

A Retreat on

St. Gaspar Bertoni's



Compendium Rude

of his

Original Constitutions

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ABBREVIATIONS, QUOTATIONS AND NOTES USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Abbreviation or Quotation	Meaning
# (##)	Number(s) of the CF
+	The “+” sign in the Jerusalem Bible is an indication meaning that there is much more information that can be obtained in its footnotes at that text.
AG	Document of Vatican II on the Missions - the Document is entitled: <u>AD GENTES</u> , meaning "To the Nations"
Art.	Article
bis	Second time
c. (cc.)	Chapter(s)
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
cf.	Confer
CF	Constitutions of the Founder
CS	Collectanea Stigmatina - these are 4 volumes [as in: CS I, CS II, CS III and CS IV] - it was compiled by one of the greatest Stigmatine historians, Fr. Joseph Stofella ⁱⁱ , CSS, beginning around the year of 1952.
CSJ	Constitutions of the Society of Jesus [St. Ignatius' Constitutions]
f. (ff.)	Follow page(s) or verse(s)
lbi (or “ib”)	It is an abbreviation of the Latin “ <i>ibidem</i> ”, and is an editorial short-cut, which means: there; in the same place.
ld	"ld." is a writer's tool meaning “idem”, in the same place, or book
Lib.	Book
MP	Founder's Private Memorial
MssB	Manoscritti Bertoni - all typed in five volumes by Fr. Luigi Benaglia ⁱ , CSS - these are all the writings of Fr. Bertoni – xeroxed by the General Secretary, Fr. John Zampieri - they have also been printed out by computer by Fr. P. Cavallo's youth group in five volumes with marginal numbers for easy reference.
n. (nn,)	Number(s)
NB	NOTA BENE [<i>"note well!"</i> - <i>"pay attention!"</i> - usually used in English and Italian manuscripts - from the Latin]
NT	New Testament
o.c. (op. cit.)	"opus citatum" – the work already quoted - it usually means a work cited earlier in the work.

Abbreviation or Quotation	Meaning
OT	Old Testament
p. (pp.)	Page(s)
Ps (Pss)	Psalm(s)
Psalms number	The Psalm number refers always to the Latin Vulgate. When are quoted two numbers, the second one refers to the modern Bibles, where the Psalm 9 was divided into two.
q. (qq.)	These are abbreviations for: <i>Question/Questions</i> - these are abbreviations usually used with St. Thomas Aquinas.
ss.	Follow pages (or verses) [from the Italian <i>seguenti</i>]
v. (vv.)	Verse(s) of the Sacred Scripture

Notes	Meaning
Footnotes	Author's complementary notes regarding terms and nouns used in this document, in numeral sequence (1, 2, 3...), in the same page (or following), at the bottom.
Endnotes	Author's complementary notes regarding terms and nouns used in this document, in Roman numeral sequence (I, ii, iii, iv..) at the end of the document.

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FOREWORD

The *Compendium Rude* [CF## 1-8]The Title

[1] Both of these words may be pondered much more in detail. As a brief presentation here, it might simply be stated that these terms are well known to theologians. **St. Thomas Aquinas** has a much studied work, entitled the **Compendium Theologiae**.¹ The object and plan of that work are described in its Prologue: as the Apostle taught the Corinthians that the entire perfection of the present life consists in faith, hope and charity, as though in certain chapters **summarizing** [*compendiosis*] our salvation, saying, ***Now there are three things that remain, faith, hope and charity*** [cf. 1 Co 13:13]. Hence, as the **blessed Augustine** has taught these three are those by which God is worshipped. Thus, St. Thomas intended to offer **a compendious doctrine** regarding the Christian religion. Fr. Bertoni intends here to offer a kind of **summary** of what the Constitutions that follow will contain. St. Thomas wrote **a doctrinal resume'** on faith, hope and charity, taking much inspiration from St. Augustine's ***Enchiridion de Fide, Spe et Caritate***² - intending by this to offer an **abrege'**, a **brief synthesis** of the faith. Fr. Bertoni has offered a synthesis of his rule in his ***Compendium***.

[2] A classical Latin Dictionary³ offers some insights that might be helpful. The word comes from the language of **economy** and offers insights that will be studied later, such as that which is ***weighed together, kept together***, saved. It is the **sparing, the saving in anything done, a shortening, an abbreviation, an abridgment**.

[3] The same dictionary would translate ***Rude*** as *rough, raw, unripe, unpolished, early* [outline, abridgment]. St. Augustine also has a classical work found in the same volume as his *Enchiridion*, entitled: ***De Catechizandis Rudibus***, meaning the unlettered, the *unschooled*.

[4] The word is often found in the **Ignatian Constitutions** [cf. nn. 20; 195; 196; 199; 404; 407]. Fr. Bertoni mentions it also in his Constitution for the Formation of Novices: a ***Compendium*** of the General and Particular Laws of the Congregation, its Constitutions [cf. **CF # 33**].

¹ Sancti Thomae de Aquino, ***Opera Omnia***. Tomus XLII. Cura et Studio Fratrum Praedicatorum. Editori di SanTommaso. ROMA 1979.

² ***Sancti Aurelii Augustini Opera***. Tomus XLVI, Pars XIII, 2. Turnholti Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii 1969.

³ Charlton T. Lewis, Ph.D., ***A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrew's Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary. Revised, Enlarged, and in Great Part Rewritten***. Oxford at Clarendon Press, **compendium**.

INTRODUCTION

[I] The Tentative English Translation of the *Compendium Rude*

1. **The End** [of this Community is to be] Apostolic Missionaries for the service of Bishops.

2. **[The Missionary (Modality of) Obedience]** The Manner of Achieving this Goal: [the Apostolic Missionaries are] *to work under the direction of, and dependent on the Ordinaries of those places in which the Missions may be offered. The Missionaries are to be totally submissive to these Bishops, concerning all that pertains to the exercise of their Apostolic Endeavor. The Missionaries are to receive their permission beforehand from them, along with the necessary faculties, always observing the guidelines set down by these Ordinaries concerning the places and the time in the exercise of their apostolate.* [From **the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation**, December 20, 1817].

3. **[Poverty]** With total **gratuity**, [the Apostolic Missionaries will] serve God and the Church.

4. [The Missionaries are to remain] **immune** from all dignities, residences, benefices, and the perpetual and particular care of souls and nuns.

5. [The Missionaries are] to be ready **to go anywhere** in the diocese and the world.

6. The Means [to be employed]: [***attende tibi et doctrinae*** - cf. 1 Tm 4:15-16 – **the law of progress: on-gong formation**]:
 - The spiritual perfection of each one;
 - Perfection in ecclesiastical doctrines;
 - Common Life;
 - The perpetual exercise of obedience, chastity and poverty
 - The program of living regarding food, clothing and lodging, will be in harmony with the more **observant clergy** among whom the Missionaries live, for the edification of the faithful, both regarding **Christian parsimony and evangelical poverty**.

7. The promotion from one **Grade** to another differs according to the qualities of those received. For some, whose talent and piety are equal to the task, they are to be promoted to the perfect priestly task, assuming the Apostolic Mission. Others, however, whose strength and faculties of mind and body do suffice, are to be promoted to the perfect service and assistance of the Missionaries.

8. **[Corporate Obedience]** The Program of Government is as follows, that there be one Superior for life over all, whom the Sodality will elect for itself. Then, every individual house is to have its own Director whom the Superior of the entire Sodality will name for a three year term, or confirm him for a second similar term. To this Director will be added assistants and administrators, as the Economist, the Procurator, and two Masters - one for spiritual matters, and the other to manage the external conducting of the community.

[II] The Possible Origin of this Title

The title of this section of St. Gaspar Bertoni's – *Compendium Rude* - might best be understood as a kind of general introductory synthesis to his entire *Original Constitutions*. In these first eight Constitutions there are noted the principal elements of the 12 Parts of his Constitutions which follow.

This style of writing may be compared in some way to **St. Augustine's *Enchiridion*** - or, to **St. Bonaventure's *Breviloquium*** – or, most likely, to **St. Thomas' *Compendium Theologiae*** - a kind of general synthesis of the subject matter being treated. There follows here a brief consideration of each of these classics of theology:

[1] **St. Augustine's *Enchiridion*⁴ *Fidei, Spei et Caritatis***, or, more simply: the work on ***Faith, Hope and Charity***: this is a work with two titles, but usually referred to by St. Augustine himself by the latter, the simpler of the two. Yet, the work has been popularly known simply as '**Augustine's *Enchiridion***', or, ***handbook***. Several times in the course of his work, the Doctor of the Church refers to it by this title:

4: According to your letter, you wish me to write a book, to serve you as a **handbook**, as they call it, something that would **always be within reach**. It should contain the answers to questions such as these: What is most to be sought after? In view of the various heresies, what is chiefly to be avoided? ... What is the beginning and what the end of human endeavor? What is the **sum total** of all teaching?...

All these things which you ask about you will undoubtedly know if you understand well what man should believe and hope for and love....

5: Now, once the mind has been endowed with the beginning of faith, which **works through love, it tends through right living to attain to sight**, where dwells for the holy and perfect of heart that ineffable beauty, the **full vision** of which constitutes supreme happiness. Surely this is the answer to your question: What is the beginning and what the end of human endeavor? We begin in faith and are made perfect by sight. This is at the same time **the sum total of all teaching**: and the **sure and true foundation** of Catholic faith is Christ. *For other foundation*, says the Apostle, *no man can lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus*. [1 Co 3:11]. Nor can it be denied that this is the proper foundation of the Catholic faith, because it can be held that this is **doctrine common** to ourselves and to some heretics. For, we shall find that among some heretics who like to be called 'Christians', Christ is honored in name, though in reality He is not with them. To prove this would take too long, for we should have to mention all the heresies which once were, which are now, and which could have existed under the Christian name, and then demonstrate that this is true of each and everyone of them. Such a treatise would fill so many volumes as to seem endless.

6: You ask me for a **handbook**, that is, **a book that can be carried in the hand**, and not one to **load your bookcase**. Now, then, to return to those three things by

⁴ Cf. Ancient Christian Writers. The Catholic University of America. N. 3. *St. Augustine: Faith, Hope and Charity*. Translated and annotated by Louis A. Arand. NY/Mahwah NJ: Newman 1947, pp. 3, ff.

which, as I have said, God is to be worshipped – faith, hope and charity: it is easy to say what is to be believed, what is to be hoped for, and what is to be loved. However, to refute the calumnies of those who think otherwise requires more painstaking and more detailed instruction. **And, to impart such instruction, it will not suffice to place a small manual in one's hands; rather it will be necessary to enkindle a great zeal in one's heart...**

The Bishop of Hippo remained convinced that all the objects of the theological virtues are summed up in the **Lord's Prayer**, the **Commandments** [the **Decalogue**] and the **Creed**. St. Augustine tried to **synthesize the principal points** of the Christian faith in this **handbook**. St. Thomas, centuries later, seems to have discovered that there was no better model for his ***Compendium Theologiae*** than Augustine's treatise on the **Creed**, the **Our Father** and the **Decalogue**. Augustine was consciously striving to keep his broad presentation within the proper limits of an **outline**, or **manual**. While the sweep of his vision is broad, there is **not an exhausting treatise** of any one aspect of it – but there are clearly echoes of his life's work and reflection within. As a result, it is stated that St. Augustine offers a **summarized exposition of Christian Doctrine** in this treatise. The ***Enchiridion*** of Augustine is called a song of praise to honor the grace of God.

[2] The ***Breviloquium***⁵ of St. Bonaventure: and his ***Itinerarium Mentis in Deum***⁶ are often thought to be the Seraphic Doctor's **masterpieces**. For many, these two **manageable works** contain **the heart of this great doctor's system of supernatural teaching**. The *Itinerary* has long been recognized as one of the shorter masterpieces of **medieval mysticism**, perhaps best **interpreted in the light of Francis receiving the Stigmata**, as depicted by Ghiotti.

The ***Breviloquium*** is a deductive treatise, made up of a Prologue and seven parts: at the head of each chapter, an aspect of the divinity is established as **a kind of principle from which the rest of the chapter develops**. It has been noted that this work has none of the customary disadvantages of a ***Summa***. These are always meant to serve for consultation, reference work – whereas the ***Breviloquium*** can almost be **read at a sitting**, more as a unit - It provides **a systematic approach to the Love of God without being overlong and overly involved**.

While he is convinced of the paradoxical human nature: *an infinite nothing*, he sees Scripture as being addressed by God to human beings, based on their God-given capacity for understanding. Great mystics have both preceded and followed Bonaventure – but his unique contribution may have been his capacity of bringing together the **mystical insights** and to demanding **reality of truth**. His

⁵ *The Works of Bonaventure. Cardinal Seraphic Doctor and Saint.* Translated from the Latin by Jose' de Vinck. II. ***The Breviloquium***. Paterson NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press 1962, cf. pp. vii, ff.

⁶ Saint Bonaventura. ***The Mind's Road to God***. Translated with an Introduction, by George Boas. NY/London Macmillan Publishing Co. the Library of Liberal Arts 1986. 17th printing.

path to truth is not the simply rational, or sheer abstraction. He has developed under the direction of the Holy Spirit **a certain intuition and inner supernatural apprehension**. He manifests the fact of his **deep immersion in the supernatural – his great motivating force has been the love of God, revealed in God's Word** – attainable to the philosopher – and often freely given through mystical graces.

[3] **St. Thomas Aquinas** and his ***Compendium Theologiae***: a recent scholar on the Angelic Doctor⁷ dates this work to the Saint's years in Rome 1265-1268, almost ten years prior to his death in 1274. This was written at the request of a contemporary. However, there has long been a tendency to consider the ***Compendium Theologiae*** among the Saint's **very final works** – and indeed, even that as it is left **incomplete**, this is simply because death intervened. However, a number of his other works have likewise been left incomplete. Other scholars reason that there are some more than striking similarities between this work, and the Saint's ***Summa Contra Gentiles*** which also saw the light of day between 1265-1267.

The first part of this work, ***De Fide*** [246 chapters] might go back to this earlier time – where is the incomplete part on Hope would have been done later. The theory is that after completing the section on Faith. St. Thomas had to return to Naples in 1272. And this might have some truth to it, thus explaining how it does **seem to end rather abruptly**. The tract on hope is indeed brief – and with this work, St. Thomas gains a place among the great *abbreviators* of the Christian Doctrine.

Most would say that St. Thomas is **quite dependent** in the set-up of this work on his predecessor, St. Augustine, and his ***Enchiridion*** of Faith, Hope and Charity, which St. Thomas was trying to emulate here. At least the central idea is held in common with the two doctors of the Church: that of synthesizing the faith around the theological virtues. The style used is the following:

- in the tract on **Faith**, the emphasis would be to ponder in some depth the articles of the **Creed**;
- in the tract on **Hope**, the emphasis is on developing the seven petitions of the **Our Father** - this was left incomplete, as has been noted;
- for the tract on **Charity**, which is totally missing in St. Thomas' present work, most likely the idea was to ponder the **Decalogue**.

The end result would be **a kind of Catechism. In response to the kenosis of the Divine Word**, St. Thomas offers here **his homage to the littleness of humans, in drawing the immensity of God's Word to some kind of a synthesis**. This seems to be the style of the ***Synoptic Gospels*** - and also noting the fact that if everything Jesus did and said had been written down, the whole world would not have sufficed to contain them! [cf. conclusion of John, 12:25].

⁷ Cf. Jean-Pierre Torrell, OP, *Initiation a saint Thomas d'Aquin. Sa personne et son oeuvre*. Paris: du Cerf 1993, pp. 239, ff.

St. Thomas wrote his *Summa Theologica* with this Prologue:

Because the **Master of Catholic Truth** ought not only to teach the proficient, but also to instruct beginners [according to the Apostle: *As Unto Little ones in Christ, I give You milk to drink, not meat* [1 Co 3:1, 2], we purpose **in this book to treat of whatever belongs to the Christian religion in such a way as may tend to the instruction of beginners**. We have considered that students in this Science have not seldom been hampered by what they have found written by other authors, partly on account of **the multiplication of useless questions, articles, and arguments**; partly also because those things that are needful for them to know are not taught according to the order of the subject matter, but according as the plan of the book ought require, or the occasions of the argument offer; partly too, because frequent repetition brought weariness and confusion to the minds of readers.

Endeavoring to avoid these and other like faults, we shall try, by God's help, to set forth whatever is included in this sacred Science as **briefly and clearly** as the matter itself may allow.

If the parallel holds, we might note that St. Gaspar Bertoni has set down in his *Compendium Rude*, the main headings of his precious booklet of the *Original Constitutions*, the outlines for achieving the holiness of an Apostolic Mission.

St. Thomas himself thus explained his *Compendium Theologiae*, in his 'Author's Preface'⁸:

To restore man, who had been laid low by sin, to the heights of divine glory, the Word of the eternal Father, through containing all things within His immensity, **willed to become small**. Thus He did, not by putting aside His greatness, but **by taking to Himself our littleness**. No one can say that He is unable to grasp the teaching of heavenly wisdom what the word taught at great length, although clearly, throughout the various volumes of sacred Scripture for those who have leisure to study, He has reduced to **brief compass** for the sake of those whose time is taken up with the cares of daily life. Man's salvation consists in **knowing the truth**, so that the human mind may not be confused by diverse errors; **in making for the right goal**, so that man may not fall away from true happiness by pursuing wrong ends; and in carrying out the laws of justice, so that he may not besmirch himself with a multitude of vices.

Knowledge of the truth necessary for man's salvation is comprised within a few brief articles of faith. The Apostle says in Romans 9:24 [Vulgate]: *For He shall finish His word and cut it short in justice; because a short word shall the Lord make upon the earth* – and in a later passage, he adds: *This is the word of faith, which we preach* [Rm 10:8], **In a short prayer Christ clearly marked out man's right course**, and in teaching us to say this prayer, **He showed us the goal of our striving and hope. In a single precept of charity, He summed up that human justice which consists in observing the Law: Love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the Law** [cf. Rm13:10]. Hence

⁸ *Aquinas' Shorter Summa. St. Thomas's Own Concise Version of his Summa Theologica*. Manchester NH: Sophia Institute Press [published in 1947] 1993, 2002, pp. 3, ff.

the Apostle taught that the whole perfection of the present life consists in faith, hope and charity, as **in certain brief headings** outlining our salvation: *Now there remain faith, hope and charity* [1 Co 13:13]. These are the three virtues by which God is worshiped...

Again, relying on this suggested parallel, between the three Doctors of the Church – but, perhaps culminating in St. Thomas' ***Compendium Theologiae***, and his ***Summa Theologiae***, St. Gaspar presents his booklet with the elements, the rudiments of holiness for the Apostolic Ministry in the service of the Church, **in the person of her Bishops appointed by the Holy Spirit** [cf. Ac 20:28].

St. Thomas' ideal in writing he presents in these introductions the choices need to be made to reach holiness:

- **to know the truth**, or that which is presented in the Articles of the Creed;
- **to pursue the proper purpose in life**, that is what the Lord has laid down for believers in His own, the *Lord's Prayer*;
- **to observe 'justice', which is summarized in the one commandment of charity**. Thus, the Apostle to the Gentiles notes that there are three that remain: Faith, Hope and Love. For St. Augustine, this is how God is authentically honored.

Fr. Bertoni followed the style of St. Ignatius of Loyola, who, in his Constitutions prefaced the entire volume with what he called the *Formula* - this is a series of paragraphs worked out by the Founder and his first Companions in community discussions, then submitted to the Holy See. These statements were later returned by the Holy See to the Society of Jesus in the form of two Papal Bills [one in September 1540 – and its emendation through community discussions and sent back by the Holy See in July 10 years later] – and St. Ignatius used some of the conclusions as the preface to his work – to which he gave the title the ***Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus***.

Here Fr. Bertoni, in his ***Compendium Rude***, offers us a kind of parallel to the Jesuit ***Formula***, as well as his own 'Preview of Coming Attractions', the main points – that will follow in his 306 remaining ***Original Constitutions***.

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