Theodore of Mopsuestia. They note that of substances or persons we say ‘*apud*’ (with) but as regards accidents we say they are *in* the substance. So they concluded that the words of John ‘and the Word was *with* God’ proved the subsistence of several persons countering the Sabellians who denied a plurality of persons in the Trinity.⁵²

Furthermore the word ‘with’ indirectly denotes *authority*, as St Thomas and the Fathers, John Chrysostom, and Hilary observe. For we would not say, strictly speaking, that the king was in the presence of his soldiers but that the soldiers were in the presence of their king. So we do not say the Father is present to the Son but the Son is present to the Father. But of course the three persons of the Blessed Trinity are equal in dignity. However, there is the relationship of origin through which the Father generates the Son. So it is suitable to say that the Son is present to the Father, whereas it would not equally be suitable to say that the Father is with the Son.

⁴⁸ *Jn* 14: 10.

⁴⁹ *Jn* 1: 18.

⁵⁰ *Mk* 16: 19.

⁵¹ Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*?, 1, III, cap. VIII; Athanasius, *Oratio Quod Deus de Deo sit Verbum*; Augustine, *De Trinitate* VI, II; Fulgentius, *Ad Monimum* III, II; Victorinus (Marius), *Contra Arium* 1 II. (Question mark, mine).

⁵² *ISG*, Lib. I, Lez. XXVI, p. 69, note 1.

Rosmini notes differences between human generation and divine generation. Unlike human generation where the generated person is separate from the generator, the Word remains continually in the Father. The Word is in the bosom of the Father. Secondly unlike our generation in time, divine generation simply *is*, nothing new happens in it. Thirdly with human generation there is a beginning, a middle and an end to the action. Divine generation is always in complete immanent act. ‘...hence we say at the same time that both the Word is always being conceived and is always conceived.’⁵³

He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.⁵⁴

Rosmini begins Book 2 of his Commentary with an analysis of verse 2 of John’s gospel. This Reading is an excellent example of Rosmini’s exegesis in company with the Fathers. His main premiss is that John teaches that the Word is not a creature. He was not one of the things which were made, but all things were made through him. Saying ‘*and without him was not anything made that was made*’ destroys one of the main arguments of the Arians, namely, that all things were made through the Word except the Word himself who was made by the Father; because if one of the things that were made was the Word, the words of the Evangelist ‘that not one of the things made was made without the Word’, would not be true. Also if the Word was in the beginning with the Father, he cannot have been made because that which *IS* has no need of being made.

Rosmini examines the words of John at greater length. There are two renditions of the verses: a) *Omnia, per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil, quod factum est; in ipso vita erat...*; and, b) *Omnia, per ipsum facta sunt, et sine ipso factum est nihil. Quod factum est, in ipso vita erat...*’ Also the Latin uses the word *nihil* (nothing) whereas the Latin equivalent of the Greek is *nec unum* (not one).

Commenting on these two different versions of John’s words, Rosmini says that many Fathers joined the last words ‘*quod factum est*’ to the words which follow i.e. *in ipso vita erat*, (*Quod factum est, in ipso vita erat* [What was made was life in him]). Rosmini follows the common reading which joins ‘*quod factum est*’ to the *preceding* verse, (...*factum est nihil, quod factum est.*) because he believes that it is necessary to explain that ‘all things’ (*omnia*) does not just mean ‘all things’ but ‘all things *made*.’ This excludes the three divine persons who were not made. All things that were made were made through the Word. Then he goes on to say that the Greek construction of the text seems more natural than the Latin, which uses the word *nihil*. The Greek words *oude hen* are translated as *neque unum* (not one). This perfectly connects with ‘*quod factum est*’ (*ho gegonen*) which follows. The Fathers say that the second version (*Quod factum est, in*

⁵³ *ISG, ibid.*, p. 70.

⁵⁴ *ISG, Lib. II, Lez. XXX, p. 7. Jn 1: 2–3.* ‘Hoc erat in principio apud Deum. Omnia, per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil, quod factum est.’ (Latin Vulgate).

ipso vita erat) has a very important and sublime sense, but, Rosmini says, this can be found in the preceding words.

Mostly it was the Latin Fathers who used the reading which joined *quod factum est* to the following verse, thus, *Quod factum est, in ipso vita erat*. The Greeks, on the whole, placed the full stop after *quod factum est*. Rosmini mentions John Chrysostom, Theophylact, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Leontius, Eutimes, and Elijah of Crete. Ambrose calls this the reading of the Egyptians and the Alexandrians.⁵⁵ St Thomas recognises the Greek reading and attributes it to John Chrysostom. The latter was so great an authority that all the Greeks followed his punctuation, namely *sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est*.⁵⁶

The Latin, *nihil quod factum est* is not so clear and free of ambiguity as in the Greek *oude hen ho gegonen*. Some Greek Fathers attribute the full stop before *ho gegonen* to the Eunomian and Macedonian heretics. Origen, the precursor of these errors, followed it as well. He said that the Holy Spirit was made by the Word through whom all things were made and the Macedonians followed him saying that the Holy Spirit was a creature. The Manichaeans, using the Latin *nihil quod factum est*, take *nihil* as a thing made without the Word.⁵⁷ But the Greek excludes this error because it uses *nec unum* i.e. *not even one thing that was made*. Augustine interprets *nihil quod factum est sine ipso* for *sin*.⁵⁸ This teaching is true says Rosmini, but not sustained by the Greek *nec unum quod*.

Hopefully the above analysis and explanation is clear enough to the reader. It is certainly a good example of how Rosmini explains his own exegesis of the text and enlists the Fathers to support his explanation.

Rosmini continues his observations on these verses of John saying that the fact that ‘the creation of the universe was made in the Word is a truth which was announced in an initial and negative way from the beginning of revelation.’⁵⁹

Many Fathers interpreted the Word as the principle of things in the words of Genesis, ‘In the beginning (*principio*) God created the heavens and the earth.’⁶⁰ Jesus Christ stated expressly that he is the beginning, since, in answer to the Jews who asked ‘who are you?’ he replied ‘The *beginning*, who also speak unto you.’⁶¹ And in the book of Revelation, John calls him, ‘the true and faithful witness, the *beginning* of God’s creation.’⁶²

Earlier,⁶³ commenting on the words ‘*all things were made through him*’, Rosmini reiterates that the divine Word is the subsistence of being *per se notum*. It is object, but not ideal object as are the essences of finite things. It is *subsistent object* and, therefore,

⁵⁵ Ambrose, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 36. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*, note 1, p. 78.

⁵⁶ John Chrysostom, *In Joann.* p. I. Lect. II. ISG, *ibid.*

⁵⁷ Cf. Jerome, *in Manich.* c. 2. Augustine, *De nat. boni contra Manichaeos*, c. XXV. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*

⁵⁸ Augustine, *In Joannis evang. Tractatus*, I; *Ep. CL, contra Arianos*, and *Soliloquia*, c. 4 and 5. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*

⁵⁹ ISG, Lib II, Lez. XXXVIII, p. 95.

⁶⁰ *Gen.* 1: 1.

⁶¹ *Jn* 8: 25 (Douai). Cf. ISG, *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁶² *Rev* 3: 14. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*

⁶³ ISG, Lib. II, Lez. XXXIV, pp. 84–85.

object which is at the same time subject or person in its objectivity in so far as it feels and lives as living object. This might seem a contradiction, but the fact is that we can consider the Word under two aspects: a) as object through its essence, as light and b) as personal subsistence. There is, of course, no real distinction in the Word but only two aspects of our mind based on the fact of our twofold relationship with him. In creatures we distinguish the essence of a thing, that which makes it what it is (the idea of it) from its subsistence (its reality). So in so far as we consider the *essence* of the thing coming from the Word, we consider the Word as object or light, as making things known. In so far as the *subsistence* of things comes from the Word, as from a cause, we consider it as creative power producing subsistence. If we consider the Word as subsistence and therefore also as creative power, he has the same subsistence and the identical creative power of the Father who communicates it to him. But if we consider the Word as object, as being light *per se notum* we can say that the Father makes all things through his Word.

Let us now return to what we were saying. '*The true and faithful witness*'; refers more to the Word as object, that is, that which makes all things known, and '*the beginning of God's creation*' more to the Word as subsisting and effective agent. As we have just said these two properties are not divided. When we say '*true and faithful witness*' we do not consider the Word as light in the abstract but as personal object and illuminator, the object person, and when we say '*beginning of God's creation*' we do not express only an operating activity, because the Word is the principle of creatures both as object and as subsistence.

Rosmini goes on to say that the sentence of Genesis agrees with the Psalm 'In the beginning, O Lord, thou foundest the earth.'⁶⁴ Origen comments: 'what is the principle of all things unless our Lord and Saviour of all things, Jesus Christ, the first born of all creation? In him, therefore, our beginning, that is in his Word, God made heaven and earth.'⁶⁵ Basil also interprets the words of Genesis in the same way and calls the Word, *artifex*.⁶⁶ Ambrose says, 'In this principle, therefore, that is, in Christ, God made heaven and earth.'⁶⁷ Augustine agrees, 'In this principle, O God, you made heaven and earth, in your Word, in your Son, in your power, in your wisdom, in your truth.'⁶⁸ Jerome writes, 'In the head of the book it was written of me, that is, in the beginning, Genesis.'⁶⁹

Rosmini goes on to apply this word 'principio' or 'principle' to the Word. He says the term applies to him in the most absolute way both in the ideal and the real order, that is, in the order of knowledge and in the production and conservation of created things. As we have seen the Word is *being per se notum* (being known through itself), in

⁶⁴ Ps 101: 26 (Douai). Cf. ISG, Lez. XXXVIII, p. 96..

⁶⁵ Origen, *In Genesim commentarii*, Hom I. Cf. ISG, *ibid*.

⁶⁶ Basil, *In Gen.* Hom. I, [Hexaemeron?]. Cf. ISG, *ibid*. (Work and question mark, mine).

⁶⁷ Ambrose, *Hexaemeron*, 1. I. c. 4. Cf. ISG, *ibid*.

⁶⁸ Augustine, *In Gen.1* II: 78, 9. Cf. ISG, *ibid*.

⁶⁹ Rosmini quotes Jerome, 'the book of the tradition of Genesis', N. 31 (*Quaestiones Hebraicae in Genesim?*). (Work and question mark, mine). ISG, *ibid*.

other words intelligibility itself. For human beings the Word is the objective principle of natural and supernatural knowledge. As regards natural knowledge, it is the remote principle because the objective principle of natural knowledge is the *idea of being* which comes from the Word without the Word revealing itself to us. But the Word is the proximate principle of knowledge in the supernatural order. It is either internal, infused by grace by means of an immediate communication to us of the Word or his gifts; or external, revealed and taught by words and signs. In ancient times the Word communicated himself through his gifts by means of the natural and written law, but not yet personally. With regard to this revealed knowledge of the Old Testament, the Word was the remote principle. Hence this knowledge was imperfect. With regard to the New Testament and the perfect knowledge revealed through Christ, the Word, he is the immediate principle. In the order of reality St Thomas teaches that the Word is principle in two ways, as containing the reason of things, their ideal essence, and because he makes them subsistent. These two aspects are those under which Rosmini believes the Word should be considered, viz. as *object* and as *subsistent person*. He says that they are mentioned in the words of Christ ‘*The beginning, who also speak unto you.*’⁷⁰ ‘As if he said “I, the person, am the principle through which, and in which, all things were made; and I am also the principle of knowledge which now I communicate to you by speaking to you”.’⁷¹

If we consider the Word under the aspect of causing things to subsist, he is equal to the Father, not less, as the Arians said.⁷² They said that the words ‘all things were made by him’ mean by the Father alone who also made the Word. But St John had said that the Word was already in the beginning with God. They also said that God made everything through the Word as through an instrument, a servant, a disciple. The Fathers refer to this error.⁷³ Rosmini also refers to several passages of the Scriptures.

So the Word has the identical subsistence and power as the Father. When we say that the Father acts through the Son this does not mean that the Son is the instrument of the Father nor that he is less than the Father. Origen had wrongly asserted that the Son was the servant and instrument of the Father.⁷⁴ Rosmini says that the Council of Sirmia condemned the Arians. But it appears, nevertheless, to have had a chequered existence regarding its views on the Trinity.⁷⁵ Interpreting the words of Genesis, ‘let

⁷⁰ *Jn* 8: 25. ‘Principium et loquor vobis (Douai).

⁷¹ *ISG*, Lib. II, *Lez.* XXXVIII, p. 98.

⁷² *ISG*, Lib. II, *Lez.* XL, p. 102.

⁷³ See Athanasius, *Contra Arianos*, Serm. III; Cyril of Alexandria, *In Joannis Commentarius*, 1.I and *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate* L.V c. III. The Fathers have shown that the word ‘through’ has not just the significance which the Arians attribute to it. Athanasius, *De communi essentia*; Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto*; John Chrysostom, *In Joannem homiliae*, Hom. IV. *ISG*, *ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷⁴ Origen, *In Joannem commentarii*, lect. I.

⁷⁵ Sirmium condemned Arianism in 348 and 351. But the ‘Second Formula of Sirmium’ apparently held that the Son was inferior and subordinate to the Father and that the Holy Spirit existed through the Son. Cf. *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, The Catholic University of Washington, 1967, Vol. 13, p. 260.

us make man in our image, after our own likeness',⁷⁶ it understood them as said by the Father to the Son and that in the creation of things the Son complied with the Father. Hilary, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Eusebius had said the same.⁷⁷ Rosmini says it was not the intention of the Council to make the Son subordinate to the Father. Cyril of Alexandria, commenting on the above quotation, says 'let us make man' is not said of a superior to a subordinate but of an equal to an equal.⁷⁸ In fact all three persons co-operate equally. So the words of this Council, that the Son complied with the Father, must be understood in the sense that he had his creative power from the Father, and could create with the power and nature he had from the Father.

In him was life and the life was the light of men

To conclude this chapter let me say a few words on Rosmini's commentary regarding the words *In him was the life and the life was the light of men*.⁷⁹ In Readings LI–LIII Rosmini again refers to the creation of man in the image and likeness of God which he also dealt with in his *Antropologia soprannaturale*.⁸⁰

We have seen that the Word is absolute being in the form of object-person. And in this Word is life, communicated from the Father to the Son. Now how does it happen that the life which is in the Word is the light of men?

This light is the object of the human spirit which it makes intelligent. But it is not merely object but object-life, subsisting object, *per se loveable* and *per se understood*. So when John says, 'and the life was the light of men' we are not dealing with the creation of a merely sensitive being. Merely sensitive being does not require the life of the Word to be communicated as light, because merely sensitive beings e.g. animals, are not intelligent. Augustine says, 'cattle are not illuminated, because cattle do not have rational minds which can see wisdom (objective wisdom). But man, made in the image of God, has a rational mind through which he is capable of recognising wisdom. Therefore that life, through which all things are made, is light, not of every living being but the light of men.'⁸¹ The light which comes from the Word is not mere object but life-light, and life is feeling and therefore reality. It is not a mere idea. The life which St John is talking about is not the bare idea of being. Mere ideal being would be light and not life, because the simple idea of being does not give a real feeling but a pure intuition. The life he talks about is intellectual life, and life-light *per se* loved in the Holy Spirit, so it is also moral life. St John is speaking, here, of the complete light which sanctifies human beings and perfects them in the supernatural

⁷⁶ *Gen* 1: 26.

⁷⁷ Hilary of Poitiers, *De Synodis*, c. XIII; Clement of Alexandria; Tertullian, in 1. *Adversus Praxean*; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*, p. 103, note 4.

⁷⁸ Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate*. Cf. ISG, *ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Jn* 1: 4.

⁸⁰ See above chapter 8.

⁸¹ Augustine, *In Joannis evangelium Tractatus*, I, 18. (Rosmini's addition in brackets). ISG, Lez. LI, p. 123.

order. So Jesus says, 'I am the light of the world: he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'⁸²

When we talk about supernatural life in this context we are not referring to redeemed human beings who are given supernatural life in baptism. This is a new creation. We are referring to the creation of the human race in the book of Genesis. 'Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being.'⁸³ This breath of life is the life which is light and which is in the Word. So man was constituted not just in the natural order but also in the supernatural order. There was a real communication of the Word.

We read: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....'⁸⁴ 'In man also are found the three forms of being analogous to those which constitute the three divine persons in God, namely, the subjective form, the objective form which is given to man to intuit and the moral form in the inclination and harmony of the subject to the objective being manifested to him. Therefore the three forms of life, the real, the intellectual and the moral which unites the first two and in whose loving embrace it consists.'⁸⁵ But the objective form of being is not given to man in such a way that it forms part of him, he is subject and cannot become object, otherwise he would become God! The object being is the *image* of being as Scripture says. The Fathers observe that man is not *made the image* of God but *made to the image* of God because he *intuits* the image of God at his creation. On the other hand, when man was created he was made in the image of God through his perception of the Divine Word. He was placed in a supernatural state and endowed with divine grace. But grace does not constitute an element of his nature. In his natural state he has only the intuition of being, not a perception of it.

I began this chapter by explaining that the *Commentary* was written for the most part when Rosmini was in Naples, Gaeta and Caserta. Giovanni Battista Manzi was a student at Naples in the house of the Missione dei Vergini and got to know Rosmini who was staying there in 1849. He was one of 32 students all of whom had a great esteem for Rosmini. The latter's troubles were at their height but one would never have thought it to look at him, always affable and smiling. 'This clearly revealed his tranquillity which had to come from his joy at being able to dictate those immortal pages on the Gospel of St John. Part of this sublime treatise was written at the Vergini, and I recall him asking one of my companions to take to him in the library a work of St Augustine, among others, as he needed it because he was commenting on the Gospel of St John. I even believed that he was internally happy. Seeing him follow the Pope, surrounded by the esteem of those cardinals who were guests at the Vergini, Cardinals Patrizi, Barberini, Ostini and the priest Hohenloe, who, as I experienced,

⁸² *Jn* 8: 12.

⁸³ *Gen* 2. 17.

⁸⁴ *Ibid* 1: 26.

⁸⁵ *ISG*, Lez., LIII, p. 126.

had a veneration for Rosmini, made me believe that he was at the summit of his fame. A young man at the time, I knew nothing about the Index, nor of the uproar in important circles. I thought he was happy, because, as I have said, he looked serene and peaceful to me.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Giovanni Battista Manzi, Priest of the Mission, Piacenza, 4 August, 1908.

Chapter 10

The Suffering Church

The editor of the 1966 edition of the *Cinque piaghe*, Monsignor Clemente Riva, says in his Preface, that, in this book, Rosmini presents an image of the crucified Church suffering from five wounds analogous with the chief wounds inflicted on the body of Christ. They are: 1) the separation of the clergy from the laity in public worship; 2) the insufficient education of the clergy; 3) the lack of union among the bishops; 4) the nomination of the bishops by civil authority; 5) the state control of the goods of the Church. ‘The book...is not completely taken up with the diagnosis of these evils but its most important part is its positive discourse on the Church... The wounds are simply a motive, a stimulus for Rosmini to enlarge his penetrating examination of the whole immaculate spouse of Christ, with all its immense richness and its infinite capacity to work for the good of its members and the whole of humanity; to be the true instrument of salvation for all mankind.’

In Rosmini’s *Diario personale* we read: ‘1832, 18 Nov. When I was at Correzzola with my friend Mellerio, tutor of Duke Melzi, to whom the villa belongs, I began to write my *Delle Cinque piaghe* which I eventually finished on 11 March 1833. But I revised the last wound at Stresa in November 1847.’² We know that the manuscript lay in his desk until then. In his *Diario della carità* he also mentions it. ‘Nov. 18. On this day Ambrose Phillips suggested the Leicester mission which the Dominicans had given up. We were at Correzzola with Duke Melzi. It was there that I began to write *Delle Cinque piaghe della Chiesa*.’³ Valle, in his *Esame storico-critico* to the Critical Edition of the work, states that there is no mention of the book in Rosmini’s letters at this time.⁴ However, there is a mention on 30 April 1848, in a letter to don Carlo Gilardi at Rome: ‘I will send you shortly, a little work, which I am having printed here, regarding present political matters, as also the *Piaghe*, when they arrive.’ Presumably they were actually at the printers as would appear in a letter to don Alessandro Pestalozza at Milan on 8 May 1848: ‘If the copies of the *Cinque piaghe* arrive where you are, give one of them to don Alessandro for me, to whom very best wishes.’⁵ They are also mentioned in

¹ A.R., *Delle cinque piaghe della santa Chiesa*, Morcelliana, 1966. *Preface* pp. 10–11. ‘It is undoubtedly the most famous of Rosmini’s books, written with great passion and love of the Church. It caused him immense personal damage, but he felt that the renewal of the Church was of such great urgency that he had to be prepared to suffer for it. Rosmini borrowed the image of the “crucified Church” from Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254).’ Antonio Belsito, *The Five Wounds of the Church*, Lecture given at Ratcliffe College, Leicester, 30 October 2004.

² S. A. I. *DP*, p. 425.

³ S. A. I. *DC*, p. 315.

⁴ *CP*, Ed. Crit. Valle, *Composizione dell’opera*, pp. 285–286.

⁵ *EC*, Vol. X, Letter 6150, from Milan, and Letter 6161, from Stresa.

letters to friends. Initially these copies were issued without the author's name and were sent only to them, but it did not remain a secret for long. We read in a letter to don Carlo Gilardi at Rome, on 13 June 1848: 'I am not very pleased by your letter to the Cardinal which accompanied the *Cinque piaghe*, firstly, because you kept quiet about me being the author which is no longer a secret.'⁶ He also wrote from San Bernardino, where he had gone because of bad health, to don Giulio Padulli at Milan, on 21 July 1848, 'The book of the *Cinque piaghe* was well received here by most ecclesiastics and lay people. I also know that the Pope keeps it on his table and can't be displeased with it, as he has several times renewed his invitation to me to come to Rome.'⁷ In the meantime, the work had been published in Brussels without Rosmini's knowledge, and in the following year, 1849, it was printed by Batelli at Naples. Rosmini was against this as he wished to make some alterations and clarifications to avoid possible misunderstandings. In fact, while he was at Naples, he edited a copy of the Batelli printing. This is as far as he got, as the prohibition of his book supervened. Rosmini himself says, in an Author's Note, 'This book, written seventeen years ago was published by me on the election of pope Pius IX. Intended for a few friends, as I state in the conclusion, it was issued in other editions against my wishes by pirate publishing houses. The result was greater publicity and swifter diffusion of the study than I would have desired.'⁸ To conclude: we can say that there are three stages in the composition of this work, 1832–1833, November 1847 and 1849.⁹

In the Critical Edition of Rosmini's works the *Cinque piaghe* is listed among his ecclesiastical apologetics. As far as his use of the Fathers is concerned, we shall find that they are used as exemplars of the riches of the Church and right living. They present an ideal in life. As Bettetini and Peratoner say, 'Rosmini's use of patristic texts offers us continual points for reflection through the comparison and assessment of the pastoral situation of his time. In this regard the author wishes to direct attention to the difference in quality with the aim of discovering in the life of the ancient Church and its eminent pastors elements which can still be important and inspire a pastoral style closer to the Gospel.'¹⁰ In this work simple mention of the Fathers abounds and quotations are typically documentary, that is, not woven into a philosophical or theological argument. One interesting point is that quotations and references to Augustine are no longer in the majority.¹¹ Some 25 Fathers are mentioned in his research into the ancient Church.

It seems to me that the best way to tackle Rosmini's use of the Fathers in the *Cinque piaghe* is to take each wound in turn referring to appropriate passages or comments.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Letter 6192, from Stresa.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Letter 6212.

⁸ *CP, Author's Note*, Translation by Denis Cleary, Fowler Wright Books, Leominster, 1987.

⁹ Cf. Valle, *loc. cit.*, p. 286.

¹⁰ Bettetini-Peratoner, *op. cit.*, p. 515.

¹¹ Cyprian, for instance, is mentioned 17 times, and Athanasius 11 times; whereas, Augustine, 10 times, keeps company with Leo the Great and John Chrysostom and Clement of Alexandria 9 times.

Clearly, in a work such as this where references abound it would not be possible, nor desirable, to refer to each.

The Division between People and Clergy at Public Worship

The first wound is *the division between people and clergy at worship*. Rosmini emphasises that the Sacraments are not intended to be mere spectacles but liturgical actions in which both clergy and laity are to take an active part. ‘...the people in God’s temple were themselves to be an important element in worship.’¹² ‘All the faithful, clergy and people, represent and form in the Church the marvellous unity indicated by Christ when he said: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, in agreement about everything they ask, there am I in the midst of them”.’¹³ Perfect union is present when Christians carry out their respective roles, understanding them and being aware of what they are doing. Rosmini saw the separation from the Church in worship, through a lack of understanding, to be the first wound in the mystical Body of Christ. He sees two reasons for this; firstly, that a full living instruction is lacking. Expressions are repeated without any real in-depth explanation. Teachers themselves are not informed. This leaves hearers unmoved. Secondly, the language of the Church ceased to be the language of the people. With the demise of Latin came a lack of understanding in the uneducated faithful.

Although it has been said that Rosmini desired the vernacular in the liturgy this was not his intention. In an Author’s Note at the beginning of the work he says, ‘Without disapproving explicitly of the suggested use of modern languages in the sacred liturgy, I go on immediately to say that the clergy, given suitable instruction, could overcome the disadvantage imposed by a dead language. It has rightly been desired that I add an explicit disapproval of the opinion, censured by the Church, which favours adoption of the vernacular in the sacred liturgy. I have accepted this...’¹⁴ Rosmini never got to publish a revised edition of his work. However in chapter 1 he gives, as his opinion, that he does not think it fitting that the liturgy be translated into the vernacular. He gives some positive reasons for retaining Latin and other ancient languages in the Greek and Oriental churches: they reflect the immutability of the faith; they unite many different Christian peoples in a single rite with the same sacred tongue; they impress the unity and greatness of the Church; they give an other-worldly atmosphere, through their sense of age and mystery; they offer a sense of re-assurance to worshippers; they have been adapted by the saints to express fittingly the divine mysteries. Then Rosmini enumerates the disadvantages of the vernacular: The loss of the advantages he has just mentioned; the great number of modern languages would entail immense work and cause severe division amongst the people; unity and concord would suffer. Modern languages are variable and unstable and would bring constant changes to the stable character of what is sacred; such changes could not be given

¹² *CP*, c. I, n. 14, p. 26, [n. 14, p. 10].

¹³ *Mt* 18: 19–20. Cf. *CP*, n. 15, p. 27, [n. 15, p. 11].

¹⁴ *CP*, Avvertimento, p. 13, [Author’s Note].

continual consideration; people attached to the uniformity and stability of their worship in childhood would be unnerved by these changes; modern languages would not always have been adapted sufficiently to express fittingly the entire content of the ancient languages. People who do not approve of the vernacular in the liturgy will readily associate themselves with these sentiments. It is interesting that Rosmini does not mention the fact that the languages of the liturgy were not originally in Latin. What he would say at the present time is anybody's guess. But he was always a devoted son of the Church and times have changed. However, some of the difficulties he mentions still apply and show his perspicuity in the matter. At the time of writing, the updating of the language of the Missal in English appears to be causing quite a few headaches!

With these few remarks we come to the end of the first chapter. As has been seen, the Fathers are not quoted. But the above comments are needed for the completion of the topic, and we can now move on to the next wound which deals with *the insufficient education of the clergy*.

The Insufficient Education of the Clergy

Rosmini begins by stating that in the finest period in the history of the Church the faithful were taught by word both through preaching, and by words and rites in the liturgy. Holy men did the preaching and communicated to others their own holiness. The rites of the Church, effective in themselves, were made even more effective by the dispositions of those who took part. Rosmini makes the telling point that priests emerged from the ranks of these good people. A crowd would appeal for a layman as pastor and in a few days he would become a proven bishop. Examples are Ambrose, Alexander, Martin and Peter Chrysologus. He points out that in his own time the clergy are no better than the faithful! They come from Christians who do not understand the ceremonies of the Church and who are uncomprehending onlookers. It would not occur to them that they are members of the one mystical body of Christ. 'Only great men can form great men. This is another merit of education offered to priests in earlier ages; they were taught by the best men the Church possessed. The opposite is the second reason for the insufficient education of modern priests.'¹⁵

In the first centuries the bishop's home was the seminary for priests and deacons. The latter learnt from a holy person who combined learning with pastoral practice. Bishops like Alexander had candidates like Athanasius. Instruction was apostolic because the likes of Irenaeus, Pantaenus and Hermas drew their wisdom from the disciples of the apostles such as Clement, Timothy, Titus, Ignatius and Polycarp. Rosmini quotes Irenaeus who has left us a description of his own training under Polycarp.¹⁶ The result of this early education was a constant stream of great men. The government of the Church benefited and such priests were respected. Bishops jealously reserved the education of priests to themselves. On rare occasions others

¹⁵ *CP*, c. II, n. 27, p. 39, [n. 27, p. 22].

¹⁶ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, L. V. c. XX. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 40, [p. 23, and note 3, p. 196].

were allowed to preach. John Chrysostom was greatly honoured to be commissioned by Flavian, Bishop of Antioch. Augustine's talents were recognised by Valerian, Bishop of Carthage. In the school of Alexandria teachers were well-known for their extraordinary knowledge and holiness.¹⁷ A simple priest was held in great honour. Irenaeus was introduced to Pope Eleutherius as 'a man full of fervour in witnessing to Jesus Christ. This is the recommendation we give him...'¹⁸

The Middle Ages saw tremendous disasters and the nations fled for help to religion and now asked not just for spiritual help, but aid on a human level. The clergy found themselves at the head of these peoples. The Church was flooded with worldly honours, and lost its poverty so much recommended by the early Fathers. The bishops were overwhelmed by worldly affairs which distracted them from their spiritual duties, such as preaching and training the clergy, and their own recollection. Rosmini quotes, at length, Gregory the Great, bemoaning his fate. He says that he was, 'under the flag of the church government to be tossed about and often submerged by the waves of the world.'¹⁹ And, 'Dressed as a bishop, I have returned to the world. Modern conditions subject me in my pastoral duty to more cares than I ever had in my life as a layman...earthly business makes it impossible for me not only to preach about the Lord's miracles, but even to meditate on them...'²⁰

Paradoxically as kings rose in virtue the clergy sank into utter corruption. At the beginning, the latter were reluctant to engage in worldly affairs but they grew used to them. The people's instruction and pastoral care was handed on to the lower clergy. The bishops' residences were no longer centres of learning and holiness and the parish priests became pastors in the eyes of the people. The bishops lorded it over the clergy (though, of course, there were exceptions to this sad state of things) and the people abandoned their bishops.

However, with the passing of time, 'Seminaries were established to overcome the total lack of education amongst the clergy and catechisms were written to remedy the total lack of popular instruction.'²¹ As a result of this, discipline and morals improved. But the Church still lacked great men. Rosmini repeats his dictum, 'Only great men can form great men.'²² Seminarians relied on memorising sections of work rather than all-round instruction. In contrast, Rosmini quotes Clement of Alexandria, speaking of his own teacher, (St Pantaenus according to Eusebius)²³ as 'a Sicilian bee sucking at the flowers in the prophetic and apostolic fields in order to provide the honey of genuine,

¹⁷ *CP, ibid.*, n. 29 note 6, p. 42, [n. 29, note 6, p. 196].

¹⁸ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, L. V. c. V. The unity and submission of clergy and people to the Bishop was recommended by Ignatius in his letters to the various churches. Rosmini quotes Ignatius's letters to the Trallians, to the church at Magnesia and to the church at Ephesus. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 28, note 5, pp. 41–42, [n. 28, note 5, p. 196].

¹⁹ Gregory the Great, *Epist. Lib. XI*, ep. 1, Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 31, p. 44, [n. 31, p. 26].

²⁰ Gregory the Great, *Lib. I*, ep. V. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 44–45, [pp. 26–27] for the rest of the quotation.

²¹ *Ibid.*, n. 34, p. 49, [n. 34, p. 31].

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, L. V, c. 11. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 35 note 15, p. 49. [Source for Eusebius omitted in English].

incorrupt knowledge for the spirit of those who would listen to him.²⁴ Inferior clergy used inferior books. The meagreness and poverty of the books used is the third cause of the insufficient education of the clergy. Some books are classics but others are petty and one-sided. Naturally people were not enthused and had an aversion to study. All this was very unlike the only text book of the early Church, namely the Scriptures, which, as Clement of Alexandria says, ‘enkindles fire in the soul, and simultaneously directs the mind’s vision fittingly towards contemplation, broadcasting its seeds within us and bringing to germination the seed we already possess.’²⁵ This sublime book, says Rosmini, used in the hands of the great men who expounded it, became the nourishment of other great men. Almost all the great works written in the first six centuries were written by bishops. The only exceptions were extraordinary men like Origen and Tertullian.

With the rise of religious orders, centres of learning were established in the monasteries. After the rampages of the barbarians new works were written which were lacking in originality. They were the *compendia* or *summae*. These were needed to facilitate ecclesiastical tradition, enriched over the centuries. This was the era of scholastic theology. These *compendia* and *summae* reached their perfection in the thirteenth century with the marvellous work of St Thomas. Unfortunately the 15th and 16th centuries saw the abandonment of speculation and the core of Christian philosophy was rejected, learning declined and the theologians succeeded the scholastics. Rosmini is scathing about the conditions of his time and the books used in the Seminaries.²⁶ The lack of a suitable method is the fourth and last cause of the wound under discussion.

Rosmini re-iterates the importance of the holiness going hand-in-hand with knowledge in teachers and quotes Gregory Nazianzen who describes the qualifications of a good teacher: ‘It is not sufficient for anyone at all to philosophise about divine truths; this is the work of persons purified in body and soul, or at least marching steadily on the road to purification and already far advanced in meditation on holy things.’²⁷ Clement of Alexandria has given us a description of ancient teachers who ‘took time to weigh carefully and discern among their disciples those capable of following what they were saying. They paid careful attention to their conversation, morals, habits, general tenor of life, bearing and dress; they wanted to know whether they were a highway, or rock, or a path trodden by passers-by, or fertile land, or woodland, or rich well-kept soil that would bear fruit.’²⁸

²⁴ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, L. 1, Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 50, [n. 35, p. 32].

²⁵ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, Lib. 1. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 38 p. 52, [n. 38, p. 34].

²⁶ *CP, ibid.*, n. 40, pp. 56–57, [n. 40, pp. 36–38].

²⁷ Gregory Nazianzen, Orations XXVII and XXIX. Rosmini also refers to Clement of Alexandria *Stromata* Lib. I and *Paedagogus* in f. where he speaks on the disinterestedness, spiritual light and holiness required in a person capable of teaching sacred doctrine. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 43 note 33, p. 60, [pp. 40–41, note 33, pp 201–202. Rosmini gives the first Oration of Gregory as XXXIII].

²⁸ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, Lib. I. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 61, [p. 40].

Finally Rosmini points out that ‘the principle requiring “communication of Christ’s living word, not a repetition of a dead, human word, in ministerial training” produced another consequence. All branches of knowledge came spontaneously to subject themselves to the word and drew unity from it.’²⁹ There were not two educations, one pagan and the other Christian. People were not first harmed by pagan teaching and then put on the right path by Christian teaching. Secular studies reinforced the faith. Origen was trained in the school of Pantaenus, and Gregory Thaumaturgus under teachers like Origen. Jerome says that Origen used secular knowledge to lead to the faith philosophers and learned men who came to his lectures.³⁰ Christ’s word alone was loved and sought. The hidden life was found through prayer, contrition and the liturgy; and their minds were nourished by grace. Rosmini quotes Clement of Alexandria and Origen, speaking about the study of knowledge and the qualities necessary in the recipient.³¹

Rosmini concludes by saying that only the episcopate has the mandate to restore great books and great teachers, but it must be united and not divided; this union was lacking in his times.

Disunion among the Bishops

The great prayer for unity which our Lord made in St John’s Gospel before his passion was principally for an interior unity of faith, hope and love, and the Church can never exist without it. External unity is its outward expression. St Paul also speaks of it in his letter to the Ephesians.³² It is also the source of unity within the episcopate. Cyprian expresses their common feeling in his book *De unitate Ecclesiae* [On the Unity of the Church]. The apostles maintained this two-fold unity; interior unity by their participation in the communion of doctrine and grace; exterior unity by one among them being first. Cyprian says, in one of his letters, ‘God is one, and Christ is one and the Church and the see of Peter established by the word of the Lord are one.’³³ The episcopate is one, held together in its entirety by all together.³⁴ This unity dominated the minds and hearts of the early bishops. The Church enjoyed the same doctrine, the same discipline and the same customs.

There were various reasons for this:

Firstly, the bishops knew each other personally. Possible candidates had been educated in the schools of their own bishops or had been able to know each other by travelling to see one another. Rosmini gives examples. John Chrysostom was educated by Meletius at Antioch who recognised his good qualities. Chrysostom’s companions

²⁹ *CP, ibid.*, n. 44, p. 61, [n. 44, p. 41].

³⁰ Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, c. XXIV. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, note 37, p. 62, [note 37, p. 202]. In this same note Rosmini refers to Gregory Thaumaturgus who explains Origen’s method.

³¹ *CP, ibid.*, n. 45 note 38, pp. 62–63, [n. 45 note 38, pp. 202–203].

³² *Jn* 17; *Eph* 4: 4–6.

³³ Cyprian, *Epistula*, n. XL (XLIII in *The Fathers of the Church*, CUA Press, 1964). Cf. *CP*, c. III, n. 48 note 3, p. 66, [n. 48 note 3, p. 204].

³⁴ Cyprian, *De unitate ecclesiae*, c. III (V in *The Fathers of the Church*, CUA Press, 1958). Cf. *CP, ibid.*, note 4.

were Theodore (later, Bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia) and Maximus (later Bishop of Seleucia in Isauria). Basil, a friend of Chrysostom, was made bishop when a young man. The same sort of thing happened in the West. Among Valerian's disciples, when Jerome visited him, were Chromatius and Heliodorus both of whom became bishops. Then we have Augustine's monastery which nurtured bishops.³⁵ Jerome travelled around specifically to improve his knowledge and to meet eminent ecclesiastics. Orosius travelled from Spain to Africa to see Augustine who sent him on to Jerome.

A *second* reason was that bishops were in correspondence with one another. The obvious example is the letters of the Apostles and their successors. Popes Clement and Soter wrote to Corinth; Ignatius, and Denis of Corinth to various churches. Denis wrote seven letters which are extant and Ignatius wrote six. 'In this letter to the church at Rome St Denis says; "Today we have celebrated the Lord's day and have read your letter. We shall continue to read it for the sake of our instruction, as we do with the letters already sent to us by Clement".'³⁶

Thirdly, bishops visited one another out of mutual charity or zeal for church affairs. Rosmini regrets that in his time dioceses do not communicate, and bishops confine their duties to their own diocese.

Fourthly, assemblies and councils were held frequently. As a result the people's opinions were sought continually and the bishop gave an account to the people of his rule in the diocese and willingly accommodated them. This can be seen in Cyprian's letters. Later Augustine did the same.³⁷ As regards bishops and priests, the latter's opinions were sought in everything which concerned church government.

Fifthly, The metropolitan had authority over the bishops of a province, and greater sees had several provinces. This orderly arrangement of government helped to unify and knit together the whole body of the Church.

And finally, *sixthly*, the overall authority of the Pope gave perennial identity to the whole body of the Church. All these factors combined to give great strength to the early Church.

The barbarian invasions caused the bishops to enter political government. The aim of Providence was to bring religion into the heart of society and sanctify it. But human nature is limited and weak. One evil resulting from this was disunion among the bishops. Once the bishops got involved in worldly affairs and power, access to them became difficult. Meetings of bishops required a tedious preparation through protocol and etiquette. Avarice and power led inexorably to disunion. Antipopes were the true and really great source of dissension and discord in the Western church, especially in the 14th century. 'A constant factor in the history of the Church is that "great temporal power united for a long period with an episcopal see produces innumerable causes of disharmony."³⁸ At first the bishops were reluctant to shoulder

³⁵ *CP, ibid.*, n. 51 note 6, p. 67, [n. 51, note 6, p. 204].

³⁶ Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica*, Lib. IV, c. 23. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 52 note 8, p. 68, [n. 52 note 8, p. 204].

³⁷ Cf. Cyprian, *Epistula XXXVIII*; Augustine, *Sermones*, CCCLV, and CCCLVI. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 54 note 13, p. 70, [n. 54 note 13, p. 205].

³⁸ *CP, ibid.*, n. 63, p. 77, [n. 63, p. 52].

political burdens but their successors took to them all too easily. Inevitably, the bishops, having become bound to the state and involved with secular dominion, became enemies and involved in war and violence. Power and wealth became a source of disharmony. Moreover, dioceses were abandoned not just for political reasons, but so that the bishops could settle down at court. Although things improved as the centuries passed (we call to mind the Council of Trent), the effects still prevailed in Rosmini's day. The Pope was free in a limited way, but bishops were free only in the United States and other non-catholic regions where Catholicism was more or less tolerated. Other bishops were tied to the State and tried to fetter the Pope. Church power had come absorbed into the legal power of the ruler. '...it provides the world with masses of armed men and useless priests.'³⁹ The clergy could no longer mediate between the government and the people. Rosmini himself suffered at the hands of the Austrian government because they did not like prominent men leaving their territory. He had to have a passport to go to Rome and even Piedmont. He was seen as unreliable and a "papalist". 'It is time', he says, 'to reject national churches in which the episcopate is considered the first estate, or a political party, or council of state, or group of courtiers.'⁴⁰ Finally the wealth of the clergy was a source of disunion among the people and bred envy and avarice among nobles and kings.⁴¹ Unfortunately, the clergy reacted by imposing spiritual deprivations and caused rulers to cut themselves off from the church. Readers will recognise many of these evils in the history of the church in England. Rosmini concludes, 'Perhaps the real need is for freedom to allow religion to communicate directly with the heart of the people irrespective of the mediation of the rulers and governments.'⁴²

The Nomination of Bishops by Lay Power

In his chapter on the fourth wound, *the nomination of bishops by lay power*, Rosmini explains how, in the first centuries of the Church bishops were elected 'by the judgement of the clergy and the advice of the people'. The Church consulted the body of the faithful. In those days it was felt that they could assist the clergy in their choice. But as bishops became worldly and engrossed in secular affairs the people grew indifferent to them. The bishops became important to the state and eventually were nominated by the princes. This long chapter is full of documents to illustrate the historical events which shaped the gradual control of the State over the Church. The

³⁹ *CP, ibid.*, n. 69, p. 83, [n. 69, p. 58].

⁴⁰ *CP, ibid.*, n. 71, p. 86, [n. 71, p. 61].

⁴¹ In his treatment of the fourth wound, Rosmini says, with regard to the Church's temporalities, that in the early Church, the ruling principle was, 'It is better to relinquish temporal benefits than defend them at the cost of greater spiritual harm,' and he quotes Augustine, 'Anyone wishing to disinherit his children in order to leave what he has to the Church will have to find someone other than Augustine to take his gift. And please God I am right in saying that this will not be easy.' Augustine, *Sermo, CCCVI*. Cf. *CP*, c. IV, n. 100 note 91, p. 141, [note 91, p. 231].

⁴² *CP*, c. III, n. 73, p. 92, [n. 73, p. 66].

Church fought a losing battle in its determination to maintain the ancient practice of having bishops elected by clergy and people.

‘Already in the 6th century, the ruler’s *placet* began to weigh more heavily in the balance of those choosing a bishop than the merits of candidates. Canons of various councils ruled against the danger and defended freedom of choice.’⁴³ Popes and Councils insisted on freedom of choice for validity until the eleventh or twelfth century, but by this time it had been whittled away and almost lost. Because of public disorder, the clergy arrogated to themselves the election of bishops, excluding the people because lay power was taking control; and amongst the clergy the cathedral canons soon took precedence. A further development was papal “reservations” by which the Holy See reserved the right to election, the appointment of bishops and the reservation of benefices. Rosmini states that he is here considering ordinary and universal reservations. The Council of Basle attacked this practice. The Church had gone too far and was constrained to compromise through the Concordats of Eugene IV (1446) and Nicholas V (1448). A terrible consequence of this was the surrender of the nomination of bishops to the secular powers. However, in Rosmini’s time, things were improving. In England, Ireland, USA and Belgium the Church had regained its rights over the election of bishops.

Feudalism

Feudalism was the cause of the fifth wound, that is, the Church’s lack of control over the administration and use of its temporalities. Barbarian rulers looked on the Church as their vassal and claimed control over its temporalities as a right. The early Church was poor but free. Persecution did not deprive her of freedom of government, nor did the violent appropriation of her possessions damage her true liberty.⁴⁴ At this time she was free of vassalage. The Church had its own traditional standards which governed the acquisition, administration and use of material benefits.

The *first requirement* was that the acquisition of temporalities should depend on spontaneous offerings. This was clear in apostolic times and it was still the rule at the end of the second and beginning of the third century. Tertullian says, ‘Each one who can, puts aside some money monthly, or when he decides. No one is forced; all give spontaneously. These funds are the investments of piety.’⁴⁵ Offerings were given to maintain the clergy, Cyprian would seem to reprove less fervent Christians who did not pay tithes. ‘But now we do not even give a tenth of our patrimony, and, although the Lord orders us to sell, we rather buy and increase.’⁴⁶ Spontaneity only ceased when offerings were enforced by sanctions imposed by the state, in the 8th century.

The *second requirement* was that goods should be possessed, administered and dispensed in common. This was so in the early Church. John Chrysostom ‘longed to

⁴³ CP, c. IV, n 79, p. 98, [n. 79, p. 70].

⁴⁴ CP, c. V, n. 133, p. 183, [n. 133, p. 135].

⁴⁵ Tertullian, *Apologetico*, c. XXXIX. Cf. CP, *ibid.*, n. 136, p. 184, [n. 136, p. 136].

⁴⁶ Cyprian, *De unitate Ecclesiae*, c. XXVI. Cf. CP, *ibid.*, n. 137 note 10, p. 185, [n. 137 note 10, p. 244].

introduce it among his people at Constantinople.⁴⁷ This requirement was preserved for a long time amongst the clergy who received necessary funds from their respective bishops. Later the Church forbade clerics to receive goods alienated from common possessions. In the 4th century the Emperor Valentinian prohibited them from receiving legacies. Ambrose and Jerome did not object to this law. The latter says, 'I do not regret the law, but I am sorry we have merited it. Wounds have to be cauterised, but it is lamentable that we cause these wounds in ourselves. Let there be an heir by all means, but let it be the Church, the mother, nurse and guardian of the flock. Why should we stand between mother and children?' Ambrose also mentions the law of Valentinian saying 'Not that I complain, but that they should know what I do not complain about. I prefer us to be less in money than in grace.' And he adds a little later, 'The Church's possessions are at the disposition of the poor. How many captives has the Church ransomed, how much food has she distributed to the hungry, and how much help to refugees?'⁴⁸

However, when churches were founded far from the cathedral, funds had to be assigned to them. Moreover, with feudalism and vassalage, bishops became loyal to their rulers and became individualistic and led them to dispose of church properties as their own possessions. The lower clergy had to be protected from the cruelty of their bishops.

A *third requirement* in the early Church was that the clergy should use church temporalities only for their strict maintenance, the rest being applied to pious works and especially alms for the poor. Rosmini again refers to the New Testament, namely, the poverty of Christ and the practice of the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles.⁴⁹ He also quotes Isidore of Pelusium who said about the early clergy 'they will glory in voluntary poverty.'⁵⁰ Rosmini quotes, 'Julian Pomerius, a disciple of Augustine who became a priest in France and was master of Caesarius at Arles. He was a great rhetor. He wrote *De vita contemplativa*, the first detailed text regarding the goods of the Church as *the patrimony of the poor*.'⁵¹ Julian says that the priests in early times took on the distribution for the poor and lived as poor men. After speaking of the voluntary poverty of Bishops Paulinus of Nola and Hilary of Arles, he adds, 'It is easy to understand, therefore that holy men like this (who had renounced everything to become followers of Christ) were perfectly aware that the Church's possessions are made up simply of the devotion of the faithful, of satisfaction for sins, and of what belongs to the poor. They never used this wealth for their own benefit as though it belonged to them, but accepted it in trust for the poor. The Church holds its possessions in common with those who have nothing, and therefore cannot share them with people who already have enough of their own. Benefiting the well-off

⁴⁷ *CP, ibid.*, n. 142, p. 187, [n. 142, p. 139].

⁴⁸ Jerome, *Epistula ad Nepotianum*; Ambrose, *Epistula XVII*, Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 143 note 22, p. 188, [n. 143 note 22, p. 244].

⁴⁹ *Mt* 8: 20; *Lk*: 9: 58 and *Acts* 3: 6.

⁵⁰ Isidore of Pelusium, *Epistulae*, Lib. I, V, ep., 21. *CP, ibid.*, n. 151, p. 194, [n. 151, p. 145].

⁵¹ Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. III, p. 67.

means throwing away what is distributed.⁵² Julian goes on to reprove priests who have their own patrimony and still want a share of the common goods of the Church.

In the Middle Ages, the Church's possessions fell under the feudal system. Separate institutions were established for various works of charity which gradually came under the control of lay people.

The *fourth requirement* was that ecclesiastical wealth used for pious and charitable purposes should also be assigned to fixed determined works to prevent self-interest and arbitrariness from interfering in the disbursement of finances. As church riches grew, resources were allotted to definite purposes according to a fourfold division, namely, support of the bishop, the lower clergy, the poor and the upkeep of church buildings. However, feudalism made this requirement impossible.

The *fifth requirement*, was a generous spirit, prompt to give and slow to receive. Rosmini quotes *Acts* 20: 35. Ambrose, says Rosmini, refused donations and legacies if he knew the poor would suffer as a result, 'God does not look for offerings that leave relatives hungry...mercy must begin at home.'⁵³ Augustine had to defend himself against the accusation that he gave with total generosity, but took nothing. The result was, so the complaint ran, that the Church at Hippo received no benefactions and no legacies. Possidius gives examples of Augustine's unselfishness.⁵⁴ John Chrysostom explains in a sermon why the Church accepted fixed, regular donations rather than live, as it used to, on occasional collections from the faithful. They had to do this because of the destitute. 'Your tightfistedness has brought the Church to this state. If things were done according to the laws reaching back to apostolic times, the Church's income would flow without fail and without diminution from your good will. But you are all seeking treasure on earth now, and locking up your wealth in vaults, while the Church has to spend money on widows, virgins, travellers, captives, the handicapped and mutilated, and other needy persons. So how can the Church act otherwise?'⁵⁵ To combat feudalism the Church was forced to impede alienation of goods by the maximum acquisition and preservation of temporalities. This led to avarice on the part of the clergy. This was a far cry from Ambrose's saying, 'The Church's wealth is not to be hoarded, but used to alleviate necessity.'⁵⁶

A *sixth requirement* was to want the administration of her possessions to be made public. Rosmini again quotes the New Testament.⁵⁷ He says that John Chrysostom

⁵² Julian Pomerius, *De vita contemplativa*, L. II, c. IX. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 151 note 36, p. 194, [n. 151 note 36, p. 246].

⁵³ Ambrose, *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*, c. XVIII. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 156 and note 46, p. 198, [n. 156 and note 46, page 247].

⁵⁴ *CP, ibid.*, n. 156, pp. 198–199, [n. 156, p. 150].

⁵⁵ John Chrysostom, *Homilia XXI in epistula ad Corinthios*. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 157, p. 199, [n. 157, pp. 150–151].

⁵⁶ Ambrose, Cf. Gratian, *Corpus iuris canonici*, Caus. XII, q.1, cann. 2, 20, 21. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 159 and note 50, p. 200, [n. 159 and note 51, p. 247].

⁵⁷ 1 *Cor* 16: 2–4.

was not afraid to give an account of his administration of church income, 'And we are ready to inform you of our administration.'⁵⁸

A *final requirement* is that the Church should administer its temporalities watchfully and carefully. Rosmini concludes by saying that the Church has always been at odds with temporal authority, friendly or otherwise. At the same time she has had the greater burden of the care of souls. 'There hasn't been sufficient time to obtain a perfect method of administration. But, 'If we consider what the Church has received during the centuries of her existence, and how much has been lost through lack of serious careful administration, we can only imagine where the Church would be now if her temporalities had always been wisely administered.'⁵⁹

Rosmini shows his great love of the Church, but at the same time was not oblivious to its shortcomings. Riva quotes F. Bonali, 'The Council of Trent laid its healing hand particularly on three wounds: 1) the ignorance of the clergy and the people; 2) the division of the clergy and the estrangement of the clergy and the people with the consequent lessening of social action within the Church; 3) the servile subjection of the clergy to lay power. Three main reforms sprang from these wounds which we can formulate as follows: 1) the education of the clergy and laity; 2) the holding of Synods and the complete restoration of the ecclesiastical hierarchy according to the norms of early Church discipline, from which it would emerge as the guide and enlightener of peoples; 3) the absolute freedom of the Church in social action.'⁶⁰ Rosmini himself mentions improvements which had come about at the time of writing, especially in certain countries.

The *Cinque piaghe* had a chequered existence. Rosmini wondered whether it would be right to 'make a study of the ills of holy Church?' Would it be overbold? Would it be disrespectful to the pastors of the Church? But he decided that it would not be wrong, as he would be writing out of zeal for the good of the Church and for the glory of God. Alas, the book met with opposition and it was placed on the Index two years after its publication. Only during the second Vatican Council in the pontificate of Paul VI was it removed, shortly before the Index was abolished. It was finally recognised as a truly prophetic work and many of his ideas were adopted by the Vatican Council.

Riva lists some of the main themes of the book: 'the living union of the clergy and the faithful in the one people of God; the active and intelligent sharing in the liturgy; Christianity as a mystery of supernatural life; the centrality of the Holy Eucharist; and the word of God; a return to the sources of the Fathers of the Church; the indispensability of a living theology; the grave harm of a hypocritical system of law; in-depth education of the clergy; the union of all the bishops to form one body together with its head, the Roman Pontiff; the recovery, in the Christian community, of the idea of the bishop as father and pastor of the local church; the presence and

⁵⁸ John Chrysostom, *In Ep. Ad Cor.* Hom. XXI. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 161, p. 203, [n. 161, p. 154].

⁵⁹ *CP, ibid.*, n. 164, pp. 204–205, [n. 164, pp. 155–156].

⁶⁰ *CP, Morcelliana, Preface*, pp. 9–10. Cf. F. Bonali, *Le Cinque piaghe di A Rosmini e il Concilio di Trento*, in *Rivista Rosminiana*, XLI (1947), p. 11.

agreement of the faithful in the election of their own bishop; the sense of responsibility and sharing in the life of the church community; the freedom of the church from political powers and earthly goods; the charity of the church towards the poor to whom the goods of the church partly belong; the prevalence of the idea of social justice, a Christian ideal, over the ideal of the individual person which is a pagan notion; the Christian living of the individual and, only after that, that of society; the Christocentric plan in the history of the human race.⁶¹

Naturally, Rosmini is dealing with problems which beset the Church in his own time. They will not correspond completely with our own problems but he says many things which are apposite even nowadays. Quacquarelli sees the *Cinque piaghe* as a book of meditation on the Church as *the mystery of Christ*. Rosmini has an ecclesial vision in harmony with the patristic issues dealt with in Vatican II. namely, the participation of all the faithful in the priestly unity which comes from baptism. This is at the heart of the life of the Church today,⁶² It is worth remembering that Rosmini was 'alone in the [19th] century in basing the principle of the common priesthood of the faithful in an ecclesial community bound to Christ in the priestly unity of clergy and faithful.'⁶³

⁶¹ *CP*, Morcelliana, *Preface*, pp. 11–12.

⁶² Quacquarelli, *R,P*, c. II, p. 54.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, c. II, p. 121.

Chapter 11

The Election of Bishops by Clergy and People

In a letter to Canon Giuseppe Gatti¹, Rosmini says, ‘Because I love the people intensely, I desire union between the people and clergy more than anything else. But I do not mean that people have a direct part in the government of the Church.’² Christ has entrusted the government of the Church to his Apostles and their successors but the people can intervene as advisers. Rosmini explains to Gatti that when he says the election of bishops by clergy and people is of divine right, he intends not *divine constitutive right* but *divine moral right*, the violation of which does not constitute grounds for invalidity. This right demands that elections be carried out freely by the Church and that the Christian people have a voice in these elections. ‘The people are a part of the mystical body of Christ; together with their pastors and incorporated with the Head, they form a single body. In baptism and confirmation they have received the impression of an indelible priestly character. I do not mean that they share in the public priesthood or have any jurisdiction; still less that ecclesiastical jurisdiction has its source in them, as heretics say. This jurisdiction comes immediately from Christ to the episcopate ordered towards unity under Peter. Nevertheless, the ordinary Christian possesses a mystical private priesthood giving him special dignity and power and a feeling for spiritual things. The clergy hierarchical and non-hierarchical, has its rights, but so have the Christian people. Clergy and people enjoy freedom within the limits prescribed by sacred tradition and the laws of the Church; all are free in Christ. For example, the Christian people can and must oppose a bishop openly teaching heresy; they can and must separate themselves from an intruder in a see or a schismatic. Their sense of the supernatural teaches them to do this, and gives them the right to do it.’ Cyprian supports this right and duty.³ This statement regarding the priesthood of the laity is an astonishing insight and truly prophetic, as we have seen since the Second Vatican Council. ‘Indeed, he was alone in the 19th century in establishing the principle of the common priesthood of the laity through an ecclesial community bound to Christ in the priestly unity of clergy and faithful. They were no longer to be a passive faithful cut off from the community, but active with the priests, and engaged in choosing their pastors.’⁴

¹ To Canon Giuseppe Gatti, Stresa, 8 June 1848, *CP*, Appendix I, pp 209 ff, [pp 157 ff].

² *Ibid.*

³ *CP, ibid.*, Letter I, p. 213–214, [p. 161]. Cyprian, *Epistula* LXVIII.

⁴ Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. VII, pp. 121–122. This is still a burning question. ‘A confident Catholic identity — or in terms of the current theology, a deeper sense of *communio* — is currently impeded by a lack of confidence in lay people and local Churches....Cardinal Martini also calls for greater local participation in the selection of bishops. The current system involves consultation to a greater or lesser degree with the local bishops but with clergy, Religious and laity hardly at all, and then only secretly. The process is a disempowering one in which dioceses are left waiting for a decision from on high reached by mysterious

Rosmini goes on to demonstrate that the Fathers of the Church taught that the people's part in the choice of their pastors derived from the divine law. He quotes, firstly Pope St Clement. The Apostles '...HANDED DOWN A RULE FOR FUTURE SUCCESSION so that when they died their ministry and office might be accepted by other proven men. They were either constituted, therefore, by the apostles, or from then on by other outstanding men WITH THE CONSENT AND APPROBATION OF THE WHOLE CHURCH. Those chosen, therefore, will have ministered without fault to the flock of Christ humbly, tranquilly and generously, and WILL HAVE OBTAINED THE UNQUALIFIED APROVAL OF ALL....'⁵ In the *Apostolic Constitutions* we read, 'I Peter, as first amongst you, declare that the person to be ordained bishop is to be without fault in all things, AND CHOSEN BY ALL THE PEOPLE AS THE MOST WORTHY. This is how bishops have always been selected. When a person has been nominated, therefore, without objection on his part, he will give his consent in the assembly of the PEOPLE, presbyterate and all the bishops who are present. The assembly will take place on a Sunday. The president of the assembly must ask the presbyterate and PEOPLE if this is THEIR CHOICE....'⁶ Rosmini further quotes from the *Apostolic Constitutions* about bishops, 'if in some small parish there is no one of a suitable age, but a person can be found whom HIS FELLOW CITIZENS JUDGE worthy of the episcopate because of the maturity and discipline he shows even as a young man, let him be appointed for the sake of peace if he is witnessed to by ALL.'⁷

Rosmini goes on to list successors of Clement among whom are Leo the Great and Gregory the Great. He quotes two passages from Leo pointing to the fact that he appreciated the freedom of people in their choice of pastors. 'When the election of the chief priest is being dealt with, he should be preferred whom the clerics and people have asked for through harmonious agreement... When a metropolitan dies and another must be chosen in his place, the bishops of the province will have to meet in the city of the metropolitan, so that after the wishes of all the clerics and citizens have been discussed, they may choose the best man from among the priests or deacons of the same church.'⁸ 'The wishes of the congregation and the testimony of the people should be expected; the opinions of the nobles and the clerics' choice should be asked for — these are the procedures ordinarily observed in the consecration of bishops by those who know THE DECREES OF THE FATHERS ...The approval of the clergy, the testimony of those in noble rank and the agreement of the

methods.... The Pope's final say in appointing bishops must remain. But there is no reason why lay people, priests and Religious should be unable to hold open, public discussions about the needs of the diocese and the kind of bishop they believe would meet those needs. This local discernment needs to be built into the system.' *The Tablet*, 17 April 2004, p. 3, *The Dialogue the Church Needs*. But note that in 1975 Cardinal Basil Hume sought the opinion of clergy and laity about a successor for the Archdiocese of Westminster. Cf. *The Tablet*, 4 June 2005, p. 10, Anthony Howard, *Hume: the patrician's hero*.

⁵ Clement of Rome, *Epistula I ad Corinthios*, n. 44. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, Letter I, p. 215, [p. 162].

⁶ *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, L. VIII, c. IV. *CP, ibid.*, p. 215, [p. 163].

⁷ *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, L. II, c. II. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 216, [pp. 163–4].

⁸ Leo the Great, *Epistula*, XIV. (Not LXXXIV as in Rosmini) Cf. *CP, ibid.*, note 12, p. 217, and Letter I, note 14, p. 279, [note 12, p. 250].

common people should be had. He who is to be in charge of all should be chosen by all.⁹ For Leo 'the universality of priesthood and kingship lies in God's adopted people.'¹⁰ Leo was aware that saddling people with a bishop they did not want was equivalent to depriving them of a bishop. He therefore adhered to the ancient discipline of the Church which allowed the clergy, people and provincial bishops a say in the choice of a bishop. In 445 he wrote to Anastasius, bishop of Thessalonica, 'When a bishop is being selected, give first preference to the person desired by the united consent of clergy and people. If several people receive votes the metropolitan should choose the most loved and meritorious candidate. It is essential to exclude all those unwanted or unasked for, if the people are not to be crossed and end by despising or hating their bishop. IF THEY CANNOT HAVE THE CANDIDATE THEY DESIRE, THE PEOPLE MAY FALL AWAY FROM RELIGION UNDULY.'¹¹

There had been trouble even as early as the time of Athanasius who had complained about the Emperor Constant trying to play a role in the choice of bishop. He points out that it was against the law of God to commission bishops against the wishes of the people, or when they were unknown nor recommended by their good works. 'This man thought hard about how to transform the law and eliminate the constitution established by the Lord and handed down to us by the Apostles. He decided to change church custom and set up a new way of appointing bishops. He sends bishops, escorted by soldiers, from as far as fifty days' journey away. The people do not want these foreigners who instead of being welcomed by them, have to go to the local magistrates with letters and threats.'¹² Rosmini says that it is clear from this that the choice of bishop by clergy and people was held to be of divine institution and part of the apostolic tradition.

Gregory the Great (6th century) was very careful about requiring the people's consent, according to ancient tradition before confirming bishops in their sees. Rosmini refers to his letters and says that they are directed not just to the clergy but also to the people of Rimini, Perugia, Naples and Nepi. They are exhorted to take part in the election of their bishops.¹³ He wrote to the subdeacon, Antoninus, 'Inform the clergy and people of the city immediately to agree about a choice of bishop, and send the decree of election so that he may be ordained with our consent, according to ancient practice. Above all, be careful not to allow royal power, or patronage from highly placed persons, to have any influence in the election. A bishop ordained in this

⁹ *Ibid.*, *Epistula* X (not LXXXIX as in Rosmini) Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 217; note 12, and note 15, p. 279, [note 12, page 250].

¹⁰ Leo the Great, *Tract.* 3. 1. Cf. Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. VI, p. 105.

¹¹ Leo the Great, *Epistula ad Anastasium* c. 5, (also *Epistula ad Episcopos Provinciae Viennensis* and *Epistula ad Rusticum Narbonensem* c. 7). Cf. *CP*, c. IV, n. 77 note 8, p. 96, [n. 77, note 8 p. 211].

¹² Athanasius, *Epist. Ad solitariam vitam agentes*. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 78 note 11, p. 97, [n. 78 note 11, p. 211]. Cf. *CP*, Appendix Letter I p. 220, [p. 165].

¹³ Gregory the Great, *Lib. I*, letters, LVI and LVIII; *Lib. II*, letters III, VIII, XXX. Cf. *CP, ibid.* note 15. p. 217, [n. 15, p. 250].

way is constrained to obey his protectors; church goods and discipline suffer accordingly.¹⁴

Government in the Church is different from secular rule. It is at the service of mankind. Origen says, 'A man is called to the episcopate not to command, but to serve the Church with such courtesy and humility that both he and the Church might benefit.'¹⁵ Popular choice dictated the choice of bishops. It was only fitting that the people should know what kind of person was to pastor them and have confidence in his holiness and prudence. The principle that it is necessary to choose the best available person was strenuously upheld in the early Church. Rosmini again quotes Origen, 'God's choice and the presence of the people are imperative when a bishop is ordained. The people are present so that everyone may be sure that the bishop chosen is the best, most learned, holy and virtuous person available. In this way, no one will regret the choice, nor have any reason for wanting to change it.'¹⁶ Again, speaking of the way Aaron was chosen as high priest in the old testament, he says 'Although the Lord has commanded the institution of the high priest, and chosen him, Moses nevertheless convenes the assembly. The presence of the people is required at the ordination of a priest so that all may know and witness that the person chosen for the priesthood is the best, most learned, holiest and most virtuous person amongst the people.'¹⁷ In his homily XXII on the book of Numbers he indicates a great disparity between a bishop and a simple priest. He compares the bishop to the leader of the Hebrew people appointed by Moses through divine revelation and in the presence of the people. But Moses appointed elders whom Origen compared to priests. Origen says Moses did not want to set an example of presumption to his successors. John Chrysostom agrees. He notes that the apostles did not appoint deacons without taking the people into account. He says the same about the choice of Matthias taking the place of Judas.¹⁸ However abuses of power and office were not lacking and John disapproves of ambitious and worldly priests in his *De Sacerdotio* [On the Priesthood]. But he does not oppose the apostolic custom that the whole Church accepted.¹⁹ Quacquarelli quotes Chrysostom as saying that the ordaining bishop is wont to ask the faithful for prayers and that they add their votes and assent. The Apostles consulted the faithful before appointing seven deacons and before electing Matthias.²⁰

But if bishops and clergy are uncaring pastors people will not be interested in what pastors are provided. The people really cannot be blamed for an attitude of

¹⁴ Gregory the Great, L. II, c. II, Indictione undecima, *epistula*. XXII. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 79 and note 23 p. 101, [n. 79 and note 23, p. 214].

¹⁵ Origen, *Homilia in Matth* XX, 25. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 77 note 4, p. 94, [n. 77 note 4, p. 210].

¹⁶ *Id. Homilia XX in Num.*, and *Homilia VI in Levit.* Cf. *CP, ibid.*, note 6, p. 95, [note 6, p. 210]. Cf. Appendix I, p. 22, [p. 166].

¹⁷ Origen, *Hom. VI in Levit.* Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 113 note 118, p. 159 [p. 239]. Cf. *CP, Appendix I, ibid.*

¹⁸ John Chrysostom, in *Actus apostolorum homiliae* Homilia XIV. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 221–222 and note 28, [p. 167 and note 28, p. 252].

¹⁹ A.R., *Risposta ad Agostino Theiner*, Ed. Naz., 1971–1972, Vol. II, nn. 388–389, pp. 212–213. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. IX, p. 111.

²⁰ John Chrysostom, *In epistula II ad Corinthios*, homilia 19, 3. Cf. Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. 2, p. 49.

indifference if pastors are foisted on them whom they do not know. They will show only an outward conformity and practically speaking become independent of their bishop who simply figures in the sanctuary and carries out ceremonies which are unintelligible to them. In this respect, Origen makes the telling comment, 'God provides pastors for the churches according to the people's deserts.'²¹

In the first letter to Canon Gatti, Rosmini quotes at length from Cyprian's Synodal Letter number 68 to the bishops of Spain. He concludes, 'What we hold to in practically all our provinces as the rightful celebration of ordination is to be preserved and held as of DIVINE AND APOSTOLIC OBSERVANCE. The people for whom the new leader is ordained, the bishops of the province and the neighbouring districts are to gather so that the bishop may be chosen in the PRESENCE OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE FULLY CONVERSANT WITH THE LIFE OF INDIVIDUALS AND AWARE OF HOW EACH HAS BEHAVED HIMSELF.'²² Cyprian knew from experience. His biographer, Pontius states that he was elected by God and the people who wished to make him Bishop of Carthage. Cyprian hid in his house, but the people blocked all the exits. Pontius says with some distaste that the people saw in Cyprian not only a bishop, but a future martyr!²³ In the East, Gregory the Wonderworker, appointed Alexander, a humble coal merchant as Bishop of Cumana against the wishes of the notables of the city and those who wanted to have one of their friends chosen. Gregory's decision met with the approval of the community.²⁴

Rosmini quotes Florus, a deacon of Lyons in the 10th century, who wrote a book entitled *The Election of Bishops*. He wrote this to combat the theory in royal circles that the legitimacy and ratification of episcopal elections depends on the royal will. 'It is obvious to all who hold priestly office in the Church of God that the ordination of bishops must be governed by the authority of the sacred canons and church custom which depend on THE DISPOSITIONS OF DIVINE LAW AND APOSTOLIC TRADITION. Therefore, when a see falls vacant on the death of its pastor, one of the clergy of the diocese, chosen by common consent of that clergy and all the people, appointed openly and solemnly by public decree, and consecrated by a lawful number of bishops, will rightly take the place of the deceased bishop. There is no doubt that divine dispensation and judgement will confirm what has been carried out in such an orderly and lawful manner by the Church of God. These things will be found in the conciliar statutes of the Fathers, and in the decrees of the popes of the apostolic see. They have been confirmed ceaselessly from the beginning by the Church of Christ.' Florus quotes Cyprian's letter to Antonianus in which he speaks of the election of

²¹ Origen, *Hom. IV. in Iudic.* Cf. *CP*, c. IV, n. 77 note 10, p. 97, [n. 77 note 10, p. 69 and p. 211].

²² Cyprian, *Epistula*, 68 (PL 3 1027) Cf. *CP*, *ibid.*, n. 78 note 11, p. 97, [n. 78, note 11, p. 211]. Cf. *CP*, Appendix, Letter I, p. 224, [p. 169].

²³ Quacquarelli, *op. cit.* p. 109. Augustine was in church listening to his bishop appealing for a priest when the people spotted him and dragged him before the bishop as their candidate. He was ordained forthwith! Cf. Serge Lancel, *St Augustine*, SCM Press, 2002. c. XVI, p. 151. There is also the well-known story of Ambrose whom the people demanded for bishop while he was still a layman.

²⁴ Quacquarelli, *op. cit.*, p. 110–111.

Cornelius as proof of what he teaches. 'The bishop was chosen by the decision of God and his Christ, according to the witness given by all the clergy with the support of the people, and by the consent of the senior priests and good men.' Florus goes on to say that it is clear from the words of Cyprian that for almost four hundred years from apostolic times bishops were ordained and legitimately governed without reference to human power. This freedom was upheld when rulers became Christian. He says that later custom required that consultation with the ruler was necessary in some countries for harmony's sake, but not for verifying ordination.²⁵

An oratorian, Agostino Theiner, had written a book against the *Cinque piaghe* in 1849.²⁶ Theiner's theory irritated Rosmini. Theiner maintained 'that all the evils of ancient elections sprang from the intrigues of the bishops, and the ambition of the clergy and the people.'²⁷ But Rosmini found that Theiner's view was not based on thorough, balanced research. On the other hand, Theiner believed that Rosmini's historical appreciation was based on his study of the French historians, such as Thomassin, Alexandre and Fleury and that he didn't know the Fathers. But the latter is certainly not true. Theiner would not accept the value which Rosmini attributed to the priesthood of the faithful and the unity of the clergy and the people. He did not grasp the spirit of Rosmini.²⁸ It was a very bitter dispute. Rosmini's reply once again cites many authorities and the Fathers of the Church in defence of his position. But sufficient is said here for us to grasp his recourse to the Fathers in his desire to see the involvement in the whole body of Christ in the election of bishops.

Rosmini sums up the rights and duties of the people in the election of their pastor:²⁹

1. To bear witness to the virtue and suitability of the pastor they are to receive. They have a right to make known defects as Cyprian says 'so that in the people's presence good and evil may be discerned.'³⁰
2. To express their desire and request for the pastor whose virtues they experience. The bishops of Alexandria said that Athanasius became bishop after his predecessor's death by acclamation of the assembly.

²⁵ Florus, *Liber de electione Episcoporum* in PL 119, 11–13. Cf. *CP, ibid.*, n. 88, p. 122, [n. 88, pp. 85–86].

²⁶ Rosmini's book, *Risposta ad Agostino Theiner*, was written in 1850 in reply to Theiner's attack on the *Cinque piaghe*, but because the latter had been placed on the Index the former was not made public. Theiner's book was entitled *Lettere storico-critiche intorno alle "Cinque piaghe della santa Chiesa" del ch. Sac. Don A. De Rosmini Serbati. Lettera prima intorno alla elezione dei vescovi mediante il clero ed il popolo*, [Historical-critical Letters regarding the "Five Wounds of Holy Church" by the priest A. Rosmini Serbati. The First Letter regards the election of bishops by clergy and people] Napoli, Cannavacioli, 1849. In his preface to Rosmini's *Risposta ad Agostino Theiner* Rinaldo Orecchia calls Theiner's book one 'full of lies, calumnies, contradictions and historical and doctrinal errors.' Preface, p. XV. Theiner's book was written in German and translated into Italian by Abate Ferdinando Mansi. *Ibid.*, p. XVI.

²⁷ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. IX, p. 112.

²⁸ Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. II, pp. 39–40.

²⁹ *CP*, Appendix, Letter III, p. 247, [pp. 187–188].

³⁰ Cyprian, *Epistula*, LXVIII, Cf. *CP, ibid.*, p. 247, [p. 187].

3. To refuse a bishop who has been chosen providing this is the work of the majority. Celestine says, 'no bishop shall be given to people unwilling to receive him.'³¹

Celestine and Leo took special note of the esteem the people had for a pastor they chose.³² Rosmini believed that, in the choice of bishops, it is necessary to revert to Leo's norm, namely, 'that the person governing everyone should be chosen by everyone'. Practically speaking this means:

1. 'the devout, Christian populace of the diocese,
2. the clergy of the diocese,
3. the provincial bishops, with their metropolitan at their head,
4. the Roman Pontiff as arbiter and supreme adjudicator.'³³

In conclusion we can see how important is the application of these principles to life in the Church today. It reminds us, too, of the problems which can rise in a diocese if a bishop, not agreeable to the people, is chosen for it by the Holy See. Although modern communication enables people to have some idea of the qualities of bishops and priests, the right of the people to have a real say in the selection of a bishop should not be neglected.

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³¹ Celestine *Epistula*, II c. V. Cf. *CP*, *ibid.*, p. 247, [p. 188].

³² Celestine, *Epist II ad Episc. Narbonens.* Leo the Great, *Epistula XIV ad Anastasium*. Cf. *CP*, Appendix, Letter III, p. 248, [p. 188].

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 249, [p. 189–190].

Chapter 12

Understanding the Mind of the Author

Rosmini's work, *Il linguaggio teologico* [Theological Language] was begun at Stresa on 29 October 1854, but was never completed as Rosmini died in the following July. It can be seen as an epilogue to the long and bitter polemic beginning with the publication of the *Trattato della coscienza morale*. The attacks on Rosmini's orthodoxy ended up with the examination of all Rosmini's works before the Congregation of the Index (of which he was a member!). This ultimately vindicated him with the decree *Dimittantur* of July 1854.

Rosmini refers to or quotes 28 works of Augustine in this short book. He is mentioned on 37 out of the 63 pages. Of the other Fathers, Hilary of Poitiers and Vincent of Lerins are major figures. But there is no doubt that Rosmini, with his thorough knowledge of Augustine, could apply the vicissitudes through which the latter passed in getting his work understood, to the problems which he incurred with his own works.

In the Introduction to the *Theological Language* Rosmini says that he wished to restore a sound philosophy and this was the aim in all his published works. But there were unexpected difficulties.

On the one hand, I found myself encouraged by the support of many learned men, amongst them some holding positions of the highest dignity in the Church, who raised my hope that my religious aim was in part succeeding. On the other hand, some theologians did not sufficiently understand subjects treated in this way, and thought there were serious errors in what I had written. They made this clear to the public in a great number of books, and denounced my works as erroneous to the holy apostolic See. The Pope ordered the Sacred Roman Congregation of the Index to examine the works thoroughly, and a short time ago they were declared free from any solid foundation for accusation. What seemed harmful, God turned to good.

Despite the dissipation of grave doubts about the soundness of the teaching, some wise and honourable persons were still hesitant about the possible obscurity of these philosophical works with their new language, and thought it might be of help, at least to less understanding readers, if certain points proper to theology, or common to theology and philosophy, were clarified. No particular proposition or expression was indicated, but general comments were made about the very difficult doctrine on original sin and human freedom, where, it seemed, greater clarification and more common theological language could be helpful...

'Out of respect for these opinions, I have decided to introduce this new edition of my moral writings with a study of the suggested

obscurity and novelty of language in them, and to attempt to clarify the two points mentioned above in order to satisfy all those who are one with me in loving pure, Catholic teaching, and in desiring what is good.¹

The manuscript, written entirely by him, reveals the waning physical strength of the Author, who was gravely ill and close to death. He never revised it properly, and his writing could not keep up with his mind because of his sufferings.² The situation was truly poignant. We see Rosmini, ill and aged beyond his years, expending what energy remained to him in fulfilling the directives given him by Pope Pius VIII in 1830 when he was in his prime.³

Rosmini, following Victorinus, ‘a celebrated 4th century orator teaching in Rome’, first sets out the reasons why an author’s writings may be obscure. Obscurity can arise either from the nature of the material being taught, or from the difficulty of the subject upon the writer or upon the reader. One of the benefits coming from writers opposed to sacred doctrine is that ecclesiastical writers become more careful in their own expositions and more exact. Rosmini says that even the Fathers, spoke more freely before heresies made them more cautious in their explanations, and quotes Augustine to this effect. ‘What is wrong on the part of heretics has helped progress on the part of true Catholic members of Christ. What is wrong, God uses well, and all things work towards the good of those who love God.’⁴ Some writers are deliberately obscure either to impress people and muddy the waters, or to avoid censure by the Church. This is wrong. But some writings can be moderately obscure without causing ambiguity about belief. Rosmini cites the Scriptures as an example, quoting Augustine again: ‘to exercise and temper in some way, the minds of readers, to break down the difficulties and focus the efforts of those wishing to learn, and to veil the spirits of the impious so that they either be converted to piety or excluded from the mysteries.’⁵ However, Rosmini hastens to add, following Augustine, that we should not imitate them because Christian teachers have a duty to elucidate the teaching of the Scriptures. Of course, their teaching should be adapted to the different students whom they teach.

Obscurity can also be due to the shortcomings of the reader or the hearer. This can depend upon lack of understanding because the person is not intelligent enough or does not know enough, even when the subject in itself is clear enough. Also people can maliciously pretend not to understand, and accuse the author of obscurity. ‘St Augustine himself was often accused of obscurity, despite his genius, his eloquence,

¹ *LT*, Introduction, pp. 20–22, [nn. 3–4, pp. 2–3]. The new edition of Rosmini’s moral writings was never published. The old edition *Opuscoli morali di Antonio Rosmini-Serbatì, prete roveretano* had appeared in Milan in 1841.

² Cf. *LT*, Preface, A. Quacquarelli, pp. 15–16.

³ A.R., *Introduzione*, n. 11, p. 30, [nn. 11–11a, pp. 24–25].

⁴ *LT*, c. I, p. 26, [n. 8, p. 9]. Augustine, *Contra Iulianum*, I, n. 22.

⁵ Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, IV, n. 22. Cf. *LT*, c. II, p. 27, [n. 8, p. 10].

and the great love which impelled him to speak to all the faithful as clearly as the level of argument permitted. His sacrifice of classical Latin, and his continual prayer for grace to make himself clear to the faithful, did not absolve him in the sight of his opponents. But he was deeply humble, and in his *Retractions* would have sincerely acknowledged any conscious defect of obscurity....With a frankness that normally accompanies sincere humility, he begged his adversaries not to calumniate him with accusations of obscurity, but pray to God for the grace to understand what he had written clearly. "Some still do not understand what I think has been said sufficiently clearly. I beg them not to blame me for negligence or lack of capacity. Rather, let them ask God for enlightenment".⁶I have already touched on this earlier.⁷

The third reason for obscurity lies in the very nature of the subject. This is a relative obscurity which can, with perseverance and the advance of learning, be overcome. Good examples are mathematics, science, astronomy and so on. "St Augustine rightly observes that, "what is sought with difficulty is sweeter when found".⁸

As regards divine truths Rosmini reminds us of the words of St Paul that 'For now we see [them] in a mirror dimly, but then face to face'⁹ as long as we are in this present life. But this fact does not prevent us from using our intelligence to dispel some of the darkness with the help of divine grace, prayer and meditation. Again he refers to Augustine, 'The height of the Word of God calls us to work hard; it does not denigrate our understanding. If all were closed, there would be nothing obscure to be revealed. Again, if all were covered, the soul would be without nourishment and without strength with which to knock at what is closed.'¹⁰

I have already mentioned Rosmini's extensive quotation regarding Consentius who wrote to Augustine. Consentius was persuaded that truth should be perceived by faith rather than reason. Yet he asked Augustine to explain the teaching on the Trinity.¹¹ Augustine replied that 'If I am to do what you want and help you to penetrate the mystery as far as possible, I have to do so by following reason itself.'¹² Augustine says that God expects us to use our reason which marks us out as intelligent beings. 'Again, the person who understands truly what previously he only believed is in a better position than the one who still desires to understand what he believes.'¹³ He adds that not all people have the capacity to philosophise about God. If it is too much for them they should be satisfied with faith in this life, with the assurance that one day all will become clear.

⁶Augustine, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, III, c. 2. *LT*, c. III, p. 30–31, [n. 12, pp. 12–13].

⁷See Chapter 3, p. 35.

⁸Augustine, *Enarrat. In Ps. CIII*, sermo II, n. 1. Cf. *LT*, c. IV, p. 34, [n. 14, p. 14].

⁹1 Cor 13: 12.

¹⁰Augustine, *De Verbis. Apostolorum*, sermo CLVI. Rosmini gives the reference as Sermo XIII. Cf. *LT*, *ibid.*, p. 35 and c. IV, note 3, p. 88, [n. 16, p. 16].

¹¹See Ch. 3, pp.37–38.

¹²Augustine, *Epistula*, 120. *LT*, *ibid.*, pp. 36–37, [n 18, pp. 17–18].

¹³*Ibid.*

The use which Rosmini makes of Augustine's teaching is very striking and occupies nearly all of chapter IV of *Il linguaggio teologico*. Rosmini continues the same subject in the following chapter. He mentions that according to Thomas Aquinas, 'When philosophy is rightly applied to it, the content of sacred doctrine is *illustrated more clearly*...' ¹⁴ The Fathers and Doctors of the Church, especially Augustine, encouraged those who were able to offer this kind of enlightenment. As mentioned earlier, one of the advantages to be drawn from attacks on sacred doctrine is that sacred teaching is refined and developed. Speaking on this topic Rosmini refers to an astonishing sixteen works of Augustine. ¹⁵ Christian teachers should not speak over the heads of their listeners. Obviously an author has a certain class of persons in mind when writing his book, but he cannot prevent others from reading it! It is up to readers to choose books suitable to themselves. Again Rosmini supports what he says with references to Augustine.

Sometimes people advise modern writers to avoid questions which are too complicated for the average intelligence. They do this through excessive prudence. They see such teaching as a cause of dissension when wrongly understood. But it needs to be checked whether this might come from defects in the reader rather than the written word itself. What is the truth of the matter? No one criticised Augustine's teaching on grace until the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians opposed it as though it were something new. In his own lifetime he was blamed by the Marseillais. ¹⁶ Augustine replied 'Those who still do not understand what I think I have expressed clearly, granted the nature of the questions, should not calumniate me as though I had been negligent or blame me for my lack of skill. Rather they should ask God for understanding.' ¹⁷ Prosper of Aquitaine, a protagonist of Augustine, describes the situation, 'Those who have read your Beatitude's book (*De correptione et gratia*) and were already adhering to the holy, apostolic authority of your teaching have understood better and become better informed; the others who were having difficulty, are more opposed to it than ever.' ¹⁸ No amount of clarifications by Augustine helped those having difficulties. St Remigius, in the second half of the ninth century, lauded Augustine's courage in his *Book of Three Letters*. ¹⁹

It is important to distinguish between praiseworthy and ungodly innovations in unfolding traditional doctrines. St Paul and all the Fathers and Doctors of the Church teach that the deposit of faith handed over by Christ to the Apostles and to their successors cannot be diminished, changed or increased in the slightest. But if this is the case is it possible to develop them? Fathers and teachers of the Church upheld the

¹⁴ *LT*, c. V, p. 42, [n. 23, p. 23].

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42, [p. 23].

¹⁶ Presumably referring to the dispute with John Cassian and the Gallic opposition. Cf. F. Cayre, *Manual of Patrology*, Desclée and Co, 1935, Vol. I, chapter XVII, p. 636.

¹⁷ Augustine, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum*, III, c. 2, 4. Cf. *LT*, *ibid.*, p. 46, [n. 27, p. 27].

¹⁸ Prosper *Epistula ad Augustinum*, I, 2. Cf. *LT*, *ibid.*, p. 47, [n. 27, p. 27].

¹⁹ Remigius of Lyons *De tribus epistulis liber*, c. 35. Cf. *LT*, c. V, continuation, p. 47, [n. 28, p. 28].

unchangeable doctrine of the Church, but they also explained them, made clear what was implicit in them and made them relevant to the time in which they lived. There is plenty of scope for inventiveness which does not step over the boundaries of sacred doctrine. Such writers followed the advice of Tertullian, ‘“Let us search in what is our own, and from our own people, and what concerns our own; and for that only which, granted the rule of faith, can be questioned”’. The part of doctrinal teaching drawn from their own understanding and spirit bestows upon the Fathers and other ecclesiastical writers variety of richness and style, but because style makes them progress in different, individual ways and modes they do not constitute at this level the same unshakeable authority proper to their unanimous witness of unique doctrine.’²⁰

Rosmini comments on and quotes at length St Vincent of Lerins on the development of Christian doctrine. Vincent compares the growth of doctrine with the growth of a human being. The fully fledged adult is present in the embryo. ‘In like manner, it behoves Christian doctrine to follow the same laws of progress, so as to be consolidated by years, enlarged by time, refined by age, and yet, withal, to continue incorrupt and unadulterated, complete and perfect in all the measurement of its parts, and, so to speak, in all its proper members and senses, admitting no change, no waste of its distinctive property, no variation in its limits.’²¹ It is real progress but not alteration of the faith. Vincent’s rule is that there should be no discrepancy in doctrine. Rosmini formulates it like this: if a consequence follows as a necessary inference from a revealed truth accept it, if it does not, or if it is contrary to the truth, reject it. The ‘principle of coherence’ with what is revealed provides a sure guide. The ‘principle of incoherence’ is a sure criterion for discovering what is false and harmful in opinions.

In the next chapter (VI) Rosmini begins with a quotation of St Paul: ‘test everything; hold fast to what is good.’²² He also quotes the first letter to Timothy, ‘O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith.’²³ Paul has no quarrel with true doctrine, but only of profane innovations. This is the way the Fathers and Doctors of the Church understood this passage. Hilary admonishes the Emperor Constantius, ‘The Apostle says that new, but profane language must be avoided. Why, therefore, do you exclude new pious language?’²⁴ This means that he recognises praiseworthy innovations which the Arian Emperor was not prepared to grant. Obviously deeper investigation of Catholic doctrine brings with it new expressions and ways of thinking. Rosmini quotes the theologian Fulgenzio Petrelli who points out that the Fathers of the Church were

²⁰ Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 12, 5. F. Cf. *LT*, c. V <bis>, p. 50, [n. 31, p. 30].

²¹ Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium*, c. XXIII, 9, p. 49. Readers may be familiar with the passage from the Roman Breviary on Friday, 27 Week of the Year. Cf. *LT*, *ibid.*, p. 53, [n. 36, p. 33].

²² 1 *Thess* 5: 21.

²³ 1 *Tim* 6: 20–21.

²⁴ Hilary, *Contra Constantium Imperatorem*, n. 16. Cf. *LT*, c. VI, p. 57, [n. 39, p. 36].

correctly understood when they spoke with greater freedom because common faith was their interpreter. The fact that heretics quibbled over these expressions necessitated their using new expressions and definitions to counteract them.

Augustine justified his own language and that of the other Fathers in speaking about the Blessed Trinity: 'We confess that these terms sprang from the necessity of speaking, when prolonged reasoning was required against the devices or errors of the heretics'.²⁵ The Arians accused Athanasius and other defenders of the divinity of the Word of novelty, and the Pelagians accused Augustine in the same way, as we have seen. These attacks on Augustine occurred even in the 18th century.

Rosmini goes on to say that heretics were willing to infiltrate malicious innovations of their own to support their own teaching and the Fathers had always accused them of malicious inconsistency. Hilary reproved the Emperor Constantius for refusing to accept the words *homoiousion* or *homoousion*,²⁶ because they were not found in the Scriptures, although the Emperor was ready to admit many other expressions not found there.²⁷

In chapter IX of his work, Rosmini speaks of zeal combined with discretion in rebutting error. Half educated and impetuous people can cause more harm than good. Others are hesitant and uncertain in their judgements and have a strong distaste for controversy. They do not want to disturb charity at the expense of truth. In the time of Augustine there were people who were downhearted by the arguments concerning predestination and wished he had never spoken about it. However Augustine was vindicated by the 2nd Council of Orange, whose canons were composed of Augustine's own words.

Rosmini mentions the case of St Paschasius Radbertus.²⁸ He wrote a very precise exposition of the doctrine of the Eucharist, but for that very reason was regarded as innovative and caused a good deal of misgiving among the learned. St Odo of Cluny supported him and said that his work was written in accordance with the opinions of the Fathers. But in spite of his clarity his treatise stirred up dispute. Some people believed they were learned enough to understand it, whereas Paschasius knew that their errors were a result of ignorance. In fact the Church gained in having many questions clarified; and a second consequence was a more precise language regarding the Eucharist. Paschasius had affirmed that in the Holy Eucharist the flesh of our Saviour was the same as that of the Virgin Mary, and that which suffered on the cross and rose again. St Ambrose supported this.²⁹ This was very new for the uneducated and even the learned. Rhabanus Maurus, the Bishop of Magonza, opposed it, because

²⁵ *LT, ibid.*, p. 59, [p. 38, n. 40]. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VII, c.4.

²⁶ These terms relate to the dispute over the persons of the Blessed Trinity. The *homoiousions* held that the Son was *similar* in essence to the Father. The *homoousions* held that the Son was *one* in essence with the Father. The latter expression was accepted by the Council of Nicaea and articulated by Athanasius.

²⁷ Hilary, *Contra Constantium Imperatorem*, 16. Cf. *LT*, c. VII, p. 65, [n. 47, p. 43].

²⁸ A 9th century monk of Corbia, who wrote a treatise on the Eucharist, *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, in 831.

²⁹ Ambrose, *De Mysteriis*. c. 9. Cf. *LT*, c. IX, p. 74, [n. 57, p. 52].

he had read that St Augustine and St Jerome had spoken as though there were three bodies of the Lord, namely, the Church, the Eucharist and the Jesus, born of Mary. He accused Paschasius of not reconciling St Ambrose with the other two Fathers. Both Paschasius and Rabanus were correct. Rabanus did not deny that the body of Christ was identical, really and substantially, with the body born of the Virgin Mary and crucified, but he only denied this according to species and outward form (appearances). Paschasius would agree with this. This is a good example of how innovative language can cause controversy and how the truth surfaces to the advantage of the Church even if the authors were accused of error at the time.

In the last chapter of *Theological Language* Rosmini deals with rules to be followed in judging whether the author is sound or in error. Rosmini lays out several rules but the first one, which I mention here, is the fundamental principle accepted by the Fathers. This has already been mentioned, namely that the deposit of faith should remain untouched by increase or diminution, remaining entire, though Christ left it to be explored and developed. It goes without saying that this applies not only in the words employed, but in the sense given to them. Hilary says that Scripture is not found in material phrases but in understanding what lies beneath them. 'Scripture has to be understood, not simply read.'³⁰ Jerome says the same, 'Scripture has to be understood not simply read. Otherwise, if we follow the letter, we ourselves could make up new dogma.'³¹ Augustine states that the error of heretics lies in their not possessing the doctrine contained in the words. 'They are heretics not because they despise what the Scriptures contain, but because they do not understand them.'³² Athanasius observes that, as far as possible, heretics conceal their errors under the very words of Scripture, 'the devil, the author of heresies, because of the ill savour which attaches to evil, borrows the language of Scripture as a cloak with which to sow the ground with his own poison also, and seduce the simple.'³³ These examples, Rosmini says, show that we must penetrate below the words to the arguments used and examine the entire context of the teaching.

This principle must be used with care. Hilary adds, 'Heresy is about understanding, not about written words. We are dealing with wilfully mistaken meaning not with speech.'³⁴ Ambrose agrees, 'The letter is not mistaken; no fault is to be found in the written word; it is the meaning which is at fault.'³⁵ Finally Hilary says, synthesising the two parts of the principle, 'The understanding of what is said is to be found in the cause of what is said. What we talk about is not to be subject to the word, but the word to what we talk about.'³⁶

³⁰ Hilary of Poitiers, *Liber ad Constantium Imperatorem*, II, 9. Cf. *LT*, c. X, p. 78, [n. 60, p. 55].

³¹ Jerome, *Dialogus contra Luciferianos*, Cf. *LT*, *ibid*.

³² Augustine, *Epistula*, CXX, n. 13. Cf. *LT*, *ibid*.

³³ Athanasius, *Contra Arianos oratio secunda*, I. 8. Cf. *LT*, *ibid*.

³⁴ Hilary, *De Trinitate*, II, 9. Cf. *LT*, *ibid*, p. 79, [n. 61, pp. 55–56].

³⁵ Ambrose, *De Fide*, II, 1, 16. Cf. *LT*, *ibid*.

³⁶ Hilary, *De Trinitate*, IV, 14. Cf. *LT*, *ibid*.

Rosmini's plan was to divide his work into two parts. The first would deal with theological language and the second with original sin. Page 7 of the Manuscript indicated the first part of nine chapters; pages 8–10 contain points for the development of the material and references to Rosmini's own works or to those of the Fathers. Those readers who are familiar with Rosmini's life will see in the first part of Theological Language which has come down to us, not simply a treatise on the use of expressions and rules for the interpretation of theological thought, but also reflections by a dying man on the treatment meted out to him by his opponents, not always in good faith, and even maliciously. One would have thought that the thorough examination of his works and the decree *Dimittantur* exonerating him from error would have been the end of the matter. But Pope Pius IX, who always professed to be Rosmini's friend and who was never criticised by Rosmini in any way, did not give him the full support which justice demanded. He tried to please everybody and acted out of peace and prudence. Before the General Congregation of Consultors met to make a decision on Rosmini's works, the Pope said to 'those who thought that Rosmini had a right to be vindicated "Justice is all very well, but among the cardinal virtues there is also prudence; I shall try to hold the balance"'.³⁷ And, although the Pope clearly confirmed the decision taken by the Congregation, instead of sending Rosmini a Brief, he ordered the Congregation to communicate a sentence of dismissal in secret to both sides (opponents of Rosmini's works and his supporters). So the Decree was not published. One cannot escape the fact that the Pope could have been more forceful in support of his faithful servant and friend.

In a letter to Bertetti prior to the all-important meeting of the Congregation, Rosmini reiterates how careful he has been in trying to write sound doctrine. But now people treat his expressions as if they were some dangerous *novelty*. He is ready to change or clarify anything that needs to be altered or improved. But he went on to say that he could not be expected to make changes simply because his accusers said that his expressions were dangerous. He had taken his expressions mostly from St Thomas, the Fathers and the best of the Scholastics 'whom I have always revered, and whose study I have tried to promote for more than twenty years'.³⁸ Even after the *Dimittantur* decree, Cardinal Recanati wanted him to clarify expressions and even write a book, a compendium of Catholic doctrine, to assure the public of the orthodoxy of his views. Rosmini assured the Cardinal that this would not help matters. Which passages required annotation? 'If I attempted to enter so vast and vague a field as your suggestion indicates, I should be acting contrary to my conscience, I should be walking in the dark, feeling for what I cannot see: my annotations would give rise to the need of further notes; in fact I should be attempting the impossible.' He points out that his works are judged free from error. 'In fact I do not know anyone who has taken scandal by the perusal of my works; most of which are not read by the weak.'³⁹

³⁷ Leetham, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

³⁸ *Ibid.* Cf. *EC*, Vol. XII, Letter, 7666, p. 341.

³⁹ Leetham, *ibid.*, p. 437. Cf. *EC*, Vol. XII, Letter 7739, p. 425.

It does not appear to Rosmini that either the Cardinal or the Holy Father would 'oblige a broken old man to put aside his other labours that he has undertaken for the good of the Church, or at least that he desires to devote to that end, and expect him to spend the few years that remain to him in a work so unrewarding and so fruitless in itself, when the Holy See after a long examination has found nothing to censure in my works...'⁴⁰

However, the Master of the Apostolic Palace told Rosmini that the Pope would appreciate some declaration on his part about original sin and freedom. So, as long as the declaration was limited to these two points, and out of deference to the Holy Father, Rosmini summoned up his failing energy and began *Il linguaggio teologico*. It was the beginning of the end, and perhaps a fitting moment to end this brief book on Rosmini and the Fathers of the Church.

⁴⁰ Leetham, *ibid.*, p. 439. Cf. *EC*, *ibid.*, p. 430.

Afterword

Limitations

This book would not be complete without my saying something on the limitations found in Rosmini's works concerning sources which he quotes.

I mentioned in chapter three the letter to Alessandro Paravia regarding Rosmini's translation of Augustine's *De catechizandis rudibus*. There, Rosmini admits that his translation is slapdash because of the haste with which he wrote it.¹ Rosmini's mind was very quick and he worked speedily. When one considers Rosmini's enormous literary production it is not surprising that shortcomings and errors have crept in with regard to references. Of course, in the case of his posthumous works, he never had the chance to edit them. A good example is the *L'introduzione del Vangelo secondo Giovanni*. Without a Critical Edition of the work, the references to the Fathers, for the most part, lack accuracy, demonstrating that a lot of work needs to be done to make them more precise. Rosmini may well have intended to return to them when finally revising and editing the work. We saw that the *Antropologia soprannaturale* suffered the same defects.²

Antonio Quacquarelli, to whom I am indebted for most of this chapter, says in his *La lezione patristica di Antonio Rosmini* that "Those who are familiar with the manuscripts of Rosmini notice that he has transcribed patristic passages, or has had them transcribed, on separate sheets with the indication of the source. Some can be attributed accurately since the book and chapter of the work are given; others simply mention the name of the Christian author. Sometimes in the draft of the work passages appear which are not included on separate sheets and seem to be quoted from memory. The source can correspond not to the work mentioned but to another one."³ Quacquarelli adds in his *Le radici patristiche della teologia di Antonio Rosmini* that other works simply have the author and the title of the work.⁴ Two points can be noted here. Firstly the secretary to whom Rosmini dictated the work, or who had the job of researching the source, could have made a mistake, or Rosmini's memory played him false. Again he may have intended to check later or give the job to his secretary. In his book on St Augustine, Serge Lancel gives some interesting facts about the limitations placed on the early Fathers at the time they wrote. It was certainly a labour of love. It is difficult, he says, to imagine the sheer physical effort needed to write on tablets with stylus, or later, with a reed pen on papyrus. The scribes were real

¹ See chapter 3, p. 34 above.

² See chapter 7, p. 83 above.

³ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. X, p. 119.

⁴ Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. II, p. 51.

craftsmen. Lancel points out that Augustine was no shorter of good secretaries than Pliny the Younger, but in spite of all this the long-hand transcriptions could be full of errors. 'In the same period Jerome, who was scathing in his comments, came straight out with his criticisms of one of his Spanish friends' copyists, whose errors in copying Jerome's own works had made him shudder, especially when the errors were patently due to a desire to correct supposed mistakes'.⁵ Quacquarelli goes on to say that the divisions of classical-pagan and ancient Christian works into books and chapters were for the most part due to 16th century editors. At times we are not dealing with editions different from those Rosmini quotes, but there is a mistake due to his or a copyist's oversights.

Quacquarelli points out that there is no rule governing the passages Rosmini quotes. Much depends on the importance of the subject he is dealing with. If his sources are in Greek he quotes the Latin translation. But there is no doubting his knowledge of Greek. Enrico Turolla in his preface to Rosmini's work *Aristotele esposto ed esaminato* [Aristotle explained and examined] mentions the fact that 'This explanation of Aristotelian thought is certainly the first to prescind from ancient commentaries. It is pursued and developed directly on the text without any intermediary; no Latin texts, no paraphrases on Arabic texts or commentaries of Aristotle's followers, but directly, without anything standing in the way; without any intervention that could alter the text. Rosmini [was] helped by a surprising knowledge of Greek (especially attic Greek), as witnessed by constantly good translations of the Aristotelian texts which he cites frequently from the originals of all (or nearly all) Aristotle's works...'⁶

If Rosmini quotes a text in Italian, he either made a translation himself or through a secretary. If he quotes someone else's translation he gives the name. Quacquarelli gives an example from Rosmini's *Risposta ad Agostino Theiner*. Rosmini quotes a translation by Michel Angelo Giacomelli of Chrysostom's, *Del sacerdotio*, L. III, c. IV. Quacquarelli adds that this translation must have been well known at the time.⁷

Before giving some examples to illustrate what I have translated from Quacquarelli's chapter heading as 'Abbreviated and Defective References', it is important that we note the contribution which Rosmini makes in the field of patrology in the context of his own time. As I have already said,⁸ intense work was going on in the field of patrology in the 18th century. Rosmini would have had access to the books in print at the time, but the Migne edition of the Fathers was just beginning to be published.

In 1825 Rosmini welcomed joyfully the news that the editor Battaggia of Venezia intended to publish, before Migne, a complete edition of all the Greek and Latin Fathers.⁹ From December 1849 he took out a subscription with a view to acquiring

⁵ Serge Lancel, *op. cit.*, chapter XX, p. 216.

⁶ A.R., *Aristotele esposto ed esaminato*, Ed. Naz., Vol. XXIX, 1963, ed. Enrico Turolla, Introduction, p. XI.

⁷ Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. X, pp. 128–129. A. R. *Risposta ad Agostino Theiner*, Vol. II, n. 392, p. 215.

⁸ Cf. chapter 1, p. 20, above.

⁹ Quacquarelli *LP*, c. II, p. 24.

Migne but he wanted the Greek Fathers to be published more quickly.¹⁰ He kept himself up to date in all the questions which the new books brought up.¹¹ We must remember that patristic studies today have progressed since Rosmini's time. Origen, whom Rosmini revered, has been justly revalued and given the prominent place in patristic studies that he deserves. Many books have been discovered that had been lost. Quacquarelli mentions the *Traditio apostolorum* which came to light at the end of the 19th century.¹² There have been new discoveries of codices, papyri and monuments. Also new developments of biblical exegesis have influenced a more enlightened reading of the Fathers.

Let us now take a look at some examples of the limitations in attributions given by Rosmini in some of his works. In the *Nuovo saggio* he is speaking about truth and being. He quotes Augustine *veritas est qua ostenditur id quod est* [Truth is that which manifests what is]. He then says that Hilary of Poitiers' definition has the same sense *Verum est declarativum aut manifestativum esse* [Truth is being in so far as being indicates and manifests], that is *being* considered as that which declares and manifests things.¹³ The trouble is that Rosmini refers this quotation from Hilary simply to Book V of Hilary's *De Trinitate*. No chapter is given nor does it occur in the whole work. Rosmini has taken this and the quotation of Augustine from the *Summa* of St Thomas. Thomas is saying that truth resides in the intellect. 'So then truth dwells primarily in the intellect, and secondarily in things according as they are related to the intellect as their principle. Consequently there are various definitions of truth. Augustine says *truth is that whereby that which is is made manifest*; and Hilary says that *truth makes being clear and evident*'.¹⁴ For the question is, where did St Thomas get his quotation from? Quacquarelli mentions the interesting fact that the *Nuovo saggio* went through five editions in Rosmini's lifetime.¹⁵

A second example is taken from the same work. Rosmini is discussing direct and reflective knowledge. Direct knowledge is unwilling knowledge. On the occasion of

¹⁰ The *Series Latina* was published between the years 1844–1864. This covered the Latin authors from Tertullian to Innocent III (A.D. 200–1216). The *Series graeca* was published between the years 1857–1866. This comprised the Greek and Latin texts of authors from Pseudo-Barnabas to the Council of Florence (A.D. 120–1438); finally, 81 volumes were published from 1856–1867 of the Latin text only of the Greek Fathers. Cf. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 9, p. 827.

¹¹ Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. XI, p. 140.

¹² Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. IX, p. 111; *RP*, c. VI, p. 103 and c. II, p. 29. Apparently written by Hippolytus, the *Traditio apostolorum* was formerly called the Egyptian Church Order and was kept alive in the East but forgotten by the West until it surfaced in 1891 and was translated. It provides the richest source of the life of the Church in the first three centuries. Cf. *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. I, pp. 689–690 and Vol. V, p. 227.

¹³ A. R., *NS*, Vol. III, sez. VI, parte II, c. II, Art. IV, n. 1122, p. 78, [n. 1122, p. 68]. Cf. Quacquarelli, *op. cit.* c. X, p. 124.

¹⁴ S.T. Q. XVI, Art. I.

¹⁵ The Critical Edition referring to this paragraph 1122 says that Rosmini does not refer directly to the words of St Augustine who writes *veritate sunt vera quae vera sunt*, [In fact, true things really are true] and as regards the quotation from St Hilary quotes PL 10, 131.

sensations the understanding forms perceptions, and these perceptions and the ideas subsequent to them are formed in a natural instinctive way. Whereas, when we reflect our will comes into play.¹⁶ Rosmini discusses the theory of Aristotle and St Thomas and then quotes Tertullian. 'For this reason, reflective knowledge is more an *acknowledgement* than an *act of knowledge*. As Tertullian most fittingly said: Nos definimus Deum primum natura COGNOSCENDUM, deinde doctrina RECOGNOSCENDUM [We define that God is first naturally KNOWN and then doctrinally ACKNOWLEDGED]. He gives the source as *Contra Marc.* L. 1, without giving the chapter. He goes on to distinguish popular and philosophical knowledge. Popular knowledge starts from a first reflection whereas philosophical knowledge comes from a higher order of reflection. He says that elsewhere 'Tertullian distinguishes *popular* from *philosophical* knowledge. In fact the whole of his book *De testimonio animae* (Testimony of the Soul) is an attempt to establish this distinction'. He translates a passage himself from Tertullian without any reference to a chapter.¹⁷

In his book *Le radici patristiche* Quacquarelli mentions the work by Alfeo Valle in the Critical Edition of the *Cinque piaghe*, particularly regarding mistakes in the cross references. Quacquarelli mentions some examples. Valle has been careful to check patristic passages which Rosmini quotes from Fleury, Alexandre and Thomassin.¹⁸

In chapter 2 of the *Cinque piaghe* Rosmini mentions in a note, a sermon of Gregory Nazianzen on the qualities needed in a teacher of theology. Rosmini refers to two sermons, Oratio XXXIII, and XXIX. But the first should be XXVII.¹⁹ Quacquarelli mentions note 37 to n. 44 in chapter two which refers to Gregory Thaumaturgus in praise of Origen. The reference is simply *Thau. in Orig.* whereas he is referring to chapters 6, 9 and 13.²⁰ In this note, too, Rosmini refers to Jerome with the initials D.V.M. c. 54. This has been corrected in both the Critical and English editions from *De viris magnis* to *De viris illustribus*. Evidently Rosmini's thought of the Fathers being great men was responsible for this slip of the pen. At the end of this chapter Rosmini quotes Clement of Alexandria, also Origen, regarding the holiness needed in listening to the Word of God. The second quotation from Origen is given as from Homily XXIII whereas it should be XIII.²¹

In chapter four where Rosmini speaks of the nomination of the bishops being subject to civil government, he refers in a note to Gregory the Great who was very

¹⁶ Cf. chapter 6, page 66–67, above.

¹⁷ Rosmini, *NS*, Vol. III, sez. VI, parte IV, c. II, Art. VII, nn. 1265–1268, pp. 177–178, [nn. 1265–1268, pp. 164–165]. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. X, p. 125–127.

¹⁸ Claude Fleury, *Histoire ecclésiastique*, Italian translation, G. Gozzi, Firenze, 1766–1767, 26 Vols.; Natalis Alexandre, *Historia Ecclesiastica Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, C. Roncaglia, Parisiis, 18 Vols.; and Louis Thomassin, *Vetus et Nova Ecclesiae Disciplina*, Lucae, 1728, 3 vols. Cf. Quacquarelli, *RP*, c. II, p. 51.

¹⁹ *CP*, c. II, n. 43, note 33, p. 60, and note 20, p. 270, [n. 43, p. 40].

²⁰ *Ibid.*, n. 44, note 37, p. 62, [n. 44, p. 41. There is no mention of the ref. *Thau in Orig.* in the English translation]. Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. X, p. 131.

²¹ *Ibid.*, n. 45, note 38, p. 62 and note 25, p. 270, [n. 45, p. 41 and note 38, p. 203. Correction made in English translation].

aware of the importance of freedom in episcopal elections. Rosmini refers to letter 7 in Book III. In fact the subject is dealt with in letter 7 of Book IV.²² Chapter five deals with the Church having the free use of its own temporalities. In early times tithes were paid to the Church. Rosmini refers to Irenaeus *Adversus Haereses*, Lib. IV, c. 34. This should be c. 18.²³ In the same note Rosmini refers to Cyprian's *De unitate ecclesiae* c. 5. This should be c.26.²⁴ Further we read that the Emperor Valentinian forbade individual members of the secular or religious clergy to receive individual legacies. Rosmini quotes Ambrose bewailing the fact that irregularities had necessitated this law. He refers to the letters of Ambrose Book I, letter XVII. It is in fact letter XVIII.²⁵ In n. 153 Rosmini mentions benefices being assigned to individual clerics who thus became independent of their bishops. It prevented episcopal subsidies in proportion to the needs and work of the clergy. In a note Rosmini refers to Cyprian ordering that Aurelius and Celerinus be given the same assistance as the priests. But the reference of Rosmini to the letters of Cyprian is wrong. It is not letter XXXIII but XXXIV.²⁶ In the same note, Rosmini refers to the letters of Gregory the Great. It looks as though the book should not be XI but XIV.²⁷ In n. 157 Rosmini quotes John Chrysostom. He refers to a Homily, n. XI. on Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. This homily is, in fact, n. XXI.²⁸

Finally in Letter 3 to Canon Giuseppe Gatti, *On the Election of Bishops*, Rosmini says, 'As Pope Siricius and Pope Innocent I affirm, "A judgement confirmed by the comments of many people is complete".' The reference he gives to Siricius is wrong. It is not to letter IV but letter V.²⁹

In Letter I to Canon Gatti, Rosmini quotes Leo the Great concerning his appreciation of the freedom of the people in choosing their pastors. The references to two of his letters quoted are not correct. Rosmini mentions letters LXXXIV and LXXXIX. They should read XIV and X.³⁰ Finally, Rosmini quotes Cyprian in reference to the unity of the Church. He quotes one of his letters, number XL. Yet the edition to which I referred gave it as number XLIII.³¹ The following quotation on the same subject mentions *De unitate Ecclesiae* chapter. III. Yet I found the reference under chapter V.³²

²² *Ibid.*, c. IV, n. 79, note 23, p. 101, and notes 23, and 24, p. 272, [n. 79, p. 70, note 23, p. 214].

²³ *Ibid.*, n. 137, note 10, p. 185, and note 4, p. 278, [n. 137, p. 136, note 10, p. 244].

²⁴ *Ibid.*, note 10, p. 185 and note 6, p. 278, [note 10, p. 244].

²⁵ *Ibid.*, n. 143, note 22, p. 188 and note 12, p. 278, [n. 143, p. 138, note 22, p. 244, number of letter not mentioned in English].

²⁶ *Ibid.*, n. 153, note 40, p. 196 and note 20, p. 278, [n. 153, p. 147, and note 40, p. 246. Number of letter not mentioned in English translation].

²⁷ *Ibid.*, note 21, p. 278.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, n. 157, note 49, p.199 and note 28, p. 278, [n. 157, pp. 150–151 and note 50, p. 247].

²⁹ *CP*, Appendix, Letter III, note 2, p. 243 and note 1, p. 280, [p. 184 and note 2 p. 256].

³⁰ *CP*, Appendix Letter I note 12, p. 217 and notes 14 and 15, page 279, [p. 164, and note 12 p. 150, PL references correct].

³¹ Cf. *The Fathers of the Church*, St Cyprian, Letters, 43, (5), p. 109.

³² *CP*, c. III, n. 48 notes 3 and 4, pp. 65–66, and note 2, page 270, [n. 48, p. 43 and notes 3 and 4, p. 204]. Cf. *The Fathers of the Church*, St Cyprian, Treatises, The Unity of the Church, c. 5, p. 99.

On the first blank page of his *Teodicea* [Theodicy], the Boniardi-Pogliani edition, Milan, 1845, Rosmini adds a reference in his own handwriting in pencil, 'St Cyprian, or whoever the author is, quotes, in *De laude martyrii*, the passage from St Paul: like this, *Do you not know that everyone that striveth for the mastery etc...so run that you may obtain*'.³³ Rosmini realises that the passage is not actually from Cyprian but Pseudo Cyprian. However he gets the reference wrong. It is not from chapter IV but from chapter XXVIII.³⁴

Quacquarelli mentions some examples of defective references from *Conferenze sui doveri degli ecclesiastici* [Conferences on Ecclesiastical Duties]. Rosmini is describing hardness of heart which does not understand anything and therefore is intransigent and negligent. He refers to Isidore, but does not say which Isidore. It is, in fact, Isidore of Pelusium.³⁵ We can call this a defect of abbreviation or omission. But there are also defects in references. In *Conference III*, Rosmini says that the priest should accompany mentally what he recites orally.³⁶ Augustine strongly recommends this in many of his works. 'Many cry out not with their own voice but with the voice of their body. The cry that reaches the Lord is your thought. It cries out within you where God is listening.' Rosmini quotes this as coming from *Enarratio in psalmos* (Explanation on the Psalms), Psalm XXX. In actual fact, says Quacquarelli, there are two distinct passages; one is on Psalm CXLI, 2, the other is on Psalm XXX.³⁷ Earlier in the same work, he again quotes Augustine 'In order to direct we advise; to instruct we teach; to convert we pray'. The general source is given as *De verbis apostolorum*. We should refer to Sermon CXXXI, 10, 10.³⁸ Finally another example is where Rosmini stresses the importance of humility in the priest. He supports this with a quotation apparently from Augustine, 'God dwells in the high heavens. Humble yourself and he will stoop down to you. Lift yourself up and he flees from you.' Rosmini refers to a sermon of Augustine on the Ascension. Now Caesarius of Arles depended on Augustine and although the greater part of the former's sermon is drawn from Augustine's sermon n. 261, Caesarius of Arles, himself, is the author of this passage. It is an insert.³⁹ As

³³ 1 Cor 9: 24–25. The passage is taken from these verses.

³⁴ *Teodicea*, Ed. Crit., *Dedica Premessa*, note a, p. 11 and *Dedica Premessa*, note 3. p. 643 Cf. Quacquarelli, *LP*, c. X, pp. 129–130.

³⁵ *Conferenze*, Conf., I, pp. 64–65, [pp. 68–69]. Quacquarelli *op. cit.*, cap. X, p. 120. I have found this same problem with regard to St Gregory and St Hilary in my preparation for this book.

³⁶ This echoes what is found in the Common Rules of the Institute of Charity, 'And to this [perfecting the way they say their prayers] they will attain by endeavouring, as far as human weakness permits, to say their vocal prayers, and to fulfil their other exercises with actual attention and an understanding of the sentiments expressed by the words which they address to God' (*Common Rules* n. 12).

³⁷ The two passages are in psalm 141: 2, 'Many cry to the Lord not with their own voice, but with the voice of their body', and in psalm 30: 4, 'If therefore you call, call within where God hears.' Cf. *Conferenze* n. III, p. 36–37, [p. 43]. Cf. Quacquarelli, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

³⁸ Quacquarelli, *Ibid.* Cf. *Conferenze*, Conf., II, p. 23, [p. 30].

³⁹ Caesarius, *Sermo*, CCX. Cf. *Conferenze*, IX, p. 151, [p. 147]. Quacquarelli, *Ibid.* pp. 122–123.

Quacquarelli says, we mustn't expect too much from Rosmini, taking into account the times in which he lived.

Frequently in Rosmini's works he mentions in one note many references to different works of the same author, whereas only one pertains to the text, and, in addition, it is in an abbreviated form. A good example is a reference to Tertullian in Rosmini's work *Del matrimonio, Lettera ad un teologo sul ministro del sacramento* [On Marriage, Letter to a Theologian on the Minister of the Sacrament]. The passage referring to marriage 'which the Church arranges and seals with the priest's blessing'⁴⁰ is an abbreviation of Tertullian's *Ad uxorem*, 2, 8, 6. Moreover he refers at the same time in an odd form of reference to *De monogamia*, c. V, and. II *ad Uxorem*, c. IX, and *De Pudicitia*, c. IV.⁴¹

Quacquarelli also refers again to the *Teodicea* where Rosmini is explaining that evil is not something positive but is a deprivation of good. He cites Jerome, 'Among Latin Fathers, a similar thought was expressed by St Jerome in his *Commentaries on the Lamentations of Jeremiah*, where he says: "Evil is not, of its own nature, any of the things that subsist, and is not created by God".'⁴² The reference does not correspond to the quotation because it is 'a contamination', one which passes from a work of the author to another one of the same author or from one author to another. This happens to him especially with ancient Christian authors with which he has great familiarity, such as Jerome. A note in the critical edition of the *Teodicea* states that the concept is Jerome's and refers to his commentary on Isaiah c. XIV and also the commentary on Jeremiah c. XVIII.

Final examples of mistakes and shortcomings in references can be taken from *Il linguaggio teologico*. Allow me to put the first example in its context. In chapter 9

⁴⁰ A. R., *Del matrimonio*, Ed. Crit. (30), 1977, p. 198.

⁴¹ The correct references are given by Remo Bessero Belti in the Edizione Critica, note 1 p. 366. Cf. Quacquarelli, c. X, p. 130. The passage from Tertullian's *Ad Uxorem* reads, 'How shall we ever be able adequately to describe the happiness of marriage *which the Church arranges, the Sacrifice strengthens, upon which the blessing sets a seal*, at which angels are present as witnesses, and to which the Father gives his consent? For not even on earth do children marry properly and legally without their father's permission. (Italics mine). II, c. VIII, 6. (*Ancient Christian Writer's*, Tertullian, Vol. XIII, Longmans Green, 1951, p.35). The passage from *De Monogamia* reads, 'So then you propose to *marry in the Lord*, as the law and the Apostle require — supposing that you bother about this at all. But how will you dare request the kind of marriage which is not permitted to the ministers from whom you ask it, the bishop who is a monogamist, the presbyters and deacons who are bound by the same obligation, the widows whose way of life you repudiate in your own person?' c. XI. *op. cit.*, p. 93. The passage from *De Pudicitia* reads, 'So, too, whoever enjoys any other than nuptial intercourse, in whatever place, and in the person of whatever woman, makes himself guilty of adultery and fornication. Accordingly, among us, secret connections as well; connections, that is, not first professed in presence of the Church-run risk of being judged akin to adultery and fornication; nor must we let them, if thereafter woven together by the covering of marriage, elude the charge. But all the other frenzies of passions, impious both toward the bodies and toward the sexes, beyond the laws of nature, we banish not only from the threshold, but from all shelter of the Church, because they are not sins, but monstrosities.' c. XVI, (Christian Classics Electronic Library).

⁴² *Teodicea*, Lib. II, c. III, n. 184, p. 142, and note 9, p. 646, [Vol. I, n. 184, p. 190].

Rosmini is discussing the book on the Eucharist *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini* of Abbot Paschasius Radbertus and the adverse reactions to it. He also mentions another monk Rathmanus, who had also written a book about the same subject on the orders of Charlemagne. All this is apropos of the need for development of language to keep up with theological developments and the need for clarity. Rosmini says that Paschasius had said that the Eucharist was both *truth* and *figure*. Rathmanus took the word *truth* for *manifestation*, which, according to him, Gregory had given it. The result was that Rathmanus denied that Christ was present in *truth* in the Eucharist and asserted that he was there only in mystery or figure i.e. under the appearances of bread and wine. This was substantially what Paschasius taught; but those who erroneously thought that Christ himself was perceptible to the senses questioned this. As can be seen, Rathmanus' expression out of context was open to equivocation. Rathmanus believed, as did Paschasius, that Christ was *really present* under the appearances of bread and wine. But it does not sound like this. This shows how carefully theological language has to be formulated. And readers have to be sensitive to new styles of explanation. However, the point of this from the view of Rosmini and the Fathers is that Rathmanus referred to Gregory. 'Lord, may your sacraments perfect in us what they contain, so that what we do now in *specie*, we may receive in *rerum veritate*.' These words refer to what we can *perceive* of the sacrament, not of the sacrament itself. They ask that one day we may receive without veil or mystery what we now receive under the species of bread and wine. Now, Rosmini does not give a reference to these words of Gregory, but research has traced them to the *Sacramentarium Gregorianum*, which is recited at St Peter's on Holy Saturday. The authorship of this work is unanimously attributed to Gregory the Great.⁴³

Sometimes Rosmini summarises a quotation. In chapter 5 (continuation) he has been expounding how the Church has progressed through the ages in doctrine and understanding, with reference to the teaching of Vincent of Lerins, 'a successor in this matter to the holy Doctors and famous Fathers quoted by the Church herself in the great Councils'. Then, in a footnote he says 'In the 5th Synod (or 6th according to Gennadius): "In all things we follow the holy men who were also holy teachers of the Church of God" (*Apud Gennadium*, p. 317). Many other Councils said the same.' This is an abbreviation of a long passage of Gennadio Scolario, patriarch of Constantinople.⁴⁴

The above examples give us some idea of the research that needs to be done on all Rosmini's works to clarify the sources to which he was referring, so that we can truly appreciate the contribution of the Fathers which adds to the richness of his thought.

⁴³ Quacquarelli, *op. cit.*, c. X, 119–120. *LT*, c. IX, pp. 70–73, [nn. 53–57, pp. 48–53].

⁴⁴ *LT*, c. 5 <bis>, p. 53, [n. 35, pp. 32–33] Cf. Quacquarelli, *op. cit.*, c. X, p. 120. Gennadii Scolarii, *Defensio quinque capitum, quae in sancta Oecumenica Florentina Synodo continentur*, Roma, 1657, pp. 56–57.

Appendix 1

A list of the Main Fathers Mentioned in Rosmini's Works

Altaner⁷ divides the time of the Fathers into three main periods,

- 1) The time of foundation (till the Council of Nicaea, 325).
- 2) The peak period (from 325 to the Council of Chalcedon, 451).
- 3) The decline in the West till the death of Isidore of Seville, 636, in the East till the death of John of Damascus, 749.

First Period

A. The Apostolic Fathers

Barnabas
St Clement of Rome
St Ignatius of Antioch
St Polycarp
Hermas
Papias

The first period begins with the time of the Apostolic Fathers, because, actually or supposedly, they had contact with the Apostles or were instructed by their disciples.

They did not write a great deal, but their importance lies in what they *did write* and the link they had with the apostolic age. Originally there were five of them, **Barnabas**, so called because a Letter was written in his name about 100; **St Clement of Rome**, 4th successor of St Peter, (92–101); **St Ignatius of Antioch** (martyred in Rome c 110); **St Polycarp** (martyred probably in 156) and **Hermas** (140 ?); to whom was added later **Papias** of Hierapolis, reputedly the disciple of the apostle John and companion of Polycarp and venerated by St Ignatius, and the *Epistle to Diognetus*. Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp were probably in contact with the men of the apostolic age. Their writings are closely connected with the Holy Scriptures.

St Justin, philosopher and martyr, also lived in the second century. He was of a pagan Greek family. He was born at Neapolis in Palestine (c 100–11) and died c. 165–166. Another famous writer of the second century was **St Irenaeus of Lyons**. He was born in Asia Minor and was the most important of the second century theologians. He reputedly, on the word of St Jerome, died a martyr in 202.

⁷ Bethold Altaner, *Patrology*, (Trans Hilda C. Graef), Herder/Nelson, 1960.

<p>B. Third Century Fathers. These can be divided into Eastern and Western.</p>	
<p>Eastern The School of Alexandria</p>	<p>Western</p>
<p>In the East two big names of the School of Alexandria are prominent. Clement of Alexandria was probably born in Athens c. 150 and died before 215. He has been called the first Christian Scholar. He was familiar with Scripture and all the Christian teaching which had gone before him and was also familiar with over 300 pagan authors. The other great Father was Origen (185–253). He was probably the greatest scholar of Christian antiquity. His father was martyred. Alas, Origen took the teaching of Christ about eunuchs literally and castrated himself. Also his ordination later caused controversy, as he was ordained outside his own diocese and against the wish of his bishop. There is no doubting Origen's holiness but Altaner says that addiction to allegorical exegesis of Scripture and the influence of Platonic philosophy led him into grave doctrinal errors.⁸ He suffered under the persecution of Decius. Rosmini says that he was the first scholar to comment on the entire Bible.</p> <p>Finally, mention should also be made of Eusebius of Caesarea. He was born in Palestine, perhaps at</p>	<p>There was also controversy in the West. Tertullian was born at Carthage c. 160, the son of a pagan Roman captain. Unfortunately he was an impulsive and impetuous character and his rigorism led him into Montanism (206–7). The Montanists preached absolute chastity (Tertullian had sown his wild oats as a young man) and the rejection of the world in view of its imminent end which was to accompany the advent of the Holy Spirit⁹. St Hippolytus lived and worked in Rome at the beginning of the third century. He was probably a native of the Greek East. He was another rigorist, and ambitious. He came into conflict with Pope Callistus (217–222) and was elected anti-pope. He remained in schism during the papacy of Urban and Pontianus and was exiled to Sardinia with the latter under Emperor Maximinus. Reconciled to the Church he died in exile and was buried on the same day as Pontianus. Both saints are venerated as martyrs¹⁰. St Cyprian was born between 200 and 210 probably at Carthage. He was the son of wealthy pagan parents and was converted to Christianity about 246. He, too, was not immune from controversy. (Remember Christian doctrine was being thrashed out at the time). He suffered under the persecution of Decius, and was beheaded during the persecution under Valerian. Lactantius</p>

⁸ Cf. Altaner, *op. cit.*, pp. 224–5. Controversies about him flared up after his death. The Emperor Justinian condemned nine theses in an edict (543). The bishops of the empire agreed with this.

⁹ Cf. Pier Franco Beatrice, *Introduction to the Fathers of the Church*, Edizioni Istituto S. Gaetano, 1987, p. 141.

¹⁰ The second Eucharistic Prayer is based on the model of St Hippolytus in the *Apostolic Tradition*.

Caesarea, in 263. He was an outstanding scholar but not one of the great theologians. His lasting fame is due to his work as the great historian of Christian antiquity. He died in 339.	was a native of Roman Africa (b. 290) where he had been a pupil of Arnobius . He taught rhetoric in Nicomedia. The humanists called him the Christian Cicero. He had to flee during the persecution of Diocletian in 303. Later he turned up as teacher of Constantine's son, Crispin c. 317. Nothing is known of his later life.
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Second Period

The next period stretching from the Council of Nicaea 325 to the Council of Chalcedon 451 is also the golden age of patristic literature and the time of the four great Councils. They are: Nicaea I (325), Constantinople I (381), Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). It is not surprising to learn that the Fathers of the time were deeply involved in the great mysteries of our faith, not without cost to themselves.

Eastern Fathers	Western Fathers
<p>St Athanasius (295–373) is the most famous of the Alexandrian Bishops. He fought hard against the Arians, and the secular power who supported them. They denied the divinity of Christ and therefore the Trinity. As a result Athanasius had to leave his see five times and he lived in exile for seventeen years.¹¹ The controversy with the Arians occupied almost the whole of the fourth century. This heresy was condemned by the Council of Nicaea. Another Bishop of Alexandria was St Cyril who was born in 370. He refuted the Arians, but owes his fame to the fact that he was an implacable adversary of Nestorius who</p>	<p>The five great Fathers of the Western Church were: St Hilary of Poitiers, St Ambrose, St Jerome, St Augustine and St Leo the Great.</p> <p>St Hilary of Poitiers was born about 315 and died in 367. He came from a noble pagan family 'but his quest for the meaning of life led him to the study of Scripture and to baptism.'¹² The clergy and people of his city elected him as bishop in 350. But, because of his opposition to Arianism he was exiled to Asia Minor. He spent three years there but he was sent back to Gaul at the instigation of the Arians to whom he had become a nuisance! He was the most important opponent of Arianism in the West, and was given the name of 'Athanasius of the West'.</p> <p>He was the first eminent exegete of the West, bringing to it important ideas in Eastern theology. St Ambrose came from a noble family and was probably born at Treves in 339.</p>

¹¹ For details see Altaner, *op. cit.*, pp. 312–313.

¹² Altaner, *op. cit.*, p. 423.

<p>taught that the two natures in Christ were distinct to such an extent that there was no contact between them. According to him, therefore Mary was simply mother of the man Jesus and not mother of God. The Third Council of Ephesus (431) confirmed Cyril's teaching and proclaimed Mary, Mother of God (<i>Theotokos</i>).</p> <p>St Basil the Great, was born c.330. He and his younger brother, St Gregory of Nyssa, came from a family of saints! With Basil's friend St Gregory Nazianzen they are called the Cappadocian Fathers. Basil and Gregory of Nazianzen compiled the <i>Philocalia</i>, an anthology of Origen's writings, and two monastic rules. St Basil became Bishop of Caesarea and thus Metropolitan of Cappadocia. He, too, fought against the Arians and merited the title of 'the Great'. He is revered throughout the Church and especially in the East. St Gregory Nazianzen (b. 329–330, d.c.390) was born near Nazianzus in Cappadocia. He was ordained priest by his father, the bishop and angrily fled into the desert. However he returned to Nazianzus and helped his father. This was not all. Basil, his friend, consecrated him bishop of a small town, Sasima, against his will. But he never governed it. Later he was confirmed bishop by the second</p>	<p>After his father's early death his mother returned to Rome with her three children. In 370 Ambrose became a consul with his official residence at Milan. On the death of the Arian bishop there were violent scenes between the Arians and Catholics. Ambrose tried to intervene and surprisingly was nominated bishop by both parties. He resisted, being only a catechumen, but he was duly baptised and consecrated a bishop, probably on December 7, 374. He devoted himself to theology and began to lead an ascetical life. Ambrose fought against the Arians. He was the friend and advisor of three emperors and rebuked Theodosius I for ordering a massacre at Thessalonica. As a result the Emperor did public penance. When he died Ambrose delivered the funeral oration. Ambrose was an outstanding saint and beside Theodosius was the most brilliant mind of his day. He also baptised the great Augustine. St Jerome was born of wealthy Catholic parents in Dalmatia between 340 and 350. He came to Rome very early on to study. He was baptised in Rome and later went to Gaul where he decided to consecrate his life to Christ. He decided to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and, taken ill on the way, he stopped at Antioch. While there he learnt Greek. For about three years he lived as a hermit in the desert of Chalcis, East of Antioch and during this time he learnt Hebrew! He was ordained priest in 379. Soon after, he left Antioch for Constantinople. He attended the lectures of St Gregory Nazianzen and was friendly with Gregory of Nyssa. He also became an enthusiastic admirer of the exegesis of Origen. At the invitation of Pope Damasus he attended a synod in Rome and during these years (382–385) became the secretary of the aged Pope. He was also charged with the revision of the Latin texts of the Bible. All know that the Latin Vulgate edition of the</p>
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<p>council of Constantinople, but he resigned after only a few days and spent the rest of his life quietly on the family estate. He was a great rhetorician. Gregory of Nyssa born c. 335, retired into the desert where he remained for ten years. In this he was influenced by his friend Gregory Nazianzen. He became bishop only at the insistence of his brother Basil and was made Bishop of Nyssa in Cappodocia in 371. His life was not without difficulties but he was present at the Council of Constantinople in 381.</p> <p>Among the other Eastern Fathers is St Cyril of Jerusalem. He was born in or near Jerusalem about 313. He was consecrated Bishop of Jerusalem in 348 but soon came into conflict with his Metropolitan, Acacius of Caesarea, who was Arian minded. He was twice deposed and exiled and again a third time by the Emperor Valens. This last exile lasted eleven years. Cyril attended the Council of Constantinople in 381. St John Chrysostom (b.344 (?)–407). His early dates cannot be stated with certainty. He came from a noble family at Antioch. His devout mother, Anthusa, became a widow when she was 20 and made the decision not to marry again in order to devote her time to the rearing and education of her son. He was baptised in 372. He studied theology with Theodore of</p>	<p>Bible was the fruit of his scriptural labours. In Rome he became the centre of an ascetical circle and this led to trouble when St Paula's daughter Blesilla died at an early age. Jerome left Rome once again for Jerusalem eventually settling in Bethlehem. St Paula and her daughter Eustochium followed a little later and her wealth enabled her to build three convents for women, of which she was superior, and one for men, directed by St Jerome. Jerome taught in pilgrims' hostels and a monastic school. He spent thirty four years at Bethlehem, but he got involved in controversies. He was excitable and hot - tempered, biting sarcasm and frequently offensive. He liked to be praised and was an extremely sensitive person, and his nerves suffered from excessive asceticism and grave illness. He is a good example of a saint to be admired but not imitated! He died in 419 or 420.</p> <p>St Augustine (354–430) was born at Thagaste in Numidia. His father was baptised just before his death. His mother, St Monica, was a devout Christian. During a grave illness Augustine asked for baptism, but the danger passed quickly and his mother only had him enrolled as a catechumen. His father wanted him to be a teacher of rhetoric. He received his first lessons at Thagaste and continued his studies in Madaura but went to Carthage in 371. There he sowed his wild oats. He had an affair lasting till about 384 and his son Adeodatus was born in 372 (died in 390). At this time he despised Christianity as an old wives' tale. and his mother refused to have him home because of this. He first joined the Manicheans. He finished his studies in 374–375 and returned to Thagaste as professor of the liberal arts. But he grew disillusioned with Manicheism. In 383 he moved to Rome against the will of St Monica and at the beginning of 384 was appointed to the post of professor of rhetoric at Milan. St Augustine was not happy,</p>
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<p>Mopsuestia through his contact with Diodore of Tarsus. He was ordained priest in 386 and achieved fame as an orator. In spite of resistance he was consecrated Bishop of Constantinople in 398. John's reforming zeal made him enemies. After a short exile he was recalled but he annoyed the Empress Eudoxia, tension arose, and again he was exiled. He died in exile in 407. The Emperor Theodosius II, the son of Eudoxia who had died, had him solemnly buried in the church of the Apostles, in Constantinople. Pope Innocent I and the whole of the West sided with Chrysostom. He is the patron of Christian preachers, and has been entitled Chrysostom (the golden mouth) from the sixth century. The volume of his literary production is greater than any other Eastern writer, and only St Augustine can be compared with him. Theodore of Mopsuestia was born in 350 of rich parents at Antioch. After being a priest in Antioch he became Bishop of Mopsuestia in 392 and died 428. He was the greatest exegete of the Antiochene school. Nestorius was his disciple and though Theodore was considered orthodox in his life he was attacked after his death during the Nestorian controversy. His writings show that he taught a largely orthodox Christianity and he has been largely</p>	<p>he realised that his sensual life did not satisfy him. In Milan he came under the influence of St Ambrose, saw that the latter had the answers to Manicheism, and through his philosophical studies he hoped to achieve union with God through philosophical meditation. But Simplicianus (who succeeded Ambrose as Bishop of Milan) led him to the letters of St Paul and Augustine realised his union with God could only be achieved by grace. This increased his internal struggle to be virtuous. The famous story of St Augustine running into a garden and hearing a child, singing '<i>tolle, lege</i>' is well known. He opened his book of St Paul's letters and his eye fell on <i>Romans 13: 13 'let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in revelling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.'</i> He found peace. In 385 he resigned his office and was enrolled for baptism in the following Lent. Augustine was baptised by St Ambrose on Holy Saturday 387 together with his son and his friend Alypius. Some months later he returned to Africa (via Rome and Ostia where his mother died). He lived there for three years but the Bishop of Hippo asked him to become a priest. His formidable mind now turned to theology. In 395 he was consecrated bishop and succeeded Valerius as Bishop of Hippo in 395. He died in Hippo in 430 while the city was besieged by the Vandals. 'The great Bishop of Hippo combined the creative power of Tertullian and the intellectual breadth of Origen with the ecclesiastical sense of Cyprian, the dialectical acumen of Aristotle, with the idealistic enthusiasm and the profound speculation of Plato, the practical sense of the Latin with the agile intellect of the Greek. Augustine is the greatest philosopher of the patristic age and probably the most important and influential theologian of the Church, whose outstanding achievements had not a few</p>
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<p>exonerated. It must be remembered that he died before the council of Chalcedon.</p> <p>Theodoret of Cyrus was born at Antioch in 393. In 423 he was consecrated Bishop of Cyrus, near Antioch, against his will. He sided with Nestorius in 431 and wrote against Cyril and the Council of Ephesus. He was deposed in 499 and appealed to Pope Leo I. After having agreed to a declaration against Nestorius he was allowed to attend the Council of Chalcedon (451) as an orthodox preacher. But later his writings against Cyril and the Council of Ephesus were condemned. It should be mentioned that Theodoret never completely approved of Nestorius' teaching.</p> <p>He was one of the most fertile writers of the Greek Church.</p>	<p>enthusiastic admirers even in his lifetime.⁷⁷ We should also not forget that Augustine founded a monastic order. No wonder Rosmini believed him to be the greatest intellect the Church had ever known, and was deeply influenced by him.</p> <p>St Leo the Great was Pope from 440–461. He was between 40 and 50 years old when he was made Pope. He was 'the guardian of orthodoxy and the saviour of Western civilisation'.⁸ He met Attila, the Hun, at Mantua in 452 and caused him to turn back. He also met the king of the Vandals in 455 with the result that when Rome was attacked it was spared torture, murder and fire. He intervened in the Monophysite controversy.⁹ He also took measures against other heretical doctrines. He was a superb rhetorician. We know of 96 short sermons and a collection of letters.</p>
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⁷⁷Altaner, *op. cit.*, pp. 492–493.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 417.

⁹The Monophysites held that the human nature of Christ ceased when the divine person of God's son assumed it. This was counteracted by the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

Third Period

The sixth century saw the end of the Patristic period of literature. In this period we can include **St Gregory the Great** (c. 540–604), **St John Damascene** (b.c. 675–d.749?) and **Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite** who wrote during the Monophysite controversies (First traces of his works 512–518). The dates and real name of the author are unknown. He wrote under the name of Dionysius the Areopagite.

Appendix 2

Table I

Rosmini's Reading Lists in his Early Years

The Fathers of the Church, the Titles and the Number of their Works¹

Year and total books read/ or consulted	Author	No	Title of Work
1810 – 1812	Augustine	1	Enchiridion.
40	Gregory the Great	1	Moralia.
	Jerome	1	Epistulae.
	John Chrysostom	1	Consolationes.
1812 - 1813	Ambrose	1	De officiis ministrorum.
90	Augustine	2	Confessiones; De cohabitatione clericorum (Rule).
	Gregory the Great	2	Letters; Moralia.
	Jerome	2	Epistulae; Praefatio ad Biblia.
	John Chrysostom	1	Homilia.
	Lactantius	1	De divinae institutiones.
1814 428	Ambrose	1	De officiis ministrorum.
	Arnobius	1	Adversus gentes.
	Augustine	21	Confessiones; Contra Adimantum; Contra Cresconium; Contra Faustum; Contra Iulianum; De baptismo; De civitate Dei; De doctrina christiana; De fide et symbolo; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae; De peccato originali; De remissione peccatorum; De Spiritu et littera; De vera religione; Enarrationes

¹ For details of the titles refer to Radice, *Annali*. One or two of these titles would have been part of a particular work.

Appendix 2

			in psalmos; Enchiridion ad Laurentium; Epistulae; Expositio epistulae ad Galatas; Sermoni; Tractatus XV in Iohannis evangelium.
	Clement of Alexandria	3	Cohortationes ad gentes; Pedagogus; Stromata.
	Clement of Rome	1	Epistula ad Corinthios.
	Cyprian	3	De bono patientiae; De unitate Ecclesiae Catholicae; Quod idoli dii non sint.
	Cyril of Alexandria	1	Contra Iulianum.
	Eusebius of Caesarea	2	Historia Ecclesiastica; Praeparatio evangelica.
	Gregory Nazianzen	2	Oratio I contra Iulianum; Oratio in laudem of S Basili.
	Gregory the Great	1	Homiliae in Ezechielem prophetam.
	Jerome	3	Adversus Jovinianum; De scriptis in Joseph; Epistulae.
	John Chrysostom	2	Homilia; De sacerdotio.
	Justin	4	Apologia I and II; Dialogus cum Tryphone; Oratio ad Graecos (<i>spurious</i>).
	Ignatius of Antioch	1	Ad Philadelphos.
	Irenaeus of Lyons	1	Adversus haereses.
	Lactantius*	3	De falsa sapientia Divinae institutiones; De mortibus persecutorum.
	Leo the Great	1	Orationes.
	Origen	2	Contra Celsum; Tractatus.
	Prosper of Aquitaine	1	Carmen de ingratis.
	Tertullian	7	Adversus Iudaeos; Ad Scapulam; Ad Nationes; Apologeticum; De idolatria; De testimonio animae; Libri de praescriptione haeticorum.
	Theodoret of Cyrus	2	Sermone de legibus; Graecarum affectionum curatio.
	Theophilus of Antioch	1	Ad Autolicum
In this year Rosmini wrote his <i>Il giorno di solitudine</i> [Day of Solitude]. Radice mentions Placidus Lactantius (a grammarian of the Vth c. but I suspect confusion here as Firmianus Lactantius was the author of <i>Divinae Institutiones</i> and <i>De mortibus persecutorum</i> . See also below.			

Appendix 2

1815² 45	Jerome	1	Epistulae.
	Lactantius*	1	Divinae institutiones.
* See above (1814)			
1816 46	No fathers are mentioned as being consulted or read this year. The list is divided into scholastic and cultural.		
1817 30	Augustine	2	Opera; Retractationes.
	Tertullian	1	De oratione.
In this year Rosmini entered his first year of theology, and, as well as the above authors, one should take into account the Codices he bought. These originated from the Convent of St Justina at Padua.			
1818 19			
There are no Fathers mentioned this year but Rosmini did buy a library from the Venier Bookshop at Padua. This family had fallen on hard times in Venice and had come to Padua where Venier set up a bookshop. These volumes were going cheaply. They are not included in the reading list for 1818.			
1819 58	Ambrose	1	De officiis ministrorum.
	Augustine	2	De natura et gratia contra Pelagium; Enarrationes in psalmos.
	Clement of Alexandria	2	Cohortationes ad gentes; Stromata.
	Jerome	1	Epistulae.
	John Chrysostom	1	Opuscoli consolatorii.
	Theoderet of Cyrus	1	Sermones.
1820 88	Augustine	4	Confessiones; De catechizandis rudibus; Retractationes; Sermones.
	Gregory the Great	1	Moralia.
	Jerome	1	Epistula.
In this year Rosmini was ordained deacon and concluded his university studies. Books quoted by Rosmini are found especially in his published works. In this year he translated Augustine's <i>De catechizandis rudibus</i> .			
1821 107	Ambrose	2	De obitu Theodosii oratio; De virginibus.

² This does not include sources used for the work *Il giorno di solitudine*.

Appendix 2

	Augustine	8	De catechizandis rudibus; De doctrina christiana; De fide et symbolo; De Genesis ad litteram liber imperfectus; De psalmorum bono; De sancta virginitate; Epistulae; Tractatus in S. Iohannis evangelium.
	Basil	2	Epistulae; Tractatus.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Stromata.
	Cyprian	1	Epistulae
	Cyril of Jerusalem	1	Catecheses.
	Dionysius the Areopagite	1	De ecclesiastica hierarchia.
	Gregory Nazianzen	1	Orationes.
	Gregory the Great	3	Moralia; Tractatus in Ezechielem Prophetam; Regolae Pastoralis.
	Isidore of Seville	1	De divinis officiis.
	Jerome	3	Contra Jovinianum; De viris illustribus In Isaia.
	John Chrysostom	1	Tractatus.
	Justin	1	Apologia.
	Origen	1	Contra Celsum.
	Prosper of Aquitaine	1	De ingratis.
	Tertullian	2	Apologeticum; De exhortatione castitatis.
This was the year of Rosmini's Ordination to the Priesthood on 21 April. He published <i>Delle lodi di S. Filippo Neri</i> , and the translation of Augustine's <i>De catechizandis rudibus</i> [Catechism for Beginners].			
1822 137	Augustine	5	Confessiones; De civitate Dei; De utilitate credendi; Epistula; Epistulae ad Romanos inchoata expositio.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Stromata.
	Eusebius	1	Eclogae propheticae.
	Gregory Nazianzen	1	Poemata.
	John Chrysostom	1	Tractatus.
	Justin	2	2 Apologia; Cohortatio ad gentes.
	Lactantius	3	Divinae institutiones; De ira Dei; De vera sapientia.
	Origen	1	Contra Celsum.
	Theophilus of Antioch	1	Ad Autolycum.
A considerable number of books were read or consulted this year because of the thesis on the Oracles which Rosmini wrote for his degrees in Canon Law and Theology. Long bibliographical lists of theological studies have been omitted.			
1823 170	Augustine	4	Confessiones; De civitate Dei; De ordine; Epistulae.

Appendix 2

	Tertullian	1	Apologeticum.
The books read partly or completely in 1823 are mentioned chiefly in the first six books of <i>Filosofia della politica</i> [Philosophy of Politics], and in the <i>Panegirico alla santa e gloriosa memoria di Pio VII</i> [Panegyric to the holy and glorious memory of Pius VII]. In such works one would not expect many references to the Fathers. <i>Dell' educazione cristiana</i> and <i>Lettera sul cristiano insegnamento</i> were published.			
1824 83	Augustine	1	De civitate Dei.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Stromata.
	Gregory the Great	2	Dialogi; Moralia.
	Jerome	1	Epistulae.
	Justin	1	Cohortatio ad gentes.
This was a particularly important year for the increase of works in the Rosminian library. He wanted to build up a library which would do honour to Rovereto and one which would be useful for his friends. He bought two entire libraries at considerable expense.			
1825	Arnobius	1	Adversus gentes.
174	Augustine	2	Confessiones; De civitate Dei.
	Eusebius	1	Historia Ecclesiastica.
	Gregory of Nazianzen	1	Poemata.
	Gregory the Great	1	Moralia.
	Isidore of Seville	1	Origines.
	Jerome	1	Epistulae.
	John Chrysostom	1	Homilia.
	Lactantius	1	De mortibus persecutorum.
1825 was a year of great achievements for Rosmini. The <i>Filosofia della politica</i> now numbered 7 books, and four essays were added which would be included in his <i>Opuscoli filosofici</i> . He also revised and finalised his <i>Panegyric of Pius VII</i> . These works entailed the reading or consulting of a large number of books.			
1826 139	Ambrose	1	De virginibus.
	Augustine	3	De doctrina christiana; Epistulae; Tractatus in Iohannis evangelium.
	Eusebius	1	Commentary on David.
	Tertullian	1	Apologeticum.
In this year Rosmini started his <i>Directorium Spiritus</i> , the volumes of copious notes and quotations gathered together in preparation for the writing of the <i>Constitutions</i> .			
1827 82	Augustine	1	Confessiones.

Appendix 2

Rosmini revised certain essays and wrote new ones for his <i>Opuscoli filosofici</i> , and he was working on his <i>Directorium Spiritus</i> . It was a sad year. His cousin, Carlo, and his friend Moschini both died and he became very ill with liver trouble. But it was also a time of expectation with the immediate preparations for going to Calvario.			
1828 96	Augustine	4	De moribus Manichaeorum; De vera religione; Sermones; Soliloquia.
	Cyprian	2	De lapsis; Epistulae.
This year was occupied with the writing of the <i>Constitutions</i> , polemical essays against Melchiorre Gioia, the drafting of the <i>Nuovo saggio</i> , and the revision of the first volume of <i>Opuscoli filosofici</i> and the <i>Trasunto delle massime di perfezione cristiana</i> .			
1829 103	Athanasius	1	Oratio de incarnationis Verbi.
	Augustine	7	Confessiones; De civitate Dei; De diversis quaestionibus 83; De doctrina Christiana; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De magistro; De Trinitate.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Cohortationes ad gentes.
	Cyprian	1	Quod idola dii non sint.
	Eusebius	1	Praeparatio evangelica.
	Gregory of Nazianzen	1	Orationes.
	Gregory the Great	1	Moralia.
	Justin	2	Apologium; Oratio ad Graecos.
These works are quoted chiefly in the first three volumes of <i>Nuovo saggio published in 1829</i> , he also gave the finishing touches to the <i>Massime di perfezione cristiana</i> [Maxims of Christian Perfection].			
1830 121	Augustine	18	Confessiones; Contra academicos; Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum ad Bonifacium; Contra Faustum Manicheum; De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De magistro; De Trinitate; De vera religione; Enarrationes in Psalmos; Enchiridion ad Laurentium; Epistulae ad Galatas expositio; Epistula ad Paulinum; Epistula ad Vitalem; Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium; Retractationum libri duo; Sermones; Soliloquiorum libri duo.
	Epiphanius	1	Haereses (Panarion).
	Gregory the Great	2	Tractatus; Opera.

Appendix 2

	Irenaeus	1	Adversus haereses.
	Jerome	2	Commenti biblici; Epistulae.
	Prosper of Aquitaine	1	Epistula ad Augustinum.
	Tertullian	1	Adversus Marcionem.
Quoted chiefly in the last Volume of the <i>Nuovo saggio</i> and <i>De conscientia ethica</i> .			
1831 121	Jerome	1	Epistula ad Demetriade.
Books read completely or otherwise are less than preceding years because Rosmini was going back over previous works, either the <i>Nuovo saggio</i> which took up almost all his reading, or he was continuing and revising works essentially finished. Publication of <i>Principi della scienza morale</i> [Principles of Moral Science].			
1832 140	Ambrose	2	De fide ad gratianum Augustum libri quinque; De Spiritu Sancto ad Gratianum Augustum, libri tres.
	Athanasius	2	Contra Arianos; Epistulae.
	Augustine	19	Contra Adimantum; Contra adversarios legis et prophetarum; Contra Faustum; Contra Iuliani secundam responsionem opus imperfectum; De civitate Dei; De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII; De doctrina christiana; De fide et symbolo; De gratia Christi et peccato originali; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De natura boni; De sermone Domini in monte; De spiritu et littera; De Trinitate; Epistulae; Meditationes; Sermones; Soliloquia; Tractatus CXXIV in Ioannis evangelium.
	Basil	4	Contra Eunomium; De Spirito Sancto; Epistulae; Treatise—Admonitions to Young Men on the Profitable Use of Pagan Literature.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Stromata.
	Clement of Rome	1	Animadversiones.
	Cyril of Alexandria	5	De Sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate; Epistulae; In Joannem commentarius; Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate; Tractatus.
	Dionysius the Areopagite	2	De Divinis nominibus; Opere;
	Epiphanius	1	Adversus haereses.

Appendix 2

	Gregory Nazianzen	2	Orationes; Poemata;
	Gregory of Nyssa	1	Orationes.
	Gregory the Great	1	Tractatus in Evangelia.
	Gregory the Thaumaturgus (Wonderworker)	1	De Incarnatione et Fide.
	Hilary of Poitiers	2	De Trinitate; Fragment on the Trinity.
	Isidore of Pelusia	1	Epistulae.
	Jerome	2	Commentarioli in Psalmos; In epistulam ad Ephesios commentarii.
	John Chrysostom	5	De Gen.; Epistulae; In epistulam ad Romanos homiliae; Opera; Quod nemo laeditur nisi a se ipso.
	Maximus Confessor/Martyr	2	Capita Theologica (Spurious?); Exegetical fragment.
	Origen	1	Dei principi.
	Tertullian	2	Adversus Marcionem; De Praescriptione (c.7.)
	Theoderet of Cyrus	1	Historia ecclesiastica.
The Fathers mentioned above are mentioned mostly in the <i>Antropologia soprannaturale</i> [Supernatural Anthropology] which he began to write this year and continued with intervals till 1836. <i>Della ecclesiastica eloquenza</i> [On Ecclesiastical Eloquence] also figures. This was a discourse given in the Seminary of Trent. He also began <i>Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale</i> [Anthropology as an Aid to Moral Science] and <i>Le cinque piaghe delle Santa Chiesa</i> [The Five Wounds of the Church].			
1833 201	Ambrose	6	De Fide ad Gratianum Augustum libri quinque; De officiis ministrorum; De Paradiso; Epistulae; Expositionis evangelii secundum Lucam libri decem; Sermones.
	Athanasius	2	Orationes contra Arianos; Orationes contra gentiles.
	Augustine	23	Confessiones; Contra Adimentum; Contra secundam responsionem Iuliani opus imperfectum; De civitate Dei De correptione et gratia; De fide et symbolo; De Genesi ad litteram; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De moribus ecclesiae catholicae; De natura et gratia contra Pelagium; De nuptiis et concupiscentia libri duo; De peccatorum meritis et remissione; De quantitate animae; De spiritu et littera;

Appendix 2

			De Trinitate; De vera religione; Enarrationes in Psalmos; Enchiridion at Laurentinum; Epistulae ad Romanos inchoata expositio; Epistulae; Retractiones; Sermones; Tractatus 124 in Iohannis evangelium.
	Basil	2	Contra Eunomium; Tractatus.
	Cyril of Alexandria	4	Contra Iulianum; De sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate; In Joannem commentarius; Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate; Stromata.
	Dionysius the Areopagite	1	De divinis nominibus.
	Eusebius	2	Historia Ecclesiastica; Praeparatio evangelica.
	Gregory of Nyssa	2	De virginitate; Orationes.
	Gregory the Great	5	Dialogi; Epistulae; Moralia in Job; Tractatus: Liber regulae pastoralis.
	Hilary of Poitiers		De Trinitate.
	Irenaeus	1	Adversus haereses.
	Jerome	5	Dialogus adversus Pelagianos; Epistulae; In epistulam ad Ephesios commentarii; In epistulam ad Galatas commentarii; In Ezechiel commentarii.
	John Chrysostom	3	De Sacerdotio; Hom IX in Genesim.
	John Damascene	2	De fide orthodoxa; Source of Knowledge.
	Justin	2	Apologia; Dialogus cum Tryphone.
	Lactantius	1	Divinae institutiones.
	Maximus the Confessor	2	Capita theologica; Mystagogia.
	Origen	2	De principiis; Tractatus.
	Prosper of Aquitaine	1	Liber sententiarum ex operibus S. Augustini delibatarum.
	Tertullian	4	Adversus Praxeam; De anima; De baptismo; De carne Christi.
	Theoderet of Cyrus	1	Graecorum affectionum curatio.
In this year Rosmini read or consulted many books, chiefly in his development of the <i>Antropologia soprannaturale</i> , and organising the publication of <i>Storia dell' amore</i> [History of Love] and <i>Frammenti di una storia dell'empietà</i> [Fragments of a History of Ungodliness]. He completed the <i>Cinque piaghe</i> . *Re Lactantius see above (1814).			
1834	Augustine	1	De civitate Dei.
48	Cyril of Alexandria	1	De Sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate.
	Gregory Nazianzen	1	Discorsi.

Appendix 2

	Ignatius of Antioch	1	Epistula ad Ephesios.
	John Chrysostom	1	Orationes.
	Justin	2	Apologia; Oratio ad Graecos.
Books either completely or partly read in 1834 are less than previous years because of the increasing pastoral work at Rovereto. This obliged him to suspend work on the two Anthropologies (Supernatural and Moral) which required vast research on the subjects with which he was dealing.			
1835 36	Ambrose	1	Expositio in psalmum 118.
	Augustine	2	De fide et operibus; Sermones.
	Basil	1	Orationes.
	Gregory the Great	1	Moralia in Job.
	Jerome	1	Altercatio Luciferiani et Orthodoxi.
	John Chrysostom	1	In Genesim.
The number of books read completely or in part by Rosmini in this year is proportionate to his slight literary work. This was taken up again only after he ceased to be Archpriest and he concentrated chiefly on the confutation of the criticisms of Mamiani and in the exposition of the errors of Romagnosi.			
1836 195	Ambrose	1	Hexaameron.
	Augustine	9	De civitate Dei; De doctrina christiana; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De magistro; De Trinitate; Enarratio in psalmos; Retractiones; Soliloquiorum libri duo; Tractatus in Joannis evangelium.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Stromata.
	Cyril of Alexandria	1	Contra Iulianum.
	Dionysius the Areopagite	2	De coelesti hierarchia; De Divinis nominibus.
	Eusebius	1	Praeparatio evangelica.
	Justin	1	Apologia.
	Origen	2	In Joannem commentarii; In Romanos commentarii
	Tertullian	3	Adversus Marcionem; Adversus Praxeam; De anima.
	Theoderet of Cyrus	1	Graecorum affectionum curatio.
The books and periodicals read wholly or in part are very numerous this year as he had taken up again fully his time dedicated to study in order to give a solid confutation to			

Appendix 2

Mamiana and Romagnosi.			
1837 226	Augustine	8	Confessiones; Contra Iulianum; De civitate Dei; De doctrina christiana; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De moribus ecclesiae catholicae; De Trinitate; Enarrationes in psalmos.
	Basil	1	Orationes.
	Clement of Alexandria	1	Stromata.
	Gregory Nazianzen	1	Discorsi.
	Gregory the Great	1	Orationes.
	John Chrysostom	1	De Sacerdotio.
	Lactantius	1	Divinae institutiones
	Tertullian	2	Adversus Marcionem; De anima..
1837 saw the Publication of new works, viz. <i>Prefaces</i> to moral and political works, the <i>Della sommaria cagione per la quale stanno o rovinano le umane società</i> [The Summary Cause for the Stability or Downfall of Human Societies], the <i>Storia comparativa e critica de' sistema morali</i> [The Comparative and Critical History of Moral Systems] and his many letters. This resulted in a huge number of works read or consulted. But the nature of the works did not necessitate a great reference to the Fathers.			

The above table was based on the volumes by the late Gianfranco Radice *Annali di Antonio Rosmini - Serbati*. To continue the work up to the final year of Rosmini's life, 1855, would require far more resources and study than is available to me. However we can mention the early and major works of Rosmini together with the works of the Fathers quoted in each work. This will give us a good idea of Rosmini's use of the Fathers in his early works and those from 1830.

Table II

A. Early Works

1814	Il giorno di solitudine [The Day of Solitude]	Ambrose	De officiis ministrorum.
		Arnobius	Adversus gentes.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Adimantum; Contra Cresconium; Contra Faustum; Contra Iulianum; De baptismo; De civitate Dei; De doctrina cristiana; De fide et symbolo; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae; De peccato originali; De remissione peccatorum; De Spiritu et littera; De vera religione; Enarrationes in psalmos; Enchiridion ad Laurentinum; Epistulae; Expositio epistulae ad Galatas; Sermoni; Tractatus XV in Johannis evangelium.
		Clement of Alexandria	Cohortationes ad gentes; Pedagogus; Stromata.
		Clement of Rome	Epistula ad Corinthios.
		Cyprian	De bono patientiae; De unitate Ecclesiae Catholicae; Quod idoli dii non sint.
		Cyril of Alexandria	Contra Iulianum.
		Eusebius of Caesarea	Historia Ecclesiastica; Praeparatio evangelica.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Oratio I contra Iulianum; Oratio in laudem S Basilii.
		Gregory the Great	Homeliae in Ezechielem prophetam.
		Ignatius of Antioch	Ad Philadelphos.
		Irenaeus	Adversus haereses.
		Jerome	Adversus Jovinianum; De scriptis in Joseph; Epistulae.

Appendix 2

		John Chrysostom	Homeliae; De sacerdotio.
		Justin	Apologia I and II; Dialogus cum Tryphone; Oratio ad Graecos (<i>spurious</i>).
		Lactantius	De falsa sapientia; Divinae institutiones; De mortibus persecutorum.
		Leo the Great	Sermones.
		Origen	Contra Celsum; Homiliae.
		Prosper of Aquitaine	Carmen de ingratis.
		Tertullian	Adversus Iudaeos; Ad nationes; Apologeticum; Ad scapulam; De idolatria; De testimonio animae; Libri de praescriptione haereticorum.
		Theoderet of Cyr	Sermone de legibus; Graecarum affectionum curatio.
		Theophilus of Antioch	Ad Autolicum.
This lay in manuscript form for many years and was ultimately edited by G. Lorizio and published in 1993 by P. U. L. Roma.			
1821	Storia dell' amore	Ambrose	Epistula 82; Expositionis in Lucam liber II.
		Athanasius	De incarnatione Dei Verbi.
		Augustine	De catechizandis rudibus; De civitate Dei; De doctrina christiana; De Genesi ad litteram; De Trinitate; Sermones; Tractatus in Iohannis evangelium.
		Jerome	Commentarii; Dialogus adversus Pelagianus; Epistula XXI ad Damasum; Epistula LIII ad Paulinum; Epistula 108 ad Eustochium.
		Origen	Homilia 14 in Lucam.
		Tertullian	De carne Christi.
1821	Dell' educazione Cristiana	Ambrose	De obitu Theodosii oratio; De virginibus.
		Augustine	De catechizandis rudibus; De

Appendix 2

			Doctrina Christiana; De Genesis ad litteram liber imperfectus; De psalmorum bono; De sancta virginitate; Epistulae; Tractatus in Iohannis evangelium.
		Basil	Epistulae; Homiliae.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Cyprian	Epistulae.
		Cyril of Jerusalem	Catecheses.
		Dionysius the Areopagite	De ecclesiastica hierarchia.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Orationes.
		Gregory the Great	Moralia; Tractatus in Ezechielem prophetam; Regulae pastoralis.
		Jerome	Contra Iovinianum; De viris illustribus In Isaia.
		John Chrysostom	Homiliae.
		Justin	Apologia.
		Origen	Contra Celsum.
		Tertullian	Apologeticum; De exhortatione castitatis.
The use of the Fathers in these early works shows the extraordinary intellectual precocity of Rosmini.			

B. Mature Works

1828	Costituzioni dell' Istituto Della Carità [Constitutions of the Institute of Charity]	Ambrose	Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam.
		Augustine	De opere monachorum.
		Basil	Basili Regula a Rufino latine versa.
		John Chrysostom	In Epistolam ad Romanos.

Appendix 2

1830	Nuovo saggio sull'origine delle idee [New Essay on the Origin of Ideas]	Athanasius	De incarnatione verbi Dei.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra academicos; Contra Faustum; De diversis quaestionibus; De doctrina christiana; De libero arbitrio; De Trinitate; De utilitate credendi; De vera religione; Enarrationes in psalmos; Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium; Retractiones; Sermo VIII de verbis Domini; Soliloquia.
		Clement of Alexandria	Cohortationes ad gentes.
		Eusebius of Caesarea	Praeparatio evangelica.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Oratio XXXI.
		Gregory the Great	Homilia II in Evangelia.
		Hilary of Poitiers	De Trinitate.
		Irenaeus	Adversus Haereses.
		Jerome	Epistula ad Paulinum; In Gal. Prol.; In Os. X.
		Justin	Apologia; Oratio ad Graecos.
		Tertullian	Adversus Marcionem; De testimonio animae.
1831	Principi della scienza morale [Principles of Moral Science]	Ambrose	Hexaemeron.
		Augustine	De diversis quaestionibus; Retractiones.
		Jerome	Epistula ad Demetriadem.

Appendix 2

1837 – 38	Storia comparativa e critica de' sistemi intorno al principio della morale [Comparative History and Critique of Systems regarding the Principle of Morality]	Augustine	Contra Iulianum haeresis Pelagianae defensorem; De civitate Dei; De doctrina christiana; De diversis quaestionibus; De libero arbitrio; De moribus ecclesiae catholicae; De Trinitate; Enarrationes in psalmos.
		Basil	Homilia in principium proverbiorum.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Gregory the Great	XL Homiliae in evangelia.
		Isidore of Pelusia	Epistulae.
		Jerome	Epistula CXXV ad Rusticum.
		John Chrysostom	Quod nemo laeditur nisi a se ipso.
		Lactantius	Divinae institutiones.
		Tertullian	De anima.
1838	Antropologia in servizio della scienza morale [Anthropology as an Aid to Moral Science]	Arnobius	Adversus gentes.
		Athanasius	Oratio contra gentes.
		Augustine	Contra duas Epistulas Pelagianorum; Contra Iulianum; De civitate Dei; De correptione et gratia; De Genesi ad litteram; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De libero arbitrio; De nuptiis et concupiscentia; De peccatorum meritis et remissione; De rerum varietate; Ep.107 ad Vital; Hom. 9 in Gen.;

Appendix 2

			Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium.
		Basil	Epistula; Homilia in psalmos.
		Gregory of Nazianzen	Oratio 42.
		Gregory of Nyssa	De hominis opificio; In Cantica canticorum homiliae; Oratio catechetica
		Gregory the Great	Moralia.
		Hilary of Poitiers	Tractatus super psalmos.
		Jerome	In Epistulam ad Galatas; In Isaiam commentarii.
		John Chrysostom	De Genesi ad litteram.
		John Damascene	De fide orthodoxa.
		Lactantius	Divinae institutiones.
		Prosper of Aquitaine	De vocatione omnium gentium.
		Tertullian	De anima; Adversus Marcionem.
		Theoderet of Cyrus	Homilia II. in natale. Salvatoris.
1839	Trattato della coscienza morale [Treatise on Moral Conscience]	Ambrose	Epistula.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Iulianum; De baptismo; De catechizandis rudibus; De civitate Dei; De dono perseverantiae; De Genesi ad litteram De legibus; De libero arbitrio; De nuptiis et concupiscentia; De peccatorum meritis; De Trinitate; De utilitate credendi; Enchiridon; Epistulae;

Appendix 2

			Retractiones; Sermones.
		Basil	Homiliae; Orat.III de peccato Regulae brevius tractatae.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Orationes.
		Gregory the Great	Moralia.
		Isidore of Pelusium	Levit.
		Jerome	Dialogus adversus Pelagianos.
		John Chrysostom	Homiliae; In Cant.
		Lactantius	Divinae institutiones.
		Leo the Great	Sermo.
		Origen	Contra Celsus.
		Tertullian	Ad Demetriadem; Adversus Marcionem; Apologeticum; Epistula; Lib. de corona militis.
Cf. <i>Linee per uno studio sull' uso delle fonti patristiche nelle opere Rosmini</i> , Bettini-Peratoner, Rivista Rosminiana, July–December 1997.			
1839	Filosofia della politica. [Philosophy of Politics] La società e il suo fine [Society and its Purpose]	Augustine	De Civitate Dei.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Eusebius	Praeparatio evangelica.
One would not expect the Fathers to be quoted much in a work of this type.			
1840	Manuale dell' esercitatore [Manual for the Retreat Giver]	Ambrose	Expositio in Evangelium secundum Lucam.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Iulianum; Epistula ad Paulinum; Soliloquia.
		Cyprian	De exhortatione martyrii.
		Gregory the Great	Registrum Epistularum; Moralia

Appendix 2

			in Iob.
		John Chrysostom	De reparatione lapsi.
		Lactantius	Divinae institutiones.
1841	Filosofia del diritto [The Philosophy of Right]	Arnobius	Adversus gentes.
		Ambrose	Epistula 60 ad Paternam; Epistula ad Valentinianum.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Faustum; De bono coniugali; De civitate Dei; De consensu evangelistarum; De Genesi ad litteram; De haeresibus ad Quodvultdeus; De libero arbitrio; De natura et gratia; De sermone Domini in monte; De utilitate credendi; Enchiridion; Epistulae; In Leviticum. Tractatus in Joannis evangelium.
		Barnabus	Letter to Polycarp.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Cyprian	Epistula.
		Eusebius	Historia ecclesiastica; Praeparatio evangelica.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Oratio 31.
		Gregory the Great	Epistulae.
		Ignatius of Antioch	Epistula ad Smyrnaeos.
		Irenaeus	Contra Haereses.
		Jerome	Adversus Iovinianum; Ad oceanum.
		John Chrysostom	Homiliae in Matthaeum; De virginitate.

Appendix 2

		Lactantius	Work not given; De divinae institutiones.
		Leo the Great	Epistulae.
		Origen	Homilia in Leviticum.
		Tertullian	Adversus Marcionem; Apologeticum; De oratione. De praescriptione haereticorum
1845	Teodicea [Theodicy]	Ambrose	De Spiritu Sancto; Expositionis evangelii secundum Lucam; Hexaameron.
		Athanasius	Oratio contra gentes.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Iulianum; De baptismo parvulorum; De civitate Dei; De correptione et gratia; De Genesi ad litteram; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De libero arbitrio; De praedestinatione; De Trinitate; De utilitate credendi; De vera religione; Enarratio in Psalmos; Enchiridion; Epistulae; Quaestiones in heptateuchum; Retractiones; Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium.
		Basil	Homilia in Hexaameron.
		Gregory the Great	Homilia X de Epiphania.
		Jerome	In Ieremiam commentarii; Epistula ad Minervium et Alexandrum.
		John Damascene	De fide orthodoxa.
		Origen	In Levit. Peri arkon.
		Prosper of Aquitaine	Epigrammata in obtrectatorem

Appendix 2

			Augustini.
		Theophilus of Antioch	Ad Autolycus.
1848	Delle cinque piaghe della santa Chiesa [The Five Wounds of Holy Church]	Ambrose	De basilicis tradendis; Epistula; Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam.
		Athanasius	Epistula ad solitarium vitam agentes.
		Augustine	Epistula; Sermones.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Cyprian	De unitate ecclesiae; Epistulae.
		Epiphanius	Relatio de sua electione.
		Eusebius	Historia ecclesiastica.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Orationes.
		Gregory the Great	Epistulae.
		Gregory the Thaumaturgus	In Originem.
		Jerome	De viris illustribus; Epistula ad Nepotianum.
		John Chrysostom	In epistulam I ad Corinthios homiliae XI, XXI, XII.
		Ignatius of Antioch	Epistula ad Ephesios; Epistula ad Magnesios; Epistula ad Trallianos.
		Irenaeus	Adversus haereses.
		Isidore of Pelusia	Epistula.
		Leo the Great	Epistulae ad Anastasium; ad Rusticum; ad Episcopos Provinciae Viennensis.
		Origen	Homiliae, in Matth.20, 25; 11, 22 in Num; 6 in Levit; 16 in Gen; In Ex; 4 in Iudic.; 14 in

Appendix 2

			Act. Ap.
		Tertullian	Apologeticum.
There are also numerous mentions of the Fathers in the text.			
1850	Psicologia [Psychology]	Ambrose	De mortis bono.
		Athanasius	In quaestione de anima; Oratio contra idola.
		Augustine	De Genesi at litteram; De immortalitate animae; De quantitate animae; De Trinitate; De vera religione; Enarratio in Psalmos; Epistulae; Libro de haeresibus.
		Basil	Homilia in illud “Attende Tibi”.
		Clement of Alexandria	Protrepticus; Stromata.
		Eusebius	Praeparatio evangelica.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Apologeticus de fuga; De Anima, Carm.VII.
		Gregory of Nyssa	De hominis opificio.
		Irenaeus	Adversus haereses.
		Isidore of Pelusium	Epistula III.
		Jerome	Epistula XLI ad errores Io. Hieros.; In Matthaeum.
		John Damascene	De fide orthodoxa.
		Justin	Cohortatio ad Graecos.
		Lactantius	De opificio Dei; Divinae institutiones.
		Origen	Contra Celsum; De Principiis; Super Cantica.
		Tertullian	De Anima.
		Theoderet of Cyrus (Antioch)	Graecarum affectionum curatio.

Appendix 2

1850	Introduzione alla filosofia [Introduction to Philosophy]	Ambrose	De Abrahamo Patriarcha.
		Augustine	Confessiones; De civitate Dei; De diversis quaestionibus; De magistro; De ordine; De Trinitate; De vera religione; Epistulae; Sermones; Soliloquia.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		John Chrysostom	Homilia Sup. Jo. LXV; Opus imperfectus in Matthaëum X.
		Isidore of Pelusium	Epistula.
1854	Logica [Logic]	Augustine	Confessiones; Contra academicos; Contra Cresconium; De doctrina christiana; De Genesi ad litteram; De Trinitate; De utilitate credendi; Epistulae; Soliloquia.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Jerome	Adversus Helvidium de perpetua virginitate beatae Mariae; In Epistulam ad Titum commentarii.
		Tertullian	De anima.

C. Posthumous Works

1859 – 1874	Teosofia [Theosophy]	Ambrose	Hexaameron.
		Arnobius	Contra Gentes (Adversus nationes?).

Appendix 2

		Athanasius	De Incarnatione Verbi; In Act. Nicaen. Synod; Oratio contra Sabelii gregales.
		Augustine	Confessiones; De civitate Dei; De diversis quaestionibus; De Genesi ad litteram imperfectus liber; De musica; De natura boni; De ordine; De Trinitate; De vera religione; Epistulae; In epistulam Ioannis tractatus; Retractiones; Sermones; Soliloquia; Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Dionysius the Areopagite	De divinis nominibus; De ecclesiastica hierarchia.
		Eusebius of Caesarea	Historia ecclesiastica; Praeparatio evangelica.
		Gregory of Nazianzen	Orationes.
		Hilary of Poitiers	De synodis; Liber contra Constantinum imperatorem.
		Irenaeus	Adversus Haereses.
		John Damascene	De orthodoxa fide.
		Justin	Apologiae.
		Tertullian	Adversus Praxean; De testimonio animae.
1880	Del divino nella natura [On the Divine in Nature]	Ambrose	Comm. In Ep. Rom; Contra Symmachum; De interpellatione Job et David; Hexaameron; In Psalmis.
		Arnobius	Adversus Gentes.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra academicos; De civitate Dei;

Appendix 2

			Enarrationes in psalmos; Retractiones; Sermones.
		Basil	Epistula ad Amphiloichium; Homiliae.
		Clement of Alexandria	Cohortatio ad Gentes; Paedagogus; Stromata; Paranaenes.
		Cyril of Alexandria	Contra Iulianum.
		Dionysius the Areopagite	De divinis nominibus.
		Eusebius of Cesaerea	Demonstratio evangelica; Praeparatio evangelica.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Orationes.
		Gregory of Nyssa	Contra Eunomium.
		Jerome	Epistula; In Isaia commentarii.
		Justin	Cohortatio ad Graecos; De monarchia.
		Lactantius	Ad stat Theb.; Divinae institutiones
		Origen	Contra Celsum.
		Tertullian	Ad nationes; De anima; De spectaculis.
		Theoderet of Cyrus	Oratio I contra graecos; Sermo III De angelis.
This work was first published in 1869. Later, in 1938, it was published in the National Edition of Rosmini's works as part of Volume IV of the Theosophy. It is now published separately as Volume 20 of the Edizione Critica, 1991.			
1880	Conferenze sui doveri ecclesiastici [Conferences on Ecclesiastical Duties]	Ambrose	De dignitate sacramentorum; De fuga saeculi; De officiis ministrorum; Epistulae.
		Augustine	Ad Aurelium; De doctrina christiana; Enarrationes in psalmos; Epistulae;

Appendix 2

			Sermones.
		Basil	Ad Giordian.
		Caesarius of Arles	Sermo.
		Clement of Alexandria	Pedagogus; Stromata.
		Cyprian	Epistula (ad Cecil.).
		Cyril (of Alexandria?)	De sacerdotio.
		Gregory Nazianzen	Oratio I.
		Gregory the Great	Epistulae; Homilia; Moralia; Liber regulae pastoralis.
		Isidore (of Pelusium?)	Epistulae.
		Jerome	Epistula. ad Nepotianum; Epistula ad Pammachium; Epistula. ad Rusticum; Hom. XLIII In Mattheum; Super Ezech.
		John Chrysostom	De sacerdotio; Homiliae.
		Origen	Homilia; In Num.
1881	Il linguaggio teologo [Theological Language]	Ambrose	De fide; De mysteriis.
		Athanasius	Contra Arianos.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Faustum manichaeum; Contra Iulianum; Contra Iulianum opus imperfectum; De catechizandis rudibus; De civitate Dei; De doctrina christiana; De dono perseverantiae; De fide rerum invisibilium; De Genesi contra Manichaeos; De peccatorum meritis et remissione; De

Appendix 2

			praedestinatione sanctorum, De Trinitate; De utilitate ieiunii; De vera religione; Enarrationes in psalmos; Epistulae; Retractiones; Sermo.
		Gregory the Great (attrib)	Sacramentorum Gregoriano.
		Hilary of Poitiers	Contra Constantium imperatorem; De Trinitate; Liber ad Constantium Imperatorem.
		Jerome	Altercatio Luciferiani et orthodoxi.
		Prosper of Aquitaine	Epistula ad Augustinum.
		Tertullian	De praescriptione haereticorum.
This little work was begun in 1854 and was never finished because of Rosmini's death in 1855.			
1907	Compendio di etica [Compendium of Ethics]	Ambrose	De officiis ministrorum; De virginitate.
		Augustine	Confessiones; Contra Faustum; De civitate Dei; De diversis quaestionibus; De doctrina christiana; De libero arbitrio; De moribus ecclesiae catholicae; De spiritu et littera; De vera religione; Epistulae; Opus imperfectum contra Iulianum; Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium.
		Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
		Dionysius the Areopagite	De divinis nominibus.
		Gregory the Great	Moralia.

Appendix 2

	Lactantius	Divinae institutiones.
Rosmini completed the <i>Compendio di etica</i> in 1846 for Professor Sciolla of Turin University who desired a work on ethics and sent it to him. It was published in 1847 under the latter's name, since the text of moral philosophy at the University had to be written by a professor of the University. Rosmini never revealed that he was the author, even after Sciolla's death. It was only after his own death that examination of the archives revealed that he was the author. It was first published in Rosmini's name in 1907.		

The references to the Fathers in the **Antropologia soprannaturale** are so numerous that the table needs to be modified somewhat for sake of space.

1832 – 1836	Antropologia soprannaturale [Supernatural Anthropology]
Ambrose	Commentaria in epistulam ad Romanos; De Abraham; De fide; De fide resurrectionis; De mysteriis; De paradiso; De sacramentis; De Spiritu Sancto; Epistulae; Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam; Hexameron; In psalmum CXVIII expositio.
Athanasius	De sabbatis et circumcissione, ex libro Exodi; Disputatio habita in concilio Nicaeno contra Arium; Epistulae ad Serapionem; Orationes contra Arianos; Oratio contra gentes.
Augustine	Contra Adimantum; Contra adversarium legis et prophetarum; Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum; Contra epistulam Manichaei quam vocant Fundamenti; Contra epistulam Parmeniani; Contra Faustum; Contra Iulianum haeresis Pelagianae defensorem; Contra Iulianum Pelagianum; Contra mendacium; De baptismo contra Donatistas; De civitate Dei; De correptione et gratia; De diversis quaestionibus; De fide et operibus. De fide et symbolo; De Genesi ad litteram; De gratia Christi; De gratia et libero arbitrio; De libero arbitrio; De magistro; De natura boni contra Manicheos; De natura et gratia; De nuptiis et concupiscentia; De peccatorum meritis et remissione; De quantitate animae; De sermone Domini in monte; De spiritu et littera; De Trinitate; De verbis apostoli; Enarrationes in psalmos; Enchiridion; Epistulae; Hypognosticon; In Johannis evangelium tractatus; Sermo XII in Evangelium Matthaei; Sermo CLXXXV; Sermones.
Basil	Adversus Eunomium; Commentarius in Isaiam prophetam; De Spiritu Sancto; Epistulae; Homilia in psalmum XLVIII; Homilia IX in Hexameron; Homilia quod Deus non est auctor malorum; Homilia XIII in sanctum baptisma; Liturgia.
Clement of Alexandria	Stromata.
Clement Pope	Clementina (<i>pseudo</i>); De constitutionibus apostolicis; Epistula.
Cyprian	De baptismo Christi et manifestatione Trinitatis; De coena Domini; Epistula ad Pompeium; Epistula LXIII ad Caecilium; Epistulae.
Cyril of Alexandria	Commentarius in Oseam prophetam; Contra Iulianum; De Coena Domini (<i>falsely attrib.</i>); De SS Trinitate; Epistula ad Calosyrium; Epistula

Appendix 2

	ad Nestorium; Homilia; In excerptis de Spiritu Sancto; In Isaiam; In Joannis evangelium; Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate.
Cyril of Jerusalem	Catechesis mystagogica; Procathechesis.
Dionysius the Areopagite	De coelesti hierarchia; De divinis nominibus; De ecclesiastica hierarchia; De mystica theologia.
Eusebius of Caesarea	Historia ecclesiastica; Praeparatio evangelica.
Gregory Nazianzen	Carmina; Orationes.
Gregory the Great	Dialogorum Liber IV; Epistulae; Expositio in septem psalmos poenitentiales; Homiliae XL in Evangelia; Moralia; Homiliae in Ezechielem; Liber sacramentorum;.
Gregory of Nyssa	De beatitudinibus; De oratione Dominica; De virginitate; Oratio in baptismum Christi; Oratio catechetica magna;.
Hilary of Poitiers	Fragmenti; De Trinitate.
Ignatius of Antioch	Epistula ad Romanos; Epistula ad Smyrnaeos.
Irenaeus	Adversus Haereses.
Isidore of Pelusium	Epistulae.
Jerome	Adversus Jovinianum; Breviarium in psalmos; Commentaria in Abacuc prophetam; Commentaria in Aggaeum prophetam; Commentaria in Epistolam ad Galatas; Commentaria in Epistolam ad Ephesios; Commentaria in Evangelium Matthaei; Commentaria in Ezechielem prophetam; Commentaria in Isaiam prophetam; Commentaria in Jeremiam prophetam; Commentaria in Zachariam prophetam; Dialogus contra Luciferianos; Epistulae; Expositio in Epistolam II ad Corinthios; Interpretatio libri Didymi de Spiritu Sancto; Liber hebraicorum quaestionum in Genesim; Translatio libri Didymi de Spiritu Sancto.
John Chrysostom	Hom. III; Homilia de prodicione Judae; Homiliae in epistolam ad Ephesios; Homiliae in epistolam ad Hebraeos; Homiliae in epistolam ad Romanos; Homiliae in epistolam primam ad Corinthios; Homiliae in Genesim; Homiliae in Joannem; Homiliae in Mattheum; Homiliae XXX in epistolam secundam ad Corinthios; Liturgia; Homilia de beato Philogonio, Opus imperfectum in Mattheum
John Damascene	De fide orthodoxa; Eclogae.
Leo the Great	Epistulae.
Origen	Commentaria in epistolam beati Pauli ad Romanos; Commentaria in Genesim; De principiis; Homiliae in Exodum; In Leviticum.
Prosper of	Liber sententiarum ex operibus S. Augustini delibatarum.

Appendix 2

Aquitaine	
Tertullian	Apologeticus adversus Gentes; Aversus Marcionem; De anima; De baptismo; De praescriptionibus; De resurrectione carnis; De spectaculis.
Theoderet of Cyrus	Eranistes seu Polymorphus; Explanatio in Canticum Canticorum; Historia ecclesiastica; Graecarum affectionum curatio; Quaestiones in Exodum; Quaestiones in Genesim; Quaestiones in Leviticum.
Rosmini began writing the <i>Antropologia soprannaturale</i> at Trent on 4 May 1832 and continued working on it with intervals till 1836. The work was never completed but two other books were envisaged 'The Redeemer' and 'The Mother of the Redeemer'.	

1839 – 1849 L' Introduzione del Vangelo Secondo Giovanni Commentata [Commentary to the Introduction of the Gospel according to John]	Ambrose	De fide ad Gratianum; De fide contra ad Arianos; De incarnationis dominicae sacramento; Hexaemeron; In errationes in 12 psalmos.
	Athanasius.	De communi essentia; De definitione; De sententia Dionysii In Synops; In Oratio; Oratio contra Arianos;; Quod Deus de Deo sit Verbum.
	Augustine	Adversus Haereses; Confessiones Contra Iulianum; De civitate Dei; De correptione et gratia; De Trinitate; Homila; In Genesim ad litteram; Sermo; Sermo XXVIII, <i>De Verbo Domini</i> ; Tractatus in Ioannis evangelium.
	Basil	De Spiritu Sancto; Homilia.
	Clement of Alexandria.	Cohortationes ad gentes; In Eusebius, Historia Ecclesiastica.
	Clement, Pope.	Epistula.
	Cyprian	Contra Jud.
	Cyril of Alexandria	Contra Iulianum imperfectum; De Trinitate dialogi; In Joannem commentarius; Thesaurus de sancta et consubstantiali Trinitate.
	Cyril of Jerusalem.	Catecheses.
	Dionysius of Alexandria	In Eusebius.
	Epiphanius of Salamis	Adversus Haereses; In Ancorato.
	Eusebius of Caesaraea	Demonstratio evangelica; Historia ecclesiastica; Praeparatio

Appendix 2

		evangelica.
	Gregory Nazianzen.	Orationes, IV <i>De Theologia</i> ; <i>De Filio</i> .
	Gregory of Nyssa	Oratio ad Simplicium.
	Gregory the Great.	Moralia.
	Hilary of Poitiers.	De Synodis; De Trinitate; In Mattheum commentarius.
	Ignatius of Antioch.	Epistula ad Ephesios.
	Irenaeus	Contra Valentinum.
	Jerome	De scriptis ecclesiasticis; De viris illustribus; In epistula ad Ephesios; In epist. Joann I; In evangelium Matthaei commentarii; In Joannem commentarius; In Genesim; In Isaia II commentarii; In Manich.
	John Chrysostom	Homilia in Genesim homiliae; In Joannem homiliae
	Origen.	In Genesim homilia; In Joannem commentarii.
	Tertullian	Adversus Hermogenem; Adversus Praxean; Apologeticus; De praescriptione haereticorum; De Trinitate.
	Theodore of Mopsuestia	Catena Graecorum in Joannem.
	Theophilus of Antioch.	Ad Autolycum; Homilia
Further accuracy with these references is not possible without a Critical Edition. Rosmini did not finish this work, much less revise it. This is evident where, for instance, he quotes the Father but not the Work! (Cf. Irenaeus, Lezione 7) But the above table will give the reader some idea of how Rosmini drew on the Fathers. Moreover, this does not include a simple mention of the Fathers.		

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Series of the works of Rosmini were begun even when he was still living but there are two modern ones, namely:

Edizione Nazionale delle opere edite e inedite di A. Rosmini-Serbati. Instigated by Enrico Castelli in 1934 and continued till 1977, comprising some 49 volumes. This edition was merged with, and is now superseded by, a new series initiated by Michele Federico Sciacca and the Centro di Studi Rosminiani at Stresa in 1975. This is entitled ***Edizione Nazionale e Critica delle opere edite e inedite di Antonio Rosmini.*** This is associated with the Institute of Philosophical Studies, Rome and entrusted to ***Città Nuova Editrice.*** This latter series totals 40 volumes at the present time, and it is estimated eventually to comprise about 100 volumes.

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The Five Wounds of the Church (*Delle cinque piaghe della Santa Chiesa*) trans. H. P. Liddon, Longman and Co. 1883.
The Origin of Ideas (*Nuovo saggio sull' origine delle idee*) 3 vols. Kegan, Paul, Trench, 1883–1884.
Theodicy (*Teodicea*) 3 vols. trans. Fortunato Signini, Kegan, Paul, Trench, 1892–1897.

With the establishment of a house of Rosminian Studies in Durham, United Kingdom, a new series of Rosmini's works in English has been published since 1987. The works have been translated by Denis Cleary, Terence Watson and Robert A. Murphy, (*Rosmini House, Durham*), and so far comprise some 24 volumes.

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Index of Biblical References

(Roman numbers indicate pages. Numbers in italics indicate footnote references. Bible references from RSV unless otherwise noted. Where the Vulgate is concerned the Douai version is used.)

Old Testament

Genesis

1: 1	115
1.1 (Douai)	108
1: 26 (Douai)	99, 119
1: 26	118
1: 27	99
2: 7	78, 98, 120
2: 17	119

Deuteronomy

30: 14	111
--------	-----

Psalms

30: 4	155
82: 6	89
101: 26 (Douai)	116
141: 2	155

Proverbs

8: 22–23 (Douai)	108
------------------	-----

Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)

1: 1 (Douai)	112
4: 12 (Douai)	69
37: 20 (Douai)	69

Isaiah

42: 6	101
49: 8	101
66: 18–19	102

Jeremiah

31: 31–34	101
-----------	-----

Ezekiel

13: 5	12
-------	----

Amos

6:1 ff.	3
---------	---

New Testament

Matthew

5: 9	42
8: 20	<i>131</i>
18: 19–20	123

Mark

16: 19	113
--------	-----

Luke

9: 58	<i>131</i>
24: 25–27	112
24: 45	112

John

1: 1	116,
	112
1: 2–3 (Douai)	<i>114</i>
1: 1–4	<i>107</i>
1: 4 (Douai)	67,
	<i>107</i>
1: 4	118
1: 18	111,
	113
6: 27	101
7: 17	68
7: 18	69
8: 12	119
8: 25 (Douai)	115,
	117
9: 39–41	68
14: 9	112
14: 10	113
14: 16 (NRSV)	93
14: 23 (NRSV)	93
17	127
17: 3	68
17: 24 (Douai)	108

Acts

2	43
2: 4	86
3: 6	<i>131</i>
4: 32	43
4: 35	43
17: 27–28	84
20: 35	132

Romans

5: 1	<i>36</i>
5: 12 (Knox)	80
8: 29	98
10: 8–10	111

1 Corinthians

2: 2	111
2: 14	67
3: 16	88, 95
7: 21	77
9: 24–25	155
12	31
13: 12	88
16: 2–4	<i>132</i>

2 Corinthians

11: 15 ff	<i>36</i>
-----------	-----------

Galatians

3: 6–7	94
--------	----

Ephesians

1: 13	97, 102
4: 4–6	127
4: 30	89, 97, 102

Index of Biblical References

Philippians

2: 12–13 72

1 Thessalonians

5: 21 25,
146

1 Timothy

6: 20–21 146

Hebrews

11: 3 (Douai) 52

2 Peter

1: 13 88
1: 4 89

1 John

1: 5–6 68

Revelation

1: 5 111
3: 14 115
19: 11–13 111

Index of Persons

(The Fathers are given in bold characters. Where the name is already in the main text it is not repeated in a footnote on the same page. Footnote references are given in italics.).

- Aaron, 101, 138.
Abraham, 27, 94, 101.
Adam, 28, 59, 79, 80, 81, 98, 101.
Aeneus of Gaza, 59.
Alexander, 124.
Alexander, Bishop of Cumana, 139.
Alexandre, Natalis, 140, 154.
Alphonsus Liguori (St), 12, 29.
Altaner, Berthold, 11.
Ambrose (St), 13, 15, 18, 24, 28, 39, 41, 52, 59, 60, 64, 83, 93, 98, 100, 103, 107, 108, 109., 110, 111, 115, 116, 124, 131, 132, 147, 148, 155, 156.
Anastasius, Bishop of Thessalonica, 137.
Anthony the Abbot (St), 29.
Antonianus, 139.
Antoninus, 137.
Arnobius, 78.
Aristotle, 151, 154.
Athenagoras, 59.
Athanasius (St), 29, 31, 43, 57, 59, 60, 79, 88, 93, 94, 97, 100, 107, 108, 110, 112, 113, 117, 122, 124, 137, 140, 146, 147, 148.
Augustine (St), 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 77, 80, 83, 84, 90, 91, 92, 94, 95, 98, 100, 103, 104, 107, 108, 110, 111, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 122, 125, 128, 129, 131, 132, 139, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 150, 152, 155, 156.
Aurelius, 152, 155.
Barberini, Cardinal, 119.
Bartolommeo de Martyribus, Frate, 15, 30.
Basil the Great (St), 16, 17, 29, 30, 36, 39, 41, 42, 60, 69, 79, 81, 83, 86, 88, 89, 90, 92, 94, 98, 99, 100, 101, 107, 108, 110, 112, 116, 117, 128.
Basilides, 107.
Bassich, Antonio, 27.
Battaglia, Giuseppe, 152.
Bede (St), 108.
Bellarmine, (St) Robert, 103.
Bellenghi, Albertino, 29.
Bellini, E, 19.
Belsito, Antonio, 121.
Belti, Remo Bessero, 11, 105, 157.
Bembo, Pietro, 26.
Benedict (St), 12, 29, 42.
Bergamaschi, Cirillo, 59.
Bernard (St), 29.
Bertetti, Pietro, 149.
Bettetini, Maria, 17, 33, 57, 58, 59, 61, 70, 71, 122.
Bocaccio, Giovanni, 26.
Boetius, 15, 50, 51, 78.
Bonali, Francesco, 133.
Bonaventure (St), 95.
Borromeo, (St) Charles, 39.
Bridgid (St), 29.
Brown, Raymond E., 107.
Brunati Giuseppe, 27.

Caesarius of Arles (St), 30, 131, 156.
Candela, Silvestro, 105, 106.
Canossa, (St) Maddalena di, 39.
Cappocrates, 107.
Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi da, 62.
Caroli, Giovanni Maria, 104.
Cassian, John, 12, 29, 145.
Cassiodorus, 15, 57.
Cayré, F, 145.
Ceillier, Remi, 20.
Celerinus, 155.
Celestine I, Pope (St), 141.
Charlemagne, 158.
Chromatius of Aquilea (St), 128.
Ciegheri, Angelo, 20.
Cleary Denis, 62, 70, 75, 83, 87, 122.
Clement of Alexandria, 11, 17, 24, 27, 28, 43, 50, 51, 59, 66, 108, 118, 122, 125, 126, 127, 153.
Clement of Rome, Pope (St), 17, 102, 124, 128, 136.
Consentius, 37, 144.
Constant, Emperor, 137.
Constantius, Emperor, 146, 147.
Cornelius, 140.
Cyprian (St), 16, 17, 29, 36, 74, 98, 110, 122, 127, 128, 130, 135, 138, 139, 140, 153, 155.
Cyril of Alexandria (St), 78, 80, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 97, 98, 100, 107, 108, 110, 113, 117, 118.
Cyril of Jerusalem (St), 102.

Damascene, (St) John, 81, 95, 99, 110.
Dante, Alighieri, 84.
De Sombrenses, Rayemont, 23, 32.
Del Prete, V, 19.
Denis (St), 128.
Descartes René, 56.

Didymus of Alexandria (The Blind), 85, 87, 88, 90, 97.
Dionysius of Rome (St), 110.
Dionysius the Pseudo-Aeropagite, 52, 80, 95.

Eleutherius (St), 125.
Elijah (Elias) of Crete, 108, 109, 115.
Epictetus, 60.
Epiphanius of Salamis (St), 20, 41.
Eugene IV, Pope, 130.
Eusebius of Caesarea, 24, 50, 51, 110, 118, 124, 125, 128.
Eusebius of Vercelli (St), 39, 40, 41.
Eutimes, 115.
Evodius, 55.

Ferrarese, Gianfranco, 17.
Fichte, Johann Gottlieb, 45.
Flavian, Bishop of Antioch, 125.
Fleury, Claude, 140, 154.
Florus the Deacon, 139, 140.
Fontana, Valerio, 33, 36.
Foscari, Francesco, 20.
Francis of Assisi (St), 42.
Francis of Paola (St), 42.
Francis of Sales (St), 18, 29, 41.
Fulgentius of Ruspe (St), 20, 110, 112.

Gaetano (St), 39.
Gallandi, Andrea, 19.
Gatti Giuseppe, 135, 139, 155.
Gennadius of Constantinople, 158.
Gennadius of Marseilles, 20.
Giacomelli, Michel Angelo, 152.
Gilardi, Carlo, 121.
Gratian, 107, 132.
Gregory Nazianzen (St), 17, 29, 73, 79, 81, 94, 108, 110, 126, 154.

Gregory of Nyssa (St), 17, 78, 79, 81, 84 108.

Gregory Thaumaturgus (St), 18, 19, 59, 127, 139, 154.

Gregory the Great, Pope (St), 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 29, 39, 40, 41, 72, 73, 106, 125, 136, 137, 154, 155, 156, 158.

Grimlaico, 43

Guareschi, Francesco, 12.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm, 45.

Heliodorus, 128.

Hermas, 124

Hilary of Arles (St), 78, 131.

Hilary of Poitiers (St), 56, 96, 98, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 113, 118, 142, 146, 147, 148, 153, 156..

Hippolytus (St), 153

Hohenloe, Gustavus, 119.

Holste, Lucas, 30.

Honan, Hugh, 33.

Ho(a)uteville, A. C. F., 25.

Howard, Anthony, 136.

Hume, (Cardinal), Basil, 136.

Hume David, 45.

Ignatius Loyola (St), 12, 29, 39, 41.

Ignatius of Antioch (St), 124, 125, 128.

Ingoldsbury, Mary, 12.

Innocent I, Pope (St), 155.

Innocent III, Pope, 153.

Innocent, IV, Pope, 121.

Irenaeus of Lyons (St), 59, 113, 124, 125, 155..

Isaiah, 101, 102, 157.

Isidore of Pelusium, 67, 71, 131, 156.

Jeremiah, 60, 101, 157.

Jerome (St), 13, 14, 17, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 43, 60, 64, 73, 83, 89, 90, 99,

110, 111, 115, 116, 127, 128, 131, 148, 152, 154, 157.

Job, 27.

John Chrysostom (St), 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 24, 27, 29, 36, 39, 73, 74, 79, 80, 83, 96, 99, 102, 107, 108, 110, 112, 113, 115, 117, 122, 125, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 138, 151, 155.

John the Evangelist (St), 68, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 115, 118.

Judas, 138.

Julian of Eclanum, 35.

Julius Pomerius, 131, 132.

Justin (St), 11, 24, 27, 50, 77, 80.

Kant, Immanuel, 45, 65.

Lactantius, 16, 17, 24, 25, 36, 59, 79, 111.

Lancel, Serge, 22, 151, 152.

Leetham, Claude, 26, 61, 149, 150.

Leibniz, Gottfried, Wilhelm, 60.

Le Nain De Tillemont, 20.

Leo the Great, Pope (St), 17, 70, 71, 122, 136, 137, 141, 154, 155.

Leontius, 59, 115.

Locke, John, 45.

Lockhart, William, 11, 12, 33, 48.

Loewenbruck, Jean, 31, 40.

Lorizio, Giuseppe, 24, 25.

Lumper, Gottfried, 20.

Malebranche, Nicholas, 52.

Mamiani, Terenzio della Rovere, 49.

Mansi, Ferdinando, 140.

Manzi, Giovanni Battista, 119, 120.

Manzoni, Alessandro, 26, 27.

Martin, 124.

Index of Persons

- Martini, (Cardinal) Carlo Maria, 135.
Matthias, (St), 138.
Maurus Rhabanus, Bishop of Monza, 147.
Maximus of Mopsuestia, 84, 128.
Meletius of Antioch (St), 127.
Mellerio, Giacomo, 121.
Melzi, Duke, 121.
Migne, 151.
Molla, (St) Gianna, 63.
Morris John, 18, 36, 39, 40.
Moschini, Maurizio, 22, 106.
Moses, 27, 138.
Muratore, Umberto, 18, 19, 62, 75, 82, 87.
Muratori, Lodovico, 32.
- Napoleon, 29.
Nicholas V, Pope,
Noah, 27.
Norbert, (St), 40.
- Odo of Cluny (St), 147.
Oliari, Bortolomeo, 33.
Orecchia, Rinaldo, 140.
Origen, 15, 17, 18, 19, 24, 27, 59, 86, 87, 90, 98, 106, 107, 108, 111, 112, 115, 116, 117, 126, 127, 138, 139, 152, 153, 154.
Orosius, 128.
Orsi, Pietro, 24, 25, 26, 34.
Ostini, (Cardinal) Pietro, 119.
- Padulli, Giulio, 122.
Pagani, Giovanni Battista, 12.
Pantaenus (St), 18, 124, 125, 127.
Paoli, Francesco, 33, 34, 41, 47, 48, 105.
Paravia, Pier Alessandro, 15, 34, 151.
Parma, Michele, 62.
Patrizi, Cardinal, 119.
- Paul (St), 25, 31, 36, 67, 77, 80, 84, 89, 94, 98, 111, 144, 145, 146, 155, 156.
Paulinus of Nola (St), 41, 73, 110, 131.
Pellegrino, U, 106.
Peratoner, Alberto, 17, 33, 57, 58, 59, 61, 70, 71, 122,
Pestalozza, Alessandro, 121.
Peter, (St), 88, 135.
Peter Chrysologus (St), 124.
Petrelli, Fulgentio, 146.
Philip (St), 112.
Phillips, Ambrose, 121.
Picenardi, Gianni, 21, 33, 75, 81, 83, 105, 106.
Pius VIII, Pope, 143.
Pius IX, (Blessed) Pope, 122, 149.
Plato, 32, 33, 36, 37, 49, 50, 51, 52, 65, 107.
Pliny, the Younger, 152.
Polidori, Luigi, 63.
Polycarp (St), 124.
Pontius, 139.
Possidius, 132.
Prosper of Aquitaine (St), 11, 60, 145.
Prudentius, 59.
Pseudo-Barnabas, 153.
Pseudo-Cyprian, 156.
- Quacquarelli, Antonio, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 29, 34, 39, 40, 56, 57, 58, 59, 83, 104, 106, 131, 134, 135, 136, 138, 139, 140, 143, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 156, 157, 158.
- Radbertus, (St) Paschasius, 147, 148, 158.
Radice, Gianfranco, 20.
Rathmanus (Ratramnus?), 158.
Rhabanus Maurus, 147, 148.

Index of Persons

- Recanati, (Cardinal) Giusta da, 149.
Reid, Thomas, 45.
Remigius of Lyons, (St), 145.
Riva, (Bishop) Clemente, 121, 133.
Rollin, Charles, 23.
Rosmini, Margherita, 27.
Rossi, Guido, 23, 27, 34, 41.
Runck, (Maestro), 22.
- Sardagna, (Bishop) Carlo, 27.
Sartori, Dino, 42.
Scavini, Pietro, 62.
Schelling, Friedrich Wilhelm Von, 45.
Setti, Roberto, 42.
Shramm, Domenic 20.
Signini, Fortunato, 11, 12, 22, 36.
Siricius, Pope (St), 155.
Socrates, 35, 65, 67.
Solomon, 72.
Sonn, Luigi, 25, 39, 106.
Soter (St), 128.
Sozomen, 41.
Staglianò, Antonio, 19.
- Tagliaferri, Agostino, 105.
Tapparelli, P, 33.
Teresa of Avila (St), 29.
Tertullian, 11, 17, 24, 25, 27, 71, 72, 78, 98, 111, 118, 126, 130, 146, 152, 153, 154, 157.
Tevini, Simone, 25.
Theiner, Agostino, 140, 152.
Theodore of Ancyra, 78.
Theodore of Mopsuestia, 113, 115, 128.
Theodoret of Cyrus, 20.
Theodosius, 28.
Theophilus of Antioch (St), 108.
Theophylact, 102, 110, 112, 113, 115.
Thomas Aquinas (St), 11, 12, 23, 29, 32, 33, 34, 51, 54, 56, 58, 71, 95, 98, 103, 107, 108, 113, 115, 117, 126, 144, 149, 153, 154.
- Thomassin, Louis, 30, 41, 140, 154.
Timothy (St), 14, 124, 146.
Titus (St), 124.
Tomasi, Giuseppe Maria, 20.
Tommaseo, Nicolò, 22, 26.
Tommasoni, Tommaso, 17.
Tranquillinus, 25.
Turolla, Enrico, 152.
- Valentinian, Emperor, 131, 155.
Valerian of Aquilea, (Bishop), 124, 128.
Valle, Alfeo, 16, 18, 33, 39, 43, 121, 154.
Valsecchi, Antonio, 17.
Vannucci, Michelangelo, 106.
Venier Family, 26.
Vezzosi, Antonio Francesco, 20.
Victorinus of Rome, 113, 143.
Vincent of Lerins (St), 17, 142, 146, 158.
Von Haller, Carlo Lodovico, 29.
- Wagner, Richard, 62.
Watson, Terence, 75.
- Zabeo, Giovanni Prosdocimi, 20.
Zola, Giuseppe, 20.