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Outline of Talk to Socratic Club
“St. Thomas for Zags?”
9-19-2007

I. Introduction:

A problem: The goal of the Socratic Club is “philosophical inquiry into Christianity,” so Thomas Aquinas would seem to be a good candidate for honorary membership. Yet, it is not likely that Gonzaga students will encounter Thomas during their time here. So, the Club should encourage them to study St. Thomas.

II. The impossibility of examining the best reason for studying Thomas.

III. Reasons for studying Thomas that probably are not persuasive to the Socratic Club.

- A. He was rebellious.
- B. He was musical.
- C. He was the favorite teacher of the Society of Jesus, especially Ignatius and Aloysius.

IV. Reasons for studying Thomas that ought to be persuasive to the Socratic Club

A. Thomas’s reading (*legere*)

- 1. of the Bible: the examples of Isaiah and Romans
- 2. of Patristic literature: the examples of the *Catena Aurea* and of Orange II
- 3. of Aristotle: the example of the *Ethics*

B. Thomas’s questioning (*disputare*)

- 1. classroom disputations
- 2. public disputations
- 3. the case of the *Summa of theology*

C. Thomas’s approach to the question about faith and reason (*fides et ratio*)

- 1. A three bears story: rationalism, fideism, integrationism
- 2. Why Thomas’s approach is appropriate for the GU Socratic Club
- 3. Why Thomas’s approach is appropriate for a CJH University