

## HAPPINESS

“On a psychological note, since God placed the ordering in man through the natural law, if we are to be happy, i.e. if we are to reach our ultimate end, we must follow the natural law. In effect, the ordering in the natural law is, at times, an ordering to proximate ends, i.e. particular goods; these particular goods must be seen as a means toward God. Psychologically, if man is seeking God, i.e. if he is performing actions which have their ordering to God, then those actions will lead him to happiness. Psychologists must recognize that ultimately their direction of their directees might concern concrete actions viewed in light of the natural law, but the natural law ultimately orders us to God. Therefore, in order to pursue psychological health, directees must be told that they must perform actions which have God as their end, either proximately or remotely. In the past, psychologists have viewed religion as an enemy of psychological health. The truth is just the opposite, i.e. perfect psychological health can only occur when a person strives for God... The intellect and other faculties are ordered to God; to deviate from this order is to disorder the faculties and therefore can be a cause of mental illness. Seeking God can actually begin the process of reordering the faculties and therefore begetting mental health.

Since St. Thomas and the Catholic Church hold that we cannot reach our ultimate end on our own, there is an ordering in man which needs God to find its fulfillment. For that reason, Christ came to earth to re-establish the order of grace which is the means to reaching our end. But having the means is not enough. In order to arrive at an end, two things are necessary, viz. the means (and knowledge of the means) and the knowledge of the end. This is why there is revelation, so that man may know his end, know the means to that end and actually possess the means to the end. Since God has revealed these matters to man, we can use the means revealed by God to fulfill our natural ordering. Furthermore, we can use those means to reorder our faculties and so the supernatural means are very important to psychology. God, Who is a supernatural cause is more efficacious than we are in our actions. While man’s actions can help to overcome his psychological illnesses, God is more efficacious in restoring the order in ourselves than we are.”

Excerpts from: *Introduction to The Science of Mental Health*, Vol. II, Ch. 2,  
HAPPINESS, Fr. Chad Ripperger, pp. 328-329.

## THE WILL

“As modern science finds many similarities between man and animals, it has on occasion asserted that man is not fundamentally different from animals but that man is merely an advanced animal. While it has already been indicated that man not only has an immaterial soul as well as immaterial faculties of the agent and possible intellects, man has another faculty which is likewise immaterial, viz the will. Even in modern society, one of the fundamental ways which

man is treated differently from animals is the fact that he is responsible for the actions which he does voluntarily. The fact that we incarcerate and punish human beings for their behavior indicates that man is essentially different from others in the genus of animals. No other animals incarcerate members of their own group. No other animals make distinctions between felonies and misdemeanors based upon the different kinds of transactions against society and engage in trials and execute punishments, both of which are carried out by those who were not directly transgressed. One of the greatest differences between man and animals is the fact that he has freewill and therefore is responsible for his actions. Since freewill is integral to man, the power of the will is deserving of treatment as a sub-alternate principle which is necessary to know in order to proceed in psychology.

Many psychologists deny that man has free will. However, the common experience of every individual in making choices regarding his life as well as the experience we have other people making choices, often contrary to reason as well as appetite, indicates that he has freewill. Moreover, since one makes choices in one's life, the choices he makes can affect one's emotional well-being as well as mental health. Therefore, any sound psychology must have a clear grasp of the nature of the will, freedom and the nature of voluntariness."

Excerpt from: *Introduction to The Science of Mental Health*, Vol. I, Ch. 7 THE WILL,  
Fr. Chad Ripperger, p. 104.