

For Novice Class, Lesson 12

Summa Theologica II, II

Q.82, art. 3,4

Q.83, a. 2,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,12,13,14,15,16

Q.91, a. 1,2

THE XII  
CRAFT OF PRAYER

By  
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X  
DISTRACTIONS  
AND  
MEDITATION AND CONTEMPLATION  
(*Grayscott, 1931.*)

Matthew vi, 6. 'But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber and, having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret.'

I ALWAYS feel that it is necessary to reassure people about prayer. They think it an extraordinarily difficult thing, not possible for them, but for monks and nuns and holy people like that. Ordinary souls have to be content with saying a great number of prayers from a book. I often think that our besetting sin is a kind of unconscious despair.

Let me reassure you. Some people feel very much depressed about it. They think there is not much prayer in their lives. They may be entirely mistaken. There may be a great deal of prayer in their lives and they do not suspect it. It is not very good for people to know how well they pray! To try to find out whether we are standing well with God is rather a perilous thing. It is not a good thing for us to be taking our spiritual temperature. But experts seem to say that prayer is a sort of spiritual thermometer. The state of our prayer would be an index of our perfection and our love of God.

That does not mean that we cannot be loving God very much unless we have an extraordinary power of prayer. There are quantities of books written about Meditation and Contemplation; but I am so habituated to the washerwoman that I make her a sort of

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spiritual thermometer,—and some other holy people I can hardly think about without tears in my eyes.

Our dear Lord said that we should pray always. It is almost impossible not to do so if we really love God. There is no life that does not have its own little time for prayer,—morning prayers and night prayers, and, thanks be to God, a little during the day. Such souls may be very much beloved by Almighty God. People get so confused; they think prayer consists only in saying something explicit, like a number of 'Our Fathers.' They are so busy washing the dishes and scrubbing the floor, they have no time for the 'Our Fathers.' They prefer to do God's Will than to talk about it. It is better to be doing God's Will than to be looking at it, just as it is better to be playing a game than looking on.

It is very important to have such simple things as morning and night prayers. That was dinned into my ears by an old theologian. He said, 'If penitents say to you that they have committed grievous bodily sins, and are very sorry, that is enough. But if they say they have habitually omitted their morning and night prayers, have a row with them.' Now, that is not a fantastic doctrine, but the teaching of a fine theologian, who realised that prayer is the voice of Faith. Other sins are not sins which argue a lack of faith. If faith is undermined, everything is undermined. It is almost impossible to get faith back if there is no sense of sin.

There is the kneeling down. It does not matter how you are feeling. Perhaps the boys are buttoning on their collars. It would not be perfect prayer; but it is prayer. Some people say, 'You are mocking God. You are being disrespectful to God.' It would be dreadful to say that. We admit the prayer could be better. It will be next time. And, anyhow, it is better than nothing at all.

It is very important to have even a minimum of deliberate prayer. There are many ways in which the Church prays. She is a dear old model. She uses all kinds of gestures, dispositions of the body. It is not all kneeling. Sometimes she is lying on her face. Please do not think it is necessary to be on one's knees for prayer. At Holy Mass the priest kneels very rarely. But going down on one's knees is a *part* of prayer, and at least twice a day we should be on our knees. In the Garden of Gethsemane our Blessed Lord was on His knees.

There are people who think they do not pray, and the very reason may be that they are constantly devoted to God's Holy Will. The day's work is quite compatible with continuous prayer. People think they are not very good hands at prayer, yet in their heart at least they may be praying all day long,—by doing God's Holy Will in all the departments of their life. A good husband and father, who is working because it is his duty to work for his family and because it is God's Will, is really praying all the time. Those of us who had such a father know that he would be quite astonished if he were told that he was praying. He would have no idea of it. Yet he was continuously doing his duty to his wife and family because it was God's Holy and Adorable Will.

A second thing we must think about is the subject of Distractions. I always say, some people haven't any distractions, and that is entirely their own fault! It is almost a grave fault. Some people have distracted heads and they do not distract their hearts at all. Perhaps one should have a distracted heart. It should burn within us. There is the prayer of Quiet and Peace, but that is not the sort of thing we should desire in this world. We must not pray because we like it; devotion doesn't mean just the consciousness of being nice and comfortable. Real devotion means

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promptitude of the will to follow the Divine Will. Some of the best prayers make us feel extraordinarily uncomfortable. I don't want to make you feel comfortable, but to make you feel right, reassured—to urge you to go on, and not to give up.

If distractions come from disorders in your life, give those up; don't give up prayer. Give up the thing that is stealing into your heart, pushing the right things out. Our dear Lord says, 'Come in and shut the door.' That means shutting out such distractions as arise from our disorderly affections. The tragedy of the Pharisee's prayer was that he had a distracted life. That is when distractions really matter. The weeds growing up in our heart are carefully tended. We are terrified of plucking them up. If we have a distracted life and are struggling terribly to put an end to it, we are pretty certain to have distracted prayers. I feel sure that the great fights in all souls begin in a moment of prayer. Something dawns upon us that we must do.

Our Blessed Lord's prayer in the Garden was not a comfortable prayer. In His sacred Humanity, He allowed distracted prayer to have its place. He redeemed us at great cost, and the cost is expressed by the distraction in His human will. It seems almost a distracted prayer,—just one phrase seems to come, like a theme of a fugue, again and again.

I feel quite certain that if we have to put an end to our distracted life, one of the best battle-fields is the battle-field of prayer. Let us come to pray. Let us enter into our room and shut the door,—the human door to the human world,—and let us pray to our Father in secret.

You know, dear children in Jesus Christ, when we really pray for spiritual things, necessary for our state of life, those prayers are always answered. It has been my experience that God answers those in

the most amazing way. I always say that I have never seen any miracles, but I have seen again and again answers to prayer, to the right kind of prayer, for the right spiritual thing. I have seen those prayers answered immediately. Other things God sometimes answers by refusing. If a child asks for poisoned food, it is not given it. God gives us something else. He is answering the heart of the desire.

Don't let us, then, be too much distracted by distractions. Let us try to put an end to distractions merely in the intelligence. It is very difficult to think and to keep our attention fixed. St. Francis de Sales said we could only keep our attention for a quarter of an hour. St. Thomas Aquinas, who knew much more about prayer, said we could only keep it during one Credo. He was a great master of prayer himself. His last few years were spent in frequent ecstasy.

One last thing I should like to speak about is Meditation and Mental Prayer. People think of it in a sort of intellectual way, 'We are getting on ; we can meditate.' Meditation is a very great trouble to them. They have gratuitous self-complacency when they think they can meditate. But Meditation and Contemplation are not necessarily prayer at all. Meditation merely means *thinking*. Contemplation means *looking at something*. Meditation is merely recalling something. 'Where have I left those glasses? Let me see. I usually put them down on the dresser.' That is meditating!

Contemplation is *looking at something*. We can go up on to the common and contemplate the wonderful scene. The heather is very beautiful. We do not exactly think,—'That is heather. Those are the Surrey Hills.' But we just look at the heather and the bracken and the gorse. That is contemplation.

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Some people can think about God and they hardly know they are thinking of Him. Some can look at Him and see things 'all in one piece.' Numbers of people can meditate. There are many different ways, and we must not despise persons with different ways from ours. All thinking is not prayer. But thinking can be prayer, just as walking and talking and washing the floor can be prayer. I am not at all sure that thinking is more prayer than anything else good. But in order to do something rightly, you have to think about it beforehand. That is the special value of thinking. If we are not preparing, by our thought, to do something, I wonder what is the value of our thinking? If we think of God just for the pleasure of thinking about Him, it is not necessarily prayer at all. But thinking becomes prayer when we think about God and His Holy Will *for the love of God*. In a sense, meditation and thinking are prayer when we can't help thinking about God. We think of Him because we love Him. We may think we do not love Him. Some people reason, 'If I loved God, I should do such and such a thing, and I do not do it.' They are meditating. They love God so much, they do not even think they love Him. Prayer is in the mind and heart of quite simple people, who can't think that they love God. They have a subtle sense of despair. Actually they are on very high peaks of prayer. God is always present to them. They do not have to put themselves in the presence of God. Yet all the time they feel themselves unworthy to be near Him. They almost try to get away from Him. They are like the dear old publican. He thought God was not present to him. Really he was seeing the Presence of God 'all in one piece,'—by just beating his breast and praying the prayer which our Blessed Lord composed when telling the story. 'Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.' It is so beautiful. Our



dear Lord did not say, 'You have got to pray that.' He never called anyone in that way a sinner. He just told a nice little story, in which He gave us this beautiful prayer. My holy Father, St. Dominic, made that his own prayer (there are very few souls it fitted so badly!).

I find it very hard not to be impatient with books on Meditation and Contemplation which seem to belittle or overlook the Rosary. By saying the Rosary, countless numbers of people are practising contemplative prayer. At Holy Mass, it is almost impossible not to be contemplating Jesus Christ. And, almost unconsciously, we take up the attitude of sinners, unworthy to approach Him. We could not approach with a better prayer than this,—LORD, BE MERCIFUL TO ME, A SINNER.

VII

1. Prayer, communal and individual.

J. Hardon, S.J. Modern Catholic Dictionary.

**CONTEMPLATION.** The enjoyable admiration of perceived truth (St. Augustine). Elevation of mind resting on God (St. Bernard). Simple intuition of divine truth that produces love (St. Thomas). (Etym. Latin *contemplatio*, simple gazing of the mind at manifest truth; from *con-*, with + *templum*, open space for observation [by augurs]: *contemplari*, to observe, consider.)

**CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE.** Human life insofar as it is occupied with God and things of the spirit. Compared with the active life, it stresses prayer and self-denial as a means of growing in the knowledge and love of God. As a form of religious life, it identifies "institutes which are entirely ordered towards contemplation, in such wise that their members give themselves over to God alone in solitude and silence, in constant prayer and willing penance" (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 7).

**CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER.** In general, that form of mental prayer in which the affective sentiments of the will predominate, as distinct from discursive reflections of the mind. Or again, it is that prayer which looks at God by contemplating and adoring his attributes more than by asking him for favors or thanking him for graces received.

**LITTLE OFFICE OF OUR LADY.** A shortened form of the Divine Office in honor of the Blessed Virgin. It contains seven hours, but the psalms do not vary each day. Already known in the tenth century, it originated in the monasteries and was early adopted by the Cistercians and Camaldolese. Retained after the Breviary reform of St. Pius V in 1568, but no longer binding under sin. Recited by many religious communities and used as a private devotion by the faithful.

**MEDITATION.** Reflective prayer. It is that form of mental prayer in which the mind, in God's presence, thinks about God and divine things. While the affections may also be active, the stress in meditation is on the role of the intellect. Hence this is also called discursive mental prayer. The objects of meditation are mainly three: mysteries of faith; a person's better knowledge of what God wants him or her to do; and the divine will, to know how God wants to be served by the one who is meditating. (Etym. Latin *meditatio*, a thinking over.)

**MENTAL PRAYER.** The form of prayer in which the sentiments expressed are one's own and not those of another person and the expression of these sentiments is mainly, if not entirely, interior and not externalized. Mental prayer is accomplished by internal acts of the mind and affections and is either simple meditation or contemplation. As meditation, it is a loving and discursive (reflective) consideration of religious truths or some mystery of faith. As contemplation, it is a loving and intuitive (immediately perceptive) consideration and admiration of the same truths or mysteries of faith. In mental prayer the three powers of the soul are engaged: the memory, which offers the mind material for meditation or contemplation; the intellect, which ponders or directly perceives the meaning of some religious truth and its implications for practice; and the will, which freely expresses its sentiments of faith, trust, and love, and (as needed) makes good resolutions based on what the memory and intellect have made known to the will.

**PRAYER.** The voluntary response to the awareness of God's presence. This response may be an acknowledgment of God's greatness and of a person's total dependence on him (adoration), or gratitude for his benefits to oneself and others (thanksgiving), or sorrow for sins committed and begging for mercy (expiation), or asking for graces needed (petition), or affection for God, who is all good (love).

**PRAYER, CONSTANT.** The Christian practice, advocated by St. Paul, "Pray constantly" (I Thessalonians 5:17), by which a person always remains united with God. Also called the prayer of the heart, it need not be conscious awareness of God's presence. It implies that a person is constantly ready to do the will of God.

**PRAYER - AND PENANCE, ARCH-CONFRATERNITY OF.** See **POINTE AUX TREMBLES.**

**PRAYER BOOK.** A manual of prayers for private devotion by the faithful or for communal use by members of a religious community or confraternity. There is no Catholic counterpart to the Anglican Book of Common Prayer because Catholic liturgical books of prayer and chant are totally distinct from ordinary prayer books, which may contain a variety of authorized prayers, meditations, or reflective readings.

**PRAYER DURING THE DAY.** The third hour of the Divine Office, also called the "Middle Hour." It consists essentially of three psalms, a short biblical reading, and prayer that vary according to the time of the day they are said.

**PRAYER OF CHRIST.** Formerly a liturgical feast, on the Tuesday after Septuagesima, in commemoration of Christ's prayer of agony in the Garden of Olives.

**PRAYER OF QUIET.** A peaceful internal repose by which the soul is captivated by the divine presence. It is the result of contemplative love and is a fruit of the gift of wisdom. During the prayer of quiet the mind is specially enlightened by divine grace and a spiritual delight pervades the whole person. Although the lower faculties and senses are free to exercise their natural activities, God makes himself felt in the subtle part of the soul obscurely as the Great Reality. At first this prayer is of short duration. Under the influence of grace it becomes longer and may eventually become habitual.

**PRAYER OF RECOLLECTION.** Also called the prayer of simplicity, in which the soul gathers its various faculties to concentrate the mind and will on God.

**PRAYER OF SIMPLICITY.** Meditation replaced by a purer, more intimate prayer consisting in a simple regard or loving thought on God, or on one of his attributes, or on some mystery of the Christian faith. Reasoning is put aside and the soul peacefully attends to the operations of the Spirit with sentiments of love.

**PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL.** The General Intercession or Bidding prayer. In this the people exercise their priestly function by praying for all mankind. The prayer is normally to be included whenever there are people attending the Mass. The normal sequence of intentions recommended is for: the needs of the Church, civil authorities, and the salvation of the whole world, those oppressed by any kind of need, and the local community. On special occasions the intentions may be adjusted accordingly. It is the function of the priest to preside over this part of the liturgy by opening and concluding the Prayer of the Faithful, with an assistant reading the intentions and the congregation responding with an appropriate invocation.

**PRAYER OF THE HEART.** See **PRAYER, CONSTANT.**

**PRAYER OF UNION.** A most intimate union of the soul with God, accompanied by a certitude of his presence within the soul and a suspension of all interior faculties. With this prayer there is an absence of distractions because the soul is entirely absorbed in God. There is no fatigue, no matter how long the union may last, because no personal effort is involved, but rather an extraordinary experience of joy. The soul is left with an ardent zeal to glorify God; complete detachment from all created things; perfect submission to God's will; and great charity for one's neighbor.

## ON COMMUNAL PRAYER

St. Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew (1256 - 1259 A.D. on Mt. 18: 19-20; lesson II., nos. 1525 - 1527; translated by Fr. Bart de la Torre, O.P., Nov. 12, 1986, from S. Thomae Aquinatis, Super evangelium s. Matthaei lectura, ed. Raphaelis Cai, O.P., 5th ed. rev. (Turin, 1951), p. 233. An Eng. trans. of this Commentary does not exist.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, Jerusalem Bible (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, [© 1966]), chapter 18, verses 19-20:

Prayer in Common

<sup>19</sup>I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.

St. Thomas's Commentary (all Scriptural quotes are from The Jerusalem Bible):

1525. "I tell you solemnly once again....," etc. [Mt. 18:19.]

Here He posits the efficacy of prayer.

And

first He does this;

second, He gives the reason [no. 1527], "For where two or three....," etc. [Mt. 18:20.]

1526. He says, "I tell you solemnly once again....," etc.

But against this you can object that we ask for many things which we do not obtain. This happens first because of the unworthiness of the petitioners; where He says, "...two of you....," namely, you who live according to the Gospel. James 4:2-3, "You want something and you haven't got it; so you are prepared to kill. You have an ambition that you cannot satisfy; so you fight to get your way by force. Why you don't have what you want is because you don't pray for it; when you do pray and don't get it, it is because you have not prayed properly, you have prayed for something to indulge your own desires." Hence, because they do not agree, because they do not have the bond of peace: for it is impossible that the prayers of many not be heard if out of many prayers there is formed, as it were, one prayer; 2 Cor. 1:11, "You must all join in the prayers for us: the more people there are asking for help for us, the more will be giving thanks when it is granted to us." Likewise because they ask for certain things which are not expedient for their salvation: for one's petition should be for something useful, Mt. 20 [:22], "You do not know what you are asking...."

"...it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven," i.e. on high, or "...in heaven," i.e. in us.

1527. "For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them. In a meeting of the holy, not of the worldly. Ps. 110 [(111) :1], "I give thanks to Yahweh with all my heart where the virtuous meet and the people assemble." "For where two or three...." Love is not in one but in many; wherefore, 1 Jn. 4 [:16] "...anyone who lives in love, lives in God, and God lives in him." Therefore, "...I shall be there with them."

[Translator's notes: 1. 2 Cor. 1:11, "...the more people....": literally, "the more persons"; this is the only place in Scripture where "person" is used in the sense of an existing individual that can think; subsequently, the term "person" in this same sense was seen by the Church, under the guidance of the same Holy Spirit who inspired 2 Cor. 1:11, to be eminently applicable to the Trinity and to Christ. 2. "...expedient for...salvation....": literally, "for...health," embracing one's health here as well as hereafter. 3. Ps. 111:1 in the Grail translation, used the Liturgy of the Hours, reads: "I will thank the Lord with all my heart in the meeting of the just and their assembly." This is used at Evening Prayer II for Sun., Week III, as well as for Corpus Christi, Evening Prayer I, and Sacred Heart Evening Prayer II.]

to that virtue to have the will ready to do such things, and this is to be devout. Hence it is evident that devotion is an act of religion.

Reply to Objection 1. It belongs immediately to charity that man should give himself to God, adhering to Him by a union of the spirit; but it belongs immediately to religion, and, through the medium of religion, to charity which is the principle of religion, that man should give himself to God for certain works of Divine worship.

Reply to Objection 2. Bodily fatness is produced by the natural heat in the process of digestion, and at the same time the natural heat thrives, as it were, on this fatness. On like manner charity both causes devotion (inasmuch as love makes one ready to serve one's friend) and feeds on devotion. Even so all friendship is safeguarded and increased by the practice and consideration of friendly deeds.

Reply to Objection 3. Devotion to God's holy ones, dead or living, does not terminate in them, but passes on to God, in so far as we honor God in His servants. But the devotion of subjects to their temporal masters is of another kind, just as service of a temporal master differs from the service of God.

### Article 3

Whether contemplation or meditation is the cause of devotion?

Objection 1. It would seem that contemplation or meditation is not the cause of devotion. No cause hinders its effect. But subtle considerations about abstract matters are often a hindrance to devotion. Therefore contemplation or meditation is not the cause of devotion.

Objection 2. Further, if contemplation were the proper and essential cause of devotion, the higher objects of contemplation would arouse greater devotion. But the contrary is the case: since frequently we are urged to greater devotion by considering Christ's Passion and other mysteries of His humanity than by considering the greatness of His Godhead. Therefore contemplation is not the proper cause of devotion.

Objection 3. Further, if contemplation were the proper cause of devotion, it would follow that those who are most apt for contemplation, are also most apt for devotion. Yet the contrary is to be noticed, for devotion is frequently found in men of simplicity and members of the female sex, who are defective in contemplation. Therefore contemplation is not the proper cause of devotion.

On the contrary, It is written (Ps. 38:4): "In my meditation a fire shall flame out." But spiritual fire causes devotion. Therefore meditation is the cause of devotion.

I answer that, The extrinsic and chief cause of devotion is God, of Whom Ambrose, commenting on Lk. 9:55, says that "God calls whom He deigns to call, and whom He wills He makes religious: the profane Samaritans, had He so willed, He would have made devout." But the intrinsic cause on our part must needs be meditation or contemplation. For it was stated above (1) that devotion is an act of the will to the effect that man surrenders himself readily to the service of God. Now every act of the will proceeds from some consideration, since the object of the will is a good understood. Wherefore Augustine says (De Trin. ix, 12; xv, 23) that "the will arises from the intelligence." Consequently meditation must needs be the cause of devotion, in so far as through meditation man conceives the thought of surrendering himself to God's service. Oindeed a twofold consideration leads him thereto. The one is the consideration of God's goodness and loving kindness, according to Ps. 72:28, "It is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord God": and this consideration wakens love ['Dilectio,' the interior act of charity; cf. 27] which is the proximate cause of devotion. The other consideration is that of man's own shortcomings, on account of which he needs to lean on God, according to Ps. 120:1,2, "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains, from whence help shall come to me: my help is from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth"; and this consideration shuts out presumption whereby man is hindered from submitting to God, because he leans on His strength.

Reply to Objection 1. The consideration of such things as are of a nature to awaken our love ['Dilectio,' the interior act of charity; cf. 27] of God, causes devotion; whereas the consideration of foreign matters that distract the mind from such things is a hindrance to devotion.

Reply to Objection 2. Matters concerning the Godhead are, in themselves, the strongest incentive to love ['dilectio,' the interior act of charity; cf. 27] and consequently to devotion, because God is supremely lovable. Yet such is the weakness of the human mind that it needs a guiding hand, not only to the knowledge, but also to the love of Divine things by means of certain sensible objects known to us. Chief among these is the humanity of Christ, according to the words of the Preface [Preface for Christmastide], "that through knowing God visibly, we may be caught up to the love of things invisible." Wherefore matters relating to Christ's humanity are the chief incentive to devotion, leading us thither as a guiding hand, although devotion itself has for its object matters concerning the Godhead.

Reply to Objection 3. Science and anything else conducive to greatness, is to man an occasion of self-confidence, so that he does not wholly surrender himself to God. The result is that such like things sometimes occasion a hindrance to devotion; while in simple souls and women devotion abounds by repressing pride. If, however, a man perfectly submits to God his science or any other perfection, by this very fact his devotion is increased.

#### Article 4

Whether joy is an effect of devotion?

Objection 1. It would seem that joy is not an effect of devotion. As stated above (3, ad 2), Christ's Passion is the chief incentive to devotion.

But the consideration thereof causes an affliction of the soul, according to Lam. 3:19, "Remember my poverty . . . the wormwood and the gall," which refers to the Passion, and afterwards (Lam. 3:20) it is said: "I will be mindful and remember, and my soul shall languish within me." Therefore delight or joy is not the effect of devotion.

Objection 2. Further, devotion consists chiefly in an interior sacrifice of the spirit. But it is written (Ps. 50:19): "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit." Therefore affliction is the effect of devotion rather than gladness or joy.

Objection 3. Further, Gregory of Nyssa says (De Homine xii) [Orat. funebr. de Placilla Imp.] that "just as laughter proceeds from joy, so tears and groans are signs of sorrow." But devotion makes some people shed tears. Therefore gladness or joy is not the effect of devotion.

On the contrary, We say in the Collect [Thursday after fourth Sunday of Lent]: "That we who are punished by fasting may be comforted by a holy devotion."

I answer that, The direct and principal effect of devotion is the spiritual joy of the mind, though sorrow is its secondary and indirect effect. For it has been stated (3) that devotion is caused by a twofold consideration: chiefly by the consideration of God's goodness, because this consideration belongs to the term, as it were, of the movement of the will in surrendering itself to God, and the direct result of this consideration is joy, according to Ps. 76:4, "I remembered God, and was delighted"; but accidentally this consideration causes a certain sorrow in those who do not yet enjoy God fully, according to Ps. 41:3, "My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God," and afterwards it is said (Ps. 41:4): "My tears have been my bread," etc. Secondly devotion is caused as stated (3), by the consideration of one's own failings; for this consideration regards the term from which man withdraws by the movement of his devout will, in that he trusts

not in himself, but subjects himself to God. This consideration has an opposite tendency to the first: for it is of a nature to cause sorrow directly (when one thinks over one's own failings), and joy accidentally, namely, through hope of the Divine assistance. It is accordingly evident that the first and direct effect of devotion is joy, while the secondary and accidental effect is that "sorrow which is according to God" [2 Cor. 7:10.

Reply to Objection 1. In the consideration of Christ's Passion there is something that causes sorrow, namely, the human defect, the removal of which made it necessary for Christ to suffer [Lk. 24:25; and there is something that causes joy, namely, God's loving-kindness to us in giving us such a deliverance.

Reply to Objection 2. The spirit which on the one hand is afflicted on account of the defects of the present life, on the other hand is rejoiced, by the consideration of God's goodness, and by the hope of the Divine help.

Reply to Objection 3. Tears are caused not only through sorrow, but also through a certain tenderness of the affections, especially when one considers something that gives joy mixed with pain. Thus men are wont to shed tears through a sentiment of piety, when they recover their children or dear friends, whom they thought to have lost. On this way tears arise from devotion.

### QUESTION 83 Of Prayer

#### Article 1

Whether prayer is an act of the appetitive power?

Objection 1. It would seem that prayer is an act of the appetitive power. It belongs to prayer to be heard. Now it is the desire that is heard by God, according to Ps. 9:38, "The Lord hath heard the desire of the poor." Therefore prayer is desire. But desire is an act of the appetitive power: and therefore prayer is also.

Objection 2. Further, Dionysius says (Div. Nom. iii): "It is useful to begin everything with prayer, because thereby we surrender ourselves to God and unite ourselves to Him." Now union with God is effected by love which belongs to the appetitive power. Therefore prayer belongs to the appetitive power.

Objection 3. Further, the Philosopher states (De Anima iii, 6) that there are two operations of the intellective part. Of these the first is "the understanding of indivisibles," by which operation we apprehend what a thing is: while the second



Reply to Objection 2. As stated above (I, 82, 4; I-II, 9, 1, ad 3), the will moves the reason to its end: wherefore nothing hinders the act of reason, under the motion of the will, from tending to an end such as charity which is union with God. Now prayer tends to God through being moved by the will of charity, as it were, and this in two ways. First, on the part of the object of our petition, because when we pray we ought principally to ask to be united to God, according to Ps. 26:4, "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life." Secondly, on the part of the petitioner, who ought to approach the person whom he petitions, either locally, as when he petitions a man, or mentally, as when he petitions God. Hence Dionysius says (Div. Nom. iii) that "when we call upon God in our prayers, we unveil our mind in His presence": and in the same sense Damascene says (De Fide Orth. iii, 24) that "prayer is the raising up of the mind to God."

Reply to Objection 3. These three acts belong to the speculative reason, but to the practical reason it belongs in addition to cause something by way of command or of petition, as stated above.

## Article 2

Whether it is becoming to pray?

Objection 1. It would seem that it is unbecoming to pray. Prayer seems to be necessary in order that we may make our needs known to the person to whom we pray. But according to Mt. 6:32, "Your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things." Therefore it is not becoming to pray to God.

Objection 2. Further, by prayer we bend the mind of the person to whom we pray, so that he may do what is asked of him. But God's mind is unchangeable and inflexible, according to 1 Kgs. 15:29, "

But the Triumpher in Israel will not spare, and will not be moved to repentance." Therefore it is not fitting that we should pray to God.

Objection 3. Further, it is more liberal to give to one that asks not, than to one who asks because, according to Seneca (De Benefic. ii, 1), "nothing is bought more dearly than what is bought with prayers." But God is supremely liberal. Therefore it would seem unbecoming to pray to God.

On the contrary, It is written (Lk. 18:1): "We ought always to pray, and not to faint."

I answer that, Among the ancients there was a threefold error concerning prayer. Some held that human affairs are not ruled by Divine providence; whence it would follow that it is useless to pray and to worship God at all: of these it is written (Malach. 3:14): "You have said: He laboreth in vain that serveth God." Another opinion held that all things, even in human affairs, happen of necessity, whether by reason of the unchangeableness of Divine providence, or through the compelling influence of the stars, or on account of the connection of causes: and this opinion also excluded the utility of prayer. There was a third opinion of those who held that human affairs are indeed ruled by Divine providence, and that they do not happen of necessity; yet they deemed the disposition of Divine providence to be changeable, and that it is changed by prayers and other things pertaining to the worship of God. All these opinions were disproved in I, 19, 7,8; I, 22, 2,4; I, 115, 6; I, 116. Wherefore it behooves us so to account for the utility of prayer as neither to impose necessity on human affairs subject to Divine providence, nor to imply changeableness on the part of the Divine disposition.

In order to throw light on this question we must consider that Divine providence disposes not only what effects shall take place, but also from what causes and in what order these effects shall proceed. Now among other causes human acts are the causes of certain effects. Wherefore it must be that men do certain actions, not that thereby they may change the Divine disposition, but that by those actions they may achieve certain effects according to the order of the Divine disposition: and the same is to be said of natural causes. And so is it with regard to prayer. For we pray not that we may change the Divine disposition, but that we may impetrate that which God has disposed to be fulfilled by our prayers in other words "that by asking, men may deserve to receive what Almighty God from eternity has disposed to give," as Gregory says (Dial. i, 8)

Reply to Objection 1. We need to pray to God, not in order to make known to Him our needs or desires but that we ourselves may be reminded of the necessity of having recourse to God's help in these matters.

Reply to Objection 2. As stated above, our motive in praying is, not Divine disposition, we may change the Divine disposition, but that, by our prayers, we may obtain what God has appointed.

Reply to Objection 3. God bestows many things on us out of His liberality, even without our asking for them: but that He wishes to bestow certain things on us at our asking, is for the sake of our good, namely, that we may acquire confidence in having recourse to God, and that we may recognize in Him the Author of our goods. Hence Chrysostom says [Implicitly [Hom. ii, de Orat.: Hom. xxx in Genes. ]; Cf. Caten. Aur. on Lk. 18: "Think what happiness is

the intellective part is the chief of the acts of religion, since by it religion directs man's intellect to God.

Reply to Objection 2. It is a matter of precept not only that we should ask for what we desire, but also that we should desire aright. But to desire comes under a precept of charity, whereas to ask comes under a precept of religion, which precept is expressed in Mt. 7:7, where it is said: "Ask and ye shall receive" [Vulg.: 'Ask and it shall be given you.'].]

Reply to Objection 3. By praying man surrenders his mind to God, since he subjects it to Him with reverence and, so to speak, presents it to Him, as appears from the words of Dionysius quoted above (1, Objection 1). Wherefore just as the human mind excels exterior things, whether bodily members, or those external things that are employed for God's service, so too, prayer surpasses other acts of religion.

#### Article 4

Whether we ought to pray to God alone?

Objection 1. It would seem that we ought to pray to God alone. Prayer is an act of religion, as stated above (3). But God alone is to be worshiped by religion. Therefore we should pray to God alone.

Objection 2. Further, it is useless to pray to one who is ignorant of the prayer. But it belongs to God alone to know one's prayer, both because frequently prayer is uttered by an interior act which God alone knows, rather than by words, according to the saying of the Apostle (1 Cor. 14:15), "I will pray with the spirit, I will pray also with the understanding": and again because, as Augustine says (*De Cura pro mortuis* xiii) the "dead, even the saints, know not what the living, even their own children, are doing." Therefore we ought to pray to God alone.

Objection 3. Further, if we pray to any of the saints, this is only because they are united to God. Now some yet living in this world, or even some who are in Purgatory, are closely united to God by grace, and yet we do not pray to them. Therefore neither should we pray to the saints who are in Paradise.

On the contrary, It is written (Job 5:1), "Call . . . if there be any that will answer thee, and turn to some of the saints."

I answer that, Prayer is offered to a person in two ways: first, as to be fulfilled by him, secondly, as to be obtained through him. On the first way we offer prayer to God alone, since all our prayers ought to be directed to the acquisition

of grace and glory, which God alone gives, according to Ps. 83:12, "The Lord will give grace and glory." But in the second way we pray to the saints, whether angels or men, not that God may through them know our petitions, but that our prayers may be effective through their prayers and merits. Hence it is written (Apoc. 8:4) that "the smoke of the incense," namely "the prayers of the saints ascended up before God." This is also clear from the very style employed by the Church in praying: since we beseech the Blessed Trinity "to have mercy on us," while we ask any of the saints "to pray for us."

Reply to Objection 1. To Him alone do we offer religious worship when praying, from Whom we seek to obtain what we pray for, because by so doing we confess that He is the Author of our goods: but not to those whom we call upon as our advocates in God's presence.

Reply to Objection 2. The dead, if we consider their natural condition, do not know what takes place in this world, especially the interior movements of the heart. Nevertheless, according to Gregory (Moral. xii, 21), whatever it is fitting the blessed should know about what happens to us, even as regards the interior movements of the heart, is made known to them in the Word: and it is most becoming to their exalted position that they should know the petitions we make to them by word or thought; and consequently the petitions which we raise to them are known to them through Divine manifestation.

Reply to Objection 3. Those who are in this world or in Purgatory, do not yet enjoy the vision of the Word, so as to be able to know what we think or say. Wherefore we do not seek their assistance by praying to them, but ask it of the living by speaking to them.

#### Article 5

Whether we ought to ask for something definite when we pray?

Objection 1. It would seem that we ought not to ask for anything definite when we pray to God. According to Damascene (De Fide Orth. iii, 24), "to pray is to ask becoming things of God"; wherefore it is useless to pray for what is inexpedient, according to James 4:3, "You ask, and receive not: because you ask amiss." Now according to Rm. 8:26, "we know not what we should pray for as we ought." Therefore we ought not to ask for anything definite when we pray.

Objection 2. Further, those who ask another person for something definite strive to incline his will to do what they wish themselves. But we ought not to endeavor to make God will what we will; on the contrary, we ought to strive to will what He wills, according to a gloss on Ps. 32:1, "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye just." Therefore we ought not to ask God for anything definite when we pray.

Objection 3. Further, evil things are not to be sought from God; and as to good things, God Himself invites us to take them. Now it is useless to ask a person to give you what he invites you to take. Therefore we ought not to ask God for anything definite in our prayers.

On the contrary, our Lord (Mt. 6 and Lk. 11) taught His disciples to ask definitely for those things which are contained in the petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

I answer that, According to Valerius Maximus [Fact. et Dict. Memor. vii, 2, "Socrates deemed that we should ask the immortal gods for nothing else but that they should grant us good things, because they at any rate know what is good for each one whereas when we pray we frequently ask for what it had been better for us not to obtain." This opinion is true to a certain extent, as to those things which may have an evil result, and which man may use ill or well, such as "riches, by which," as stated by the same authority (Fact. et Dict. Memor. vii, 2), "many have come to an evil end; honors, which have ruined many; power, of which we frequently witness the unhappy results; splendid marriages, which sometimes bring about the total wreck of a family." Nevertheless there are certain goods which man cannot ill use, because they cannot have an evil result. Such are those which are the object of beatitude and whereby we merit it: and these the saints seek absolutely when they pray, as in Ps. 79:4, "Show us Thy face, and we shall be saved," and again in Ps. 118:35, "Lead me into the path of Thy commandments."

Reply to Objection 1. Although man cannot by himself know what he ought to pray for, "the Spirit," as stated in the same passage, "helpeth our infirmity," since by inspiring us with holy desires, He makes us ask for what is right. Hence our Lord said (Jn. 4:24) that true adorers "must adore . . . in spirit and in truth."

Reply to Objection 2. When in our prayers we ask for things concerning our salvation, we conform our will to God's, of Whom it is written (1 Tim. 2:4) that "He will have all men to be saved."

Reply to Objection 3. God so invites us to take good things, that we may approach to them not by the steps of the body, but by pious desires and devout prayers.

## Article 6

Whether man ought to ask God for temporal things when he prays?

Objection 1. It would seem that man ought not to ask God for temporal things when he prays. We seek what we ask for in prayer. But we should not seek for temporal things, for it is written (Mt. 6:33): "Seek ye . . . first the kingdom of God, and His justice: and all these things shall be added unto you," that is to say, temporal things, which, says He, we are not to seek, but they will be added to what we seek. Therefore temporal things are not to be asked of God in prayer.

Objection 2. Further, no one asks save for that which he is solicitous about. Now we ought not to have solicitude for temporal things, according to the saying of Mt. 6:25, "Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat." Therefore we ought not to ask for temporal things when we pray.

Objection 3. Further, by prayer our mind should be raised up to God. But by asking for temporal things, it descends to things beneath it, against the saying of the Apostle (2 Cor. 4:18), "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Therefore man ought not to ask God for temporal things when he prays.

Objection 4. Further, man ought not to ask of God other than good and useful things. But sometimes temporal things, when we have them, are harmful, not only in a spiritual sense, but also in a material sense. Therefore we should not ask God for them in our prayers.

On the contrary, It is written (Prov. 30:8): "Give me only the necessities of life."

I answer that, As Augustine says (ad Probam, de orando Deum, Ep. cxxx, 12): "It is lawful to pray for what it is lawful to desire." Now it is lawful to desire temporal things, not indeed principally, by placing our end therein, but as helps whereby we are assisted in tending towards beatitude, in so far, to wit, as they are the means of supporting the life of the body, and are of service to us as instruments in performing acts of virtue, as also the Philosopher states (Ethic. i, 8). Augustine too says the same to Proba (ad Probam, de orando Deum, Ep. cxxx, 6,7) when he states that "it is not unbecoming for anyone to desire enough for a livelihood, and no more; for this sufficiency is desired, not for its own sake, but for the welfare of the body, or that we should desire to be clothed in a way befitting one's station, so as not to be out of keeping with those among

whom we have to live. Accordingly we ought to pray that we may keep these things if we have them, and if we have them not, that we may gain possession of them."

Reply to Objection 1. We should seek temporal things not in the first but in the second place. Hence Augustine says (De Serm. Dom. in Monte ii, 16): "When He says that this" (i.e. the kingdom of God) "is to be sought first, He implies that the other" (i.e. temporal goods) "is to be sought afterwards, not in time but in importance, this as being our good, the other as our need."

Reply to Objection 2. Not all solicitude about temporal things is forbidden, but that which is superfluous and inordinate, as stated above (II-II:55:6).

Reply to Objection 3. When our mind is intent on temporal things in order that it may rest in them, it remains immersed therein; but when it is intent on them in relation to the acquisition of beatitude, it is not lowered by them, but raises them to a higher level.

Reply to Objection 4. From the very fact that we ask for temporal things not as the principal object of our petition, but as subordinate to something else, we ask God for them in the sense that they may be granted to us in so far as they are expedient for salvation.

#### Article 7

Whether we ought to pray for others?

Objection 1. It would seem that we ought not to pray for others. On praying we ought to conform to the pattern given by our Lord. Now in the Lord's Prayer we make petitions for ourselves, not for others; thus we say: "Give us this day our daily bread," etc. Therefore we should not pray for others.

Objection 2. Further, prayer is offered that it may be heard. Now one of the conditions required for prayer that it may be heard is that one pray for oneself, wherefore Augustine in commenting on Jn. 16:23, "If you ask the Father anything in My name He will give it you," says (Tract. cii): "Everyone is heard when he prays for himself, not when he prays for all; wherefore He does not say simply 'He will give it,' but 'He will give it you.' " Therefore it would seem that we ought not to pray for others, but only for ourselves.

Objection 3. Further, we are forbidden to pray for others, if they are wicked, according to Jer. 7:16, "Therefore do not then pray for this people . . . and do not

withstand Me, for I will not hear thee." On the other hand we are not bound to pray for the good, since they are heard when they pray for themselves. Therefore it would seem that we ought not to pray for others.

On the contrary, It is written (James 5:16): "Pray one for another, that you may be saved."

I answer that, As stated above (6), when we pray we ought to ask for what we ought to desire. Now we ought to desire good things not only for ourselves, but also for others: for this is essential to the love which we owe to our neighbor, as stated above (25, 1 and 2; 27, 2; 31, 1). Therefore charity requires us to pray for others. Hence Chrysostom says (Hom. xiv in Matth.) [Opus Imperfectum, falsely ascribed to St. John Chrysostom]: "Necessity binds us to pray for ourselves, fraternal charity urges us to pray for others: and the prayer that fraternal charity proffers is sweeter to God than that which is the outcome of necessity."

Reply to Objection 1. As Cyprian says (De orat. Dom.), "We say 'Our Father' and not 'My Father,' 'Give us' and not 'Give me,' because the Master of unity did not wish us to pray privately, that is for ourselves alone, for He wished each one to pray for all, even as He Himself bore all in one."

Reply to Objection 2. It is a condition of prayer that one pray for oneself: not as though it were necessary in order that prayer be meritorious, but as being necessary in order that prayer may not fail in its effect of impetration. For it sometimes happens that we pray for another with piety and perseverance, and ask for things relating to his salvation, and yet it is not granted on account of some obstacle on the part of the person we are praying for, according to Jer. 15:1, "If Moses and Samuel shall stand before Me, My soul is not towards this people." And yet the prayer will be meritorious for the person who prays thus out of charity, according to Ps. 34:13, "My prayer shall be turned into my bosom, i.e. though it profit them not, I am not deprived of my reward," as the gloss expounds it.

Reply to Objection 3. We ought to pray even for sinners, that they may be converted, and for the just that they may persevere and advance in holiness. Yet those who pray are heard not for all sinners but for some: since they are heard for the predestined, but not for those who are foreknown to death; even as the correction whereby we correct the brethren, has an effect in the predestined but not in the reprobate, according to Eccles. 7:14, "No man can correct whom God hath despised." Hence it is written (1 Jn. 5:16): "He that knoweth his brother to sin a sin which is not to death, let him ask, and life shall be given to him, who sinneth not to death." Now just as the benefit of correction must not be refused to any man so long as he lives here below, because we cannot distinguish the



predestined from the reprobate, as Augustine says (De Correp. et Grat. xv), so too no man should be denied the help of prayer.

We ought also to pray for the just for three reasons: First, because the prayers of a multitude are more easily heard, wherefore a gloss on Rm. 15:30, "Help me in your prayers," says: "The Apostle rightly tells the lesser brethren to pray for him, for many lesser ones, if they be united together in one mind, become great, and it is impossible for the prayers of a multitude not to obtain" that which is possible to be obtained by prayer. Secondly, that many may thank God for the graces conferred on the just, which graces conduce to the profit of many, according to the Apostle (2 Cor. 1:11). Thirdly, that the more perfect may not wax proud, seeing that they find that they need the prayers of the less perfect.

#### Article 8

Whether we ought to pray for our enemies?

Objection 1. It would seem that we ought not to pray for our enemies. According to Rm. 15:4, "what things soever were written, were written for our learning." Now Holy Writ contains many imprecations against enemies; thus it is written (Ps. 6:11): "Let all my enemies be ashamed and be . . . troubled, let them be ashamed and be troubled very speedily [Vulg.: 'Let them be turned back and be ashamed.']." Therefore we too should pray against rather than for our enemies.

Objection 2. Further, to be revenged on one's enemies is harmful to them. But holy men seek vengeance of their enemies according to Apoc. 6:10, "How long . . . dost Thou not . . . revenge our blood on them that dwell on earth?" Wherefore they rejoice in being revenged on their enemies, according to Ps. 57:11, "The just shall rejoice when he shall see the revenge." Therefore we should not pray for our enemies, but against them.

Objection 3. Further, man's deed should not be contrary to his prayer. Now sometimes men lawfully attack their enemies, else all wars would be unlawful, which is opposed to what we have said above (40, 1). Therefore we should not pray for our enemies.

On the contrary, It is written (Mt. 5:44): "Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you."

I answer that, To pray for another is an act of charity, as stated above (07). Wherefore we are bound to pray for our enemies in the same manner as we are bound to love them. Now it was explained above in the treatise on charity (25, 8,9), how we are bound to love our enemies, namely, that we must love in them

their nature, not their sin. and that to love our enemies in general is a matter of precept, while to love them in the individual is not a matter of precept, except in the preparedness of the mind, so that a man must be prepared to love his enemy even in the individual and to help him in a case of necessity, or if his enemy should beg his forgiveness. But to love one's enemies absolutely in the individual, and to assist them, is an act of perfection.

In like manner it is a matter of obligation that we should not exclude our enemies from the general prayers which we offer up for others: but it is a matter of perfection, and not of obligation, to pray for them individually, except in certain special cases.

Reply to Objection 1. The imprecations contained in Holy Writ may be understood in four ways. First, according to the custom of the prophets "to foretell the future under the veil of an imprecation," as Augustine states [De Serm. Dom. in Monte i, 21. Secondly, in the sense that certain temporal evils are sometimes inflicted by God on the wicked for their correction. Thirdly, because they are understood to be pronounced, not against the men themselves, but against the kingdom of sin, with the purpose, to wit, of destroying sin by the correction of men. Fourthly, by way of conformity of our will to the Divine justice with regard to the damnation of those who are obstinate in sin.

Reply to Objection 2. As Augustine states in the same book (De Serm. Dom. in Monte i, 22), "the martyrs' vengeance is the overthrow of the kingdom of sin, because they suffered so much while it reigned": or as he says again (QQ. Vet. et Nov. Test. lxviii), "their prayer for vengeance is expressed not in words but in their minds, even as the blood of Abel cried from the earth." They rejoice in vengeance not for its own sake, but for the sake of Divine justice.

Reply to Objection 3. It is lawful to attack one's enemies, that they may be restrained from sin: and this is for their own good and for the good of others. Consequently it is even lawful in praying to ask that temporal evils be inflicted on our enemies in order that they may mend their ways. Thus prayer and deed will not be contrary to one another.

#### Article 9

Whether the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer are fittingly assigned?

Objection 1. It would seem that the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer are not fittingly assigned. It is useless to ask for that to be hallowed which is always holy. But the name of God is always holy, according to Lk. 1:49, "Holy is His name." Again, His kingdom is everlasting, according to Ps. 144:13, "Thy

kingdom is a kingdom of all ages." Again, God's will is always fulfilled, according to Isa 46:10, "All My will shall be done." Therefore it is useless to ask for "the name of God to be hallowed," for "His kingdom to come," and for "His will to be done."

Objection 2. Further, one must withdraw from evil before attaining good. Therefore it seems unfitting for the petitions relating to the attainment of good to be set forth before those relating to the removal of evil.

Objection 3. Further, one asks for a thing that it may be given to one. Now the chief gift of God is the Holy Ghost, and those gifts that we receive through Him. Therefore the petitions seem to be unfittingly assigned, since they do not correspond to the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Objection 4. Further, according to Luke, only five petitions are mentioned in the Lord's Prayer, as appears from the eleventh chapter. Therefore it was superfluous for Matthew to mention seven.

Objection 5. Further, it seems useless to seek to win the benevolence of one who forestalls us by his benevolence. Now God forestalls us by His benevolence, since "He first hath loved us" (1 Jn. 4:19). Therefore it is useless to preface the petitions with the words our "Father Who art in heaven," which seem to indicate a desire to win God's benevolence.

On the contrary, The authority of Christ, who composed this prayer, suffices.

I answer that, The Lord's Prayer is most perfect, because, as Augustine says (ad Probam Ep. cxxx, 12), "if we pray rightly and fittingly, we can say nothing else but what is contained in this prayer of our Lord." For since prayer interprets our desires, as it were, before God, then alone is it right to ask for something in our prayers when it is right that we should desire it. Now in the Lord's Prayer not only do we ask for all that we may rightly desire, but also in the order wherein we ought to desire them, so that this prayer not only teaches us to ask, but also directs all our affections. Thus it is evident that the first thing to be the object of our desire is the end, and afterwards whatever is directed to the end. Now our end is God towards Whom our affections tend in two ways: first, by our willing the glory of God, secondly, by willing to enjoy His glory. The first belongs to the love whereby we love God in Himself, while the second belongs to the love whereby we love ourselves in God. Wherefore the first petition is expressed thus: "Hallowed be Thy name," and the second thus: "Thy kingdom come," by which we ask to come to the glory of His kingdom.

To this same end a thing directs us in two ways: in one way, by its very nature, in another way, accidentally. Of its very nature the good which is useful for an end directs us to that end. Now a thing is useful in two ways to that end which is beatitude: in one way, directly and principally, according to the merit whereby we merit beatitude by obeying God, and in this respect we ask: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"; in another way instrumentally, and as it were helping us to merit, and in this respect we say: "Give us this day our daily bread," whether we understand this of the sacramental Bread, the daily use of which is profitable to man, and in which all the other sacraments are contained, or of the bread of the body, so that it denotes all sufficiency of food, as Augustine says (ad Probam, Ep. cxxx, 11), since the Eucharist is the chief sacrament, and bread is the chief food: thus in the Gospel of Matthew we read, "supersubstantial," i.e. "principal," as Jerome expounds it.

We are directed to beatitude accidentally by the removal of obstacles. Now there are three obstacles to our attainment of beatitude. First, there is sin, which directly excludes a man from the kingdom, according to 1 Cor. 6:9,10, "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, etc., shall possess the kingdom of God"; and to this refer the words, "Forgive us our trespasses." Secondly, there is temptation which hinders us from keeping God's will, and to this we refer when we say: "And lead us not into temptation," whereby we do not ask not to be tempted, but not to be conquered by temptation, which is to be led into temptation. Thirdly, there is the present penal state which is a kind of obstacle to a sufficiency of life, and to this we refer in the words, "Deliver us from evil."

Reply to Objection 1. As Augustine says (De Serm. Dom. in Monte ii, 5), when we say, "Hallowed be Thy name, we do not mean that God's name is not holy, but we ask that men may treat it as a holy thing," and this pertains to the diffusion of God's glory among men. When we say, "Thy kingdom come, we do not imply that God is not reigning now," but "we excite in ourselves the desire for that kingdom, that it may come to us, and that we may reign therein," as Augustine says (ad Probam, Ep. cxxx, 11). The words, "Thy will be done rightly signify, 'May Thy commandments be obeyed' on earth as in heaven, i.e. by men as well as by angels" (De Serm. Dom. in Monte ii, 6). Hence these three petitions will be perfectly fulfilled in the life to come; while the other four, according to Augustine (Enchiridion cxv), belong to the needs of the present life

Reply to Objection 2. Since prayer is the interpreter of desire, the order of the petitions corresponds with the order, not of execution, but of desire or intention, where the end precedes the things that are directed to the end, and attainment of good precedes removal of evil.

Reply to Objection 3. Augustine (De Serm. Dom. in Monte ii, 11) adapts the seven petitions to the gifts and beatitudes. He says: "If it is fear God whereby blessed are the poor in spirit, let us ask that God's name be hallowed among men with a chaste fear. If it is piety whereby blessed are the meek, let us ask that His kingdom may come, so that we become meek and no longer resist Him. If it is knowledge whereby blessed are they that mourn, let us pray that His will be done, for thus we shall mourn no more. If it is fortitude whereby blessed are they that hunger, let us pray that our daily bread be given to us. If it is counsel whereby blessed are the merciful, let us forgive the trespasses of others that our own may be forgiven. If it is understanding whereby blessed are the pure in heart, let us pray lest we have a double heart by seeking after worldly things which are the occasion of our temptations. If it is wisdom whereby blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God, let us pray to be delivered from evil: for if we be delivered we shall by that very fact become the free children of God."

Reply to Objection 4. According to Augustine (Enchiridion cxvi), "Luke included not seven but five petitions in the Lord's Prayer, for by omitting it, he shows that the third petition is a kind of repetition of the two that precede, and thus helps us to understand it"; because, to wit, the will of God tends chiefly to this--that we come to the knowledge of His holiness and to reign together with Him. Again the last petition mentioned by Matthew, "Deliver us from evil," is omitted by Luke, so that each one may know himself to be delivered from evil if he be not led into temptation.

Reply to Objection 5. Prayer is offered up to God, not that we may bend Him, but that we may excite in ourselves the confidence to ask: which confidence is excited in us chiefly by the consideration of His charity in our regard, whereby he wills our good--wherefore we say: "Our Father"; and of His excellence, whereby He is able to fulfil it--wherefore we say: "Who art in heaven."

#### Article 10

Whether prayer is proper to the rational creature?

Objection 1. It would seem that prayer is not proper to the rational creature. Asking and receiving apparently belong to the same subject. But receiving is becoming also to uncreated Persons, viz. the Son and Holy Ghost. Therefore it is competent to them to pray: for the Son said (Jn. 14:16): "I will ask My [Vulg.: 'the'] Father," and the Apostle says of the Holy Ghost (Rm. 8:26): "The Spirit . . . asketh for us."

Objection 2. Angels are above rational creatures, since they are intellectual substances. Now prayer is becoming to the angels, wherefore we read in the Ps.

Article 11  
Whether the saints in heaven pray for us?

Objection 1. It would seem that the saints in heaven do not pray for us. A man's action is more meritorious for himself than for others. But the saints in heaven do not merit for themselves, neither do they pray for themselves, since they are already established in the term. Neither therefore do they pray for us.

Objection 2. Further, the saints conform their will to God perfectly, so that they will only what God wills. Now what God wills is always fulfilled. Therefore it would be useless for the saints to pray for us.

Objection 3. Further, just as the saints in heaven are above, so are those in Purgatory, for they can no longer sin. Now those in Purgatory do not pray for us, on the contrary we pray for them. Therefore neither do the saints in heaven pray for us.

Objection 4. Further, if the saints in heaven pray for us, the prayers of the higher saints would be more efficacious; and so we ought not to implore the help of the lower saints' prayers but only of those of the higher saints.

Objection 5. Further, the soul of Peter is not Peter. If therefore the souls of the saints pray for us, so long as they are separated from their bodies, we ought not to call upon Saint Peter, but on his soul, to pray for us: yet the Church does the contrary. The saints therefore do not pray for us, at least before the resurrection.

On the contrary, It is written (2 Macc. 15:14): "This is . . . he that prayeth much for the people, and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God."

I answer that, As Jerome says (Cont. Vigilant. 6), the error of Vigilantius consisted in saying that "while we live, we can pray one for another; but that after we are dead, none of our prayers for others can be heard, seeing that not even the martyrs' prayers are granted when they pray for their blood to be avenged." But this is absolutely false, because, since prayers offered for others proceed from charity, as stated above (A07,8), the greater the charity of the saints in heaven, the more they pray for wayfarers, since the latter can be helped by prayers: and the more closely they are united to God, the more are their prayers efficacious: for the Divine order is such that lower beings receive an overflow of the excellence of the higher, even as the air receives the brightness of the sun. Wherefore it is said of Christ (Heb. 7:25): "Going to God by His own power . . . to make intercession for us" [Vulg.: 'He is able to save for ever them that come to God by Him, always living to make intercession for us.']. Hence Jerome says (Cont. Vigilant. 6): "If the apostles and martyrs while yet in the

body and having to be solicitous for themselves, can pray for others, how much more now that they have the crown of victory and triumph."

Reply to Objection 1. The saints in heaven, since they are blessed, have no lack of bliss, save that of the body's glory, and for this they pray. But they pray for us who lack the ultimate perfection of bliss: and their prayers are efficacious in impetrating through their previous merits and through God's acceptance.

Reply to Objection 2. The saints impetrate what ever God wishes to take place through their prayers: and they pray for that which they deem will be granted through their prayers according to God's will.

Reply to Objection 3. Those who are in Purgatory though they are above us on account of their impeccability, yet they are below us as to the pains which they suffer: and in this respect they are not in a condition to pray, but rather in a condition that requires us to pray for them.

Reply to Objection 4. It is God's will that inferior beings should be helped by all those that are above them, wherefore we ought to pray not only to the higher but also to the lower saints; else we should have to implore the mercy of God alone. Nevertheless it happens sometime that prayers addressed to a saint of lower degree are more efficacious, either because he is implored with greater devotion, or because God wishes to make known his sanctity.

Reply to Objection 5. It is because the saints while living merited to pray for us, that we invoke them under the names by which they were known in this life, and by which they are better known to us: and also in order to indicate our belief in the resurrection, according to the saying of Ex. 3:6, "I am the God of Abraham," etc.

## Article 12

### Whether prayer should be vocal?

Objection 1. It would seem that prayer ought not to be vocal. As stated above (4), prayer is addressed chiefly to God. Now God knows the language of the heart. Therefore it is useless to employ vocal prayer.

Objection 2. Further, prayer should lift man's mind to God, as stated above (1, ad 2). But words, like other sensible objects, prevent man from ascending to God by contemplation. Therefore we should not use words in our prayers.

Objection 3. Further, prayer should be offered to God in secret, according to Mt. 6:6, "But thou, when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut

the door, pray to thy Father in secret." But prayer loses its secrecy by being expressed vocally. Therefore prayer should not be vocal.

On the contrary, It is written (Ps. 141:2): "I cried to the Lord with my voice, with my voice I made supplication to the Lord."

I answer that, Prayer is twofold, common and individual. Common prayer is that which is offered to God by the ministers of the Church representing the body of the faithful: wherefore such like prayer should come to the knowledge of the whole people for whom it is offered: and this would not be possible unless it were vocal prayer. Therefore it is reasonably ordained that the ministers of the Church should say these prayers even in a loud voice, so that they may come to the knowledge of all.

On the other hand individual prayer is that which is offered by any single person, whether he pray for himself or for others; and it is not essential to such a prayer as this that it be vocal. And yet the voice is employed in such like prayers for three reasons. First, in order to excite interior devotion, whereby the mind of the person praying is raised to God, because by means of external signs, whether of words or of deeds, the human mind is moved as regards apprehension, and consequently also as regards the affections. Hence Augustine says (ad Probam. Ep. cxxx, 9) that "by means of words and other signs we arouse ourselves more effectively to an increase of holy desires." Hence then alone should we use words and such like signs when they help to excite the mind internally. But if they distract or in any way impede the mind we should abstain from them; and this happens chiefly to those whose mind is sufficiently prepared for devotion without having recourse to those signs. Wherefore the Psalmist (Ps. 26:8) said: "My heart hath said to Thee: 'My face hath sought Thee,'" and we read of Anna (1 Kgs. 1:13) that "she spoke in her heart." Secondly, the voice is used in praying as though to pay a debt, so that man may serve God with all that he has from God, that is to say, not only with his mind, but also with his body: and this applies to prayer considered especially as satisfactory. Hence it is written (Osee 14:3): "Take away all iniquity, and receive the good: and we will render the calves of our lips." Thirdly, we have recourse to vocal prayer, through a certain overflow from the soul into the body, through excess of feeling, according to Ps. 15:9, "My heart hath been glad, and my tongue hath rejoiced."

Reply to Objection 1. Vocal prayer is employed, not in order to tell God something He does not know, but in order to lift up the mind of the person praying or of other persons to God.



Reply to Objection 2. Words about other matters distract the mind and hinder the devotion of those who pray: but words signifying some object of devotion lift up the mind, especially one that is less devout.

Reply to Objection 3. As Chrysostom says [Hom. xiii in the *Opus Imperfectum* falsely ascribed to St. John Chrysostom], "Our Lord forbids one to pray in presence of others in order that one may be seen by others. Hence when you pray, do nothing strange to draw men's attention, either by shouting so as to be heard by others, or by openly striking the heart, or extending the hands, so as to be seen by many. And yet, "according to Augustine (*De Serm. Dom. in Monte* ii, 3), "it is not wrong to be seen by men, but to do this or that in order to be seen by men."

### Article 13

Whether attention is a necessary condition of prayer?

Objection 1. It would seem that attention is a necessary condition of prayer. It is written (Jn. 4:24): "God is a spirit, and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth." But prayer is not in spirit unless it be attentive. Therefore attention is a necessary condition of prayer.

Objection 2. Further, prayer is "the ascent of the mind to God" [Damascene, *De Fide Orth.* iii, 24. But the mind does not ascend to God if the prayer is inattentive. Therefore attention is a necessary condition of prayer.

Objection 3. Further, it is a necessary condition of prayer that it should be altogether sinless. Now if a man allows his mind to wander while praying he is not free of sin, for he seems to make light of God; even as if he were to speak to another man without attending to what he was saying. Hence Basil says [*De Constit. Monach.* i] that the "Divine assistance is to be implored, not lightly, nor with a mind wandering hither and thither: because he that prays thus not only will not obtain what he asks, nay rather will he provoke God to anger." Therefore it would seem a necessary condition of prayer that it should be attentive.

On the contrary, Even holy men sometimes suffer from a wandering of the mind when they pray, according to Ps. 39:13, "My heart hath forsaken me."

I answer that, This question applies chiefly to vocal prayer. Accordingly we must observe that a thing is necessary in two ways. First, a thing is necessary because thereby the end is better obtained: and thus attention is absolutely necessary for prayer. Secondly, a thing is said to be necessary when without it something cannot obtain its effect. Now the effect of prayer is threefold. The first is an effect which is common to all acts quickened by charity, and this is merit.

On order to realize this effect, it is not necessary that prayer should be attentive throughout; because the force of the original intention with which one sets about praying renders the whole prayer meritorious, as is the case with other meritorious acts. The second effect of prayer is proper thereto, and consists in impetration: and again the original intention, to which God looks chiefly, suffices to obtain this effect. But if the original intention is lacking, prayer lacks both merit and impetration: because, as Gregory [Hugh St. Victor, Expos. in Reg. S. Aug. iii] says, "God hears not the prayer of those who pay no attention to their prayer." The third effect of prayer is that which it produces at once; this is the spiritual refreshment of the mind, and for this effect attention is a necessary condition: wherefore it is written (1 Cor. 14:14): "If I pray in a tongue . . . my understanding is without fruit."

It must be observed, however, that there are three kinds of attention that can be brought to vocal prayer: one which attends to the words, lest we say them wrong, another which attends to the sense of the words, and a third, which attends to the end of prayer, namely, God, and to the thing we are praying for. That last kind of attention is most necessary, and even idiots are capable of it. Moreover this attention, whereby the mind is fixed on God, is sometimes so strong that the mind forgets all other things, as Hugh of St. Victor states [De Modo Orandi ii].

Reply to Objection 1. To pray in spirit and in truth is to set about praying through the instigation of the Spirit, even though afterwards the mind wander through weakness.

Reply to Objection 2. The human mind is unable to remain aloft for long on account of the weakness of nature, because human weakness weighs down the soul to the level of inferior things: and hence it is that when, while praying, the mind ascends to God by contemplation, of a sudden it wanders off through weakness.

Reply to Objection 3. Purposely to allow one's mind to wander in prayer is sinful and hinders the prayer from having fruit. It is against this that Augustine says in his Rule (Ep. ccxi): "When you pray God with psalms and hymns, let your mind attend to that which your lips pronounce." But to wander in mind unintentionally does not deprive prayer of its fruit. Hence Basil says (De Constit. Monach. i): "If you are so truly weakened by sin that you are unable to pray attentively, strive as much as you can to curb yourself, and God will pardon you, seeing that you are unable to stand in His presence in a becoming manner, not through negligence but through frailty."

Article 14  
Whether prayer should last a long time?

Objection 1. It would seem that prayer should not be continual. It is written (Mt. 6:7): "When you are praying, speak not much." Now one who prays a long time needs to speak much, especially if his be vocal prayer. Therefore prayer should not last a long time.

Objection 2. Further, prayer expresses the desire. Now a desire is all the holier according as it is centered on one thing, according to Ps. 26:4, "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after." Therefore the shorter prayer is, the more is it acceptable to God.

Objection 3. Further, it seems to be wrong to transgress the limits fixed by God, especially in matters concerning Divine worship, according to Ex. 19:21: "Charge the people, lest they should have a mind to pass the limits to see the Lord, and a very great multitude of them should perish." But God has fixed for us the limits of prayer by instituting the Lord's Prayer (Mt. 6). Therefore it is not right to prolong our prayer beyond its limits.

Objection 4. On the contrary, It would seem that we ought to pray continually. For our Lord said (Lk. 18:1): "We ought always to pray, and not to faint": and it is written (1 Thess. 5:17): "Pray without ceasing."

I answer that, We may speak about prayer in two ways: first, by considering it in itself; secondly, by considering it in its cause. The ~~not~~ cause of prayer is the desire of charity, from which prayer ought to arise: and this desire ought to be in us continually, either actually or virtually, for the virtue of this desire remains in whatever we do out of charity; and we ought to "do all things to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). From this point of view prayer ought to be continual: wherefore Augustine says (ad Probam, Ep. cxxx, 9): "Faith, hope and charity are by themselves a prayer of continual longing." But prayer, considered in itself, cannot be continual, because we have to be busy about other works, and, as Augustine says (ad Probam. Ep. cxxx, 9), "we pray to God with our lips at certain intervals and seasons, in order to admonish ourselves by means of such like signs, to take note of the amount of our progress in that desire, and to arouse ourselves more eagerly to an increase thereof." Now the quantity of a thing should be commensurate with its end, for instance the quantity of the dose should be commensurate with health. And so it is becoming that prayer should last long enough to arouse the fervor of the interior desire: and when it exceeds this measure, so that it cannot be continued any longer without causing weariness, it should be discontinued. Wherefore Augustine says (ad Probam. Ep. cxxx): "It is said that the brethren in Egypt make frequent but very short

prayers, rapid ejaculations, as it were, lest that vigilant and erect attention which is so necessary in prayer slacken and languish, through the strain being prolonged. By so doing they make it sufficiently clear not only that this attention must not be forced if we are unable to keep it up, but also that if we are able to continue, it should not be broken off too soon." And just as we must judge of this in private prayers by considering the attention of the person praying, so too, in public prayers we must judge of it by considering the devotion of the people.

Reply to Objection 1. As Augustine says (ad Probam. Ep. cxxx), "to pray with many words is not the same as to pray long; to speak long is one thing, to be devout long is another. For it is written that our Lord passed the whole night in prayer, and that He 'prayed the longer' in order to set us an example." Further on he says: "When praying say little, yet pray much so long as your attention is fervent. For to say much in prayer is to discuss your need in too many words: whereas to pray much is to knock at the door of Him we pray, by the continuous and devout clamor of the heart. Onedeed this business is frequently done with groans rather than with words, with tears rather than with speech."

Reply to Objection 2. Length of prayer consists, not in praying for many things, but in the affections persisting in the desire of one thing.

Reply to Objection 3. Our Lord instituted this prayer, not that we might use no other words when we pray, but that in our prayers we might have none but these things in view, no matter how we express them or think of them.

Reply to Objection 4. One may pray continually, either through having a continual desire, as stated above; or through praying at certain fixed times, though interruptedly; or by reason of the effect, whether in the person who prays--because he remains more devout even after praying, or in some other person--as when by his kindness a man incites another to pray for him, even after he himself has ceased praying.

#### Article 15 Whether prayer is meritorious?

Objection 1. It would seem that prayer is not meritorious. All merit proceeds from grace. But prayer precedes grace, since even grace is obtained by means of prayer according to Lk. 11:13, "(How much more) will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask Him!" Therefore prayer is not a meritorious act.

Objection 2. Further, if prayer merits anything, this would seem to be chiefly that which is besought in prayer. Yet it does not always merit this, because even the saints' prayers are frequently not heard; thus Paul was not heard when he besought the sting of the flesh to be removed from him. Therefore prayer is not a meritorious act.

Objection 3. Further, prayer is based chiefly on faith, according to James 1:6, "

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." Now faith is not sufficient for merit, as instanced in those who have lifeless faith. Therefore prayer is not a meritorious act.

On the contrary, A gloss on the words of Ps. 34:13, "My prayer shall be turned into my bosom," explains them as meaning, "if my prayer does not profit them, yet shall not I be deprived of my reward." Now reward is not due save to merit. Therefore prayer is meritorious.

I answer that, As stated above (13) prayer, besides causing spiritual consolation at the time of praying, has a twofold efficacy in respect of a future effect, namely, efficacy in meriting and efficacy in impetrating. Now prayer, like any other virtuous act, is efficacious in meriting, because it proceeds from charity as its root, the proper object of which is the eternal good that we merit to enjoy. Yet prayer proceeds from charity through the medium of religion, of which prayer is an act, as stated above (3), and with the concurrence of other virtues requisite for the goodness of prayer, viz. humility and faith. For the offering of prayer itself to God belongs to religion, while the desire for the thing that we pray to be accomplished belongs to charity. Faith is necessary in reference to God to Whom we pray; that is, we need to believe that we can obtain from Him what we seek. Humility is necessary on the part of the person praying, because he recognizes his neediness. Devotion too is necessary: but this belongs to religion, for it is its first act and a necessary condition of all its secondary acts, as stated above (82, 1 and 2).

As to its efficacy in impetrating, prayer derives this from the grace of God to Whom we pray, and Who instigates us to pray. Wherefore Augustine says (De Verb. Dom., Sermon. cv, 1): "He would not urge us to ask, unless He were willing to give"; and Chrysostom [Cf. Catena Aurea of St. Thomas on Lk. 18. The words as quoted are not to be found in the words of Chrysostom] says: "He never refuses to grant our prayers, since in His loving-kindness He urged us not to faint in praying."

Reply to Objection 1. Neither prayer nor any other virtuous act is meritorious without sanctifying grace. And yet even that prayer which impetrates sanctifying

grace proceeds from some grace, as from a gratuitous gift, since the very act of praying is "a gift of God," as Augustine states (*De Persever.* xxiii).

Reply to Objection 2. Sometimes the merit of prayer regards chiefly something distinct from the object of one's petition. For the chief object of merit is beatitude, whereas the direct object of the petition of prayer extends sometimes to certain other things, as stated above (A6,7). Accordingly if this other thing that we ask for ourselves be not useful for our beatitude, we do not merit it; and sometimes by asking for and desiring such things we lose merit for instance if we ask of God the accomplishment of some sin, which would be an impious prayer. And sometimes it is not necessary for salvation, nor yet manifestly contrary thereto; and then although he who prays may merit eternal life by praying, yet he does not merit to obtain what he asks for. Hence Augustine says (*Liber. Sentent. Prosperi sent. ccxii*): "He who faithfully prays God for the necessities of this life, is both mercifully heard, and mercifully not heard. For the physician knows better than the sick man what is good for the disease." For this reason, too, Paul was not heard when he prayed for the removal of the sting in his flesh, because this was not expedient. If, however, we pray for something that is useful for our beatitude, through being conducive to salvation, we merit it not only by praying, but also by doing other good deeds: therefore without any doubt we receive what we ask for, yet when we ought to receive it: "since certain things are not denied us, but are deferred that they may be granted at a suitable time," according to Augustine (*Tract. cii in Joan.*): and again this may be hindered if we persevere not in asking for it. Wherefore Basil says (*De Constit. Monast. i*): "The reason why sometimes thou hast asked and not received, is because thou hast asked amiss, either inconsistently, or lightly, or because thou hast asked for what was not good for thee, or because thou hast ceased asking." Since, however, a man cannot condignly merit eternal life for another, as stated above (I-II, 114, 6), it follows that sometimes one cannot condignly merit for another things that pertain to eternal life. For this reason we are not always heard when we pray for others, as stated above (Q7, ad 2,3). Hence it is that four conditions are laid down; namely, to ask--"for ourselves--things necessary for salvation--piously--perseveringly"; when all these four concur, we always obtain what we ask for.

Reply to Objection 3. Prayer depends chiefly on faith, not for its efficacy in meriting, because thus it depends chiefly on charity, but for its efficacy in impetrating, because it is through faith that man comes to know of God's omnipotence and mercy, which are the source whence prayer impetrates what it asks for.

## Article 16

Whether sinners impetrate anything from God by their prayers?

Objection 1. It would seem that sinners impetrate nothing from God by their prayers. It is written (Jn. 9:31): "We know that God doth not hear sinners"; and this agrees with the saying of Prov. 28:9, "He that turneth away his ears from hearing the law, his prayer shall be an abomination." Now an abominable prayer impetrates nothing from God. Therefore sinners impetrate nothing from God.

Objection 2. Further, the just impetrate from God what they merit, as stated above (15, ad 2). But sinners cannot merit anything since they lack grace and charity which is the "power of godliness," according to a gloss on 2 Tim. 3:5, "Having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof." and so their prayer is impious, and yet piety is required in order that prayer may be impetrative, as stated above (15, ad 2). Therefore sinners impetrate nothing by their prayers.

Objection 3. Further, Chrysostom [Hom. xiv in the Opus Imperfectum falsely ascribed to St. John Chrysostom] says: "The Father is unwilling to hear the prayer which the Son has not inspired." Now in the prayer inspired by Christ we say: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us": and sinners do not fulfil this. Therefore either they lie in saying this, and so are unworthy to be heard, or, if they do not say it, they are not heard, because they do not observe the form of prayer instituted by Christ.

On the contrary, Augustine says (Tract. xlv, super Joan.): "If God were not to hear sinners, the publican would have vainly said: Lord, be merciful to me a sinner"; and Chrysostom [Hom. xviii of the same Opus Imperfectum] says: "Everyone that asketh shall receive, that is to say whether he be righteous or sinful."

I answer that, In the sinner, two things are to be considered: his nature which God loves, and the sin which He hates. Accordingly when a sinner prays for something as sinner, i.e. in accordance with a sinful desire, God hears him not through mercy but sometimes through vengeance when He allows the sinner to fall yet deeper into sin. For "God refuses in mercy what He grants in anger," as Augustine declares (Tract. lxxiii in Joan.). On the other hand God hears the sinner's prayer if it proceed from a good natural desire, not out of justice, because the sinner does not merit to be heard, but out of pure mercy [Cf. 15, ad 1, provided however he fulfil the four conditions given above, namely, that he beseech for himself things necessary for salvation, piously and perseveringly.

Reply to Objection 1. As Augustine states (Tract. xlv super Joan.), these words were spoken by the blind man before being anointed, i.e. perfectly enlightened, and consequently lack authority. And yet there is truth in the saying if it refers to a sinner as such, in which sense also the sinner's prayer is said to be an abomination.

Reply to Objection 2. There can be no godliness in the sinner's prayer as though his prayer were quickened by a habit of virtue: and yet his prayer may be godly in so far as he asks for something pertaining to godliness. Even so a man who has not the habit of justice is able to will something just, as stated above (59, 2). And though his prayer is not meritorious, it can be impetrative, because merit depends on justice, whereas impetration rests on grace.

Reply to Objection 3. As stated above (07, ad 1) the Lord's Prayer is pronounced in the common person of the whole Church: and so if anyone say the Lord's Prayer while unwilling to forgive his neighbor's trespasses, he lies not, although his words do not apply to him personally: for they are true as referred to the person of the Church, from which he is excluded by merit, and consequently he is deprived of the fruit of his prayer. Sometimes, however, a sinner is prepared to forgive those who have trespassed against him, wherefore his prayers are heard, according to Sirach 28:2, "Forgive thy neighbor if he hath hurt thee, and then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest."

#### Article 17

Whether the parts of prayer are fittingly described as supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings?

Objection 1. It would seem that the parts of prayer are unfittingly described as supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings. Supplication would seem to be a kind of adjuration. Yet, according to Origen (Super Matth. Tract. xxxv), "a man who wishes to live according to the gospel need not adjure another, for if it be unlawful to swear, it is also unlawful to adjure." Therefore supplication is unfittingly reckoned a part of prayer.

Objection 2. Further, according to Damascene (De Fide Orth. iii, 24), "to pray is to ask becoming things of God." Therefore it is unfitting to distinguish "prayers" from "intercessions."

Objection 3. Further, thanksgivings regard the past, while the others regard the future. But the past precedes the future. Therefore thanksgivings are unfittingly placed after the others.



return to Paradise. Thirdly, on account of Christ Who is "the light of the world" [Jn. 8:12; 9:5, and is called "the Orient" (Zach. 6:12). Who mounteth above the heaven of heavens to the east (Ps. 67:34), and is expected to come from the east, according to Mt. 24:27, "As lightning cometh out of the east, and appeareth even into the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

## QUESTION 85 Of Sacrifice

### Article 1

Whether offering a sacrifice to God is of the law of nature?

Objection 1. It would seem that offering a sacrifice to God is not of the natural law. Things that are of the natural law are common among all men. Yet this is not the case with sacrifices: for we read of some, e.g. Melchisedech (Gn. 14:18), offering bread and wine in sacrifice, and of certain animals being offered by some, and others by others. Therefore the offering of sacrifices is not of the natural law.

Objection 2. Further, things that are of the natural law were observed by all just men. Yet we do not read that Isaac offered sacrifice; nor that Adam did so, of whom nevertheless it is written (Wis. 10:2) that wisdom "brought him out of his sin." Therefore the offering of sacrifice is not of the natural law.

Objection 3. Further, Augustine says (De Civ. Dei x, 5, 19) that sacrifices are offered in signification of something. Now words which are chief among signs, as he again says (De Doctr. Christ. ii, 3), "signify, not by nature but by convention," according to the Philosopher (Peri Herm. i, 2). Therefore sacrifices are not of the natural law.

On the contrary, At all times and among all nations there has always been the offering of sacrifices. Now that which is observed by all is seemingly natural. Therefore the offering of sacrifices is of the natural law.

I answer that, Natural reason tells man that he is subject to a higher being, on account of the defects which he perceives in himself, and in which he needs help and direction from someone above him: and whatever this superior being may be, it is known to all under the name of God. Now just as in natural things the lower are naturally subject to the higher, so too it is a dictate of natural reason in accordance with man's natural inclination that he should tender submission and honor, according to his mode, to that which is above man. Now the mode befitting to man is that he should employ sensible signs in order to signify

anything, because he derives his knowledge from sensibles. Hence it is a dictate of natural reason that man should use certain sensibles, by offering them to God in sign of the subjection and honor due to Him, like those who make certain offerings to their lord in recognition of his authority. Now this is what we mean by a sacrifice, and consequently the offering of sacrifice is of the natural law.

Reply to Objection 1. As stated above (I-II, 95, 2), certain things belong generically to the natural law, while their determination belongs to the positive law; thus the natural law requires that evildoers should be punished; but that this or that punishment should be inflicted on them is a matter determined by God or by man. On like manner the offering of sacrifice belongs generically to the natural law, and consequently all are agreed on this point, but the determination of sacrifices is established by God or by man, and this is the reason for their difference.

Reply to Objection 2. Adam, Isaac and other just men offered sacrifice to God in a manner befitting the times in which they lived, according to Gregory, who says (Moral. iv, 3) that in olden times original sin was remitted through the offering of sacrifices. Nor does Scripture mention all the sacrifices of the just, but only those that have something special connected with them. Perhaps the reason why we read of no sacrifice being offered by Adam may be that, as the origin of sin is ascribed to him, the origin of sanctification ought not to be represented as typified in him. Isaac was a type of Christ, being himself offered in sacrifice; and so there was no need that he should be represented as offering a sacrifice.

Reply to Objection 3. It is natural to man to express his ideas by signs, but the determination of those signs depends on man's pleasure.

## Article 2

Whether sacrifice should be offered to God alone?

Objection 1. It would seem that sacrifice should not be offered to the most high God alone. Since sacrifice ought to be offered to God, it would seem that it ought to be offered to all such as are partakers of the Godhead. Now holy men are made "partakers of the Divine nature," according to 2 Pt. 1:4; wherefore of them it is written (Ps. 81:6): "I have said, You are gods": and angels too are called "sons of God," according to Job 1:6. Thus sacrifice should be offered to all these.

Objection 2. Further, the greater a person is the greater the honor due to him from man. Now the angels and saints are far greater than any earthly princes: and yet the subjects of the latter pay them much greater honor, by prostrating before them, and offering them gifts, than is implied by offering an animal or any other thing in sacrifice. Much more therefore may one offer sacrifice to the angels and saints.

Objection 3. Further, temples and altars are raised for the offering of sacrifices. Yet temples and altars are raised to angels and saints. Therefore sacrifices also may be offered to them.

On the contrary, It is written (Ex. 22:20): "He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord."

I answer that, As stated above (1), a sacrifice is offered in order that something may be represented. Now the sacrifice that is offered outwardly represents the inward spiritual sacrifice, whereby the soul offers itself to God according to Ps. 50:19, "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit," since, as stated above (81, 07;84, 2), the outward acts of religion are directed to the inward acts. Again the soul offers itself in sacrifice to God as its beginning by creation, and its end by beatification: and according to the true faith God alone is the creator of our souls, as stated in I, 90, 3; I-II, 118, 2, while in Him alone the beatitude of our soul consists, as stated above (I-II, 01, 8; I-II, 2, 8; I-II, 3, 1 and 7 and 8). Wherefore just as to God alone ought we to offer spiritual sacrifice, so too ought we to offer outward sacrifices to Him alone: even so "in our prayers and praises we proffer significant words to Him to Whom in our hearts we offer the things which we designate thereby," as Augustine states (De Civ. Dei x, 19). Moreover we find that in every country the people are wont to show the sovereign ruler some special sign of honor, and that if this be shown to anyone else, it is a crime of high-treason. Therefore, in the Divine law, the death punishment is assigned to those who offer Divine honor to another than God.

Reply to Objection 1. The name of the Godhead is communicated to certain ones, not equally with God, but by participation; hence neither is equal honor due to them.

Reply to Objection 2. The offering of a sacrifice is measured not by the value of the animal killed, but by its signification, for it is done in honor of the sovereign Ruler of the whole universe. Wherefore, as Augustine says (De Civ. Dei x, 19), "the demons rejoice, not in the stench of corpses, but in receiving divine honors."

Reply to Objection 3. As Augustine says (De Civ. Dei viii, 19), "we do not raise temples and priesthoods to the martyrs, because not they but their God is our God. Wherefore the priest says not: I offer sacrifice to thee, Peter or Paul. But we give thanks to God for their triumphs, and urge ourselves to imitate them."

### Article 3

Whether the offering of sacrifice is a special act of virtue?

Objection 1. It would seem that the offering of sacrifice is not a special act of virtue. Augustine says (De Civ. Dei x, 6): "A true sacrifice is any work done that we may cleave to God in holy fellowship." But not every good work is a special act of some definite virtue. Therefore the offering of sacrifice is not a special act of a definite virtue.

Objection 2. Further, the mortification of the body by fasting belongs to abstinence, by continence belongs to chastity, by martyrdom belongs to fortitude. Now all these things seem to be comprised in the offering of sacrifice, according to Rm. 12:1, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." Again the Apostle says (Heb. 13:16): "Do not forget to do good and to impart, for by such sacrifices God's favor is obtained." Now it belongs to charity, mercy and liberality to do good and to impart. Therefore the offering of sacrifice is not a special act of a definite virtue.

Objection 3. Further, a sacrifice is apparently anything offered to God. Now many things are offered to God, such as devotion, prayer, tithes, first-fruits, oblations, and holocausts. Therefore sacrifice does not appear to be a special act of a definite virtue.

On the contrary, The law contains special precepts about sacrifices, as appears from the beginning of Leviticus.

I answer that, As stated above (I-II, 18, 6,7), where an act of one virtue is directed to the end of another virtue it partakes somewhat of its species; thus when a man thieves in order to commit fornication, his theft assumes, in a sense, the deformity of fornication, so that even though it were not a sin otherwise, it would be a sin from the very fact that it was directed to fornication. Accordingly, sacrifice is a special act deserving of praise in that it is done out of reverence for God; and for this reason it belongs to a definite virtue, viz. religion. But it happens that the acts of the other virtues are directed to the reverence of God, as when a man gives alms of his own things for God's sake, or when a man subjects his own body to some affliction out of reverence for God; and in this way the acts also of other virtues may be called sacrifices. On the other

hand there are acts that are not deserving of praise save through being done out of reverence for God: such acts are properly called sacrifices, and belong to the virtue of religion.

Reply to Objection 1. The very fact that we wish to cling to God in a spiritual fellowship pertains to reverence for God: and consequently the act of any virtue assumes the character of a sacrifice through being done in order that we may cling to God in holy fellowship.

Reply to Objection 2. Man's good is threefold. There is first his soul's good which is offered to God in a certain inward sacrifice by devotion, prayer and other like interior acts: and this is the principal sacrifice. The second is his body's good, which is, so to speak, offered to God in martyrdom, and abstinence or continency. The third is the good which consists of external things: and of these we offer a sacrifice to God, directly when we offer our possession to God immediately, and indirectly when we share them with our neighbor for God's sake.

Reply to Objection 3. A "sacrifice," properly speaking, requires that something be done to the thing which is offered to God, for instance animals were slain and burnt, the bread is broken, eaten, blessed. The very word signifies this, since "sacrifice" is so called because a man does something sacred [facit sacrum]. On the other hand an "oblation" is properly the offering of something to God even if nothing be done thereto, thus we speak of offering money or bread at the altar, and yet nothing is done to them. Hence every sacrifice is an oblation, but not conversely. "First-fruits" are oblations, because they were offered to God, according to Dt. 26, but they are not a sacrifice, because nothing sacred was done to them. "Tithes," however, are neither a sacrifice nor an oblation, properly speaking, because they are not offered immediately to God, but to the ministers of Divine worship.

#### Article 4

##### Whether all are bound to offer sacrifices?

Objection 1. It would seem that all are not bound to offer sacrifices. The Apostle says (Rm. 3:19): "What things soever the Law speaketh, it speaketh to them that are in the Law." Now the law of sacrifices was not given to all, but only to the Hebrew people. Therefore all are not bound to offer sacrifices.

Objection 2. Further, sacrifices are offered to God in order to signify something. But not everyone is capable of understanding these significations. Therefore not all are bound to offer sacrifices.

Objection 3. Further, priests ['Sacerdotes': Those who give or administer sacred things (sacra dantes): cf. 1 Cor. 4:1 are so called because they offer sacrifice to God. But all are not priests. Therefore not all are bound to offer sacrifices.

On the contrary, The offering of sacrifices is of the natural law, as stated above (1). Now all are bound to do that which is of the natural law. Therefore all are bound to offer sacrifice to God.

I answer that, Sacrifice is twofold, as stated above (2). The first and principal is the inward sacrifice, which all are bound to offer, since all are obliged to offer to God a devout mind. The other is the outward sacrifice, and this again is twofold. There is a sacrifice which is deserving of praise merely through being offered to God in protestation of our subjection to God: and the obligation of offering this sacrifice was not the same for those under the New or the Old Law, as for those who were not under the Law. For those who are under the Law are bound to offer certain definite sacrifices according to the precepts of the Law, whereas those who were not under the Law were bound to perform certain outward actions in God's honor, as became those among whom they dwelt, but not definitely to this or that action. The other outward sacrifice is when the outward actions of the other virtues are performed out of reverence for God; some of which are a matter of precept; and to these all are bound, while others are works of supererogation, and to these all are not bound.

Reply to Objection 1. All were not bound to offer those particular sacrifices which were prescribed in the Law: but they were bound to some sacrifices inward or outward, as stated above.

Reply to Objection 2. Though all do not know explicitly the power of the sacrifices, they know it implicitly, even as they have implicit faith, as stated above (2, 6,7).

Reply to Objection 3. The priests offer those sacrifices which are specially directed to the Divine worship, not only for themselves but also for others. But there are other sacrifices, which anyone can offer to God for himself as explained above (A2,3).

QUESTION 91  
Of Praise

Article 1

Whether God should be praised with the lips?

Objection 1. It would seem that God should not be praised with the lips. The Philosopher says (Ethic. 1,12): "The best of men are accorded not praise, but something greater." But God transcends the very best of all things. Therefore God ought to be given, not praise, but something greater than praise: wherefore He is said (Sirach 43:33) to be "above all praise."

Objection 2. Further, divine praise is part of divine worship, for it is an act of religion. Now God is worshiped with the mind rather than with the lips: wherefore our Lord quoted against certain ones the words of Is. 29:13, "This people . . . honors [Vulg.: 'glorifies'] Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me." Therefore the praise of God lies in the heart rather than on the lips.

Objection 3. Further, men are praised with the lips that they may be encouraged to do better: since just as being praised makes the wicked proud, so does it incite the good to better things. Wherefore it is written (Prov. 27:21): "As silver is tried in the fining-pot . . . so a man is tried by the mouth of him that praiseth." But God is not incited to better things by man's words, both because He is unchangeable, and because He is supremely good, and it is not possible for Him to grow better. Therefore God should not be praised with the lips.

On the contrary, It is written (Ps. 62:6): "My mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips."

I answer that, We use words, in speaking to God, for one reason, and in speaking to man, for another reason. For when speaking to man we use words in order to tell him our thoughts which are unknown to him. Wherefore we praise a man with our lips, in order that he or others may learn that we have a good opinion of him: so that in consequence we may incite him to yet better things; and that we may induce others, who hear him praised, to think well of him, to reverence him, and to imitate him. On the other hand we employ words, in speaking to God, not indeed to make known our thoughts to Him Who is the searcher of hearts, but that we may bring ourselves and our hearers to reverence Him.

Consequently we need to praise God with our lips, not indeed for His sake, but for our own sake; since by praising Him our devotion is aroused towards Him, according to Ps. 49:23: "The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me, and there is the

way by which I will show him the salvation of God." And forasmuch as man, by praising God, ascends in his affections to God, by so much is he withdrawn from things opposed to God, according to Is. 48:9, "For My praise I will bridle thee lest thou shouldst perish." The praise of the lips is also profitable to others by inciting their affections towards God, wherefore it is written (Ps. 33:2): "His praise shall always be in my mouth," and farther on: "Let the meek hear and rejoice. O magnify the Lord with me."

Reply to Objection 1. We may speak of God in two ways. First, with regard to His essence; and thus, since He is incomprehensible and ineffable, He is above all praise. On this respect we owe Him reverence and the honor of latria; wherefore Ps. 64:2 is rendered by Jerome in his Psalter [Translated from the Hebrew]: "Praise to Thee is speechless, O God," as regards the first, and as to the second, "A vow shall be paid to Thee." Secondly, we may speak of God as to His effects which are ordained for our good. On this respect we owe Him praise; wherefore it is written (Is. 63:7): "I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord hath bestowed upon us." Again, Dionysius says (Div. Nom. 1): "Thou wilt find that all the sacred hymns," i.e. divine praises "of the sacred writers, are directed respectively to the Blessed Processions of the Thearchy," i.e. of the Godhead, "showing forth and praising the names of God."

Reply to Objection 2. It profits one nothing to praise with the lips if one praise not with the heart. For the heart speaks God's praises when it fervently recalls "the glorious things of His works" [Cf. Sirach 17:7,8. Yet the outward praise of the lips avails to arouse the inward fervor of those who praise, and to incite others to praise God, as stated above.

Reply to Objection 3. We praise God, not for His benefit, but for ours as stated.

## Article 2

Whether God should be praised with song?

Objection 1. It would seem that God should not be praised with song. For the Apostle says (Col. 3:16): "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual canticles." Now we should employ nothing in the divine worship, save what is delivered to us on the authority of Scripture. Therefore it would seem that, in praising God, we should employ, not corporal but spiritual canticles.



Objection 2. Further, Jerome in his commentary on Eph. 5:19, "Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord," says: "Listen, young men whose duty it is to recite the office in church: God is to be sung not with the voice but with the heart. Nor should you, like play-actors, ease your throat and jaws with medicaments, and make the church resound with theatrical measures and airs." Therefore God should not be praised with song.

Objection 3. Further, the praise of God is competent to little and great, according to Apoc. 14, "Give praise to our God, all ye His servants; and you that fear Him, little and great." But the great, who are in the church, ought not to sing: for Gregory says (Regist. iv, ep. 44): "I hereby ordain that in this See the ministers of the sacred altar must not sing" (Cf. Decret., dist. xcii., cap. On sancta Romana Ecclesia). Therefore singing is unsuitable to the divine praises.

Objection 4. Further, in the Old Law God was praised with musical instruments and human song, according to Ps. 32:2,3: "Give praise to the Lord on the harp, sing to Him with the psaltery, the instrument of ten strings. Sing to Him a new canticle." But the Church does not make use of musical instruments such as harps and psalteries, in the divine praises, for fear of seeming to imitate the Jews. Therefore in like manner neither should song be used in the divine praises.

Objection 5. Further, the praise of the heart is more important than the praise of the lips. But the praise of the heart is hindered by singing, both because the attention of the singers is distracted from the consideration of what they are singing, so long as they give all their attention to the chant, and because others are less able to understand the thing that are sung than if they were recited without chant. Therefore chants should not be employed in the divine praises.

On the contrary, Blessed Ambrose established singing in the Church of Milan, a Augustine relates (Confess. ix).

I answer that, As stated above (1), the praise of the voice is necessary in order to arouse man's devotion towards God. Wherefore whatever is useful in conducing to this result is becomingly adopted in the divine praises. Now it is evident that the human soul is moved in various ways according to various melodies of sound, as the Philosopher state (Polit. viii, 5), and also Boethius (De Musica, prologue). Hence the use of music in the divine praises is a salutary institution, that the souls of the faint-hearted may be the more incited to devotion. Wherefore Augustine say (Confess. x, 33): "I am inclined to approve of the usage of singing in the church, that so by the delight of the ears the faint-hearted may rise to the feeling of devotion": and he says of himself (Confess. ix, 6): "I wept in Thy hymns and canticles, touched to the quick by the voices of Thy sweet-attuned Church."

Reply to Objection 1. The name of spiritual canticle may be given not only to those that are sung inwardly in spirit, but also to those that are sung outwardly with the lips, inasmuch as such like canticles arouse spiritual devotion.

Reply to Objection 2. Jerome does not absolutely condemn singing, but reproves those who sing theatrically in church not in order to arouse devotion, but in order to show off, or to provoke pleasure. Hence Augustine says (Confess. x, 33): "When it befalls me to be more moved by the voice than by the words sung, I confess to have sinned penally, and then had rather not hear the singer."

Reply to Objection 3. To arouse men to devotion by teaching and preaching is a more excellent way than by singing. Wherefore deacons and prelates, whom it becomes to incite men's minds towards God by means of preaching and teaching, ought not to be instant in singing, lest thereby they be withdrawn from greater things. Hence Gregory says (Regist. iv, ep. 44): "It is a most discreditable custom for those who have been raised to the diaconate to serve as choristers, for it behooves them to give their whole time to the duty of preaching and to taking charge of the alms."

Reply to Objection 4. As the Philosopher says (Polit. viii, 6), "Teaching should not be accompanied with a flute or any artificial instrument such as the harp or anything else of this kind: but only with such things as make good hearers." For such like musical instruments move the soul to pleasure rather than create a good disposition within it. On the Old Testament instruments of this description were employed, both because the people were more coarse and carnal--so that they needed to be aroused by such instruments as also by earthly promises--and because these material instruments were figures of something else.

Reply to Objection 5. The soul is distracted from that which is sung by a chant that is employed for the purpose of giving pleasure. But if the singer chant for the sake of devotion, he pays more attention to what he says, both because he lingers more thereon, and because, as Augustine remarks (Confess. x, 33), "each affection of our spirit, according to its variety, has its own appropriate measure in the voice, and singing, by some hidden correspondence wherewith it is stirred." The same applies to the hearers, for even if some of them understand not what is sung, yet they understand why it is sung, namely, for God's glory: and this is enough to arouse their devotion.