

# Aquinas texts

IN SENT. III, D. 35, Q. 1

## ARTICULUS 1: UTRUM VITA CONVENIENTER DIVIDATUR PER ACTIVAM ET CONTEMPLATIVAM

Ad primum sic proceditur. Videtur quod vita inconvenienter dividatur per activam et contemplativam. Vivere enim, ut dicit philosophus in 2 de anima, viventibus est esse. Sed contemplativum et activum non ostendunt differentiam in essendo, sed magis in operando. Ergo non sunt differentiae vitae.

Praeterea, philosophus, in 2 de anima, dicit: *vivere secundum hoc principium*, scilicet animam vegetabilem, *inest viventibus*. Sed anima vegetabilis nullo modo participat contemplationem, neque etiam agere ipsius est, sicut dicitur in 6 Ethic. Ergo vita inconvenienter dividitur per activam et contemplativam.

Praeterea, in Lib. de causis dicitur, quod vita est continuus motus ab ente sempiterno. Sed motus operationem importat. Cum ergo omnis operatio sit actio quaedam, videtur quod omnis vita sit activa; et ita non erit differentia vitae activum.

Praeterea, philosophus, in 2 de anima, dividit vivere in quatuor, scilicet nutriri, sentire, et moveri secundum locum, et intelligere. Ergo insufficienter dividitur per has duas differentias, activum et contemplativum.

Praeterea, Augustinus, in Lib. de Civ. Dei, apponit tertium membrum, scilicet compositum ex utroque. Ergo videtur quod insufficienter dividatur per activum et contemplativum.

Sed in contrarium sunt multae auctoritates sanctorum, quae dicunt per Martham et Mariam, Luc. 10, signari duas vitas, activam et contemplativam.

Praeterea, vita hominis est secundum id a quo homo est homo. Hoc autem est intellectus. Cum ergo intellectus dividatur in activum et contemplativum, idest speculativum et practicum, videtur quod humana vita in haec duo dividi debeat.

Praeterea, secundum philosophum in 9 Ethic. illud dicitur esse uniuscujusque vita in quo maxime studet, sicut militis in pugnando, et ebriosis in potando; unde et in talibus ad amicos convivere volunt. Sed hoc in quo maxime studet quis, est illud quod finem suae vitae ponit. Cum igitur finis humanae vitae felicitas ponatur, quae secundum philosophos in civilem et contemplativam dividitur, ut patet in 10 Ethic., videtur etiam quod humana vita in activam et contemplativam dividi debeat.

Respondeo dicendum, quod nomen vitae ex hoc sumptum videtur quod aliquid a seipso potest moveri; et ideo ex hoc dicta sunt primo aliqua vivere, quia visa sunt a seipsis moveri, sicut plantae per motum augmenti, et animalia per motum insuper localem; ea vero quae visa sunt non moveri nisi ab aliis mota, dicta sunt mortua, vel vita carentia, sicut lapides et ligna. Unde etiam

per quamdam transumptionem ea quorum principium motus in ipsis est dicuntur viventia, quamvis non seipsa moveant, sicut aquae scaturientes impetu sui motus a terra dicuntur vivae: aquae autem immobiles congregatae in lacunis dicuntur aquae mortuae. Ulterius, nomen vitae attributum est omnibus operationibus quas aliquis a seipso exercet non ab alio motus, etiam si motus non sint; sicut nomen motus ad operationem quamlibet solet transferri, sicut dicitur sentire et intelligere motus; et secundum hoc non solum quae moventur a seipsis vel per augmentum vel localiter, dicuntur vivere, sed omnia quae ex seipsis appetunt, sentiunt, intelligunt: haec enim dicuntur operationes vitae. Quamvis autem plures dictarum operationum in aliquo sint, ex illa tamen dicitur vita ejus quae principalis in ipso est; sicut animalium vita dicitur in sentiendo, quamvis etiam nutriantur; et hominum in intelligendo, quamvis etiam sentiant; et hoc non solum est accipiendum secundum naturales potentias, sed etiam secundum habitus superadditos. Unde vita uniuscujusque hominis dicitur in hoc consistere in quo summum studium impendit et curam, ut dicit philosophus in 9 Ethic.: et sic accipiendo vitam, dividitur in activam et contemplativam. Cum enim vita humana ordinata (quia de inordinata non intendimus, sicut est voluptuosa, quae nec humana est, sed bestialis) consistat in operatione intellectus et rationis; habeat autem intellectiva pars duas operationes, unam quae est ipsius secundum se, aliam quae ipsius est secundum quod regit inferiores vires; erit duplex vita humana: una quae consistit in operatione quae est intellectus secundum seipsum, et haec dicitur contemplativa; alia quae consistit in operatione intellectus et rationis secundum quod ordinat et regit et imperat inferioribus partibus, et haec dicitur activa vita. Unde secundum philosophum agere proprie dicitur operatio quae est a voluntate imperata, in ipso operante consistens, non in materiam exteriorem transmutandam transiens: quia hoc esset facere, quod est operatio mechanicae artis. Morales enim virtutes quae in vita activa perficiunt, circa agibilia dicuntur.

Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod essentia rei ex operatione ipsius cognoscitur; et ideo ex operationibus quibus per prius convenit nomen vitae translatum est nomen ad ipsum esse, secundum quod alius est effectus talium operationum.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod secundum animam vegetabilem dicitur esse vivere, non quasi in operationibus ejus tantum vita consistat; sed quia operationes ejus sunt primae operationes vitae in nobis; per quem modum dicitur secundum tactum inesse sensus animalibus.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod illa auctoritas intelligenda est de vita qua corpora caelestia ponebantur a quibusdam vivere velut ex se mota: quam opinionem videtur sequi ille qui librum illum condidit.

Ad quartum dicendum, quod philosophus distinxit vitam secundum quod est communis omnibus viventibus; sed nunc loquimur de divisione vitae humanae.

Ad quintum dicendum, quod illud tertium membrum apponitur ab Augustino non quantum ad diversitatem vitae, sed magis quantum ad diversitatem viventium. Quidam enim sunt qui exercitiis activae insistunt principaliter, quamvis etiam quandoque contemplationis actus exequantur: quidam vero sunt qui postpositis curis activae, principaliter contemplationi student; alii vero qui circa utrumque insistunt. Sunt nihilominus et quaedam operationes quae utrumque requirunt, sicut praedicatio et doctrina, quae a contemplatione inchoatae in actionem terminant, sicut a causa in effectum procedentes; et hoc medium in extremis includitur.

## **ARTICULUS 2: UTRUM VITA CONTEMPLATIVA CONSISTAT TANTUM IN ACTU COGNITIVAE**

### **QUAESTIUNCULA 1**

Ad secundum sic proceditur. Videtur quod vita contemplativa consistat tantum in actu cognitivae. Quia contemplationis finis est veritas. Sed veritas tantum ad cognitionem pertinet. Ergo vita contemplativa tantum in operatione cognitivae consistit.

Praeterea, vita contemplativa a sanctis otium dicitur; et philosophus etiam in 10 Ethic. dicit ipsam vacationem. Sed voluntas est vis motiva. Cum ergo motus otio et vacationi repugnet, videtur quod vita contemplativa non consistat in actu affectivae, sed solum in actu cognitivae.

Praeterea, proportionantur operationes habitibus. Sed dona quae perficiunt in vita contemplativa tantum, ad cognitionem pertinent, scilicet sapientia et intellectus. Ergo vita contemplativa consistit tantum in cognitione.

Sed contra, Isidorus dicit in Lib. differentiarum, quod contemplativa vita est quae vacans ab omni negotio, in sola Dei dilectione defigitur. Sed dilectio ad affectivam pertinet. Ergo vita contemplativa non consistit tantum in cognitione.

Praeterea, gustare ad affectum pertinet, sicut videre ad intellectum. Sed Gregorius dicit, quod contemplativa vita sapore intimo venturam jam requiem degustat. Ergo contemplativa vita non consistit tantum in cognitione.

### **QUAESTIUNCULA 2**

Ulterius. Videtur quod consistat in operatione rationis. Vita enim contemplativa est vita humana. Sed humana vita est secundum operationem humanam. Cum ergo operatio humana sit secundum rationem, a qua dicitur homo, videtur quod vita contemplativa consistat in operatione rationis principaliter.

Praeterea, vita contemplativa praecipue consistit in cognitione divinorum. Sed invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt cognoscuntur, Roman. 1; cognoscere autem ex aliquibus alia, rationis est. Ergo vita contemplativa praecipue consistit in operatione rationis.

Praeterea, Richardus de sancto Victore dicit in libro de contemplatione: *contemplationis nostrae volatus multiformiter variatur; nunc de inferioribus ad summa ascendit, nunc de superioribus ad ima descendit; et nunc de parte ad totum, nunc de toto ad partem discurrit; nunc a majori, nunc a minori argumentum trahit.* Sed iste discursus videtur ad rationem pertinere. Ergo vita contemplativa principaliter in actu rationis consistit.

Sed contra, Bernardus in libro 2 de consideratione dicit, quod *contemplatio in hoc distat a*

*consideratione, quia consideratio ad inquisitionem magis se habet, contemplatio autem est verus certusque animi intuitus. Sed intueri est intellectus, inquirere autem rationis. Ergo contemplativa vita non consistit in actu rationis, sed intellectus.*

Praeterea, secundum philosophum in 10 Ethic., secundum vitam contemplativam communicamus cum Deo. Non autem communicamus cum eo secundum inquisitionem rationis, sed magis secundum intellectus intuitum. Ergo contemplativa vita non consistit in actu rationis, sed intellectus tantum.

### **QUAESTIUNCULA 3**

Ulterius. Videtur quod omnis actus intellectus ad vitam contemplativam pertineat. Sicut enim se habet vita activa ad agibilia, ita se habet contemplativa ad contemplabilia. Sed omnes actus circa agibilia ad vitam activam pertinent. Ergo omnes actus intellectus circa intelligibilia ad contemplativam vitam pertinent.

Praeterea, vita contemplativa, secundum philosophum in 10 Ethic., in philosophiae consideratione consistit. Sed philosophia est de omnibus entibus. Ergo omnis operatio intellectus pertinet ad vitam contemplativam, cum intellectus non sit non entium.

Praeterea, Richardus de sancto Victore ponit sex species contemplationis. Prima est, quando sensibilia per imaginationem considerantes, in eis divinam sapientiam admiramur. Secunda est, quando earum rationes inquirimus. Tertia, quando ex visibilibus in invisibilia ascendimus. Quarta, quando, remota imaginatione, in solis intelligibilibus versamur. Quinta, quando ea consideramus quae ex divina revelatione cognoscimus, non humana ratione. Sexta, quando ea consideramus quibus etiam humana ratio contradicere videtur. Sed in his speciebus comprehenditur omnis operatio intellectus. Ergo omnis operatio intellectus ad vitam contemplativam pertinet.

Sed contra, Isidorus in Lib. de Sum. bono: *contemplativa vita mundo renuntians, soli Deo vivere delectatur.* Sed non vivit soli Deo nisi quando Deum solum cogitat. Ergo non omnis operatio intellectus ad contemplativam vitam pertinet.

Praeterea, circa idem videtur esse vita contemplativa et felicitas contemplativa. Sed felicitas contemplativa est tantum in consideratione nobilissimi intelligibilis, quod constat Deum esse, secundum philosophum in 10 Ethic. Ergo vita contemplativa in sola Dei consideratione consistit.

### **QUAESTIUNCULA 1**

Respondeo dicendum ad primam quaestionem, quod vita, secundum quod nunc loquimur, consistit in operatione cui aliquis principaliter mancipatur: cujus ratione omnia quae impedire possunt, dimittit; quae autem adjuvant, quaerit et prosequitur. Hoc autem non potest esse nisi per voluntatem, cujus est inter opera humana unum prae aliis acceptare, quidquid sit illud. Voluntas autem cum sit motor omnium potentiarum animae, oportet quod ad objecta et actus omnium potentiarum se habeat, prout habent rationem boni: quia unusquisque actus debitus cujuscumque potentiae est bonum ejus. Et ideo vita contemplativa consistit in actu cognitivae virtutis

praeacceptatae per affectivam. Sed cum operatio sit quodammodo media inter operantem et objectum, velut perfectio ipsius operantis, et perfecta per objectum, a quo speciem recipit; ex duplici parte potest operatio cognitivae affectari. Uno modo inquantum est perfectio cognoscentis; et talis affectatio operationis cognitivae procedit ex amore sui: et sic erat affectio in vita contemplativa philosophorum. Alio modo inquantum terminatur ad objectum; et sic contemplationis desiderium procedit ex amore objecti: quia ubi amor, ibi oculus; et Matth. 6, 21: *ubi est thesaurus tuus, ibi est et cor tuum*; et sic habet affectionem vita contemplativa sanctorum, de qua loquimur. Sed tamen contemplatio essentialiter in actu cognitivae consistit, praeexigens caritatem ratione praedicta; unde Gregorius dicit super Ezech.: *contemplativae vitae est caritatem Dei et proximi tota mente retinere, ab exteriori actione quiescere; ita ut nil jam agere libeat, sed calcatis curis omnibus, ad videndam faciem sui creatoris animus inardescat.*

Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod finis contemplationis, inquantum contemplatio, est veritas tantum; sed secundum quod contemplatio accipit rationem vitae, sic induit rationem affectati et boni, ut dictum est.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod voluntas non solum est motiva quantum ad exteriores motus qui vacationi repugnant, sed etiam motuum interiorum, etiam ipsius intellectus: qui quidem motus aequivoce dicuntur, ut patet in 3 de anima; sunt enim actus perfecti; et ideo magis assimilantur quieti quam motui: et propter hoc qui operatur secundum intellectum, vacare dicitur ab exteriorum actione, ut patet in praedicta auctoritate.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod habitus contemplativae, quamvis sint in parte cognitiva, tamen possunt eorum actus a voluntate imperari vel acceptari; et sic in eis vita contemplativa consistit.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 2

Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum, quod vita contemplativa consistit in illa operatione quam homo prae aliis acceptat; unde habet rationem finis respectu aliarum humanarum operationum, quia aliae propter ipsam exercentur. Inquisitio autem rationis sicut a simplici intuitu intellectus progreditur (quia ex principiis quae quis intellectu tenet, ad inquisitionem procedit), ita etiam ad intellectus certitudinem terminatur, dum conclusiones inventae in principia resolvuntur, in quibus certitudinem habent. Et ideo vita contemplativa principaliter in operatione intellectus consistit; et hoc ipsum nomen contemplationis importat, quod visionem significat. Utitur tamen inquisitione rationis contemplativus, ut deveniat ad visionem contemplationis, quam principaliter intendit; et haec inquisitio, secundum Bernardum, dicitur consideratio.

Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod homo, inquantum est contemplativus, est aliquid supra hominem: quia in intellectus simplici visione continuatur homo superioribus substantiis, quae intelligentiae vel Angeli dicuntur, sicut animalia continuantur hominibus in vi aestimativa, quae est supremum in eis, secundum quam aliquid simile operibus rationis operantur.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod quamvis creaturae visibiles sint via deveniendi in contemplationem divinorum, tamen in hac via non consistit principaliter contemplatio, sed in termino viae, ut dictum est.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod Richardus non intendit quod in illis discursibus principaliter consistat vita contemplativa, sed quia utitur eis ad suum finem, sicut dictum est.

### **QUAESTIUNCULA 3**

Ad tertiam quaestionem dicendum, quod vita contemplativa sanctorum praesupponit amorem ipsius contemplati, ex quo procedit. Unde cum vita contemplativa consistat in operatione quam quis maxime intendit, oportet quod sit circa contemplationem maxime amati: hoc autem Deus est: unde principaliter consistit in operatione intellectus circa Deum; unde Gregorius, super Ezech., dicit, quod contemplativa vita ad solum videndum principium anhelat, scilicet Deum. Nihilominus tamen et contemplativus considerat alia, inquantum ad Dei contemplationem ordinantur sicut ad finem, puta creaturas, in quibus admiratur divinam majestatem et sapientiam et beneficia Dei, ex quibus inardescit in ejus amorem; et peccata propria, ex quorum ablutione mundatur cor, ut Deum videre possit. Unde et nomen contemplationis significat illum actum principalem, quo quis Deum in seipso contemplatur; sed speculatio magis nominat illum actum quo quis divina in rebus creatis quasi in speculo inspicit. Et similiter etiam felicitas contemplativa, de qua philosophi tractaverunt, in contemplatione Dei consistit: quia, secundum philosophum, consistit in actu altissimae potentiae quae in nobis est, scilicet intellectus, et in habitu nobilissimo, scilicet sapientia, et etiam objecto dignissimo, quod Deus est. Unde enim philosophi ultimum tempus vitae suae reservabant, ut dicitur, ad contemplandum divina, praecedens tempus in aliis scientiis expendentibus, ut ex illis habiliores fierent ad considerandum divina.

Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod actus vitae activae non habent ex seipsis ordinem sicut actus vitae contemplativae; unde non potest dici, simpliciter loquendo, quod consistat in aliquo illorum principaliter; sed quo ad aliquem consistit principaliter in hoc in quo ille magis exercitatur; sicut quidam magis insistunt operibus justitiae, quidam vero operibus temperantiae, et sic de aliis.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod philosophus ibi accipit philosophiam stricte pro sapientia de divinis, quae speciali nomine philosophia prima dicitur.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod quamvis illa consideret interdum contemplativus, non tamen in his principaliter consistit contemplativa vita.

### **ARTICULUS 3: UTRUM VITA ACTIVA CONSISTAT TANTUM IN HIS QUAE SUNT AD ALTERUM**

#### **QUAESTIUNCULA 1**

Ad tertium sic proceditur. Videtur quod activa vita non consistat principaliter in his quae ad alterum sunt. Vita enim activa ordinatur ad contemplativam, inquantum disponit hominem ad contemplationis actum. Sed per virtutes quae ordinant hominem in seipso, maxime disponitur homo ad contemplationem, sicut per castitatem, ut dicit Commentator in 7 Physic. Ergo vita activa praecipue consistit in his quae sunt hominis ad seipsum.

Praeterea, vita contemplativa principaliter consistit in contemplatione ejus quod maxime diligitur. Ergo et vita activa similiter. Sed homo magis debet seipsum diligere quam alios in his quae virtutis sunt, ut supra, dist. 29, qu. 1, art. 5, dictum est. Ergo et vita activa magis consistit in hoc quod homo seipsum ordinet quam aliis intendat.

Praeterea, in his praecipue videtur consistere activa vita in quibus a contemplativa dividitur. Sed in his quae ad alium sunt etiam contemplativa communicat: quia ad eandem vitam pertinere videtur contemplari et contemplata docere. In passionibus autem propriis moderandis non communicat activa vita cum contemplativa. Ergo activa vita praecipue consistit in his quae sunt ad seipsum.

Sed contra, Isidorus in Lib. differentiarum: *activa vita est quae in operibus justitiae et proximi utilitate versatur*. Sed utrumque istorum ad alterum pertinere videtur. Ergo in his quae ad alterum sunt, praecipue vita activa consistit.

Praeterea, vita activa fecunda dicitur; unde per Liam significatur. Sed fecunditas ista non consistit nisi in operationibus quae fiunt ad alios. Ergo vita activa in his praecipue consistit.

## **QUAESTIUNCULA 2**

Ulterius. Videtur quod cognitio nullo modo ad activam pertineat. Sicut enim se habet vita contemplativa ad cognitionem, ita se habet vita activa ad actionem. Ergo proportionalitate transversa, sicut se habet vita contemplativa ad actionem, ita se habet vita activa ad cognitionem. Sed nihil actionis ad contemplativam vitam pertinet. Ergo nihil cognitionis pertinet ad activam.

Praeterea, vita activa consistit totaliter in operationibus virtutum moralium, ad quas scire parum vel nihil confert, ut philosophus dicit in 2 Ethic. Ergo videtur quod ad activam nihil cognitionis pertineat.

Praeterea, si aliqua cognitio ad activam vitam pertineret, praecipue videretur ad ipsam pertinere consideratio priorum actuum. Sed considerare peccata quae quis fecit, pertinet ad vitam contemplativam, ut dicit Bernardus, qui secundam speciem contemplationis ponit, qua quisque judicia Dei et peccata sua recogitat. Ergo nulla cognitio ad activam vitam pertinet.

Sed contra, ad activam vitam pertinent consilii et scientiae dona, quae quidem cognitionem important. Ergo aliqua cognitio est in vita activa.

Praeterea, philosophus dicit quod prudentia est cognata morali virtuti. Sed prudentia cognitionem importat. Ergo cum in moralibus virtutibus activa vita constet, videtur quod in activa vita sit aliquid cognitionis.

## **QUAESTIUNCULA 3**

Ulterius. Videtur quod vita activa non possit esse simul cum contemplativa. Quia vita de qua hic loquimur, consistit in hoc in quo homo maxime studet. Sed impossibile est quod homo duobus summum studium apponat. Ergo impossibile est quod in homine sit simul vita activa et

contemplativa.

Praeterea, vita activa significatur per Martham, quae turbatur circa plurima, Luc. 10. Sed turbatio vacationi repugnat quam contemplatio requirit. Ergo vita activa non est simul cum contemplativa.

Praeterea, vita activa introducit ad contemplativam; unde Gregorius: *qui ad arcem contemplationis ascendere desiderat, prius necesse est ut in campo actionis se exerceat*. Sed quod introducit ad aliquid non est necessarium illo adveniente: quia secundum Bernardum, *quid necesse est scalis tenenti jam solium?* Ergo activa vita non est simul cum contemplativa.

Sed contra est quod Augustinus dicit in Lib. de Civ. Dei, quod quoddam genus hominum est compositum ex otioso et actuoso; et loquitur de otio contemplationis. Gregorius etiam dicit super Ezech., quod plerumque a contemplativa vita ad activam utiliter animus reflectitur. Ergo contemplativa vita et activa possunt esse simul.

Praeterea, beata virgo fuit in utraque vita; et ideo secundum Anselmum in assumptione ejus legitur Evangelium de Martha et Maria, quae significant vitam activam et contemplativam. Sed beata virgo fuit tantum viatrix. Ergo in aliquo viatore potest esse simul activa et contemplativa vita.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 1

Respondeo dicendum ad primam quaestionem, quod activa vita consistit in omnibus agibilibus, sive sint ad seipsum, sive ad alium; sed principaliter consistit in his quae ad alium sunt; quia bonum multorum, secundum philosophum in principio Ethic., est divinius quam bonum unius; unde et justitia quae ad alterum est, a philosopho in 5 Ethic., dicitur esse pulcherrima virtutum. Sicut autem vita contemplativa consistit principaliter in optimo contemplabili, ita vita activa in optimo agibili.

Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod per ea quae ad seipsum sunt homo disponit se tantum ad contemplativam; licet per ea quae ad alium comparantur, homo et se et alios disponat, ubi divinius est.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod in hoc ipso quod homo aliorum saluti et regimini studet, se plus diligit, et sibi meliorem partem reservat: quia divinius est et sibi et aliis causam bonae operationis esse, quam sibi tantum, sicut dicit philosophus in 10 Ethic.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod doctrina est duplex. Quaedam quae ad cognitionem veritatis tantum ordinatur; et haec quamvis ad alterum sit, limites tamen vitae contemplativae non exit. Est autem quaedam doctrina quae ordinatur ad persuadendum bonos mores, quae praedicatio dicitur; et haec ad vitam activam pertinet. Unde Gregorius: *qui ad laborem praedicationis se dirigit, minus videt, et amplius parit*: et sic significatur per Liam, quae erat fecunda, et lippis oculis. Vel dicendum, quod doctrina potest dupliciter considerari. Uno modo secundum quod est ad exercitium cognitionis, et profectum ipsius docentis; et sic ad vitam contemplativam pertinet. Alio modo secundum quod intenditur bonum alterius. Sic autem ea quae cognitionis sunt etiam



speculativae, exercentur per modum dispositionis rerum temporalium (inter quae proximus computatur), quod activae vitae est; et ideo Gregorius dicit super Ezech., quod *activa vita est panem esurienti tribuere, verbum sapientiae nescientem docere* et cetera.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 2

Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum, quod duplex est cognitio. Una speculativa, cujus finis est veritas, secundum philosophum in 2 Metaph. Alia cujus finis est operatio, quae est causa et regula eorum quae per hominem fiunt. Quae autem ab homine fiunt, quaedam dicuntur factibilia, quae fiunt per transmutationem aliquam exterioris materiae, sicut contingit in operationibus artis mechanicae; quaedam vero non transeunt in transmutationem exterioris materiae, sed in moderationem propriarum passionum et operationum. Ad utrumque autem istorum practica cognitio dirigit. Unde non omnis practica cognitio in vita activa essentialiter invenitur, sed illa tantum quae in agibilibus dirigit opera quae sunt virtutis moralis. Haec enim cognitio ad electionem requiritur, in qua principaliter consistit moralis virtus. Contemplativa autem cognitio essentialiter non ingreditur activam vitam, quia in operabilibus humanis, cum non habeant veritatem nisi contingentem, propter seipsam veritas nunquam quaereretur: unde etiam in scientiis moralibus finis non est cognitio, sed opus, secundum philosophum in 2 Ethic. Sed tamen cognitio contemplativa aeternorum aliquando pertinet ad activam vitam, non quod sit de essentia ejus, sed quia praeexigitur ad ipsam sicut causa, dum rationes vivendi ex contemplatione aeternorum sumuntur. Sicut enim intellectus est rationis et principium et terminus, ita et vita contemplativa respectu activae; et ideo Gregorius dicit super Ezech., quod per hoc quod contemplativa mentem accendit, perfectius activa tenetur.

Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod actio non dirigit contemplationem, sicut cognitio activa dirigit actionem; et ideo non est similis ratio.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod ad virtutem moralem scire speculative de his quae ab homine non fiunt, nihil prodest; de his autem quae ab homine fiunt, parum confert; sed scientia practica multum confert, cum sit regula actionis.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod praeteritum jam transit in necessarium; unde consideratio praeteritorum peccatorum magis ad contemplationem quam ad practicam pertinet.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 3

Ad tertiam quaestionem dicendum, quod in omnibus dispositionibus naturalibus contingit quod dispositio in suo perfecto esse attingit id ad quod disponit, quod etiam erat per quamdam inchoationem, dum dispositio ad perfectionem tendebat, sicut patet de calore et forma ignis; quia quando calor completus est in termino alterationis, forma ignis inducitur, et calor simul cum forma ignis manet; dum vero erat alteratio, non erat forma ignis, nisi secundum quamdam inchoationem. Vita autem activa est dispositio ad contemplativam; unde Isidorus in Lib. de Sum. bono: *qui prius in vita activa proficit, bene ad contemplationem conscendit*. Et ideo quamdiu homo non pervenit ad perfectionem in vita activa, non potest in eo esse contemplativa vita, nisi secundum quamdam inchoationem imperfecte: tunc enim difficultatem homo patitur in actibus virtutum moralium, et oportet quod tota sollicitudine ad ipsos intendat, unde retrahitur a studio

contemplationis. Sed quando jam vita activa perfecta est, tunc operationes virtutum moralium in promptu habet, ut eis non impeditus libere contemplationi vacet. Tamen secundum quod homo est magis vel minus perfectus in vita activa, circa plura vel pauciora occupari potest activae vitae simul cum contemplativa. Et quia praelatorum est in utraque vita perfectos esse, utpote qui medii sunt inter Deum et plebem, a Deo recipientes per contemplationem, et populo tradentes per actionem; ideo oportet eos in moralibus virtutibus perfectos esse; et similiter praedicatores; alias indigne quis praelationis vel praedicationis officium assumit.

Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod ad diversa potest homo principaliter intendere diversis temporibus, quamvis non simul.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod turbatio in vita activa non contingit postquam ad perfectionem venit: quia tunc jam delectabiliter et faciliter operatur non perturbatus.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod dispositiones quae essentialiter habent imperfectionem annexam, non manent cum eo ad quod disponunt, sicut fides non manet cum visione; sed aliae dispositiones possunt simul manere, sicut dictum est, et sic est de vita activa.

## **ARTICULUS 4: UTRUM ACTIVA VITA SIT NOBILIOR QUAM CONTEMPLATIVA**

### **QUAESTIUNCULA 1**

Ad quartum sic proceditur. Videtur quod activa vita sit nobilior quam contemplativa. Tullius enim, in Lib. de Offic., probat praeeminentiam justitiae ad alias virtutes; quia propter exercitium actus ejus, actus aliarum interimuntur. Sed similiter aliquis revocatur ab otio contemplationis, ut fructum faciat per laborem actionis. Ergo activa vita est dignior quam contemplativa.

Praeterea, bonum gentis divinius est quam bonum unius. Sed vita contemplativa consistit in bono unius hominis, vita activa in bono multorum. Ergo vita activa est nobilior quam contemplativa.

Praeterea, in omnibus artibus et potentiis imperans est nobilior imperato. Sed politica quae ad vitam activam pertinet, imperat omnibus disciplinis, et disponit de his quae ad contemplativam vitam pertinent, secundum philosophum in 1 Ethic. Ergo vita activa est dignior quam contemplativa.

Praeterea, secundum Dionysium, nihil est divinius quam Dei cooperatorem fieri. Hoc autem fit per exercitium activae, qua homo aliorum reductioni in Deo studet. Ergo videtur esse nobilissimum.

Sed contra est quod dicit dominus, Luc. 10, 43: *Maria optimam partem elegit*. Per Mariam autem vita contemplativa significatur. Ergo vita contemplativa nobilior est quam activa.

Praeterea, quanto vita alicujus est caelesti vitae similior, tanto est nobilior. Sed vita contemplativa est similior caelesti quam activa: quia in caelesti vita, ut dicit Augustinus, vacabimus et videbimus; videbimus et amabimus; amabimus et laudabimus: quod ad vitam

contemplativam pertinet. Ergo vita contemplativa est nobilior quam activa.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 2

Ulterius. Videtur quod etiam vita contemplativa sit majoris meriti quam activa. Gregorius enim dicit in moralibus: *contemplativa major est merito quam activa: quia activa in usu praesentis operis laborat; contemplativa vero in sapore intimo venturam jam requiem degustat.*

Praeterea, supra dictum est, distinct. 30, quaest. unica, art. 4, quod magis consistit meritum in dilectione Dei quam proximi. Sed in contemplativa vita homo magis insistit dilectioni Dei, in activa autem magis proximi. Ergo contemplativa est majoris meriti quam activa.

Praeterea, quanto magis aliquid beneficiatur a Deo, tanto est majoris meriti. Sed secundum philosophum in 10 Ethic., Deus maxime beneficiat eos qui contemplationi student, quasi sibi simillimos. Ergo videtur quod vita contemplativa plus habeat de merito quam activa.

Sed contra, totum meritum hominis consistit in acceptatione divina. Sed Gregorius dicit super Ezech.: *nullum sacrificium est Deo magis acceptum quam regimen animarum.* Ergo cum hoc pertineat ad laborem activae, videtur quod in activa sit majus meritum.

Praeterea, meritum contra praemium dividitur. Sed contemplativa vita plus habet de ratione praemii quam activa: quia pascitur a domino contemplativa, sed activa pascit, ut dicit Gregorius. Ergo activa plus habet de merito.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 3

Ulterius. Videtur quod contemplativa vita non sit diuturnior quam activa. Vita enim activa fuit in Christo perfecta. Sed ipse fuit perfectus comprehensor. Ergo vita activa manebit in patria; et ita non est minus diuturna quam contemplativa.

Praeterea, homines erunt in patria aequales Angelis. Sed in Angelis est utraque vita: quia quidam sunt assistentes, quod ad contemplationem pertinet; quidam ministrantes, quod pertinet ad actionem. Ergo utraque vita etiam in hominibus in patria erit; et sic idem quod prius.

Praeterea, in patria manebunt virtutes cardinales, et habebunt aliquos actus: similiter etiam et dona omnia. Sed virtutes cardinales perficiunt in activa vita, et similiter quaedam dona. Ergo in patria manebit vita activa; et sic idem quod prius.

Sed contra, Luc. 10, 43: *Maria optimam partem elegit.* Glossa: *contemplativa hic incipit, et in caelesti patria perficitur; activa autem cum corpore deficit.*

Praeterea, philosophus in 10 Ethic. dicit, quod contemplativa vita diuturnior est quam activa.

## QUAESTIUNCULA 1

Respondeo dicendum ad primam quaestionem, quod duplex est ratio boni. Aliquid enim dicitur

bonum, quod propter seipsum est desiderandum: et sic vita contemplativa simpliciter melior est quam activa, inquantum magis assimilatur illi vitae ad quam per activam et contemplativam nitimur pervenire; unde et contemplativa est finis activae, et fini ultimo vicinior. Aliquid vero dicitur bonum quasi propter aliud eligendum; et in hac via vita activa praeminet contemplativae. Vita enim contemplativa non ordinatur ad aliquid aliud in ipso in quo est: quia vita aeterna non est nisi quaedam consummatio contemplativae vitae, quae per vitam contemplativam in praesenti quodammodo praelibatur: unde non restat quod ordinetur ad aliud, nisi secundum quod bonum unius hominis ordinatur ad bonum multorum, ad quod propinquius se habet vita activa quam contemplativa. Unde activa quantum ad hanc partem quae saluti proximorum studet, est utilior quam contemplativa; sed contemplativa est dignior: quia dignitas significat bonitatem alicujus propter seipsum, utilitas vero propter aliud. Sed vita activa quae non ad alium, sed ad seipsum tantum ordinatur, neque dignior neque utilior est quam contemplativa, immo comparatur ad contemplativam sicut utile ad id ad quod est utile.

Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod vita contemplativa propter activam intermittitur ad tempus, non simpliciter; seu ratione utilitatis, non ratione dignitatis.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod sicut bonum unius consistit in actione et contemplatione; ita et bonum multitudinis, secundum quod contingit multitudinem contemplationi vacare. Sed ad bonum multitudinis pervenitur per regimen activae vitae: unde ex hoc non probatur quod activa sit dignior, sed utilior.

Ad tertium dicendum, quod politica, ut dicit philosophus in 6 Ethic., non praecipit sapientiae, et aliis quae ad vitam contemplativam pertinent, sed imperat quaedam propter ipsa; sicut etiam imperat quaedam propter Deum, cui praecipit sic vel sic cultum exhiberi.

Ad quartum dicendum, quod intelligendum est ratione utilitatis in alterum provenientis.

## **QUAESTIUNCULA 2**

Ad secundam quaestionem dicendum, quod meritum pendet ex radice caritatis; unde contingit quandoque quod in activa quis plus mereatur quam in contemplativa, vel e converso, secundum quod majorem habet caritatem vel minorem. Nihilominus tamen cum quaeritur de duobus in genere quid sit majoris meriti, intelligendum est quantum pertinet ad rationem ipsorum actuum, non quantum ad ipsos operantes. Est ergo duplex meritum; scilicet dimissionis culpa, et consecutionis gloriae: quantum ad primum, majoris meriti dicitur activa quam contemplativa, inquantum laboriosior; unde habet plus de ratione satisfactionis. Quantum autem ad meritum consecutionis gloriae, sic contemplativa vita est majoris meriti quam activa quantum ad puritatem: quia non admiscetur ei tantum de pulvere terrenorum, sicut fit in activa vita. Sed quantum ad intensionem meriti videtur contemplativa iterum majoris meriti illa parte activae quae circa sui moderationem studet; minoris autem quantum ad illam partem quae profectui aliorum invigilat: quia hoc ipsum videtur esse fortioris caritatis secundum genus, quod homo, praetermissa consolatione qua in Dei contemplatione reficitur, gloriam Dei in aliorum conversione quaerat: quia etiam in humana amicitia verus amicus quaerit magis bonum amici quam de ejus praesentia delectari.

Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod contemplativa dicitur esse a Gregorio major merito, quia minus habet de impuritate demeriti admixtum.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod ex dilectione Dei videtur procedere quod homo praetermissa propria consolatione voluntatem Dei implere studeat in aliorum salute; unde Gregorius super Ezech.: *est amanti animae non parva consolatio, si cum ipsa differtur, per eam multae colligantur.*

Ad tertium dicendum, quod philosophus loquitur de contemplativa vita per comparisonem ad activam, quae in rebus humanis negotiatur, non autem respectu illius quae proximorum saluti insistit.

### QUAESTIUNCULA 3

Ad tertiam quaestionem dicendum, quod, sicut dictum est de donis et virtutibus perficientibus in vita activa, quod manent in patria, sed non quantum ad eosdem actus; similiter etiam dicendum est de vita activa: unde vita activa quantum ad illos actus quos modo habet, quibus turbatur de proximorum necessitatibus et de propriis passionibus, non remanebit: quia tunc panem esurienti non porriget, ut in Glossa inducta subjungitur. Manebit autem quantum ad alios actus qui erunt virtutum et donorum in patria. Vita autem contemplativa nihilominus est diuturnior quam activa: quia manet etiam quo ad illos actus quos in via habet: qui quidem in statu viae sunt imperfecti, sed in patria perficientur. Unde Gregorius dicit super Ezech. de contemplativa vita: *etiam cum contendimus, vix aliquid aut parum attingere valemus.*

Ad primum tamen dicendum, quod non est simile de Christo et de aliis: quia ipse erat verus viator et comprehensor; unde simul erat in actu perfecto quantum ad utramque vitam etiam secundum actus viae.

Ad secundum dicendum, quod Angeli ex ordine naturae sunt medii inter Deum et homines: et ideo eis competit ministerium custodiae, et hujusmodi; non autem animabus sanctorum.

Ad tertium patet solutio per id quod dictum est in corp.

Ad alia etiam patet solutio ex praedictis.

## SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, II-II

### QUESTION 179. THE DIVISION OF LIFE INTO ACTIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE

#### ARTICLE 1. WHETHER LIFE IS FITTINGLY DIVIDED INTO ACTIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that life is not fittingly divided into active and contemplative. For the soul is the principle of life by its essence: since the Philosopher says (*De Anima* ii, 4) that "in living things to live is to be." Now the soul is the principle of action and contemplation by its powers. Therefore it would seem that life is not fittingly divided into active and contemplative.

**Objection 2.** Further, the division of that which comes afterwards is unfittingly applied to that which comes first. Now active and contemplative, or "speculative" and "practical," are differences of the intellect (*De Anima* iii, 10); while "to live" comes before "to understand," since "to live" comes first to living things through the vegetative soul, as the Philosopher states (*De Anima* ii, 4). Therefore life is unfittingly divided into active and contemplative.

**Objection 3.** Further, the word "life" implies movement, according to Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* vi): whereas contemplation consists rather in rest, according to (*Wisdom* 8:1)6: "When I enter into my house, I shall repose myself with her." Therefore it would seem that life is unfittingly divided into active and contemplative.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (*Hom. xiv super Ezech.*): "There is a twofold life wherein Almighty God instructs us by His holy word, the active life and the contemplative."

**I answer that,** Properly speaking, those things are said to live whose movement or operation is from within themselves. Now that which is proper to a thing and to which it is most inclined is that which is most becoming to it from itself; wherefore every living thing gives proof of its life by that operation which is most proper to it, and to which it is most inclined. Thus the life of plants is said to consist in nourishment and generation; the life of animals in sensation and movement; and the life of men in their understanding and acting according to reason. Wherefore also in men the life of every man would seem to be that wherein he delights most, and on which he is most intent; thus especially does he wish "to associate with his friends" (*Ethic.* ix, 12). Accordingly since certain men are especially intent on the contemplation of truth, while others are especially intent on external actions, it follows that man's life is fittingly divided into active and contemplative.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Each thing's proper form that makes it actually "to be" is properly that thing's principle of operation. Hence "to live" is, in living things, "to be," because living things through having "being" from their form, act in such and such a way.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Life in general is not divided into active and contemplative, but the life of man, who derives his species from having an intellect, wherefore the same division applies to intellect and human life.

**Reply to Objection 3.** It is true that contemplation enjoys rest from external movements. Nevertheless to contemplate is itself a movement of the intellect, in so far as every operation is described as a movement; in which sense the Philosopher says (De Anima iii, 7) that sensation and understanding are movements of a kind, in so far as movement is defined "the act of a perfect thing." On this way Dionysius (Div. Nom. iv) ascribes three movements to the soul in contemplation, namely, "straight," "circular," and "oblique" [Cf. II-II:180:6].

## **ARTICLE 2. WHETHER LIFE IS ADEQUATELY DIVIDED INTO ACTIVE AND CONTEMPLATIVE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that life is not adequately divided into active and contemplative. For the Philosopher says (Ethic. i, 5) that there are three most prominent kinds of life, the life of "pleasure," the "civil" which would seem to be the same as the active, and the "contemplative" life. Therefore the division of life into active and contemplative would seem to be inadequate.

**Objection 2.** Further, Augustine (De Civ. Dei xix, 1,2,3,19) mentions three kinds of life, namely the life of "leisure" which pertains to the contemplative, the "busy" life which pertains to the active, and a third "composed of both." Therefore it would seem that life is inadequately divided into active and contemplative.

**Objection 3.** Further, man's life is diversified according to the divers actions in which men are occupied. Now there are more than two occupations of human actions. Therefore it would seem that life should be divided into more kinds than the active and the contemplative.

**On the contrary,** These two lives are signified by the two wives of Jacob; the active by Lia, and the contemplative by Rachel: and by the two hostesses of our Lord; the contemplative life by Mary, and the active life by Martha, as Gregory declares (Moral. vi, 37 [Hom. xiv in Ezech.]). Now this signification would not be fitting if there were more than two lives. Therefore life is adequately divided into active and contemplative.

**I answer that,** As stated above (Article 1, Reply to Objection 2), this division applies to the human life as derived from the intellect. Now the intellect is divided into active and contemplative, since the end of intellectual knowledge is either the knowledge itself of truth, which pertains to the contemplative intellect, or some external action, which pertains to the practical or active intellect. Therefore life too is adequately divided into active and contemplative.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The life of pleasure places its end in pleasures of the body, which are common to us and dumb animals; wherefore as the Philosopher says (Ethic. i, 5), it is the life "of a beast." Hence it is not included in this division of the life of a man into active and contemplative.

**Reply to Objection 2.** A mean is a combination of extremes, wherefore it is virtually contained in them, as tepid in hot and cold, and pale in white and black. On like manner active and contemplative comprise that which is composed of both. Nevertheless as in every mixture one of

the simples predominates, so too in the mean state of life sometimes the contemplative, sometimes the active element, abounds.

**Reply to Objection 3.** All the occupations of human actions, if directed to the requirements of the present life in accord with right reason, belong to the active life which provides for the necessities of the present life by means of well-ordered activity. If, on the other hand, they minister to any concupiscence whatever, they belong to the life of pleasure, which is not comprised under the active life. Those human occupations that are directed to the consideration of truth belong to the contemplative life.

## QUESTION 180. THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

### ARTICLE 1. WHETHER THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE AFFECTIONS, AND PERTAINS WHOLLY TO THE INTELLECT?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the contemplative life has nothing to do with the affections and pertains wholly to the intellect. For the Philosopher says (Metaph. ii, text. 3 [Ed Did. ia, 1] that "the end of contemplation is truth." Now truth pertains wholly to the intellect. Therefore it would seem that the contemplative life wholly regards the intellect.

**Objection 2.** Further, Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37; Hom. xix in Ezech.) that "Rachel, which is interpreted 'vision of the principle' [Or rather, 'One seeing the principle,' if derived from *rah* and *irzn*; Cf. Jerome, De Nom. Hebr.], signifies the contemplative life." Now the vision of a principle belongs properly to the intellect. Therefore the contemplative life belongs properly to the intellect.

**Objection 3.** Further, Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that it belongs to the contemplative life, "to rest from external action." Now the affective or appetitive power inclines to external actions. Therefore it would seem that the contemplative life has nothing to do with the appetitive power.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the contemplative life is to cling with our whole mind to the love of God and our neighbor, and to desire nothing beside our Creator." Now desire and love pertain to the affective or appetitive power, as stated above (I-II:25:2; I-II:26:2). Therefore the contemplative life has also something to do with the affective or appetitive power.

**I answer that,** As stated above (II-II:179:1) theirs is said to be the contemplative who are chiefly intent on the contemplation of truth. Now intention is an act of the will, as stated above (I-II:12:1), because intention is of the end which is the object of the will. Consequently the contemplative life, as regards the essence of the action, pertains to the intellect, but as regards the motive cause of the exercise of that action it belongs to the will, which moves all the other powers, even the intellect, to their actions, as stated above (I:82:4; I-II:09:1). Now the appetitive power moves one to observe things either with the senses or with the intellect, sometimes for love of the thing seen because, as it is written (Matthew 6:21), "where



thy treasure is, there is thy heart also," sometimes for love of the very knowledge that one acquires by observation. Wherefore Gregory makes the contemplative life to consist in the "love of God," inasmuch as through loving God we are aflame to gaze on His beauty. And since everyone delights when he obtains what he loves, it follows that the contemplative life terminates in delight, which is seated in the affective power, the result being that love also becomes more intense.

**Reply to Objection 1.** From the very fact that truth is the end of contemplation, it has the aspect of an appetible good, both lovable and delightful, and in this respect it pertains to the appetitive power.

**Reply to Objection 2.** We are urged to the vision of the first principle, namely God, by the love thereof; wherefore Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the contemplative life tramples on all cares and longs to see the face of its Creator."

**Reply to Objection 3.** The appetitive power moves not only the bodily members to perform external actions, but also the intellect to practice the act of contemplation, as stated above.

## **ARTICLE 2. WHETHER THE MORAL VIRTUES PERTAIN TO THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the moral virtues pertain to the contemplative life. For Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the contemplative life is to cling to the love of God and our neighbor with the whole mind." Now all the moral virtues, since their acts are prescribed by the precepts of the Law, are reducible to the love of God and of our neighbor, for "love . . . is the fulfilling of the Law" (Romans 13:10). Therefore it would seem that the moral virtues belong to the contemplative life.

**Objection 2.** Further, the contemplative life is chiefly directed to the contemplation of God; for Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the mind tramples on all cares and longs to gaze on the face of its Creator." Now no one can accomplish this without cleanness of heart, which is a result of moral virtue [Cf. 8, 7]. For it is written (Matthew 5:8): "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God": and (Hebrews 12:14): "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God." Therefore it would seem that the moral virtues pertain to the contemplative life.

**Objection 3.** Further, Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the contemplative life gives beauty to the soul," wherefore it is signified by Rachel, of whom it is said (Genesis 29:17) that she was "of a beautiful countenance." Now the beauty of the soul consists in the moral virtues, especially temperance, as Ambrose says (De Offic. i, 43,45,46). Therefore it seems that the moral virtues pertain to the contemplative life.

**On the contrary,** The moral virtues are directed to external actions. Now Gregory says (Moral. vi [Hom. xiv in Ezech.; Cf. 1, Objection 3]) that it belongs to the contemplative life "to rest from external action." Therefore the moral virtues do not pertain to the contemplative life.

**I answer that,** A thing may belong to the contemplative life in two ways, essentially or dispositively. The moral virtues do not belong to the contemplative life essentially, because the end of the contemplative life is the consideration of truth: and as the Philosopher states (Ethic. ii, 4), "knowledge," which pertains to the consideration of truth, "has little influence on the moral virtues": wherefore he declares (Ethic. x, 8) that the moral virtues pertain to active but not to contemplative happiness.

On the other hand, the moral virtues belong to the contemplative life dispositively. For the act of contemplation, wherein the contemplative life essentially consists, is hindered both by the impetuosity of the passions which withdraw the soul's intention from intelligible to sensible things, and by outward disturbances. Now the moral virtues curb the impetuosity of the passions, and quell the disturbance of outward occupations. Hence moral virtues belong dispositively to the contemplative life.

**Reply to Objection 1.** As stated above (Article 1), the contemplative life has its motive cause on the part of the affections, and in this respect the love of God and our neighbor is requisite to the contemplative life. Now motive causes do not enter into the essence of a thing, but dispose and perfect it. Wherefore it does not follow that the moral virtues belong essentially to the contemplative life.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Holiness or cleanness of heart is caused by the virtues that are concerned with the passions which hinder the purity of the reason; and peace is caused by justice which is about operations, according to Isaiah 32:17, "The work of justice shall be peace": since he who refrains from wronging others lessens the occasions of quarrels and disturbances. Hence the moral virtues dispose one to the contemplative life by causing peace and cleanness of heart.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Beauty, as stated above (II-II:145:2), consists in a certain clarity and due proportion. Now each of these is found radically in the reason; because both the light that makes beauty seen, and the establishing of due proportion among things belong to reason. Hence since the contemplative life consists in an act of the reason, there is beauty in it by its very nature and essence; wherefore it is written (Wisdom 8:2) of the contemplation of wisdom: "I became a lover of her beauty."

On the other hand, beauty is in the moral virtues by participation, in so far as they participate in the order of reason; and especially is it in temperance, which restrains the concupiscences which especially darken the light of reason. Hence it is that the virtue of chastity most of all makes man apt for contemplation, since venereal pleasures most of all weigh the mind down to sensible objects, as Augustine says (Soliloq. i, 10).

### **ARTICLE 3. WHETHER THERE ARE VARIOUS ACTIONS PERTAINING TO THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that there are various actions pertaining to the contemplative life. For Richard of St. Victor [De Grat. Contempl. i, 3,4 distinguishes between "contemplation," "meditation," and "cogitation." Yet all these apparently pertain to contemplation. Therefore it would seem that there are various actions pertaining to the contemplative life.

**Objection 2.** Further, the Apostle says (2 Corinthians 3:18): "But we . . . beholding [speculantes] the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same clarity [Vulgate: 'into the same image from glory to glory.']." Now this belongs to the contemplative life. Therefore in addition to the three aforesaid, vision [speculatio] belongs to the contemplative life.

**Objection 3.** Further, Bernard says (De Consid. v, 14) that "the first and greatest contemplation is admiration of the Majesty." Now according to Damascene (De Fide Orth. ii, 15) admiration is a kind of fear. Therefore it would seem that several acts are requisite for the contemplative life.

**Objection 4.** Further, "Prayer," "reading," and "meditation" [Hugh of St. Victor, Alleg. in N.T. iii, 4] are said to belong to the contemplative life. Again, "hearing" belongs to the contemplative life: since it is stated that Mary (by whom the contemplative life is signified) "sitting . . . at the Lord's feet, heard His word" (Luke 10:39). Therefore it would seem that several acts are requisite for the contemplative life.

**On the contrary,** Life signifies here the operation on which a man is chiefly intent. Wherefore if there are several operations of the contemplative life, there will be, not one, but several contemplative lives.

**I answer that,** We are now speaking of the contemplative life as applicable to man. Now according to Dionysius (Div. Nom. vii) between man and angel there is this difference, that an angel perceives the truth by simple apprehension, whereas man arrives at the perception of a simple truth by a process from several premises. Accordingly, then, the contemplative life has one act wherein it is finally completed, namely the contemplation of truth, and from this act it derives its unity. Yet it has many acts whereby it arrives at this final act. Some of these pertain to the reception of principles, from which it proceeds to the contemplation of truth; others are concerned with deducing from the principles, the truth, the knowledge of which is sought; and the last and crowning act is the contemplation itself of the truth.

**Reply to Objection 1.** According to Richard of St. Victor "cogitation" would seem to regard the consideration of the many things from which a person intends to gather one simple truth. Hence cogitation may comprise not only the perceptions of the senses in taking cognizance of certain effects, but also the imaginations. and again the reason's discussion of the various signs or of anything that conduces to the truth in view: although, according to Augustine (De Trin. xiv, 7), cogitation may signify any actual operation of the intellect. "Meditation" would seem to be the process of reason from certain principles that lead to the contemplation of some truth: and "consideration" has the same meaning, according to Bernard (De Consid. ii, 2), although, according to the Philosopher (De Anima ii, 1), every operation of the intellect may be called "consideration." But "contemplation" regards the simple act of gazing on the truth; wherefore Richard says again (De Grat. Contempl. i, 4) that "contemplation is the soul's clear and free dwelling upon the object of its gaze; meditation is the survey of the mind while occupied in searching for the truth: and cogitation is the mind's glance which is prone to wander."

**Reply to Objection 2.** According to a gloss [Cf. De Trin. xv, 8 of Augustine on this passage, "beholding" [speculatio] denotes "seeing in a mirror [speculo], not from a watch-tower

[specula]." Now to see a thing in a mirror is to see a cause in its effect wherein its likeness is reflected. Hence "beholding" would seem to be reducible to meditation.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Admiration is a kind of fear resulting from the apprehension of a thing that surpasses our faculties: hence it results from the contemplation of the sublime truth. For it was stated above (Article 1) that contemplation terminates in the affections.

**Reply to Objection 4.** Man reaches the knowledge of truth in two ways. First, by means of things received from another. On this way, as regards the things he receives from God, he needs "prayer," according to (Wisdom 7:7), "I called upon" God, "and the spirit of wisdom came upon me": while as regards the things he receives from man, he needs "hearing," in so far as he receives from the spoken word, and "reading," in so far as he receives from the tradition of Holy Writ. Secondly, he needs to apply himself by his personal study, and thus he requires "meditation."

#### **ARTICLE 4. WHETHER THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE CONSISTS IN THE MERE CONTEMPLATION OF GOD, OR ALSO IN THE CONSIDERATION OF ANY TRUTH WHATEVER?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the contemplative life consists not only in the contemplation of God, but also in the consideration of any truth. For it is written (Psalm 138:14): "Wonderful are Thy works, and my soul knoweth right well." Now the knowledge of God's works is effected by any contemplation of the truth. Therefore it would seem that it pertains to the contemplative life to contemplate not only the divine truth, but also any other.

**Objection 2.** Further, Bernard says (De Consid. v, 14) that "contemplation consists in admiration first of God's majesty, secondly of His judgments, thirdly of His benefits, fourthly of His promises." Now of these four the first alone regards the divine truth, and the other three pertain to His effects. Therefore the contemplative life consists not only in the contemplation of the divine truth, but also in the consideration of truth regarding the divine effects.

**Objection 3.** Further, Richard of St. Victor [De Grat. Contempl. i, 6] distinguishes six species of contemplation. The first belongs to "the imagination alone," and consists in thinking of corporeal things. The second is in "the imagination guided by reason," and consists in considering the order and disposition of sensible objects. The third is in "the reason based on the imagination"; when, to wit, from the consideration of the visible we rise to the invisible. The fourth is in "the reason and conducted by the reason," when the mind is intent on things invisible of which the imagination has no cognizance. The fifth is "above the reason," but not contrary to reason, when by divine revelation we become cognizant of things that cannot be comprehended by the human reason. The sixth is "above reason and contrary to reason"; when, to wit, by the divine enlightening we know things that seem contrary to human reason, such as the doctrine of the mystery of the Trinity. Now only the last of these would seem to pertain to the divine truth. Therefore the contemplation of truth regards not only the divine truth, but also that which is considered in creatures.

**Objection 4.** Further, in the contemplative life the contemplation of truth is sought as being the perfection of man. Now any truth is a perfection of the human intellect. Therefore the contemplative life consists in the contemplation of any truth.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37) that "in contemplation we seek the principle which is God."

**I answer that,** As stated above (Article 2), a thing may belong to the contemplative life in two ways: principally, and secondarily, or dispositively. That which belongs principally to the contemplative life is the contemplation of the divine truth, because this contemplation is the end of the whole human life. Hence Augustine says (De Trin. i, 8) that "the contemplation of God is promised us as being the goal of all our actions and the everlasting perfection of our joys." This contemplation will be perfect in the life to come, when we shall see God face to face, wherefore it will make us perfectly happy: whereas now the contemplation of the divine truth is competent to us imperfectly, namely "through a glass" and "in a dark manner" (1 Corinthians 13:12). Hence it bestows on us a certain inchoate beatitude, which begins now and will be continued in the life to come; wherefore the Philosopher (Ethic. x, 7) places man's ultimate happiness in the contemplation of the supreme intelligible good.

Since, however, God's effects show us the way to the contemplation of God Himself, according to (Romans 1:20), "The invisible things of God . . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," it follows that the contemplation of the divine effects also belongs to the contemplative life, inasmuch as man is guided thereby to the knowledge of God. Hence Augustine says (De Vera Relig. xxix) that "in the study of creatures we must not exercise an empty and futile curiosity, but should make them the stepping-stone to things unperishable and everlasting."

Accordingly it is clear from what has been said (1 and 2,3) that four things pertain, in a certain order, to the contemplative life; first, the moral virtues; secondly, other acts exclusive of contemplation; thirdly, contemplation of the divine effects; fourthly, the complement of all which is the contemplation of the divine truth itself.

**Reply to Objection 1.** David sought the knowledge of God's works, so that he might be led by them to God; wherefore he says elsewhere (Psalm 142:5-6): "I meditated on all Thy works: I meditated upon the works of Thy hands: I stretched forth my hands to Thee."

**Reply to Objection 2.** By considering the divine judgments man is guided to the consideration of the divine justice; and by considering the divine benefits and promises, man is led to the knowledge of God's mercy or goodness, as by effects already manifested or yet to be vouchsafed.

**Reply to Objection 3.** These six denote the steps whereby we ascend by means of creatures to the contemplation of God. For the first step consists in the mere consideration of sensible objects; the second step consists in going forward from sensible to intelligible objects; the third step is to judge of sensible objects according to intelligible things; the fourth is the absolute consideration of the intelligible objects to which one has attained by means of sensibles; the fifth is the contemplation of those intelligible objects that are unattainable by means of sensibles, but which the reason is able to grasp; the sixth step is the consideration of such intelligible things as the reason can neither discover nor grasp, which pertain to the sublime contemplation of divine truth,

wherein contemplation is ultimately perfected.

**Reply to Objection 4.** The ultimate perfection of the human intellect is the divine truth: and other truths perfect the intellect in relation to the divine truth.

## **ARTICLE 5. WHETHER IN THE PRESENT STATE OF LIFE THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE CAN REACH TO THE VISION OF THE DIVINE ESSENCE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that in the present state of life the contemplative life can reach to the vision of the Divine essence. For, as stated in Genesis 32:30, Jacob said: "I have seen God face to face, and my soul has been saved." Now the vision of God's face is the vision of the Divine essence. Therefore it would seem that in the present life one may come, by means of contemplation, to see God in His essence.

**Objection 2.** Further, Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37) that "contemplative men withdraw within themselves in order to explore spiritual things, nor do they ever carry with them the shadows of things corporeal, or if these follow them they prudently drive them away: but being desirous of seeing the incomprehensible light, they suppress all the images of their limited comprehension, and through longing to reach what is above them, they overcome that which they are." Now man is not hindered from seeing the Divine essence, which is the incomprehensible light, save by the necessity of turning to corporeal phantasms. Therefore it would seem that the contemplation of the present life can extend to the vision of the incomprehensible light in its essence.

**Objection 3.** Further, Gregory says (Dial. ii, 35): "All creatures are small to the soul that sees its Creator: wherefore when the man of God," the blessed Benedict, to wit, "saw a fiery globe in the tower and angels returning to heaven, without doubt he could only see such things by the light of God." Now the blessed Benedict was still in this life. Therefore the contemplation of the present life can extend to the vision of the essence of God.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "As long as we live in this mortal flesh, no one reaches such a height of contemplation as to fix the eyes of his mind on the ray itself of incomprehensible light."

**I answer that,** As Augustine says (Gen. ad lit. xii, 27), "no one seeing God lives this mortal life wherein the bodily senses have their play: and unless in some way he depart this life, whether by going altogether out of his body, or by withdrawing from his carnal senses, he is not caught up into that vision." This has been carefully discussed above (II-II:175:4 and II-II:175:5), where we spoke of rapture, and in I:12:2, where we treated of the vision of God.

Accordingly we must state that one may be in this life in two ways. First, with regard to act, that is to say by actually making use of the bodily senses, and thus contemplation in the present life can nowise attain to the vision of God's essence. Secondly, one may be in this life potentially and not with regard to act, that is to say, when the soul is united to the mortal body as its form, yet so as to make use neither of the bodily senses, nor even of the imagination, as happens in rapture; and in this way the contemplation of the present life can attain to the vision of the Divine essence. Consequently the highest degree of contemplation in the present life is that which Paul

had in rapture, whereby he was in a middle state between the present life and the life to come.

**Reply to Objection 1.** As Dionysius says (Ep. i ad Caium. Monach.), "if anyone seeing God, understood what he saw, he saw not God Himself, but something belonging to God." And Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "By no means is God seen now in His glory; but the soul sees something of lower degree, and is thereby refreshed so that afterwards it may attain to the glory of vision." Accordingly the words of Jacob, "I saw God face to face" do not imply that he saw God's essence, but that he saw some shape [Cf. I:12:11 ad 1, imaginary of course, wherein God spoke to him. Or, "since we know a man by his face, by the face of God he signified his knowledge of Him," according to a gloss of Gregory on the same passage.

**Reply to Objection 2.** In the present state of life human contemplation is impossible without phantasms, because it is connatural to man to see the intelligible species in the phantasms, as the Philosopher states (De Anima iii, 7). Yet intellectual knowledge does not consist in the phantasms themselves, but in our contemplating in them the purity of the intelligible truth: and this not only in natural knowledge, but also in that which we obtain by revelation. For Dionysius says (Coel. Hier. i) that "the Divine glory shows us the angelic hierarchies under certain symbolic figures, and by its power we are brought back to the single ray of light," i.e. to the simple knowledge of the intelligible truth. It is in this sense that we must understand the statement of Gregory that "contemplatives do not carry along with them the shadows of things corporeal," since their contemplation is not fixed on them, but on the consideration of the intelligible truth.

**Reply to Objection 3.** By these words Gregory does not imply that the blessed Benedict, in that vision, saw God in His essence, but he wishes to show that because "all creatures are small to him that sees God," it follows that all things can easily be seen through the enlightenment of the Divine light. Wherefore he adds: "For however little he may see of the Creator's light, all created things become petty to him."

## **ARTICLE 6. WHETHER THE OPERATION OF CONTEMPLATION IS FITTINGLY DIVIDED INTO A THREEFOLD MOVEMENT, CIRCULAR, STRAIGHT AND OBLIQUE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the operation of contemplation is unfittingly divided into a threefold movement, "circular," "straight," and "oblique" (Div. Nom. iv). For contemplation pertains exclusively to rest, according to (Wisdom 8:1)6, "When I go into my house, I shall repose myself with her." Now movement is opposed to rest. Therefore the operations of the contemplative life should not be described as movements.

**Objection 2.** Further, the action of the contemplative life pertains to the intellect, whereby man is like the angels. Now Dionysius describes these movements as being different in the angels from what they are in the soul. For he says (Div. Nom. iv) that the "circular" movement in the angel is "according to his enlightenment by the beautiful and the good." On the other hand, he assigns the circular movement of the soul to several things: the first of which is the "withdrawal of the soul into itself from externals"; the second is "a certain concentration of its powers,

whereby it is rendered free of error and of outward occupation"; and the third is "union with those things that are above it." Again, he describes differently their respective straight movements. For he says that the straight movement of the angel is that by which he proceeds to the care of those things that are beneath him. On the other hand, he describes the straight movement of the soul as being twofold: first, "its progress towards things that are near it"; secondly, "its uplifting from external things to simple contemplation." Further, he assigns a different oblique movement to each. For he assigns the oblique movement of the angels to the fact that "while providing for those who have less they remain unchanged in relation to God": whereas he assigns the oblique movement of the soul to the fact that "the soul is enlightened in Divine knowledge by reasoning and discoursing." Therefore it would seem that the operations of contemplation are unfittingly assigned according to the ways mentioned above.

**Objection 3.** Further, Richard of St. Victor (*De Contempl.* i, 5) mentions many other different movements in likeness to the birds of the air. "For some of these rise at one time to a great height, at another swoop down to earth, and they do so repeatedly; others fly now to the right, now to the left again and again; others go forwards or lag behind many times; others fly in a circle now more now less extended; and others remain suspended almost immovably in one place." Therefore it would seem that there are only three movements of contemplation.

**On the contrary,** stands the authority of Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* iv).

**I answer that,** As stated above (II-II:119:1 ad 3), the operation of the intellect, wherein contemplation essentially consists, is called a movement, in so far as movement is the act of a perfect thing, according to the Philosopher (*De Anima* iii, 1). Since, however, it is through sensible objects that we come to the knowledge of intelligible things, and since sensible operations do not take place without movement, the result is that even intelligible operations are described as movements, and are differentiated in likeness to various movements. Now of bodily movements, local movements are the most perfect and come first, as proved in *Phys.* viii, 7; wherefore the foremost among intelligible operations are described by being likened to them. These movements are of three kinds; for there is the "circular" movement, by which a thing moves uniformly round one point as center, another is the "straight" movement, by which a thing goes from one point to another; the third is "oblique," being composed as it were of both the others. Consequently, in intelligible operations, that which is simply uniform is compared to circular movement; the intelligible operation by which one proceeds from one point to another is compared to the straight movement; while the intelligible operation which unites something of uniformity with progress to various points is compared to the oblique movement.

**Reply to Objection 1.** External bodily movements are opposed to the quiet of contemplation, which consists in rest from outward occupations: but the movements of intellectual operations belong to the quiet of contemplation.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Man is like the angels in intellect generically, but the intellective power is much higher in the angel than in man. Consequently these movements must be ascribed to souls and angels in different ways, according as they are differently related to uniformity. For the angelic intellect has uniform knowledge in two respects. First, because it does not acquire intelligible truth from the variety of composite objects; secondly, because it understands the truth



of intelligible objects not discursively, but by simple intuition. On the other hand, the intellect of the soul acquires intelligible truth from sensible objects, and understands it by a certain discoursing of the reason.

Wherefore Dionysius assigns the "circular" movement of the angels to the fact that their intuition of God is uniform and unceasing, having neither beginning nor end: even as a circular movement having neither beginning nor end is uniformly around the one same center. But on the part of the soul, ere it arrive at this uniformity, its twofold lack of uniformity needs to be removed. First, that which arises from the variety of external things: this is removed by the soul withdrawing from externals, and so the first thing he mentions regarding the circular movement of the soul is "the soul's withdrawal into itself from external objects." Secondly, another lack of uniformity requires to be removed from the soul, and this is owing to the discoursing of reason. This is done by directing all the soul's operations to the simple contemplation of the intelligible truth, and this is indicated by his saying in the second place that "the soul's intellectual powers must be uniformly concentrated," in other words that discoursing must be laid aside and the soul's gaze fixed on the contemplation of the one simple truth. On this operation of the soul there is no error, even as there is clearly no error in the understanding of first principles which we know by simple intuition. Afterwards these two things being done, he mentions thirdly the uniformity which is like that of the angels, for then all things being laid aside, the soul continues in the contemplation of God alone. This he expresses by saying: "Then being thus made uniform unitedly," i.e. conformably, "by the union of its powers, it is conducted to the good and the beautiful." The "straight" movement of the angel cannot apply to his proceeding from one thing to another by considering them, but only to the order of his providence, namely to the fact that the higher angel enlightens the lower angels through the angels that are intermediate. He indicates this when he says: "The angel's movement takes a straight line when he proceeds to the care of things subject to him, taking in his course whatever things are direct," i.e. in keeping with the dispositions of the direct order. Whereas he ascribes the "straight" movement in the soul to the soul's proceeding from exterior sensibles to the knowledge of intelligible objects. The "oblique" movement in the angels he describes as being composed of the straight and circular movements, inasmuch as their care for those beneath them is in accordance with their contemplation of God: while the "oblique" movement in the soul he also declares to be partly straight and partly circular, in so far as in reasoning it makes use of the light received from God.

**Reply to Objection 3.** These varieties of movement that are taken from the distinction between above and below, right and left, forwards and backwards, and from varying circles, are all comprised under either straight and oblique movement, because they all denote discursions of reason. For if the reason pass from the genus to the species, or from the part to the whole, it will be, as he explains, from above to below: if from one opposite to another, it will be from right to left; if from the cause to the effect, it will be backwards and forwards; if it be about accidents that surround a thing near at hand or far remote, the movement will be circular. The discoursing of reason from sensible to intelligible objects, if it be according to the order of natural reason, belongs to the straight movement; but if it be according to the Divine enlightenment, it will belong to the oblique movement as explained above (Reply to Objection 2). That alone which he describes as immobility belongs to the circular movement.

Wherefore it is evident that Dionysius describes the movement of contemplation with much greater fulness and depth.

## ARTICLE 7. WHETHER THERE IS DELIGHT IN CONTEMPLATION?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that there is no delight in contemplation. For delight belongs to the appetitive power; whereas contemplation resides chiefly in the intellect. Therefore it would seem that there is no delight in contemplation.

**Objection 2.** Further, all strife and struggle is a hindrance to delight. Now there is strife and struggle in contemplation. For Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "when the soul strives to contemplate God, it is in a state of struggle; at one time it almost overcomes, because by understanding and feeling it tastes something of the incomprehensible light, and at another time it almost succumbs, because even while tasting, it fails." Therefore there is no delight in contemplation.

**Objection 3.** Further, delight is the result of a perfect operation, as stated in Ethic. x, 4. Now the contemplation of wayfarers is imperfect, according to (1 Corinthians 13:1)2, "We see now through a glass in a dark manner." Therefore seemingly there is no delight in the contemplative life.

**Objection 4.** Further, a lesion of the body is an obstacle to delight. Now contemplation causes a lesion of the body; wherefore it is stated (Genesis 32) that after Jacob had said (Genesis 32:30), "I have seen God face to face" . . . he halted on his foot (Genesis 32:31) . . . because he touched the sinew of his thigh and it shrank" (Genesis 32:32). Therefore seemingly there is no delight in contemplation.

**On the contrary,** It is written of the contemplation of wisdom (Wisdom 8:1)6: "Her conversation hath no bitterness, nor her company any tediousness, but joy and gladness": and Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the contemplative life is sweetness exceedingly lovable."

**I answer that,** There may be delight in any particular contemplation in two ways. First by reason of the operation itself [Cf. I-II:03:5, because each individual delights in the operation which befits him according to his own nature or habit. Now contemplation of the truth befits a man according to his nature as a rational animal: the result being that "all men naturally desire to know," so that consequently they delight in the knowledge of truth. And more delightful still does this become to one who has the habit of wisdom and knowledge, the result of which is that he contemplates without difficulty. Secondly, contemplation may be delightful on the part of its object, in so far as one contemplates that which one loves; even as bodily vision gives pleasure, not only because to see is pleasurable in itself, but because one sees a person whom one loves. Since, then, the contemplative life consists chiefly in the contemplation of God, of which charity is the motive, as stated above (1 and 2, ad 1), it follows that there is delight in the contemplative life, not only by reason of the contemplation itself, but also by reason of the Divine love. In both respects the delight thereof surpasses all human delight, both because spiritual delight is greater than carnal pleasure, as stated above (I-II:31:5), when we were treating of the passions, and because the love whereby God is loved out of charity surpasses all love. Hence it is written (Psalm 33:9): "O taste and see that the Lord is sweet."

**Reply to Objection 1.** Although the contemplative life consists chiefly in an act of the intellect, it has its beginning in the appetite, since it is through charity that one is urged to the contemplation of God. And since the end corresponds to the beginning, it follows that the term also and the end of the contemplative life has its being in the appetite, since one delights in seeing the object loved, and the very delight in the object seen arouses a yet greater love. Wherefore Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "when we see one whom we love, we are so aflame as to love him more." And this is the ultimate perfection of the contemplative life, namely that the Divine truth be not only seen but also loved.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Strife or struggle arising from the opposition of an external thing, hinders delight in that thing. For a man delights not in a thing against which he strives: but in that for which he strives; when he has obtained it, other things being equal, he delights yet more: wherefore Augustine says (Confess. viii, 3) that "the more peril there was in the battle, the greater the joy in the triumph." But there is no strife or struggle in contemplation on the part of the truth which we contemplate, though there is on the part of our defective understanding and our corruptible body which drags us down to lower things, according to (Wisdom 9:15), "The corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things." Hence it is that when man attains to the contemplation of truth, he loves it yet more, while he hates the more his own deficiency and the weight of his corruptible body, so as to say with the Apostle (Romans 7:2)4): "Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Wherefore Gregory say (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "When God is once known by desire and understanding, He withers all carnal pleasure in us."

**Reply to Objection 3.** The contemplation of God in this life is imperfect in comparison with the contemplation in heaven; and in like manner the delight of the wayfarer's contemplation is imperfect as compared with the delight of contemplation in heaven, of which it is written (Psalm 35:9): "Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure." Yet, though the contemplation of Divine things which is to be had by wayfarers is imperfect, it is more delightful than all other contemplation however perfect, on account of the excellence of that which is contemplated. Hence the Philosopher says (De Part. Animal. i, 5): "We may happen to have our own little theories about those sublime beings and godlike substances, and though we grasp them but feebly, nevertheless so elevating is the knowledge that they give us more delight than any of those things that are round about us": and Gregory says in the same sense (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "The contemplative life is sweetness exceedingly lovable; for it carries the soul away above itself, it opens heaven and discovers the spiritual world to the eyes of the mind."

**Reply to Objection 4.** After contemplation Jacob halted with one foot, "because we need to grow weak in the love of the world ere we wax strong in the love of God," as Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.). "Thus when we have known the sweetness of God, we have one foot sound while the other halts; since every one who halts on one foot leans only on that foot which is sound."

## **ARTICLE 8. WHETHER THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE IS CONTINUOUS?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the contemplative life is not continuous. For the contemplative life consists essentially in things pertaining to the intellect. Now all the intellectual perfections of this life will be made void, according to (1 Corinthians 13:8), "Whether prophecies shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed." Therefore the contemplative life is made void.

**Objection 2.** Further, a man tastes the sweetness of contemplation by snatches and for a short time only: wherefore Augustine says (Confess. x, 40), "Thou admittest me to a most unwonted affection in my inmost soul, to a strange sweetness . . . yet through my grievous weight I sink down again." Again, Gregory commenting on the words of Job 4:15, "When a spirit passed before me," says (Moral. v, 33): "The mind does not remain long at rest in the sweetness of inward contemplation, for it is recalled to itself and beaten back by the very immensity of the light." Therefore the contemplative life is not continuous.

**Objection 3.** Further, that which is not connatural to man cannot be continuous. Now the contemplative life, according to the Philosopher (Ethic. x, 7), "is better than the life which is according to man." Therefore seemingly the contemplative life is not continuous.

**On the contrary,** our Lord said (Luke 10:42): "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her," since as Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.), "the contemplative life begins here so that it may be perfected in our heavenly home."

**I answer that,** A thing may be described as continuous in two ways: first, in regard to its nature; secondly, in regard to us. It is evident that in regard to itself contemplative life is continuous for two reasons: first, because it is about incorruptible and unchangeable things; secondly, because it has no contrary, for there is nothing contrary to the pleasure of contemplation, as stated in Topic. i, 13. But even in our regard contemplative life is continuous—both because it is competent to us in respect of the incorruptible part of the soul, namely the intellect, wherefore it can endure after this life—and because in the works of the contemplative life we work not with our bodies, so that we are the more able to persevere in the works thereof, as the Philosopher observes (Ethic. x, 7).

**Reply to Objection 1.** The manner of contemplation is not the same here as in heaven: yet the contemplative life is said to remain by reason of charity, wherein it has both its beginning and its end. Gregory speaks in this sense (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "The contemplative life begins here, so as to be perfected in our heavenly home, because the fire of love which begins to burn here is aflame with a yet greater love when we see Him Whom we love."

**Reply to Objection 2.** No action can last long at its highest pitch. Now the highest point of contemplation is to reach the uniformity of Divine contemplation, according to Dionysius [Cf. Coel. Hier. iii], and as we have stated above (Article 6, Reply to Objection 2). Hence although contemplation cannot last long in this respect, it can be of long duration as regards the other contemplative acts.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The Philosopher declares the contemplative life to be above man, because it befits us "so far as there is in us something divine" (Ethic. x, 7), namely the intellect, which is incorruptible and impassible in itself, wherefore its act can endure longer.

## QUESTION 181. THE ACTIVE LIFE

### ARTICLE 1. WHETHER ALL THE ACTIONS OF THE MORAL VIRTUES PERTAIN TO THE ACTIVE LIFE?

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the acts of the moral virtues do not all pertain to the active life. For seemingly the active life regards only our relations with other persons: hence Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "the active life is to give bread to the hungry," and after mentioning many things that regard our relations with other people he adds finally, "and to give to each and every one whatever he needs." Now we are directed in our relations to others, not by all the acts of moral virtues, but only by those of justice and its parts, as stated above (II-II:58:2 and II-II:58:8; I-II:60:2-3). Therefore the acts of the moral virtues do not all pertain to the active life.

**Objection 2.** Further, Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that Lia who was blear-eyed but fruitful signifies the active life: which "being occupied with work, sees less, and yet since it urges one's neighbor both by word and example to its imitation it begets a numerous offspring of good deeds." Now this would seem to belong to charity, whereby we love our neighbor, rather than to the moral virtues. Therefore seemingly the acts of moral virtue do not pertain to the active life.

**Objection 3.** Further, as stated above (II-II:180:2), the moral virtues dispose one to the contemplative life. Now disposition and perfection belong to the same thing. Therefore it would seem that the moral virtues do not pertain to the active life.

**On the contrary,** Isidore says (De Summo Bono iii, 15): "In the active life all vices must first of all be extirpated by the practice of good works, in order that in the contemplative life the mind's eye being purified one may advance to the contemplation of the Divine light." Now all vices are not extirpated save by acts of the moral virtues. Therefore the acts of the moral virtues pertain to the active life.

**I answer that,** As stated above (II-II:179:1) the active and the contemplative life differ according to the different occupations of men intent on different ends: one of which occupations is the consideration of the truth; and this is the end of the contemplative life, while the other is external work to which the active life is directed.

Now it is evident that the moral virtues are directed chiefly, not to the contemplation of truth but to operation. Wherefore the Philosopher says (Ethic. ii, 4) that "for virtue knowledge is of little or no avail." Hence it is clear that the moral virtues belong essentially to the active life; for which reason the Philosopher (Ethic. x, 8) subordinates the moral virtues to active happiness.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The chief of the moral virtues is justice by which one man is directed in his relations towards another, as the Philosopher proves (Ethic. v, 1). Hence the active life is described with reference to our relations with other people, because it consists in these things, not exclusively, but principally.

**Reply to Objection 2.** It is possible, by the acts of all the moral virtues, for one to direct one's neighbor to good by example: and this is what Gregory here ascribes to the active life.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Even as the virtue that is directed to the end of another virtue passes, as it were, into the species of the latter virtue, so again when a man makes use of things pertaining to the active life, merely as dispositions to contemplation, such things are comprised under the contemplative life. On the other hand, when we practice the works of the moral virtues, as being good in themselves, and not as dispositions to the contemplative life, the moral virtues belong to the active life.

It may also be replied, however, that the active life is a disposition to the contemplative life.

## **ARTICLE 2. WHETHER PRUDENCE PERTAINS TO THE ACTIVE LIFE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that prudence does not pertain to the active life. For just as the contemplative life belongs to the cognitive power, so the active life belongs to the appetitive power. Now prudence belongs not to the appetitive but to the cognitive power. Therefore prudence does not belong to the active life.

**Objection 2.** Further, Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that the "active life being occupied with work, sees less," wherefore it is signified by Lia who was blear-eyed. But prudence requires clear eyes, so that one may judge aright of what has to be done. Therefore it seems that prudence does not pertain to the active life.

**Objection 3.** Further, prudence stands between the moral and the intellectual virtues. Now just as the moral virtues belong to the active life, as stated above (Article 1), so do the intellectual virtues pertain to the contemplative life. Therefore it would seem that prudence pertains neither to the active nor to the contemplative life, but to an intermediate kind of life, of which Augustine makes mention (De Civ. Dei xix, 2,3,19).

**On the contrary,** The Philosopher says (Ethic. x, 8) that prudence pertains to active happiness, to which the moral virtues belong.

**I answer that,** As stated above (Article 1, Reply to Objection 3; I-II:18:6), if one thing be directed to another as its end, it is drawn, especially in moral matters, to the species of the thing to which it is directed: for instance "he who commits adultery that he may steal, is a thief rather than an adulterer," according to the Philosopher (Ethic. v, 2). Now it is evident that the knowledge of prudence is directed to the works of the moral virtues as its end, since it is "right reason applied to action" (Ethic. vi, 5); so that the ends of the moral virtues are the principles of prudence, as the Philosopher says in the same book. Accordingly, as it was stated above (Article 1, Reply to Objection 3) that the moral virtues in one who directs them to the quiet of contemplation belong to the contemplative life, so the knowledge of prudence, which is of itself directed to the works of the moral virtues, belongs directly to the active life, provided we take prudence in its proper sense as the Philosopher speaks of it.

If, however, we take it in a more general sense, as comprising any kind of human knowledge, then prudence, as regards a certain part thereof, belongs to the contemplative life. On this sense Tully (De Offic. i, 5) says that "the man who is able most clearly and quickly to grasp the truth and to unfold his reasons, is wont to be considered most prudent and wise."

**Reply to Objection 1.** Moral works take their species from their end, as stated above (I-II:18:4; I-II:18:6), wherefore the knowledge pertaining to the contemplative life is that which has its end in the very knowledge of truth; whereas the knowledge of prudence, through having its end in an act of the appetitive power, belongs to the active life.

**Reply to Objection 2.** External occupation makes a man see less in intelligible things, which are separated from sensible objects with which the works of the active life are concerned. Nevertheless the external occupation of the active life enables a man to see more clearly in judging of what is to be done, which belongs to prudence, both on account of experience, and on account of the mind's attention, since "brains avail when the mind is attentive" as Sallust observes [Bell. Catilin., LI].

**Reply to Objection 3.** Prudence is said to be intermediate between the intellectual and the moral virtues because it resides in the same subject as the intellectual virtues, and has absolutely the same matter as the moral virtues. But this third kind of life is intermediate between the active and the contemplative life as regards the things about which it is occupied, because it is occupied sometimes with the contemplation of the truth, sometimes with eternal things.

### **ARTICLE 3. WHETHER TEACHING IS A WORK OF THE ACTIVE OR OF THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that teaching is a work not of the active but of the contemplative life. For Gregory says (Hom. v in Ezech.) that "the perfect who have been able to contemplate heavenly goods, at least through a glass, proclaim them to their brethren, whose minds they inflame with love for their hidden beauty." But this pertains to teaching. Therefore teaching is a work of the contemplative life.

**Objection 2.** Further, act and habit would seem to be referable to the same kind of life. Now teaching is an act of wisdom: for the Philosopher says (Metaph. i, 1) that "to be able to teach is an indication of knowledge." Therefore since wisdom or knowledge pertain to the contemplative life, it would seem that teaching also belongs to the contemplative life.

**Objection 3.** Further, prayer, no less than contemplation, is an act of the contemplative life. Now prayer, even when one prays for another, belongs to the contemplative life. Therefore it would seem that it belongs also to the contemplative life to acquaint another, by teaching him, of the truth we have meditated.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "The active life is to give bread to the hungry, to teach the ignorant the words of wisdom."

**I answer that,** The act of teaching has a twofold object. For teaching is conveyed by speech, and speech is the audible sign of the interior concept. Accordingly one object of teaching is the matter or object of the interior concept; and as to this object teaching belongs sometimes to the active, sometimes to the contemplative life. It belongs to the active life, when a man conceives a

truth inwardly, so as to be directed thereby in his outward action; but it belongs to the contemplative life when a man conceives an intelligible truth, in the consideration and love whereof he delights. Hence Augustine says (De Verb. Dom. Serm. civ, 1): "Let them choose for themselves the better part," namely the contemplative life, "let them be busy with the word, long for the sweetness of teaching, occupy themselves with salutary knowledge," thus stating clearly that teaching belongs to the contemplative life.

The other object of teaching is on the part of the speech heard, and thus the object of teaching is the hearer. As to this object all doctrine belongs to the active life to which external actions pertain.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The authority quoted speaks expressly of doctrine as to its matter, in so far as it is concerned with the consideration and love of truth.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Habit and act have a common object. Hence this argument clearly considers the matter of the interior concept. For it pertains to the man having wisdom and knowledge to be able to teach, in so far as he is able to express his interior concept in words, so as to bring another man to understand the truth.

**Reply to Objection 3.** He who prays for another does nothing towards the man for whom he prays, but only towards God Who is the intelligible truth; whereas he who teaches another does something in his regard by external action. Hence the comparison fails.

#### **ARTICLE 4. WHETHER THE ACTIVE LIFE REMAINS AFTER THIS LIFE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the active life remains after this life. For the acts of the moral virtues belong to the active life, as stated above (Article 1). But the moral virtues endure after this life according to Augustine (De Trin. xiv, 9). Therefore the active life remains after this life.

**Objection 2.** Further, teaching others belongs to the active life, as stated above (Article 3). But in the life to come when "we shall be like the angels," teaching will be possible: even as apparently it is in the angels of whom one "enlightens, cleanses, and perfects" [Coel. Hier. iii, viii] another, which refers to the "receiving of knowledge," according to Dionysius (Coel. Hier. vii). Therefore it would seem that the active life remains after this life.

**Objection 3.** Further, the more lasting a thing is in itself, the more is it able to endure after this life. But the active life is seemingly more lasting in itself: for Gregory says (Hom. v in Ezech.) that "we can remain fixed in the active life, whereas we are nowise able to maintain an attentive mind in the contemplative life." Therefore the active life is much more able than the contemplative to endure after this life.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "The active life ends with this world, but the contemplative life begins here, to be perfected in our heavenly home."

**I answer that,** As stated above (Article 1), the active life has its end in external actions: and if these be referred to the quiet of contemplation, for that very reason they belong to the



contemplative life. But in the future life of the blessed the occupation of external actions will cease, and if there be any external actions at all, these will be referred to contemplation as their end. For, as Augustine says at the end of *De Civitate Dei* xxii, 30, "there we shall rest and we shall see, we shall see and love, we shall love and praise." And he had said before (*De Civ. Dei* xxii, 30) that "there God will be seen without end, loved without wearying, praised without tiring: such will be the occupation of all, the common love, the universal activity."

**Reply to Objection 1.** As stated above (II-II:136:1 ad 1), the moral virtues will remain not as to those actions which are about the means, but as to the actions which are about the end. Such acts are those that conduce to the quiet of contemplation, which in the words quoted above Augustine denotes by "rest," and this rest excludes not only outward disturbances but also the inward disturbance of the passions.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The contemplative life, as stated above (II-II:180:4), consists chiefly in the contemplation of God, and as to this, one angel does not teach another, since according to Matthew 18:10, "the little ones' angels," who belong to the lower order, "always see the face of the Father"; and so, in the life to come, no man will teach another of God, but "we shall" all "see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2). This is in keeping with the saying of Jeremiah 31:34: "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor . . . saying: Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least of them even to the greatest."

But as regards things pertaining to the "dispensation of the mysteries of God," one angel teaches another by cleansing, enlightening, and perfecting him: and thus they have something of the active life so long as the world lasts, from the fact that they are occupied in administering to the creatures below them. This is signified by the fact that Jacob saw angels "ascending" the ladder — which refers to contemplation — and "descending" — which refers to action. Nevertheless, as Gregory remarks (*Moral. ii, 3*), "they do not wander abroad from the Divine vision, so as to be deprived of the joys of inward contemplation." Hence in them the active life does not differ from the contemplative life as it does in us for whom the works of the active life are a hindrance to contemplation.

Nor is the likeness to the angels promised to us as regards the administering to lower creatures, for this is competent to us not by reason of our natural order, as it is to the angels, but by reason of our seeing God.

**Reply to Objection 3.** That the durability of the active life in the present state surpasses the durability of the contemplative life arises not from any property of either life considered in itself, but from our own deficiency, since we are withheld from the heights of contemplation by the weight of the body. Hence Gregory adds (*Moral. ii, 3*) that "the mind through its very weakness being repelled from that immense height recoils on itself."

## **QUESTION 182. THE ACTIVE LIFE IN COMPARISON WITH THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE**

### **ARTICLE 1. WHETHER THE ACTIVE LIFE IS MORE EXCELLENT THAN THE CONTEMPLATIVE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the active life is more excellent than the contemplative. For "that which belongs to better men would seem to be worthier and better," as the Philosopher says (Top. iii, 1). Now the active life belongs to persons of higher rank, namely prelates, who are placed in a position of honor and power; wherefore Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xix, 19) that "in our actions we must not love honor or power in this life." Therefore it would seem that the active life is more excellent than the contemplative.

**Objection 2.** Further, in all habits and acts, direction belongs to the more important; thus the military art, being the more important, directs the art of the bridle-maker [Ethic. i, 1. Now it belongs to the active life to direct and command the contemplative, as appears from the words addressed to Moses (Exodus 19:21), "Go down and charge the people, lest they should have a mind to pass the" fixed "limits to see the Lord." Therefore the active life is more excellent than the contemplative.

**Objection 3.** Further, no man should be taken away from a greater thing in order to be occupied with lesser things: for the Apostle says (1 Corinthians 12:31): "Be zealous for the better gifts." Now some are taken away from the state of the contemplative life to the occupations of the active life, as in the case of those who are transferred to the state of prelacy. Therefore it would seem that the active life is more excellent than the contemplative.

**On the contrary,** Our Lord said (Luke 10:42): "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her." Now Mary figures the contemplative life. Therefore the contemplative life is more excellent than the active.

**I answer that,** Nothing prevents certain things being more excellent in themselves, whereas they are surpassed by another in some respect. Accordingly we must reply that the contemplative life is simply more excellent than the active: and the Philosopher proves this by eight reasons (Ethic. x, 7,8). The first is, because the contemplative life becomes man according to that which is best in him, namely the intellect, and according to its proper objects, namely things intelligible; whereas the active life is occupied with externals. Hence Rachael, by whom the contemplative life is signified, is interpreted "the vision of the principle," [Or rather, 'One seeing the principle,' if derived from *rah* and *irzn*; Cf. Jerome, De Nom. Hebr.] whereas as Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37) the active life is signified by Lia who was bleary-eyed. The second reason is because the contemplative life can be more continuous, although not as regards the highest degree of contemplation, as stated above (II-II:180:8 ad 2; II-II:181:4 ad 3), wherefore Mary, by whom the contemplative life is signified, is described as "sitting" all the time "at the Lord's feet." Thirdly, because the contemplative life is more delightful than the active; wherefore Augustine says (De Verb. Dom. Serm. ciii) that "Martha was troubled, but Mary feasted." Fourthly, because in the contemplative life man is more self-sufficient, since he needs fewer things for that purpose; wherefore it was said (Luke 10:41): "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things." Fifthly, because the contemplative life is loved more for its own sake, while the active life is directed to something else. Hence it is written (Psalm 36:4): "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, that I may see the delight of the Lord." Sixthly, because the contemplative life consists in leisure and rest, according to Psalm 45:11, "Be still and see that I am God." Seventhly,

because the contemplative life is according to Divine things, whereas active life is according to human things; wherefore Augustine says (De Verb. Dom. Serm. civ): "In the beginning was the Word': to Him was Mary hearkening: 'The Word was made flesh': Him was Martha serving." Eighthly, because the contemplative life is according to that which is most proper to man, namely his intellect; whereas in the works of the active life the lower powers also, which are common to us and brutes, have their part; wherefore (Psalm 35:7) after the words, "Men and beasts Thou wilt preserve, O Lord," that which is special to man is added (Psalm 35:10): "In Thy light we shall see light."

Our Lord adds a ninth reason (Luke 10:42) when He says: "Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her," which words Augustine (De Verb. Dom. Serm. ciii) expounds thus: "Not—Thou hast chosen badly but—She has chosen better. Why better? Listen—because it shall not be taken away from her. But the burden of necessity shall at length be taken from thee: whereas the sweetness of truth is eternal."

Yet in a restricted sense and in a particular case one should prefer the active life on account of the needs of the present life. Thus too the Philosopher says (Topic. iii, 2): "It is better to be wise than to be rich, yet for one who is in need, it is better to be rich . . ."

**Reply to Objection 1.** Not only the active life concerns prelates, they should also excel in the contemplative life; hence Gregory says (Pastor. ii, 1): "A prelate should be foremost in action, more uplifted than others in contemplation."

**Reply to Objection 2.** The contemplative life consists in a certain liberty of mind. For Gregory says (Hom. iii in Ezech.) that "the contemplative life obtains a certain freedom of mind, for it thinks not of temporal but of eternal things." And Boethius says (De Consol. v, 2): "The soul of man must needs be more free while it continues to gaze on the Divine mind, and less so when it stoops to bodily things." Wherefore it is evident that the active life does not directly command the contemplative life, but prescribes certain works of the active life as dispositions to the contemplative life; which it accordingly serves rather than commands. Gregory refers to this when he says (Hom. iii in Ezech.) that "the active life is bondage, whereas the contemplative life is freedom."

**Reply to Objection 3.** Sometimes a man is called away from the contemplative life to the works of the active life, on account of some necessity of the present life, yet not so as to be compelled to forsake contemplation altogether. Hence Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xix, 19): "The love of truth seeks a holy leisure, the demands of charity undertake an honest toil," the work namely of the active life. "If no one imposes this burden upon us we must devote ourselves to the research and contemplation of truth, but if it be imposed on us, we must bear it because charity demands it of us. Yet even then we must not altogether forsake the delights of truth, lest we deprive ourselves of its sweetness, and this burden overwhelm us." Hence it is clear that when a person is called from the contemplative life to the active life, this is done by way not of subtraction but of addition.

## **ARTICLE 2. WHETHER THE ACTIVE LIFE IS OF GREATER MERIT THAN THE CONTEMPLATIVE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the active life is of greater merit than the contemplative. For merit implies relation to meed; and meed is due to labor, according to (1 Corinthians 3:8), "Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." Now labor is ascribed to the active life, and rest to the contemplative life; for Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "Whosoever is converted to God must first of all sweat from labor, i.e. he must take Lia, that afterwards he may rest in the embraces of Rachel so as to see the principle." Therefore the active life is of greater merit than the contemplative.

**Objection 2.** Further, the contemplative life is a beginning of the happiness to come; wherefore Augustine commenting on John 21:22, "So I will have him to remain till I come," says (Tract. cxxiv in Joan.): "This may be expressed more clearly: Let perfect works follow Me conformed to the example of My passion, and let contemplation begun here remain until I come, that it may be perfected when I shall come." And Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that "contemplation begins here, so as to be perfected in our heavenly home." Now the life to come will be a state not of meriting but of receiving the reward of our merits. Therefore the contemplative life would seem to have less of the character of merit than the active, but more of the character of reward.

**Objection 3.** Further, Gregory says (Hom. xii in Ezech.) that "no sacrifice is more acceptable to God than zeal for souls." Now by the zeal for souls a man turns to the occupations of the active life. Therefore it would seem that the contemplative life is not of greater merit than the active.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37): "Great are the merits of the active life, but greater still those of the contemplative."

**I answer that,** As stated above (I-II:114:4), the root of merit is charity; and, while, as stated above (II-II:25:1), charity consists in the love of God and our neighbor, the love of God is by itself more meritorious than the love of our neighbor, as stated above (II-II:27:8). Wherefore that which pertains more directly to the love of God is generically more meritorious than that which pertains directly to the love of our neighbor for God's sake. Now the contemplative life pertains directly and immediately to the love of God; for Augustine says (De Civ. Dei xix, 19) that "the love of" the Divine "truth seeks a holy leisure," namely of the contemplative life, for it is that truth above all which the contemplative life seeks, as stated above (II-II:181:4 ad 2). On the other hand, the active life is more directly concerned with the love of our neighbor, because it is "busy about much serving" (Luke 10:40). Wherefore the contemplative life is generically of greater merit than the active life. This is moreover asserted by Gregory (Hom. iii in Ezech.): "The contemplative life surpasses in merit the active life, because the latter labors under the stress of present work," by reason of the necessity of assisting our neighbor, "while the former with heartfelt relish has a foretaste of the coming rest," i.e. the contemplation of God.

Nevertheless it may happen that one man merits more by the works of the active life than another by the works of the contemplative life. For instance through excess of Divine love a man may now and then suffer separation from the sweetness of Divine contemplation for the time being, that God's will may be done and for His glory's sake. Thus the Apostle says (Romans 9:3): "I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren"; which words Chrysostom expounds as follows (De Compunct. i, 7 [Ad Demetr. de Compunct. Cordis.]): "His mind was so steeped in the love of Christ that, although he desired above all to be with Christ, he despised even this, because thus he pleased Christ."

**Reply to Objection 1.** External labor conduces to the increase of the accidental reward; but the increase of merit with regard to the essential reward consists chiefly in charity, whereof external labor borne for Christ's sake is a sign. Yet a much more expressive sign thereof is shown when a man, renouncing whatsoever pertains to this life, delights to occupy himself entirely with Divine contemplation.

**Reply to Objection 2.** In the state of future happiness man has arrived at perfection, wherefore there is no room for advancement by merit; and if there were, the merit would be more efficacious by reason of the greater charity. But in the present life contemplation is not without some imperfection, and can always become more perfect; wherefore it does not remove the idea of merit, but causes a yet greater merit on account of the practice of greater Divine charity.

**Reply to Objection 3.** A sacrifice is rendered to God spiritually when something is offered to Him; and of all man's goods, God specially accepts that of the human soul when it is offered to Him in sacrifice. Now a man ought to offer to God, in the first place, his soul, according to (Sirach 30:24), "Have pity on thy own soul, pleasing God"; in the second place, the souls of others, according to Apocalypse 22:17, "He that heareth, let him say: Come." And the more closely a man unites his own or another's soul to God, the more acceptable is his sacrifice to God; wherefore it is more acceptable to God that one apply one's own soul and the souls of others to contemplation than to action. Consequently the statement that "no sacrifice is more acceptable to God than zeal for souls," does not mean that the merit of the active life is preferable to the merit of the contemplative life, but that it is more meritorious to offer to God one's own soul and the souls of others, than any other external gifts.

### **ARTICLE 3. WHETHER THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE IS HINDERED BY THE ACTIVE LIFE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the contemplative life is hindered by the active life. For the contemplative life requires a certain stillness of mind, according to Psalm 45:11, "Be still, and see that I am God"; whereas the active life involves restlessness, according to (Luke 10:41), "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things." Therefore the active life hinders the contemplative.

**Objection 2.** Further, clearness of vision is a requisite for the contemplative life. Now active life is a hindrance to clear vision; for Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.) that it "is blear-eyed and fruitful, because the active life, being occupied with work, sees less." Therefore the active life hinders the contemplative.

**Objection 3.** Further, one contrary hinders the other. Now the active and the contemplative life are apparently contrary to one another, since the active life is busy about many things, while the contemplative life attends to the contemplation of one; wherefore they differ in opposition to one another. Therefore it would seem that the contemplative life is hindered by the active.

**On the contrary,** Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37): "Those who wish to hold the fortress of

contemplation, must first of all train in the camp of action."

**I answer that,** The active life may be considered from two points of view. First, as regards the attention to and practice of external works: and thus it is evident that the active life hinders the contemplative, in so far as it is impossible for one to be busy with external action, and at the same time give oneself to Divine contemplation. Secondly, active life may be considered as quieting and directing the internal passions of the soul; and from this point of view the active life is a help to the contemplative, since the latter is hindered by the inordinateness of the internal passions. Hence Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37): "Those who wish to hold the fortress of contemplation must first of all train in the camp of action. Thus after careful study they will learn whether they no longer wrong their neighbor, whether they bear with equanimity the wrongs their neighbors do to them, whether their soul is neither overcome with joy in the presence of temporal goods, nor cast down with too great a sorrow when those goods are withdrawn. On this way they will know when they withdraw within themselves, in order to explore spiritual things, whether they no longer carry with them the shadows of the things corporeal, or, if these follow them, whether they prudently drive them away." Hence the work of the active life conduces to the contemplative, by quelling the interior passions which give rise to the phantasms whereby contemplation is hindered.

This suffices for the Replies to the Objections; for these arguments consider the occupation itself of external actions, and not the effect which is the quelling of the passions.

#### **ARTICLE 4. WHETHER THE ACTIVE LIFE PRECEDES THE CONTEMPLATIVE?**

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the active life does not precede the contemplative. For the contemplative life pertains directly to the love of God; while the active life pertains to the love of our neighbor. Now the love of God precedes the love of our neighbor, since we love our neighbor for God's sake. Seemingly therefore the contemplative life also precedes the active life.

**Objection 2.** Further, Gregory says (Hom. xiv in Ezech.): "It should be observed that while a well-ordered life proceeds from action to contemplation, sometimes it is useful for the soul to turn from the contemplative to the active life." Therefore the active is not simply prior to the contemplative.

**Objection 3.** Further, it would seem that there is not necessarily any order between things that are suitable to different subjects. Now the active and the contemplative life are suitable to different subjects; for Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37): "Often those who were able to contemplate God so long as they were undisturbed have fallen when pressed with occupation; and frequently they who might live advantageously occupied with the service of their fellow-creatures are killed by the sword of their inaction."

**I answer that,** A thing is said to precede in two ways. First, with regard to its nature; and in this way the contemplative life precedes the active, inasmuch as it applies itself to things which precede and are better than others, wherefore it moves and directs the active life. For the higher reason which is assigned to contemplation is compared to the lower reason which is assigned to action, and the husband is compared to his wife, who should be ruled by her husband, as

Augustine says (De Trin. xii, 3,7,12).

Secondly, a thing precedes with regard to us, because it comes first in the order of generation. On this way the active precedes the contemplative life, because it disposes one to it, as stated above (Article 1; II-II:181:1 ad 3); and, in the order of generation, disposition precedes form, although the latter precedes simply and according to its nature.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The contemplative life is directed to the love of God, not of any degree, but to that which is perfect; whereas the active life is necessary for any degree of the love of our neighbor. Hence Gregory says (Hom. iii in Ezech.): "Without the contemplative life it is possible to enter the heavenly kingdom, provided one omit not the good actions we are able to do; but we cannot enter therein without the active life, if we neglect to do the good we can do."

From this it is also evident that the active precedes the contemplative life, as that which is common to all precedes, in the order of generation, that which is proper to the perfect.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Progress from the active to the contemplative life is according to the order of generation; whereas the return from the contemplative life to the active is according to the order of direction, in so far as the active life is directed by the contemplative. Even thus habit is acquired by acts, and by the acquired habit one acts yet more perfectly, as stated in Ethic. ii, 7.

**Reply to Objection 3.** He that is prone to yield to his passions on account of his impulse to action is simply more apt for the active life by reason of his restless spirit. Hence Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37) that "there be some so restless that when they are free from labor they labor all the more, because the more leisure they have for thought, the worse interior turmoil they have to bear." Others, on the contrary, have the mind naturally pure and restful, so that they are apt for contemplation, and if they were to apply themselves wholly to action, this would be detrimental to them. Wherefore Gregory says (Moral. vi, 37) that "some are so slothful of mind that if they chance to have any hard work to do they give way at the very outset." Yet, as he adds further on, "often . . . love stimulates slothful souls to work, and fear restrains souls that are disturbed in contemplation." Consequently those who are more adapted to the active life can prepare themselves for the contemplative by the practice of the active life; while none the less, those who are more adapted to the contemplative life can take upon themselves the works of the active life, so as to become yet more apt for contemplation.