

## A Catholic Response to Five Sola's of Reformation: Sola Gratia

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The five sola's (Latin word that means *alone* or *only*) are the battle cries of 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformers against the Catholic Church. Those five may be expressed in one sentence as: We are saved by grace alone [*sola gratia*], through faith alone [*sola fide*], in Christ alone [*solus Christus* or *solo Christo*], as revealed in Scripture alone [*sola scriptura*], to the glory of God alone [*soli Deo gloria*]<sup>1</sup>. We now examine sola gratia or (by) grace alone.

We start with definition of grace. Whatever we receive from God, *free* and *undeserving*, is grace. All Christians believe in this basic definition. Catechism of the Catholic Church defines grace as *favour*, *the free and undeserved help* that God *gives us to respond* to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons (John 1:12, Romans 8:16), partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4) and of eternal life<sup>2</sup>. Reformed scholar Trueman wrote “Grace as God’s *unmerited favor* finds practical expression as it *changes believers into what God would have them be.*”<sup>3</sup> Mercy, on the other hand, is what we do not receive from God that we truly deserve. Even a Catholic would say that he goes to heaven by God’s grace, and he does not end up in hell because of His mercy.

If salvation is by grace, then it is God who decides whom He wants to be saved or there is an Election (Predestination of the Elect). There is Election in the teaching of the Catholic Church, although most Catholics are not aware. Thus, Catholics do believe in salvation by grace. We cannot have it both ways – if we play, even a *partial* or *limited* role, in our salvation, then (1) it is no longer by grace (Romans 11:6) and (2) there should not be Election in Catholic teaching, which is not the case. If this is the case what is the real issue that divides the Catholic Church and the Reformers? Why did they have the word “alone” or Latin “sola” before grace? Those who follow Luther and Calvin accuse the Catholic Church of believing in salvation by *grace plus merits*. Is this true or just a caricature of the teaching of the Catholic Church?

To better illustrate what the Reformers meant by sola gratia, consider one verse mostly cited by them to support sola gratia: *No one can come to me [Christ] unless the Father who sent me draws him* (John 6:44). Nowadays you can own a smart car. If you do not want to walk to where it is parked, you can use an application in your cell phone to “draw” that car to you. The application, *representing grace*, will start the engine and will make your car drive itself to where you are. It neither needs that car’s consent nor cooperation, because even a smart car is a dead object. That is how the Reformers, and their followers explain our state in responding to grace from God. This is not a caricature of what they believe. Reformed scholar Sproul wrote: *By nature we are born into this world DOA, dead on arrival, spiritually although alive biologically.*<sup>4</sup> “*human beings are as passive as corpses in securing their own salvation from sin*”, wrote Trueman<sup>5</sup>. What they believe is based on what Luther and Calvin wrote, yet those two Reformers did not share the same view either, as we will see.

According to Luther we do not have free will because our will is in captive/slave of the will of God or that of the devil.

*On the other hand in relation to God, or in matters pertaining to salvation or damnation, a man has no free choice, but is a captive, subject and slave either of the will of God or the will of Satan [devil].*

Luther: *The Bondage of the Will* (underlined emphasis added)  
English translation from *Luther's Works*, Vol. 33, page 70

He explained further what he meant by being slave or captive of the will of God or that of devil:

*Thus the human will is placed between the two like a beast of burden. If God rides it, it wills and goes where God wills, as the psalm says: "I am become as a beast [before thee] and I am always with thee" [Psalms 73:22]. If Satan rides it, it wills and goes where Satan wills; nor can it choose to run to either of the two riders or to seek him out, but the riders themselves contend for the possession and control of it.*

*ibid*

English translation from *Luther's Works*, Vol. 33, pages 65-66

*For if God is in us, Satan is absent, and only a good-will is present; if God is absent, Satan is present, and only an evil-will is in us.*

*ibid*

English translation from *Luther's Works*, Vol. 33, page 112

Luther used the analogy of beast of burden to represent us. We act according to who "rides" (control) us, God or Satan (the devil). We do not have freedom even to choose who controls our actions. Had there been cars in his time, then he could use cars as an analogy to represent us. How any car "behaves" depends on who is behind steering wheel, a good driver or a drunken one. Even a smart car can be hacked, and the hacker will control the car. Any car, be it smart or "traditional" one, cannot choose its driver.

Because our will is in captive then our salvation, according to Luther, is the work of God alone from start to end.

*In just the same way (our answer continues), before man is changed into a new creature of the Kingdom of the Spirit, he does nothing and attempts nothing to prepare himself for this renewal and this Kingdom, and when he has been recreated he does nothing and attempts nothing toward remaining in this Kingdom, but the Spirit alone does both of these things in us, recreating us without us and preserving us without our help in our recreated state, as also James says: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of his power, that we might be a beginning of his creature" [James 1:18]—speaking of the renewed creature.*

*ibid*

English translation from *Luther's Works*, Vol. 33, page 243

Although he neither used nor introduced the term, Luther could be the first to teach *monergism*. The word monergism comes from *mono* and *ergon* – prefix mono means single while Greek noun ergon means work. Monergism teaches that in our salvation God works *alone* in us and it is the source of the word *sola* in *sola gratia*.

In contrast to what Luther believed regarding our will, John Calvin wrote:

*But the question is asked whether freedom to choose good or evil does not naturally reside in man. He [Augustine] replies: "It must be acknowledged that we have free choice to do both evil and good. But in doing evil each one is free of righteousness and the slave of sin, while in doing good, no one can be free, unless he has first been set free by the Son of God [Augustine: Rebuke and Grace 1.2, NPNF<sup>6</sup> 5:472]. So people are freed from evil by the grace of God alone. Without this they do no good at all, whether by thinking, or by willing and loving, or by acting. This means not only that when [grace] shows them they know what they should do, but that when it enables them they gladly do what they know [to be right]. [Augustine: ibid 2.3] And he then explains this more briefly. "The human will does not obtain grace through its freedom, but rather freedom through grace." [ibid 8.17, NPNF 5:478]*

Calvin: *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will*, page 130  
(underlined emphasis added)

English translation by G.I. Davies and edited by A.N.S. Lane

We can note the difference between Calvin and Luther. Luther denied the existence of our freedom while Calvin wrote that (1) we have freedom to choose to do both evil and good (following Augustine) but (2) we can do the latter only after being set free by grace of God alone. Before being set free, later referred as being *regenerated*, by grace *alone*, *our will is only free to do evil*. Even the titles of what they wrote should tell us the difference. That of Luther, in English, is "*Bondage of the Will*" while that of Calvin is "*Bondage and Liberation of the Will*". Our will is always in bondage/slavery, according to Luther, before and after regeneration (in Luther's terminology: changed into a new creature). Luther wrote "*We are not masters of our actions, from beginning to end, but servants.*"<sup>7</sup> That is why Luther taught monergism from start to end. On the other hand, according to Calvin, only in regeneration, through which our will is set free, grace works alone in us. After being set free or regenerated by grace alone, and while still controlled by grace, we can freely cooperate freely with grace. We are no longer spiritually dead (Sproul's) or passive corpse (Trueman's). Freely cooperation with grace is later known as *synergism*, from Greek prefix *syn* that means "together" and Greek noun *ergon* that means "work". Most of Reformed scholars follow this monergism (at regeneration) - synergism (after regeneration) concept<sup>8</sup>. For scriptural support they cite Ephesians 2:1-5 and Colossians 2:13, that say "being dead through our trespasses". A dead person (a corpse) can give neither consent nor cooperation. When God by grace regenerate him, grace obviously works alone. But once he is made alive, he can freely cooperate with grace while still under grace.

How do Catholics respond to *monergistic regeneration* taught by followers of Calvin? The Greek word regeneration (*παλιγγενεσία*) appears twice in New Testament (Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5). Both have nothing to do with regenerating spiritually dead persons. Scripture says the soul that sins shall die (Ezekiel 18:20). We are dead in sins in the sense that our sins make us deserve hell – they do not make us spiritually dead. Scripture also says: *Righteousness delivers from death* (Proverbs 10:2). It is righteousness, not regeneration, that delivers us from death.

In Catholic teaching everything in our salvation is synergistic. Among Protestants, *Arminian*<sup>9</sup> Protestants are also synergists.

*When God touches man's heart through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, man himself is not inactive while receiving that inspiration, since he could reject it; and yet, without God's grace, he cannot by his own free will move himself toward justice in God's sight*

Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1993 (underlined emphasis added)

The above clause came from Trent council, convened to counter Reformation in 16<sup>th</sup> century AD. It did not declare something new, but rewording of the decree made in Council of Orange in 529 AD, almost one thousand years before Luther nailed his 95 theses on 31 October 1517.

*"The good will of God and of man. Men do their own will, not God's, when they do what displeases God; but when they do what they wish, in order to serve the divine will, even though willingly they do what they do, nevertheless, it is the will of Him by whom what they will is both prepared and ordered"*

Canon 23 of Orange Council<sup>10</sup> (underlined emphasis added)

The canons (decrees) of Council of Orange were based on what Augustine wrote on the existence of Original Sin and relation between grace and (our) freedom. Augustine did not deny the existence of our free will but unless it is moved by grace, we can do nothing good with our (free) will.

*Therefore, my dearly beloved, as we have now proved by our former testimonies from the Holy Scripture that there is in man free determination of will for living rightly and acting rightly; so now let us see what are the divine testimonies concerning the grace of God, without which we are not able to do any good thing.*

Augustine: On Grace and Free Will. Chapter 7 (underlined emphasis added)  
For complete text refer to <http://www.ccel.org/cCEL/schaff/nPNF105.xix.iv.html>

Did Augustine teach monergistic regeneration? The following statement by Augustine should settle whether he was synergist or taught monergistic regeneration:

*But God made you without you. You didn't, after all, give any consent to God making you. How were you to consent, if you didn't yet exist? So while he made you without you, he doesn't justify you without you. So he made you without your knowing it, he justifies you with your willing consent to it. Yet it's he that does justifying (in case you should think it's your justice, and go back to dead losses, the wastage and the muck), for you to be found in him [Christ] not having your own justice, which is from the law, but the justice through the faith of Christ, which is from God; justice from faith, to know him and the power of his resurrection, and a share in his sufferings [Philippians 3:9-10]. And that will be your power, your strength; a share in Christ's sufferings will be your strength.*

Augustine: Sermon 169.13 (underlined emphasis added)

English translation from: *The Works of Saint Augustine: sermons III/5 (148-183)*, page 231

Is synergism scriptural? The Greek verb συνεργεω (sunergeo), that means “to work together” and from where we have the English word “synergy”, appears five times in New Testament (Mark 16:20, Romans 8:28, 1 Corinthians 16:16, 2 Corinthians 6:1 and James 2:22). The corresponding adjective συνεργος (sunergos), that means fellow or co-workers appears 13 times in New Testament. *For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building* (1 Corinthians 3:9). According to Scripture we have freedom to choose between good and evil (Deuteronomy 30:15-20). Some verses that show the role of our freedom are: *Return to me [God] .... and I will return to you* (Zechariah 1:3); *You will seek me [God] and find me; when you seek me with all your heart* (Jeremiah 29:13); *Draw near to God and he will draw near to you* (James 4:8). Catholics understand that we must be *first* moved and enabled by grace before we can freely return/seek/draw near to God. But when we sin, we do it freely; God does not make us do so.

The reason why Reformed scholars accuse the Catholic Church of teaching salvation by grace plus merits is they confuse synergism with what is known as *semi-pelagianism*<sup>11</sup>. In semi-pelagianism grace from God and our (free) will are *two mutually exclusive and independent agents*. God provides grace but it is up to us to cooperate with it or not. There is no Election in semi-pelagianism, we are the one who make decision. Synergism, on the other hand, teaches that our freedom is produced and depends on grace<sup>12</sup>. This also came from Augustine who wrote “*The human will does not obtain grace through its freedom, but rather freedom through grace.*” (quoted by Calvin above). There is Election in both synergism and monergism.

How God's grace works in us while we remain free at the same time, is a mystery<sup>13</sup>. Until today there is no dogmatic (binding) declaration from the Catholic Church on this issue. At present there are five views: *Thomism, Augustianism, Molinism, Congruism* and *Syncretism*<sup>14</sup>.

## End Notes

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- 1 <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/five-solas/>
- 2 Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1996
- 3 Trueman, C. R.: *Grace alone*, page 45-46.  
Carl R. Trueman (born 1967) is Christian theologian and church historian. He was Professor of Historical theology and Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary until 2018. He is now Professor at department of Biblical and Religious Studies of Grove City College, Pennsylvania, USA ([www.gcc.edu](http://www.gcc.edu)).
- 4 *When we considered in an earlier study our condition of original sin, we used the biblical metaphors of death and slavery. By nature we are born into this world DOA, dead on arrival, spiritually although alive biologically. We have no inclination whatsoever in our souls towards the things of God – no interest, no passion, no love. We are dead. Because we are spiritually dead, we are slaves to the sinful impulses and lusts that drive our behavior.*

Sproul: *Romans, St Andrew's Expositional Commentary*, page 188-189  
(underlined emphasis added)

Robert Charles Sproul (1939 - 2017) was respected and internationally renown Reformed theologian and pastor. He was the founder of Ligonier Ministry ([www.ligonier.org](http://www.ligonier.org)) and served as executive editor of *Tabletalk* magazine published by Ligonier Ministry. Ligonier Ministry has YouTube channel where we can listen to many of his statement/speech. Sproul was excellent in explain theological concepts in the way most of us, without any background in Theology or Religious Study, can understand.

- 5 Trueman, C. R.: *Grace alone*, page 40.
- 6 NPNF (Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers) is collection of (English translation of) the works of a number of early Christians (Church Fathers) who live during and after Council of Nicea in 325 AD. They are available online at [www.ccel.org](http://www.ccel.org).
- 7 Thesis 39 of *Disputation Against Scholastic Theology*. English translation from Luther's Works Vol. 31, page 11.
- 8 *The act of grace which regenerates, operating within the spontaneous energies of the soul and changing their character, can neither be co-operated with nor resisted. But the instant the soul is regenerated it begins to co-operate with and sometimes, alas! also to resist subsequent gracious influences prevenient and co-operative.*

Hodge, A.A.: *Outlines of Theology*, page 448-449 (underlined emphasis added)

Archibald Alexander Hodge (1823 – 1886) was Reformed theologian. He was Principal of Princeton Seminary from 1878 to 1886, after his father, Charles Hodge (1797 to 1878) who held that position from 1851 to 1878.

Regeneration, then, is to be conceived monergistically. God alone works, and the sinner has no part in it whatsoever. This, of course, does not mean, that man does not co-operate in later stages of the work of redemption. It is quite evident from Scripture that he does.

Berkhof, L.: *Systematic Theology*, page 473 (underlined emphasis added)

Louis Berkhof (1873 – 1957) was one of distinguished Reformed theologians. He taught at Calvin Theological Seminary from 1906 and served as its president from 1931 – 1944.

*There is much confusion about the debate between monergism and synergism. When Augustinianism is defined as monergistic, one must remember that it is monergistic with respect to the beginning of salvation, not to the whole process. Augustinianism does not reject all synergism, but does reject a synergism that is all synergism.*

Sproul: *Willing to Believe: The Controversy over Free Will*, pages 73

Sanctification is not monergistic. It is synergistic. That is, it demands the cooperation of the regenerate believer.

Sproul: *Chosen by God*, page 131 (underlined emphasis added)

In contrast Horton denies synergistic sanctification.

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*It is vital to distinguish the new birth (or effectual calling) from conversion. In the former, we are passive: acted upon and within by the triune God through the gospel. In the latter we are active (having been “activated” by grace), since we are raised from spiritual death to everlasting life.*

*Does this mean that we are monergists at the point of regeneration and justification, only to become synergists thereafter? Not at all, our faith and grateful obedience are not only responses to God’s gift but are produced in us from beginning to end by the same grace of God.*

Horton, M.S.: *For Calvinism*, page 110, 111 (underlined emphasis added)

Michael Scott Horton (born 1964) is J. Gresham Machen Professor of Theology and Apologetics at Westminster Seminary California and Editor in chief of Modern Reformation magazine.

- <sup>9</sup> The name Arminian came from Dutch Protestant theologian *Jacob Harmensen* or in Latin *Jacobus Arminius* (1560 – 1609). For more information: <http://evangelicalarminians.org>.
- <sup>10</sup> The council promulgated 25 canons followed by conclusion, and can be summarized as (1) the existence of original sin, 2), God foreordained no one to evil but we do evil through our own free-will, and (3) prevenient grace from God enables us to do good works, to obey His Commandments and to be saved *while we remain free*.

- Canon 1. If anyone says that by the offense of Adam’s transgression not the whole man, that is according to body and soul, was changed for the worse, but believes that while the liberty of the soul endures without harm, the body only is exposed to corruption, he is deceived by the error of Pelagius and resists the Scripture which says: *“The soul, that has sinned, shall die”* [Ezekiel 18:20]; and: *“Do you not know that to whom you show yourselves servants to obey, you are the servants of him whom you obey?”* [Romans 6:16]; and: *“Anyone is adjudged the slave of him by whom he is overcome* [2 Peter 2:19].
- Canon 2. If anyone asserts that Adam’s transgression injured him alone and not his descendants, or declares that certainly death of the body only, which is the punishment of sin, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul, passed through one man into the whole human race, he will do an injustice to God, contradicting the Apostle who says: *“Through one man sin entered in the world, and through sin death, and thus death passed into all men, in whom all have sinned”* [Rom. 5:12].
- Canon 3. If anyone says that the grace of God can be bestowed by human invocation, but that the grace itself does not bring it to pass that it be invoked by us, he contradicts Isaia the Prophet, or the Apostle who says the same thing: *“I was found by those who were not seeking me: I appeared openly to those, who did not ask me”* [Romans 10:20; Isaiah 65:1].
- Canon 4. If anyone contends that in order that we may be cleansed from sin, God waits for our good will, but does not acknowledge that even the wish to be purged is produced in us through the infusion and operation of the Holy Spirit, he opposes the Holy Spirit Himself, who says through Solomon: *“Good will is prepared by the Lord”* [Proverbs 8:35: LXX], and the Apostle who beneficially says: *“It is God, who works in us both to will and to accomplish according to his good will”* [Philippians 2:13].
- Canon 5. If anyone says, that just as the increase [of faith] so also the beginning of faith and the very desire of credulity, by which we believe in Him who justifies the impious, and (by which) we arrive at the regeneration of holy baptism (is) not through the gift of grace, that is, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit reforming our will from infidelity to faith, from impiety to piety, but is naturally in us, he is proved (to be) antagonistic to the doctrine of the Apostles, since blessed Paul says: *We trust, that he who begins a good work in us, will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus* [Philippians 1:6]; and the following: *It was given to you for Christ not only that you may believe in Him, but also, that you may suffer for Him* [Philippians 1:29]; and: *By grace you are made safe through faith, and this not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God* [Ephesians 2:8]. For those who say that faith, by which we believe in God, is natural, declare that all those who are alien to the Church of Christ are in a measure faithful.

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- Canon. 6. If anyone asserts that without the grace of God mercy is divinely given to us when we believe, will, desire, try, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, urge, but does not confess that through the infusion and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in us, it is brought about that we believe, wish, or are able to do all these things as we ought, and does not join either to human humility or obedience the help of grace, nor agree that it is the gift of His grace that we are obedient and humble, opposes the Apostle who says: *What have you, that you have not received?* [1 Corinthians 4:7]; and: *By the grace of God I am that, which I am* [1 Corinthians 15:10].
- Canon. 7. If anyone affirms that without the illumination and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,—who gives to all sweetness in consenting to and believing in the truth,—through the strength of nature he can think anything good which pertains to the salvation of eternal life, as he should, or choose, or consent to salvation, that is to the evangelical proclamation, he is deceived by the heretical spirit, not understanding the voice of God speaking in the Gospel: *"Without me you can do nothing"* [John 15:5]; and that of the Apostle: *Not that we are fit to think everything by ourselves as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God* [2 Corinthians 3:5].
- Canon 8. If anyone maintains that some by mercy, but others by free will, which it is evident has been vitiated in all who have been born of the transgression of the first man, are able to come to the grace of baptism, he is proved to be inconsistent with the trite faith. For he asserts that the free will of all was not weakened by the sin of the first man, or assuredly was injured in such a way, that nevertheless certain ones have the power without revelation of God to be able by themselves to seek the mystery of eternal salvation. How contrary this is, the Lord Himself proves, who testifies that not some, but no one can come to Him, except *whom the Father draws* [John 6:44], and just as he says to PETER: *"Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to you, but my Father, who is in heaven"* [Matthew 16:17]; and the Apostle: *No one can say Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit* [1 Corinthians 12:3].
- Canon 9. *"The assistance of God.* It is a divine gift, both when we think rightly and when we restrain our feet from falsity and injustice; for as often as we do good, God operates in us and with us, that we may work".
- Canon 10. *The assistance of God.* The assistance of God ought to be implored always even by those who have been reborn and have been healed, that they may arrive at a good end, or may be able to continue in good work.
- Canon 11. *"The obligation of vows.* No one would rightly vow anything to God, unless he accepts from Him what he vows" as it is written: *And what we have received from your hand, we give to you* [1 Chronicles 29:14].
- Canon 12. *"God loves such as us.* God loves us, such as we shall be by His gilt, not such as we are by our own merit".
- Canon 13. The restoration of free will. Freedom of will weakened in the first man cannot be repaired except through the grace of baptism; "once it has been lost, it cannot be restored except by Him by whom it could be given. Thus Truth itself says: *If the Son liberates you, then you will be truly free*" [John 8:36].
- Canon 14. "No wretched person is freed from misery, however small, unless he is first reached by the mercy of God", just as the Psalmist says: *Let thy mercy, Lord, speedily anticipate us* [Psalms 78:8]; and also: *"My God, His mercy will prevent me"* [Psalms 58:11].
- Canon 15. "From that which God fashioned, Adam was changed by his own iniquity, but for the worse. From that which injustice has effected, the faithful (man) is changed by the grace of God, but for the better. Therefore, the former change was (the result) of the first transgression, the latter according to the Psalmist *is the change of the right hand of the Most High* [Psalms 76:11]".
- Canon 16. "Let no one glory in that which he seems to possess, as if he did not receive (it), or think that he has received (it) for this reason, because the sign appeared from without, either that it might be read, or sounded that it might be heard. For thus says the Apostle: *If justice (is) through the law, then*

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*Christ died for nothing [Galatians 2:21]: ascending on high he led captivity captive, he gave gifts to men [Ephesians 4:8; cf. Psalms 67:19], Whoever has, has from Him, but whoever denies that he has from Him, either does not truly possess, or that, which he possesses, is taken away from him [Matthew 25:29]".*

- Canon 17. "Worldly desire creates the fortitude of the Gentiles, but the *charity* of God, which is *diffused in our hearts*, not by free will, which is from us, but *by the Holy Spirit, which is given to us* [Rom. 5:5] produces the fortitude of the Christians".
- Canon 18. "*That grace is preceded by no merits.* A reward is due to good works, if they are performed; but grace, which is not due, precedes, that they may be done".
- Canon 19. "*That no one is saved except by God's mercy.* Even if human nature remained in that integrity in which it was formed, it would in no way save itself without the help of its Creator; therefore, since without the grace of God it cannot guard the health which it received, how without the grace of God will it be able to recover what it has lost?".
- Canon 20. "*That without God man can do no good.* God does many good things in man, which man does not do; indeed man can do no good that God does not expect that man do".
- Canon 21. "*Nature and grace.* Just as the Apostle most truly says to those, who, wishing to be justified in the law, have fallen even from grace: *If justice is from the law, then Christ died in vain* [Galatians 2:21]; so it is most truly said to those who think that grace, which the faith of Christ commands and obtains, is nature: If justice is through nature, *then Christ died in vain*. For the law was already here, and it did not justify; nature, too, was already present, and it did not justify. Therefore, Christ did not die in vain, that the law also might be fulfilled through Him, who said: *I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill (it)* [Matthew 5:17], and in order that nature ruined by Adam, might be repaired by Him, who said: He came to seek and to save that which had been lost [Luke 19:10]".
- Canon 22. "*Those things which are peculiar to men.* No one has anything of his own except lying and sin. But if man has any truth and justice, it is from that fountain for which we ought to thirst in this desert, that bedewed by some drops of water from it, we may not falter on the way".
- Canon 23. "*The good will of God and of man.* Men do their own will, not God's, when they do what displeases God; but when they do what they wish, in order to serve the divine will, even though willingly they do what they do, nevertheless, it is the will of Him by whom what they will is both prepared and ordered".
- Canon 24. "*The branches of the vine.* Thus there are *branches in the vine*, not that they may bestow anything upon the vine, but that they may receive from it the means by which they may live; so truly the vine is in the branches, that it may furnish vital nourishment to these, not take it from them. And by this it is an advantage to the disciples, not to Christ, that each have Christ abiding in him, and that each abide in Christ. For if the branch is cut off, another can sprout forth from the living root; but that which has been cut off, cannot live without the root [John 15:5 ff.]".
- Canon 25. "*The love with which we love God.* Truly to love God is a gift of God. He Himself has granted that He be loved, who though not loved loves. Although we were displeasing we were loved, so that there might be produced in us [something] by which we might please. For the *Spirit* whom we love together with the Father and the Son *pours forth the charity* [of the Father and the Son] *in our hearts* [Romans 5:5]".

And thus according to the statements of the Holy Scriptures written above, or the explanations of the ancient Fathers, God being propitious, we ought to proclaim and to believe that through the sin of the first man free will was so changed and so weakened that afterwards no one could either love God as he ought, or believe in God, or perform what is good on account of God, unless the grace of divine mercy reached him first. Therefore, we believe that in the [case of] the just Abel, and Noe, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the multitude of the ancient saints that illustrious faith which the Apostle Paul proclaims in their praise [Heb. 11], was conferred not by the good of nature, which had been given before in [the case of] Adam, but through the grace

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of God. Even after the coming of the Lord we know and likewise believe that this grace was not held in the free will of all who desired to be baptized, but was bestowed by the bounty of Christ, according to what has already been said often, and Paul the Apostle declares: *It has been given to you for Christ, not only, that you may believe in him, but also that you may suffer for him* [Philippians 1:29]; and this: *God, who has begun a good work in you, will perfect it even to the day of our Lord* [Philippians 1:6]; and this: *By grace you are made safe through faith, and this not of yourselves: for it is the gift of God* [Ephesians 2:8]; and that which the Apostle says about himself: *I have obtained mercy, that I may be faithful* [1 Corinthians 7:25; 1 Timothy 1:13]; he did not say: "because I was," but: "that I may be." And that: *What have you, that you have not received?* [1 Corinthians 4:7]. And that: *Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights* [James 1:17]. And that: *No one has anything, except it has been given him from above* [John 3:27]. Innumerable are the testimonies of the Sacred Scriptures which can be brought forward to prove grace, but they are passed over out of a desire for brevity; also because, in truth, more [proofs] will not profit those for whom a few do not suffice.

According to the Catholic faith we believe this also, that after grace has been received through baptism, all the baptized with the help and cooperation of Christ can and ought to fulfill what pertains to the salvation of the soul, if they will labor faithfully. We not only do not believe that some have been truly predestined to evil by divine power, but also with every execration we pronounce anathema upon those, if there are [any such], who wish to believe so great an evil. This, too, we profess and believe unto salvation, that in every good work we do not begin, and afterwards are helped by the mercy of God, but He Himself, with no preceding good services [on our part], previously inspires us with faith and love of Him, so that we may both faithfully seek the sacraments of baptism, and after baptism with His help be able to perform those [acts] which are pleasing to Him. So very clearly we should believe that the faith—so admirable—both of that famous thief, whom the Lord restored to his native land of paradise [Luke 23:43], and of Cornelius the centurion, to whom the angel of the Lord was sent [Acts 10:3], and of Zacchaeus, who deserved to receive the Lord Himself [Luke 19:6], was not from nature, but a gift of God's bounty.

Denzinger: *The sources of Catholic Dogma (Enchiridion Symbolorum)*, 30<sup>th</sup> edition, pages 75-81  
English translation by Roy J. Deferrari

Enchiridion Symbolorum is handbook or compendium containing collection of creeds, chief decrees and definitions of councils and of past popes, each given a number with prefix *Denz* or *Dz* or *DS* (Denzinger – Schönmetzer). First published in 1854 and continuously extended. Heinrich Joseph Dominicus Denzinger (1819 – 1883) was one of the leading Catholic German theologians in his time.

<sup>11</sup> *This, of course, also points to Arminius's synergism: salvation becomes a matter of the individual cooperating with God's grace in a manner in which the individual always has a decisive role.*

Trueman, C. R.: *Grace alone*, page 150.

<sup>12</sup> *So it remains true that grace is not efficacious because free will consents, but conversely the free will consents because grace efficaciously premoves it to the willing and performance of a good act.*

Catholic Encyclopedia: *Controversies on Grace: Thomism* (underlined emphasis added)

*For it is not the will which by its free consent determines the power of grace, but conversely it is grace which makes the free good act possible, prepares for it and co-operates in its execution.*

Catholic Encyclopedia: *Controversies on Grace: Molinism* (underlined emphasis added)

<sup>13</sup> *The way in which the fact of man's free choice is reconciled with fundamental Christian truth of his total dependence on the grace of God is, ultimately, a mystery. The Catholic Church has always believed and taught both truths while its theologians have full liberty to attempt to explain their compatibility.*

New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 6, page 93: *Free Will and Grace*

<sup>14</sup> Dominican Banez (died in 1604) formulated *Thomism* teaching on relation between grace and free-will. That of *Augustinian* was developed by *Noris* (died in 1704) and *Berti* (died in 1766) and that of *Molinism* by *Luis de Molina* (1535 – 1600). Extension of *Molinism*, known as *Congruism*, was developed by *Suarez* (died in 1617), *St. Robert Bellarmine* (died in 1621) and *Jesuit General Aquaviva* (died in 1613). Other than *Thomism*,  
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Augustinianism, Molinism and Congruism, that of *Ysambert* (died in 1642), *Habert* (died in 1668), *Tournely* (died in 1729) and St. *Alphonsus of Liguori* (died in 1787) syncretizes all previous four and is therefore known as *Syncretism*. For more detail of all those five:

Ludwig Ott: *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, pages 248-249  
Catholic encyclopedia at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06710a.htm>