

## QUESTION 26

### The Order of Charity

We next have to consider the order of charity. And on this topic there are thirteen questions: (1) Is there an order of charity? (2) Should a man love God more than his neighbor? (3) Should a man love God more than himself? (4) Should a man love himself more than his neighbor? (5) Should a man love his neighbor more than his own body? (6) Should a man love one neighbor more than another? (7) Should a man love a better neighbor more than someone connected with himself? (8) Should a man love someone connected with him as a blood relative more than someone connected with him by other close ties? (9) Should a man love his children more than his parents out of charity? (10) Should a man love his mother more than his father? (11) Should a man love his wife more than his father or mother? (12) Should a man love his benefactor more than his beneficiary? (13) Does the order of charity remain in heaven?

#### Article 1

##### Is there an order of charity?

It seems that there is not an order of charity:

**Objection 1:** Charity is a certain virtue. But in the case of the other virtues there is no assigned order. Therefore, neither is there any assigned order in the case of charity.

**Objection 2:** Just as the object of faith is the first truth, so the object of charity is the highest good. But no order is posited in the case of faith; rather all things are believed equally. Therefore, neither should any order be posited in the case of charity.

**Objection 3:** Charity exists in the will. But it is reason that orders, and not the will. Therefore, no order should be attributed to charity.

**But contrary to this:** *Canticle of Canticles* 2 says, "He brought me into the wine cellar; he gave order to the charity within me."

**I respond:** As the Philosopher explains in *Metaphysics* 5, 'before' (*prius*) and 'after' (*posterius*) are said in relation to some principle. But an ordering includes within itself some sort of 'before' and 'after'. Hence, wherever there is a principle, there must also be an ordering.

Now it was explained above (q. 23, a. 1 and q. 25, a. 12) that the love of charity tends toward God as the principle of beatitude and that the friendship of charity is based upon the sharing of beatitude. And so among the things that are loved out of charity there has to be an ordering according to their relation to the first principle of this love, i.e., God.

**Reply to objection 1:** Charity tends toward the ultimate end under the character *ultimate end* and, as was explained above (q. 23, a. 6), this feature does not belong to any other virtue. But as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 1) the end has the nature of a principle among things that are desirable and doable. And so charity especially implies a relation to the first principle. And so in the case of charity the ordering is thought about most of all in relation to the first principle.

**Reply to objection 2:** Faith belongs to a cognitive power whose operation exists insofar as the things known exist in the knower (*res cognitae sunt in cognoscente*). By contrast, charity exists in an appetitive power whose operation consists in the soul's tending toward the things themselves. Now an ordering is more chiefly found in the things themselves, and it flows from them to our cognition. And this is why an ordering is more appropriate for charity than for faith.

Still, there is an ordering in the case of faith as well, insofar as faith is principally about God, whereas it is secondarily about the other things that are referred back to God.

**Reply to objection 3:** An order belongs to reason insofar as it is reason that does the ordering, but it belongs to the appetitive power insofar as it is the appetitive power that is ordered. And it is in this

latter way that an order is posited in the case of charity.

## Article 2

### Is God to be loved more than one's neighbor?

It seems that God is not to be loved more than one's neighbor:

**Objection 1:** 1 John 4:20 says, "If one does not love his brother, whom he sees, then how can he love God, whom he does not see?" From this it seems that what is more visible is more lovable, since, as *Ethics* 9 says, seeing is the beginning of love (*principium amoris*). But God is less visible than our neighbor. Therefore, He is also less lovable by charity.

**Objection 2:** Similarity is a cause of love—this according to Ecclesiasticus 13:19 ("Every animal loves its like"). But the similarity of a man to his neighbor is greater than his similarity to God. Therefore, a man loves his neighbor out of charity more than God.

**Objection 3:** As is clear from Augustine in *De Doctrina Christiana* 1, what one loves in his neighbor is God. But God does not exist more in Himself than in one's neighbor. Therefore, it is not the case that God ought to be loved more than one's neighbor.

**But contrary to this:** What is to be loved more is such that certain things are to be hated because of it. But neighbors are to be hated because of God, viz., if they lead one away from God—this according to Luke 14:26 ("If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, then he cannot be my disciple"). Therefore, God is to be loved out of charity more than one's neighbor.

**I respond:** A friendship has to do mainly with that thing wherein is principally found the good which is such that the friendship is based on the sharing of it. For instance, political friendship has to do mainly with the city's ruler, on whom the entire common good of the city depends; hence, it is likewise the case that trust and obedience are especially owed to him by the citizens.

Now the friendship of charity is based upon the sharing of beatitude, which consists essentially in God as the first principle from whom it flows into everyone who is capable of beatitude. And so it is God who is mainly and especially to be loved out of charity, whereas our neighbor is to be loved as one who participates along with us in beatitude from God.

**Reply to objection 1:** There are two ways in which something is a cause of love.

In one way, as a *reason for loving* (*ratio diligendi*). And this is the way in which the good is a cause of love, since each thing is loved insofar as it has the character of goodness (*rationem boni*).

In a second way, because it is a sort of *path to acquiring an act of loving*. And this is the way in which vision is a cause of love—not, to be sure, in such a way that something is lovable by reason of the fact that it is visible, but because it is through vision that we are led toward love.

Therefore, it does not have to be the case that what is more visible is more lovable; instead, what is more visible occurs first for us to love. And this is the way the apostle argues. For since our neighbor is more visible to us, he appears first for us to love; as Gregory puts it in a certain homily, "From the things that the mind knows it learns to love what is unknown." Hence, if one does not love his neighbor, it can be argued that he will not love God, either—not because his neighbor is more lovable, but because he appeared first to be loved. However, God is more lovable because of His greater goodness.

**Reply to objection 2:** The similarity that we have to God is prior to and a cause of the similarity that we have to our neighbor. For we are made similar to our neighbor because it is from God that we participate in that which our neighbor likewise has from Him. And so by reason of similarity we ought to love God more than our neighbor.

**Reply to objection 3:** If we think of God's substance, then He is equal in everything in which He

exists, since He is not diminished by the fact that He exists in a thing. But it is still not the case that our neighbor has God's goodness to the same degree (*equaliter*) that God has it. For God has goodness by His essence (*essentialiter*), whereas our neighbor has it by participation (*participative*).

### Article 3

#### Should a man love God out of charity more than himself?

It seems not to be the case that a man should love God out of charity more than himself:

**Objection 1:** In *Ethics* 9 the Philosopher says, "The friendly regard (*amicabilia*) directed toward the other comes from the friendly regard that is directed toward oneself." But a cause is more powerful than its effect. Therefore, the friendship of a man with himself is greater than his friendship with anyone else. Therefore, he should love himself more than God.

**Objection 2:** Each thing is loved to the extent that it is one's own good. But the reason for loving is loved more than that which is loved for that reason—in the same way that principles, which are the reason for knowing, are themselves better known. Therefore, a man loves himself more than any other loved good. Therefore, it is not the case that he loves God more than himself.

**Objection 3:** One enjoys God to the extent that he loves Him. But one loves himself to the extent that he loves enjoying God, since this is the highest good that anyone can will for himself. Therefore, it is not the case that one ought to love God out of charity more than himself.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Doctrina Christiana* 1 Augustine says, "If you ought to love even yourself not for your own sake but for the sake of Him in whom is found the most appropriate end of your love, then let no other man be irritated if you love him, too, for the sake of God." But that for the sake of which a thing is such-and-such is itself more such-and-such (*propter quod unumquodque, illud magis*). Therefore, a man should love God more than himself.

**I respond:** We are able to receive a twofold good from God, viz., (a) the good of *nature* and (b) the good of *grace*.

*Natural love* is based upon the sharing (*communicatio*) of natural goods with us that is brought about by God. By this natural love it is not only man in the integrity of his nature that loves God above all things and more than himself, but every creature in its own way, i.e., by intellectual love or rational love or animal love or at least by natural love, as with rocks and other things that lack cognition. For every part naturally loves the common good of the whole more than its own proper particular good. This is evident from what it does (*ex opere*). For each part has its main inclination toward common action for the advantage of the whole. This is likewise apparent in the case of the political virtues, in accord with which citizens, for the sake of the common good, sometimes sustain losses both to their own property and to their own persons.

Hence, this is true *a fortiori* in the case of the friendship of charity, which is based upon a sharing in the *gifts of grace*. And so out of charity a man ought to love God, who is the common good of all things, more than himself, since beatitude exists in God as the common and originating principle of everyone who is able to participate in beatitude.

**Reply to objection 1:** The Philosopher is talking about friendly regard for another in whom the good that is the object of friendship is found in some *particular* mode, but not about friendly regard for another in whom this good is found with the character of the *whole*.

**Reply to objection 2:** Each part loves the good of the whole insofar as it is appropriate for itself—not in such a way that it refers the good of the whole back to itself, but rather in such a way that it refers himself back to the good of the whole.

**Reply to objection 3:** The fact that someone wills to enjoy God pertains to the love by which God

is loved with the love of concupiscence (*amor concupiscentiae*). But we love God with the love of friendship (*amor amicitiae*) more than with the love of concupiscence, since the good of God is greater in itself than what we are able to participate in by enjoying Him. And so, absolutely speaking, a man loves God out of charity more than himself.

#### Article 4

##### Should a man love himself out of charity more than his neighbor?

It seems not to be the case that a man should love himself out of charity more than his neighbor:

**Objection 1:** As was explained above (a. 2), the main object of charity is God. But sometimes a man has a neighbor who is more closely joined to God than he himself is. Therefore, one ought to love such a neighbor more than himself.

**Objection 2:** The more we love someone, the more we avoid what is detrimental to him. But out of charity a man suffers what is detrimental to himself for the good of his neighbor (*pro proximo*)—this according to Proverbs 12:26 (“A man who disregards harm to himself for the sake of his friend is just”).

**Objection 3:** 1 Corinthians 13:5 says that charity “does not seek what belongs to it.” But we especially love someone whose good we seek to the highest degree. Therefore, it is not the case that out of charity a man loves himself more than his neighbor.

**But contrary to this:** Leviticus 19:18 and Matthew 22:39 say, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” From this it seems that a man’s love for himself is, as it were, the exemplar of the love which he has for another. But the exemplar is better than what it is an exemplar of. Therefore, a man ought to love himself out of charity more than his neighbor.

**I respond:** There are two things in a man, viz., (a) his *spiritual* nature and (b) his *corporeal* nature.

As was explained above (q. 25, a. 7), a man is said to love himself by the fact that he loves himself in accord with his *spiritual* nature. And on this score, after God, a man should love himself more than anyone else. This is clear from the very nature of loving. For as was explained above (a. 2), God is loved as the source of the good that the love of charity is based upon. And a man loves himself out of charity by reason of the fact that he participates in that good, whereas his neighbor is loved by reason of their fellowship in that good.

Now the fellowship is a reason for loving as regards a certain sort of union in relation to God. Hence, just as *unity* is stronger than *union*, so, too, a man’s own participation in the divine good is a stronger reason for him to love than is another’s being associated with him in this participation. And so a man ought to love himself out of charity more than his neighbor. An indication of this is that a man should not undertake a sinful evil that is contrary to his own participation in beatitude in order to free his neighbor from sin.

**Reply to objection 1:** The love of charity has quantity not only on the part of its object, which is God, but also on the part of the one who loves, i.e., the man himself who has charity—just as the quantity of any action depends in some way on the subject itself. And so even if a better neighbor is closer to God, nonetheless, since he is not as close to the one who has charity as the latter is to himself, it does not follow that anyone ought to love his neighbor more than himself.

**Reply to objection 2:** A man ought to suffer bodily detriment for the sake of his friend, and in this very way he is loving himself with respect to his spiritual mind. For this pertains to the perfection of virtue, which is a good of the mind. By contrast, as has already been explained, in spiritual matters it is not the case that a man should suffer what is detrimental, viz., by sinning, in order that he might free his neighbor from sin.

**Reply to objection 3:** In *Regula* Augustine says, “When it is said, ‘Charity does not seek what

belongs to it,' this should be understood to mean that charity places what is held in common ahead of what is private." But it is always the case that the common good is more lovable to each individual than his own private good—in the same way that, as has been explained (a. 3), the good of the whole is more lovable to each part than the partial good that belongs to it itself.

### Article 5

#### Should a man love his neighbor more than his own body?

It seems not to be the case that a man should love his neighbor more than his own body:

**Objection 1:** Our neighbor's body is understood in our notion of our neighbor. Therefore, if a man ought to love his neighbor more than his own body, then it follows that he should love his neighbor's body more than his own body.

**Objection 2:** As has been explained (a. 4), a man loves his own soul more than his neighbor. But our own body is closer to our soul than our neighbor is. Therefore, we ought to love our own body more than our neighbor.

**Objection 3:** Everyone exposes what he loves less to risk before he exposes what he loves more to risk. But not every man is obligated to expose his own body to risk for his neighbor's safety; rather, that is something that perfect individuals do—this according to John 15:13 ("Greater charity no one has than to lay down his life (*anima*) for his friends"). Therefore, a man is not obligated to love his neighbor more out of charity than his own body.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Doctrina Christiana* 1 Augustine says, "We ought to love our neighbor more than our own body."

**I respond:** As has been explained (aa. 2 and 4), what is to be loved more out of charity is that which has more of the character of what is lovable out of charity. Now fellowship in full participation in beatitude, which is the reason for loving one's neighbor, is a stronger reason for loving than is participation in beatitude by way of overflow, which is the reason for loving our own body. And so, out of charity, we ought to love our neighbor, as regards the salvation of his soul, more than our own body.

**Reply to objection 1:** According to the Philosopher in *Ethics* 9, each thing seems to be what is preeminent in it (*praecipuum in ipso*). When it is claimed that our neighbor is to be loved more than our own body, this is understood to have to do with his soul, which is the more important part of him.

**Reply to objection 2:** It is with respect to the constitution of our nature that our body is closer to our own soul than our neighbor is. But with respect to participation in beatitude, the fellowship of our neighbor's soul with our soul is even greater than the fellowship of our own body with our soul.

**Reply to objection 3:** Taking care of his own body is of concern to every man, but taking care of his neighbor's safety is not of concern to every man, except perhaps in an emergency. And so there is no necessity of charity that a man expose his own body to risk for his neighbor's safety, except in cases in which he is obligated to provide for his neighbor's safety. Rather, it pertains to the perfection of charity that someone should of his own accord offer himself for this.

### Article 6

#### Should one neighbor be loved more than another?

It seems not to be the case that one neighbor should be loved more than another:

**Objection 1:** In *De Doctrina Christiana* 1 Augustine says, "All men are equally to be loved. But

since you are unable to do good to all of them, you have to take into account especially those who, given the circumstances of time and place and other such things, are more closely connected with you, as it were, by happenstance.” Therefore, it is not the case that one neighbor is to be loved more than another.

**Objection 2:** Where the reason for loving different individuals is one and the same, then the love should not be unequal. But as is clear from Augustine in *De Doctrina Christiana* 1, there is a single reason for loving all our neighbors, viz., God. Therefore, we ought to love all our neighbors equally.

**Objection 3:** As is clear from the Philosopher in *Rhetoric* 2, to love is to will the good for someone. But we will an equal good for all our neighbors, viz., eternal life. Therefore, we should love all our neighbors equally.

**But contrary to this:** Someone should be loved more to the extent that one who acts contrary to loving him sins more grievously. But one who acts contrary to the love of certain neighbors sins more grievously than one who acts contrary to the love of other neighbors. Hence, Leviticus 20:9 commands, “Let whoever curses his father or mother die the death”—which is not commanded in the case of those who curse other men. Therefore, some of our neighbors are such that we ought to love them more than others.

**I respond:** On this matter there are two opinions.

Some have asserted that all neighbors are to be loved equally out of charity as regards *affection*, but not as regards *exterior effects*. They say that the ordering of love must be understood as having to do with *exterior good works*, which we ought to confer more on those who are close to us than on strangers, but not as having to do with *interior affection*, which we should confer equally on all, even our enemies.

However, this claim is unreasonable. For the affections that belong to charity, which is an inclination of grace, are no less ordered than those that belong to natural appetite, which is an inclination of nature, since both inclinations proceed from God’s wisdom. Now we see in the case of natural things that a natural inclination is proportioned to an act or movement that befits the nature of the thing; for instance, earth has a greater inclination of gravity than water has, since it belongs to earth to exist below water. Therefore, it must be the case that the inclination of grace, i.e., the affection of charity, is likewise proportioned to what is to be done externally—so that, namely, we have a more intense affection of charity toward those to whom it is more fitting for us to be beneficent.

And so one should reply that even with respect to affection it is necessary to love one of our neighbors more than another. And the reason is that since the principle of love is (a) God along with (b) the one who is himself doing the loving (*ipse diligens*), it must be the case that the affection of love (*dilectionis affectus*) is greater in proportion to a greater proximity to one or the other of these principles. For as was explained above (a. 1), in everything in which a principle is found, the ordering has to do with the relation to that principle.

**Reply to objection 1:** There are two ways in which love can be unequal.

In one way, on the part of *the good that we wish for our friend*. And in this regard, we love every man equally out of charity, since we wish for all of them the same generic good, viz., eternal beatitude.

In the second way, love is called greater because of *a more intense act of loving*. And in this regard, it is not necessary to love all men equally.

An alternative reply is that there are two ways in which love can be had unequally with respect to certain individuals.

In one way, from the fact that some individuals are loved and others are not loved. And it is necessary to preserve this sort of inequality as regards *good deeds (in beneficentia)*, because we cannot do good to everyone. However, this sort of inequality of love should not be had as regards *good will (in benevolentia)*.

The other sort of inequality of love stems from the fact that some are loved more than others.

Therefore, Augustine intends to exclude the first sort of inequality and not this second sort, as is clear from what he says about good deeds (*de beneficentia*).

**Reply to objection 2:** Not all neighbors are equally related to God; instead, some are closer to Him because of their greater goodness. These are more to be loved out of charity than others who are less close to Him.

**Reply to objection 3:** This argument goes through in the case of quantity of love on the part of the good that we wish for our friends.

### Article 7

#### Should we love those who are better more than those who are more closely connected with us?

It seems that we should love those who are better more than those who are more closely connected with us:

**Objection 1:** It seems that what should not be hated for any reason is to be loved more than what is such that there is some reason why it should be hated—just as what is more white is less mixed with black. But there are reasons why persons connected with us should be hated—this according to Luke 14:26 (“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother ...”)—whereas there is no reason why good men should be hated. Therefore, it seems that those who are better are to be loved more than those who are more closely connected with us.

**Objection 2:** It is by charity that a man is especially conformed to God. But God loves more what is better. Therefore, through charity a man should likewise love one who is better more than one who is more connected with him.

**Objection 3:** As regards any friendship, what is to be loved more is what the friendship is based upon. For by natural friendship we love more those who are more closely connected with us by nature—for instance, our parents or children. But the friendship of charity is based upon a sharing of beatitude, to which being better is more relevant than being more closely connected with us. Therefore, out of charity we should love those who are better more than those who are more closely connected with us.

**But contrary to this:** 1 Timothy 5:8 says, “If any man does not take care of his own, and especially of those who belong to his own household, then he has denied the faith and is worse than a non-believer.” But the interior affection of charity should correspond to its exterior effect. Therefore, charity should be had more with respect to those who are closer to us than to those who are better.

**I respond:** Every act must be proportioned both to its *object* and to its *agent*. But from its *object* it has its species, whereas from the power of its *agent* it has the mode of its intensity. For instance, a movement has its species from its *terminus ad quem*, whereas it has its intensity from (a) the disposition of the thing that is moved (*ex dispositione mobilis*) and (b) the power of the thing that effects the movement (*ex virtute moventis*).

So, then, an act of loving (*dilectio*) has its species from its object, whereas it has its intensity from the one who has the act of loving (*ex parte ipsius diligentis*). Now the object of charity’s act of loving is God, whereas it is the man who has the act of loving.

Therefore, as far as its *species* is concerned, the diversity of the act of loving that belongs to charity should, in the case of neighbors to be loved, be thought of as corresponding to their *relation to God*—so that, namely, out of charity we will a greater good for a neighbor who is closer to God. For even though the good that charity wills for everyone, viz., eternal beatitude, is a single good in its own right (*unum secundum se*), it nonetheless has different degrees corresponding to the different [individual] participations in beatitude. And it belongs to charity to will that God’s justice be preserved, according to which those who are better participate more perfectly in beatitude. This has to do with the species of the

act of loving, because the different species of the act of loving correspond to the different goods that we wish for those whom we love.

By contrast, the *intensity* of the act of loving should be thought of as having to do with the *relation to the man who is doing the loving*. Accordingly, the man loves those who are closer to him with a more intense affection with respect to the good concerning which he loves them than he loves better men with respect to a greater good.

There are also other differences here that have to be taken into consideration. For instance, some neighbors are closer to us by natural origin, which they cannot withdraw from, since they are what they are because of their natural origin. By contrast, as was explained above (q. 24, aa. 4 and 10-11), the goodness of virtue, by which some draw near to God, can come and go, increase and decrease. And so out of charity I can will that this man, who is connected with me, should be better than some other man and so be able to attain a higher degree of beatitude.

And there are yet other ways in which we can out of charity love more intensely those who are more closely connected with us, since we love them in many ways. For with those who are not connected with us we have only the friendship of charity, whereas with those who are connected with us we have other types of friendship corresponding to the sort of connection they have with us. But since the good upon which any other sort of upright friendship is based is ordered toward the good that charity is based upon as its end, it follows that charity regulates (*imperet*) the act of any other friendship, in the way that a craft that has to do with the end regulates a craft that has to do with the means to that end. And so charity can regulate our loving someone because he is a relative or because he is connected with us or because he is our fellow citizen or because of any other licit bond of this sort that can be ordered toward the end of charity. And so out of charity, eliciting and regulating in many ways, we love those who are connected with us more.

**Reply to objection 1:** In the case of those close to us we are not commanded to hate that they are close to us; rather, we are commanded to hate only that they keep us from God. And in doing so they are not our relatives, but our enemies—this according to Micah 7:6 (“A man’s enemies are those of his own household”).

**Reply to objection 2:** Charity brings it about that a man is conformed to God according to a certain proportion, viz., in such a way that the man is related to what is his own in the way that God is related to what is His own. For as was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 19, a. 10), as long as this is done with a goodness of will, we are able out of charity to will certain things, because they are fitting for us, which God nonetheless does not will, because it is not fitting for Him to will them.

**Reply to objection 3:** As has been explained, charity elicits an act of loving not only in accord with the notion of the object but also in accord with the notion of the one doing the loving. Because of the latter, it happens that what is more closely connected with us is loved more.

## Article 8

### Should we especially love those who are connected with us by carnal origin?

It seems not to be the case that we should especially love those who are connected with us by carnal origin:

**Objection 1:** Proverbs 18:24 says, “A man amiable in society will be more a friend than a brother is.” And Maximus Valerius says, “The bond of friendship is very strong and in no way weaker than ties of blood. This is likewise more certain and tested: The lottery of birth yielded a fortuitous result, whereas it was by solid judgment that each individual’s uncoerced will contracted the bond of friendship.” Therefore, it is not the case that those who are connected with us by blood are to be loved

more than others.

**Objection 2:** In *De Officiis* 1 Ambrose says, “I love you whom I have begotten in the Gospel no less than if I had begotten you in marriage. For nature is no more vigorous in loving than grace is. We should love more firmly those whom we think will be with us forever than those who will be with us just in this world.” Therefore, it is not the case that our blood relatives are to be loved more than those with whom we are connected in other ways.

**Objection 3:** As Gregory says in a homily, “The proof of love is in the exhibiting of the deed.” But there are some individuals on whom we ought to confer the works of love more than on even our own relatives, in the way that in the military one’s commander is more to be obeyed than one’s father. Therefore, it is not the case that those who are connected with us by blood are to be loved in a more special way.

**But contrary to this:** As is clear from Exodus 20:12, honoring one’s parents is specifically commanded in the precepts of the Decalogue. Therefore, those who are joined to us by carnal origin are to be loved by us in a more special way.

**I respond:** As has been explained (a. 7), those who are more closely connected with us are to be loved more out of charity, both because they are loved more intensely and also because they are loved for more reasons.

Now the intensity of an act of loving stems from the connection of what is loved with the lover. And so the love for different individuals is to be measured by the different types of connection—so that, namely, an individual is loved more in what pertains to the connection in accord with which he is loved. And, further, one act of loving is to be compared to another by comparing the one connection with the other.

So, then, one should reply that the friendship among blood relatives is based upon the connection of natural origin, whereas the friendship among fellow citizens is based upon civic sharing, and the friendship among fellow soldiers is based upon sharing in battle. And so in matters that pertain to nature we ought to love our blood relatives more, whereas in matters that pertain to civic life we ought to love our fellow citizens more, and in matters of battle we should love our fellow soldiers more. This is why in *Ethics* 9 the Philosopher says, “What is proper and fitting should be rendered to each individual. And this is what people seem to do. For instance, they invite their relatives to weddings, and it will seem especially necessary to honor their parents and provide them with support.” And something similar holds for the other cases.

But if we are comparing one sort of connection with another, it is clear that the connection of natural origin is prior and more fixed, since it has to do with what belongs to the substance, whereas other connections supervene on it and can be removed. And so the friendship among blood relatives is more stable. But other friendships can be stronger as regards what is proper to each friendship.

**Reply to objection 1:** Since one’s friendship with associates is contracted by one’s own choice, it follows that in those things that fall under our choice, for instance, matters of action, this sort of love takes precedence over our love of our blood relatives, with the result that we agree more with these friends in matters of action.

However, our friendship with relatives is more stable, because it is more natural, and it prevails in matters that have to do with nature. Hence, we are more bound to our blood relatives in providing for necessities.

**Reply to objection 2:** Ambrose is talking about love as regards good deeds that have to do with the sharing of grace, viz., instruction in morals. For in this matter a man ought to help to a greater degree his spiritual children, whom he has given birth to spiritually, than his corporeal children, whom he ought to provide for more in matters of corporeal support.

**Reply to objection 3:** The fact that in matters of battle a soldier obeys his commander more than his father proves not that his father is loved less absolutely speaking, but only that he is loved less in a

certain respect, i.e., with respect to the love based upon sharing in battle.

### Article 9

#### Should a man love his children out of charity more than his parents?

It seems that a man should love his children (*filium*) out of charity more than his parents (*pater*):

**Objection 1:** We ought to love more those whom we are more obligated to do good to. But we are more obligated to do good to our children (*filiis*) than to our parents (*parentibus*). Therefore, children are to be loved more than parents.

**Objection 2:** Grace perfects nature. But as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 8, parents naturally love their children more than they are loved by their children. Therefore, we ought to love our children more than our parents.

**Objection 3:** Through charity a man's affections are conformed to God. But God loves his children more than He is loved by them. Therefore, we should likewise love our children more than our parents.

**But contrary to this:** Ambrose says, "God is to be loved first; second, one's parents; next, one's children; after that, the members of one's household."

**I respond:** As was explained above (aa. 4 and 7), there are two ways to think about the degrees of love:

In one way, on the part of the *object*. And on this score, what is to be loved more is that which has a greater sort of good and is more similar to God. And in this sense one's parents are to be loved more than one's children, since, we love our parents under the concept *principle*, which has the character of a more eminent good and is more similar to God.

In the second way, the degrees of love are calculated on the part of the *one doing the loving*. And in this sense what is loved more is what is more closely connected. On this score, as the Philosopher explains in *Ethics* 8, one's child is to be loved more than one's father. First, because parents love their children as something of their own, whereas a father is not something of his child. Second, because parents know with more certainty that some individuals are their children than vice versa. Third, because a child is closer to his parent, since he is a part, than a father is to his children, to whom he bears the relation *principle of*. Fourth, because parents have loved for a longer time, since a parent begins to love his child immediately, whereas the child begins to love his parents as time goes on. But love is stronger to the extent that it has lasted longer—this according to Ecclesiasticus 9:14 ("Do not forsake an old friend, for the new one will not be like to him").

**Reply to objection 1:** Honor and the submission of reverence are owed to the principle, whereas to the effect it is correspondingly fitting to receive the principle's influence and its provision. Because of this, what children owe more to their parents is honor, whereas what parents owe more to their children is concern about providing for them.

**Reply to objection 2:** Parents naturally love their children more by reason of the children's connection with them. But by reason of a more eminent good children naturally love their parents more.

**Reply to objection 3:** As Augustine says in *De Doctrina Christiana* 1, "God loves us to our advantage and for His own honor." And so because parents are related to us by the relation *principle of*, in the way that God is, it properly belongs to parents that honor be shown to them by their children, whereas what belongs to the children to their advantage is to be provided for by their parents—even though in a case of necessity children are obligated, from the benefits they have received, to provide especially for their parents.

## Article 10

### Should a man love his mother more than his father?

It seems that a man should love his mother more than his father:

**Objection 1:** As the Philosopher says in *De Generatione Animalium* 1, “the female provides the body in generation.” But as was explained in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 90, a. 2 and q. 118, a. 2), a man has his soul not from his father, but from God through creation. Therefore, a man has more from his mother than from his father. Therefore, he ought to love his mother more than his father.

**Objection 2:** A man ought to love more the one who loves him more. But a mother loves her children more than a father does; for in *Ethics* 9 the Philosopher says, “Mothers have greater love for their children. For generation is more laborious for the mothers, and mothers know more surely than fathers do that the children are theirs.” Therefore, the mother is to be loved more than the father.

**Objection 3:** More affection of love is owed to the one who has worked harder for us—this according to Romans 16:6 (“Greet Mary, who has labored much among you”). But the mother labors more in generation and education than the father does; hence, Ecclesiasticus 7:29 says, “Do not forget the groaning of your mother.” Therefore, a man should love his mother more than his father.

**But contrary to this:** In *Super Ezechiel* Jerome says, “After God, the Father of all, one’s father is to be loved.” And it is afterwards that he adds the mother.

**I respond:** What is said in these comparisons is to be understood ‘in its own right’ (*per se*), so that the question is understood to be whether one’s father *insofar as he is a father* is to be loved more than one’s mother *insofar as she is a mother*. For as the Philosopher points out in *Ethics* 8, in all cases of this sort there is such a range of goodness and badness that the friendship might be lessened or destroyed. This is why, as Ambrose puts it, “Good servants are to be preferred to bad children.”

However, speaking *per se*, the father is to be loved more than the mother. For the father and mother are loved as certain principles of natural origin. But the father is a principle in a more excellent way, since the father is a principle in the mode of an *agent*, whereas the mother is a principle in the mode of a *patient* and of *matter*. And so, speaking *per se*, the father is to be loved more.

**Reply to objection 1:** In human generation the mother supplies the body’s unformed matter, whereas the matter is formed through the formative power that exists in the father’s semen. And even though this sort of power cannot create a rational soul, it nonetheless disposes the bodily matter to receive this type of form.

**Reply to objection 2 [and objection 3]:** This argument pertains to the other reason for love, since the species of friendship by which we love someone who loves us is different from the species of friendship by which we love someone who has generated us. But here we are speaking of the friendship which is owed to the father and the mother in accord with the notion of generation.

## Article 11

### Should a husband love his wife more than his father and mother?

It seems that a husband should love his wife more than his father and mother:

**Objection 1:** No one puts a thing aside except for something that is loved more. But Genesis 2:24 says, “A man leaves his father and mother because of his wife.” Therefore, a husband should love his wife more than his father or mother.

**Objection 2:** In Ephesians 5:28 and 33, the Apostle says that husbands should love their wives as themselves. But a man should love himself more than his parents. Therefore, a husband should likewise

love his wife more than his parents.

**Objection 3:** Where there are multiple reasons for love, there ought to be a greater love. But there are multiple reasons for love in the case of the friendship which is had with one's wife; for as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 8, "In the case of this friendship, it seems to be *useful*, and *pleasant*, and for the sake of *virtue*, as long as the spouses are virtuous." Therefore, there should be more love for one's wife than for one's parents.

**But contrary to this:** As Ephesians 5:28-29 says, "A husband ought to love his wife as his own flesh." But as was explained above (a. 5), a man ought to love his own body less than his neighbor. But among our neighbors it is our parents that we ought to love more, Therefore, we should love our parents more than our spouse.

**I respond:** The degree of love can have to do with both (a) the character of the good and (b) the connection with the one who is doing the loving.

Therefore, in accord with the character of the good, i.e., the object of the act of loving, parents are to be loved more than spouses, since they are loved under the notion of a principle and of a more eminent good.

However, in accord with the notion of connection, one's wife is to be loved more, since a wife is joined to the man and they exist as one flesh—this according to Matthew 19:6 ("And they are no longer two, but one flesh"). And so one's wife is loved more intensely, while more reverence is to be shown to the parents.

**Reply to objection 1:** One's father and mother are not deserted in all respects because of his wife, since in certain respects a man ought to assist his parents more than his wife. Rather, having left his parents, a man adheres to his wife with respect to the union of carnal intercourse and the union of living together.

**Reply to objection 2:** The Apostle's words should be taken to mean not that a man should love his wife as much as he loves himself; instead, it should be taken to mean that the love which he has for himself is the reason for loving that he has with respect to the wife who is joined to him.

**Reply to objection 3:** Multiple reasons are likewise found in the friendship with one's parents, and in some respects they take precedence over the reasons for loving which are had with respect to one's spouse—this has to do with the character of the good, even though the latter reasons take precedence with respect to the character of the connection.

**Reply to the argument for the contrary:** This passage is not to be understood in such a way that the phrase 'as he loves his own body' implies equality of love; rather, it implies the reason for loving. For a husband loves his wife principally by reason of their carnal union.

## Article 12

### Should a man love his benefactor more than his beneficiary?

It seems that a man should love his benefactor more than his beneficiary:

**Objection 1:** As Augustine says in *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, "There is no greater incentive for someone to love you than for you to love him first; for he must have a hard mind indeed who, even if he does not will to offer love, wills not to return love."

**Objection 2:** Someone is more to be loved to the extent that a man sins more gravely if he ceases to love him or if he acts contrary to love. But one who does not love his benefactor or acts against him sins more gravely than if he ceases to love someone whom he has benefited up to now. Therefore, benefactors are to be loved more than beneficiaries.

**Objection 3:** As Jerome says, among all the things to be loved, God is especially to be loved and,

after Him, one's father. But these are our greatest benefactors. Therefore, a benefactor is to be loved most of all (*maxime*).

**But contrary to this:** In *Ethics* 9 the Philosopher says, "Benefactors seem to love those whom they benefit more, rather than vice versa."

**I respond:** As was explained above (aa.7, 9 and 11), there are two ways in which something is loved: in one way because it has the character of a more excellent good; in the second way, by reason of a closer connection.

Therefore, in the first way a benefactor is to be loved more. For since he is a principle of good in the one to whom he does good, he has the character of a more excellent good—just as was explained above in the case of a parent.

However, in the second way we love more those to whom we do good. The Philosopher proves this in *Ethics* 9 by means of four arguments.

First, because someone to whom good is done is, as it were, a sort of handiwork of the benefactor, and thus it is customary to say of someone that he will have been 'made' by his benefactor. But it is natural for everyone to love his own handiwork, just as we see that poets love their poems. And the reason why is that each thing loves its own being and its own life, and this is especially clear in its action.

Second, because each individual naturally loves that in which he sees his own good. To be sure, it is true both that the benefactor has some good in the one whom he benefits and also vice versa, but the benefactor sees in the one he benefits his own *upright* good, whereas the one who benefits sees in the benefactor his own *useful* good. But an upright good is considered more pleasant than a useful good, both because an upright good is longer-lasting—for usefulness quickly passes and the pleasure of the memory is not like the pleasure of something present—and also because we recall our own upright goods with more pleasure than the useful goods that have come to us from others.

Third, because it pertains to a lover to *act*, since he wills and does good for the one he loves, whereas it pertains to the one loved to *receive*. And so to love belongs to him who is more excellent.

Fourth, because it is more difficult to bestow benefits than to receive them. But we love more those things which we work hard at, whereas we easily look down upon what comes easily to us.

**Reply to objection 1:** There is in the benefactor something such that the one who receives the benefit is incited to love him. But the benefactor loves the one he benefits not because he is, as it were, incited by him, but because he is moved by himself. But what is from oneself (*ex se*) is better than what is through another (*per aliud*).

**Reply to objection 2:** The beneficiary's love for his benefactor is more of an obligation, and so its contrary has the character of a greater sin. By contrast, the benefactor's love for his beneficiary is more spontaneous, and so it has greater promptitude.

**Reply to objection 3:** God likewise loves us more than we love Him, and parents love their children more than they are loved by them. And yet it does not have to be the case that we love every one of those we benefit more than we love any of our benefactors. For we prefer the benefactors from whom we receive the greatest benefits—viz., God and our parents—to those individuals on whom we have bestowed lesser benefits.

## Article 13

### Does the order of charity remain in heaven?

It seems that the order of charity does not remain in heaven:

**Objection 1:** In *De Vera Religione* Augustine says, "Perfect charity is that we love greater goods more and lesser goods less." But in heaven there will be perfect charity. Therefore, someone will love

one who is better more than himself or more than those connected with him.

**Objection 2:** Someone to whom we will a greater good is loved more. But everyone who is in heaven wills a greater good to one who has more good. Otherwise, his will would not be conformed to God's will in everything. But the one who is better has more good. Therefore, in heaven everyone will love the better individual more. And so he will love the other more than himself, and he will love someone unconnected with him more than one who is close to him.

**Objection 3:** God will be the whole reason for loving in heaven, since at that point there will be a fulfillment of what is said in 1 Corinthians 15:28 ("God will be all things in all things"). Therefore, one who is closer to God will be loved more. And so one will love someone who is better more than himself, and he will love someone unconnected with him better than someone connected with him.

**But contrary to this:** Nature is not destroyed by grace, but is perfected by grace. But the order of charity posited above proceeds from nature itself. And all things naturally love themselves more than other things. Therefore, this particular ordering of charity (*iste ordo caritatis*) will remain in heaven.

**I respond:** The order of charity has to remain in heaven to the extent that God must be loved above all things. This will absolutely be the case when a man perfectly enjoys Him.

But as regards the ordering of oneself to others, it seems that a distinction must be made. For as was explained above, the degree of love can be distinguished either (a) according to the difference among the goods that one wishes for the other or (b) according to the intensity of the love.

In the first mode, one will love those who are better more than himself and those who are less good less than himself. For each one of the blessed shall will each individual to have what is due to him according to God's justice—and this because of the perfect conformity of his human will to God's will. Nor will there then be time for making progress through merit for a greater reward—as occurs now, when a man can desire both the virtue and the reward of a better man. Instead, at that time the will of each individual will rest within what has been determined by God.

However, in the second mode one will love himself more than his neighbor, even a better neighbor. For as was explained above (a. 7), the intensity of an act of loving stems from the side of the subject who loves. And the gift of grace is conferred on each individual by God (a) primarily in order that he might order his own mind toward God, and this belongs to love of oneself, and (b) secondarily in order that he might will the ordering of other things toward God or even bring this about in his own way.

On the other hand, as regards the ordering of one's neighbors to one another absolutely speaking, the better someone is, the more he will love him, in accord with the love of charity. For the whole of the beatified life consists in ordering the mind toward God. Hence, the whole order of love among the beatified will be observed in relation to God—so that, namely, one who is closer to God will be loved more and held by everyone to be more closely connected (*propinquior*) with himself. For at that time the provision will cease that is necessary in the present life, by which everyone, for whatever sort of necessity, provides more for those connected with him than for strangers. It is by reason of this provision that in this life a man, by the very inclination of charity, loves more someone who is connected with him and on whom he must bestow the effect of charity.

Still, in heaven it will happen that someone will love for many reasons those who are connected with him, since the upright causes of love will not cease in the mind of someone who is beatified. However, the reason for loving that is taken from closeness to God will be incomparably preferred to all these reasons.

**Reply to objection 1:** This argument should be conceded as regards those who are connected with oneself. But as regards himself, someone has to love himself more than others—more so to the extent that his charity is more perfect—since the perfection of charity orders a man perfectly to God and, as has been explained, this is relevant to his love of himself.

**Reply to objection 2:** This argument is about the ordering of love according to the level of the good that someone wills for the beloved.

**Reply to objection 3:** God will be the total reason for loving for each individual, because God is the total good for a man. For if we granted, *per impossibile*, that God were not a man's good, then the man would have no reason to love. And so in the ordering of love it must be the case that after God, a man loves himself the most.