

[This is a translation of a 27-page set of notes titled "De Novissimis" in the Lonergan Research Institute Archives A239 (Batch II, folder 38). After a single introductory page on the meaning of the novissima, the "last things," a second page on the general idea of the treatise and on the learning process, and a third page on the notions of revelation, theology, and dogma, the remaining 24 pages are "De Beatitudine Civitatis Caelestis", "On the Beatitude of the Celestial City," with special emphasis on the immediate vision of God and man's natural desire for this beatific vision.]

[Note by RD December 28, 2017: There are questions regarding the order of the pages:

- (1) Michael Shields discovered while translating this piece that the original pages 15, 16, and 17 were out of order;
- (2) Frederick Crowe discovered later that the same was true of the original 18 and 19;
- (3) Robert Doran has moved the original page 8 so that it becomes page 12;
- (4) the hypothesis at present is that the material from page 20 to the end represents a second attempt at ordering the presentation on the natural desire to see God by essence, distinct from the attempt represented here by pages 8 to 12; if this proves not to be the case, these pages need to be moved up.]

[page 1]

The Last Things

The 'last things' are those events that happen at the end of life of each individual person and at the end of the world as a whole.

From scripture:

(a) The 'last time' or 'end time' is the whole messianic era, for which the previous era was a preparation. Thus the [Old Testament] prophets and the New Testament. Cf. Zorrell, *Lexicon Graecum Novi Testamenti*, under *eschatos*.

(b) This time began with the first coming of Christ: Acts 2.17; Hebrews 1.2; 1 Peter 1.20.¹

¹ Acts 2.17 (quoting Joel regarding the Messianic age: 'And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and

(c) But most of all it refers to the second coming of Christ: John 6.39-40, 11.24, 12.48; 1 Peter 1.5.²

d) Also, 'the last things' is the name given to those events that are final in the case of individuals. 'In everything you do, remember your end, and you will never sin' (Sirach7.36).

Therefore:

- (a) On the beatitude of the celestial city
- (b) On the eternal torments of hell
- (c) On the hour of decision, that is, death
- (d) On the particular judgment
- (e) On the intermediate state of purgatory
- (f) On prayers for the dead
- (g) On the second coming of Christ
- (h) On the resurrection of the body
- (i) On the general judgement.

References:

Lennerz, *De Novissimis*. Rome, 1931

Pesch, Vol. III, treatise II, *De Deo fine ultimo*

Vol. IX, treatise II, *De Novissimis*

Dugas, set of notes for course

Dictionnaire de théologie catholique, under 'ciel,' 'gloire,' 'béatitude,' 'enfer,' 'purgatoire,' etc.

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your old men shall dream dreams ...'; Hebrews 1.2: 'but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world'; 1 Peter 1.20: 'He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for our sake.'

² John 6.39-40: '... but raise it up at the last day ... and I will raise him up at the last day'; John 11.24: 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day'; John 12.48: 'the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day'; 1 Peter 1.5: 'who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.'

So far, we have dealt with the general notion of the treatise, about the treatise looked at objectively; now we must make a few observations about the treatise considered from a subjective point of view, according to the second ‘prelude’ of meditation, ‘What we want.’

We must know what it is we want: animals are acted upon, but man moves himself, activates himself; and in fact he activates himself inasmuch as he knows and wills an end. If he does not know and will, he does not act but is acted upon; he is driven this way and that by the sound of a bell, for one or two or three or four years until at last he is set free.

Above all we must know what we want in acquiring knowledge. A teacher is to the knowledge of a student as a physician is to the health of a sick person; the physician helps nature, and nature itself produces health. Medication, operations, etc., do not produce health but remove the obstacles to health and assist the work of nature. In like manner the teacher does not produce knowledge in a student; this the agent intellect of each student does, by wondering, inquiring, finding reasons, connections, causes (for science is knowledge through causes). All the teacher does is present certain external signs, sounds in the air or notes on the blackboard. It is the students themselves that produce their own knowledge.

What, then, do we want? It is very little: what the enunciation of the thesis, how the terms are defined, what the [theological] note of the thesis is, how it is proven from scripture, the Fathers, Catholic tradition and theology, and how to answer objections.

And yet, this hardly inspires enthusiasm. Actually, the acquisition of this ability to speak is rather a sign of knowledge than knowledge to be acquired. This list expresses what the examiners are looking for; it does not express what I myself can want. What is it that I want?

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Revelation, Theology, Dogma

Revelation: God’s communication to man; specifically, that which is contained in our sources, that is, in written books and unwritten traditions, DB 1787; cf. 783.

Although revelation contains mysteries (DB 1786), nevertheless, if God grants, we can acquire some understanding of the mysteries (DB 1796).

The aim of our intellect, which is properly called ‘reason’ because it proceeds step by step, is to draw all things together into a coherent system and to contemplate what has thus been systematically drawn together.

‘In order to have a proper and perfect knowledge of any effect, there must be present together in the knower all knowledge of proper and of common causes; this is what Aristotle says in the first book of the Physics: “We are said to know a thing when we know its causes and principles right down to the elements.” *De Veritate*, 2, 4, c.

It is not within our power to have this perfect systematization of the mysteries, DB 1796.

But theology is the movement towards this end, the absorption of all of revelation and the assimilation of it for the nourishment of our life as a whole and of our preaching.

Finally, dogma is [revelation] taken in the narrowest sense: DB 1792.

Accordingly, in the treatise on the last things, or eschatology, some elements are the revealed truths, others are theological, and still others are dogmatic. These are all vitally interconnected; do not separate revelation or dogma from the theological element.

The heavenly Jerusalem, eternal life, and the treasure in heaven are very clearly revealed. But in order to sort out metaphors (*Summa theologiae*, 1-2, q. 4, a. 7, ad 1m) so as to have a clear and distinct apprehension of truth, a theologian directs his attention to reasons that are purely philosophical. There is hardly anything in scripture about happiness, beatitude; but Fr. Pesch, who is not thought of as being a speculative theologian, has composed a whole treatise on beatitude.

Scripture does speak about hell; it speaks clearly about the eternity of this punishment, though not so clearly as theologians or the catechism.

The bible contains no clear reference to purgatory, and nothing at all about the particular judgment. But there is an exigency for a system to which positive theology defers, so that as much is said about purgatory and the particular judgment as about hell.

There are many things in scripture about the end of the world, but these are couched in the obscurity of prophecy; hence theologians, mindful of their ignorance, deal more briefly with this topic.

Finally, dogma, generally speaking, comes after both revelation and theology. Things that are found explicitly and formally in scripture are rarely defined dogmatically, whereas those that are in scripture only virtually, that is, formally and implicitly, are regularly defined. What is in scripture implicitly or virtually is determined through theological inquiry; for in order to recognize what is stated

implicitly or virtually, one must suppose some system, a system that is necessary indeed, but nevertheless a system.

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The Notion of Beatitude

Boethius: a state that is perfect in the presence together of all good things. ‘On the Consolation of Philosophy,’ book 3, pros. 2 (PL 63, 724). Cf. [St. Thomas], *Summa theologiae*, 1-2, q. 4, a. 7, ad 2m (definition through that which is preeminently contained in beatitude).

Bonaventure: an end that satisfies desire (4, d. 49, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1) – either satisfying it effectively as an object or satisfying it by informing it as its perfection (ibid. q. 6).

Aquinas admits that it is an end, that it satisfies our appetite (1-2, q. 2, a. 7 c.), that there is a distinction between an end considered in itself and the attainment of an end (1-2, q. 1, a. 8; qq. 2 & 3). But he places the satisfaction of desire as a property: it is a consequence of [the beatific] vision (1-2, q. 4, a. 2 c.).

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Beatitude according to Aquinas

[References are to the *Summa Theologiae*]

1, q. 26 (beatitude of God); 1, q. 62 (of angels); 1-2, qq. 1-5 (of men); 1, q. 12 (on God’s knowledge), and parallel passages.

1, q. 26, a. 1 c.: ‘The perfect good of an intellectual nature.’ ‘Both of these apply to God in a most excellent way, namely, to be perfect and to be intelligent. Hence beatitude applies to God most of all.’ (Beatitude = to be perfect and to know it.)

1, q. 62, a. 1, c.: ‘The ultimate perfection of a rational or intellectual nature’; ‘Hence it is what is naturally desired.’ Cf. 1, q. 12, a. 1 c. Cf. 1-2, q. 3, a. 2: ‘The ultimate perfection of a human person.’

Imperfect [beatitude]: that which can be attained by virtue of one’s nature; Aristotle speaks about this, happiness in this life; the angels [are happy] immediately, without discursive reasoning; perfect beatitude: that which we

expect in the future [life]; that which exceeds the capacity of our nature. Cf. 1-2, q. 5, a. 3; q. 4, aa. 5-8.

1, q. 62, a. 4 c.: For God, to be and to be happy (i.e., perfect and intelligent) are identical. For others, beatitude is the ultimate end (1-2, q. 3, a. 1, ad 1m, ‘by participation’); that is, pure act, and potency to act, or to one’s ultimate end). Through an operation (i.e., actuation, the act of a potency: cf. form, existence) that produces that end, just as medication produces health, and merits that end, and is expected from the gift of another. Meritorious: from what is owing to nature, because of the exigencies of that nature; from what is owing to grace, is radically a gift.

1-2, q. 1, a. 8 c.: end in itself (1-2, q. 2) and the attainment of the end (1-2, q. 3): objective and formal beatitude.

1-2, q. 4, a. 5, c. (cf. aa. 6-8): [what is required] for simply being happy, and for a fuller happiness: essential and accidental beatitude.

1-2, a. 4, a. 2 c.: That which is principal in essential beatitude from which all the other things necessary for the existence of happiness are derived (love, joy). Sometimes it is called the metaphysical essence of beatitude, as opposed to its properties.

1-2, q. 2, a. 7 c.: ‘perfect good that fulfils the desire for good.’

1-2, q. 4, a. 7, ad 2m: all good things are in God in a preeminent way as in their source (in reference to Boethius’s definition) [cf. arg. 2].

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The Vision of God in Relation to the Ultimate End, Charity, and Joy

1 The ultimate end-which is God in himself.

2 The ultimate end-by-which is God as the intellectual form of the Elect. From multiplicity to unity. Kingdom of heaven. The mystical body considered in its term.

3 The vision of God in his essence is that which is first by its nature in the constitution of this unity; from this flow all that pertain to the celestial city.

In itself it is the union of many in one; perfection through infinite act; perfection of knowledge; the ultimate perfection of an intellectual nature.

In its intrinsic consequence it is the utmost delight; for delight is an aspect of an elicited act.

4 The will is that appetite which follows the intellect. The apprehension of infinite good necessarily causes the highest degree of love; and when the loved object is possessed, united, and fully known, there is love not in the state of desire but in the state of joy, rest, fruition.

5 This love is the love of friendship.

Demons and the damned have the greatest yearning to see God, for their natural desire of the infinite to be satisfied. What they want is not a good in itself but a good for themselves, the satisfaction of their desire.

Demons and the damned make themselves the center of the universe: they see all things as related to themselves; for them the ultimate end, that which is an end simply and of itself, for the sake of which all else exists, is the demon or the damned himself.

Compare what happens in a country. A good politician seeks the common good, the way things ought to be. Because of this objective he can neglect his own personal good even to the point of risking his life. A tyrant likewise wants the common good, the stability and prosperity of his country, not, however, as an objective good, as that which ought to be good for all, but as a good for himself, as a means for his own honor, wealth, and pleasure. His love is inordinate. His will is irrational.

We are capable of the love of friendship: naturally so, because the will, following the intellect, wills what is in accordance with reason (good for itself: appropriate to a desire, that is, rational – good for itself: a means to one's ends, egoism, inordination); and supernaturally so, from the habit of charity, regarding what pertain to God as he is in himself.

The love of friendship is compatible with the love of concupiscence, so long as concupiscence is well ordered, loves God for the sake of God himself and all other things for his sake, and so, 'love your neighbor as yourself.'

The ultimate end-which: that which is an end simply and in itself; that for which everything else exists.

The ultimate end by-which: that by which other things are constituted for the sake of the ultimate end-which; God's objective and formal external glory.

[The remainder of material on page 6 is handwritten.]

good for oneself: to will what is good for oneself, appropriate to a desire; this includes what is good for God alone, and what is good for the neighbor alone – a metaphysical principle

to will it because it is good for oneself is love of concupiscence, which can be either sinful, if one is one's own ultimate end and all else is for oneself, or good, if desired in a well-ordered way.

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The Vision of God in Relation to Other Things

The ultimate end-which is that for the sake of which absolutely all other things exist. This is God, for whose sake all other beings exist and function.

One is correctly orientated to the ultimate end-which through charity; for charity means to will that God be the ultimate end-which. Note that the will is more objective than the intellect: for truth is in the mind, but good is in things.

The ultimate end-by-which is that reality by which ultimately all other things exist for the sake of the ultimate end-which.

This end is the external glory of God, the manifestation of divine perfection, both objectively in that creatures imitate and exhibit this perfection, and formally insofar as they know, love, and praise it. This formal end ultimately consists in the beatific vision.

This vision in itself is delightful in the extreme: intellectual delight is among the keenest of pleasures, regards the greatest object, and is without end.

This vision produces the greatest charity. On earth charity is subject to a certain weakness from the fact that the will follows the intellect, but the intellect does not see God. In heaven that reality which is in itself lovable in the extreme will be seen and contemplated for all eternity.

This charity will be accompanied by the most intense joy, for joy is the resting of the appetite in attaining its end.

Besides, by this vision is constituted the heavenly kingdom in which all human beings will be mutually united because they will be united through all being informed by the vision of God; in this commonwealth, in this perfect mystical body, there will be perfect order, mutual charity, whereby all will duly love their neighbor for the sake of God.

‘Good for oneself’ has two meanings: first, as that which is willed is subordinated to the one willing it; in this sense I will this thing for the sake of myself as end; second, as the proper relationship between the desire and the desirable, and in this sense it expresses a metaphysical principle.

The will, the rational appetite, tends to the goodness of the intelligible order; hence it is contrary to the nature of the will for a human being, who is not the ultimate end-which, to make himself the ultimate end-which.

Demons desire this vision with the love of concupiscence, for the sake of themselves, and indeed with a disordered love of concupiscence, desiring it for themselves as the ultimate end-which.

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The Natural Desire to See God Through His Essence

1 The intellect in the strict sense is that potency whereby things are known through their essences, through the intelligible species that are proportionate to the things themselves. In this sense the object of our intellect is the quiddity of material things.

2 The intellect in a more general sense is the discursive process of rational consciousness, based upon essences that are known and seeking to come to know others. In this sense the object of our intellect is being and truth.

3 Now these two do not belong to different potencies but to the same potencies: the same agent intellect both produces the intelligible species whereby we see into the essences of things and initiates the discursive process from one species to the discovery of another; and the same possible intellect receives both the species whereby it understands in the strict sense, and the [inner] words (definitions and judgments) whereby it understands in the more general sense.

4 Hence the object of our discursive intellect is broader than the object of our intellect that understands in the strict sense. For in its discursive process it is capable of conceiving and judging all things whatsoever, and in this way its object is being in its broadest extent. But in understanding in the strict sense it can only form within itself the species of material things.

5 Inasmuch, then, as it is intellect, it tends to know quiddities; but inasmuch as it is discursive, it tends toward absolutely everything. From these two tendencies

together there arises the desire to have a quidditative knowledge of all things; this includes seeing God through his essence, and in accordance with the degree of perfection of this vision adds little or nothing to it.

6 Such a desire for a vision of God is a desire for a supernatural end. For insofar as our intellect naturally knows quiddities, it is also naturally limited to knowing the quiddities of material things; but insofar as it naturally knows all things, it is limited to an analogical mode through concepts and judgments.

7 Such a desire really exists in us. For the starting point and the end of our intellectual activity belong to our intellect in the strict sense. The starting point is wonder, asking ‘why?’; the end is the contemplation of intelligible truth; the discursive process mediates between wonder and contemplation; it orders the objects of our wonder so that we may contemplate them.

Accordingly, this discursive process orders all things, for it extends to all things, to being in its broadest extent. Therefore, there exists in us a tendency to contemplate all things so ordered; this tendency arises spontaneously from our nature, and yet through our nature, as we eventually discover, it simply cannot attain that end.

But what we cannot do by ourselves alone we hope and desire to be done for us by another. Hence from our natural makeup there emerges the desire for God to raise us to a supernatural life in which we may contemplate in their essences all things in due order.

[Page 9: The following five numbered sections on page 9 of the Latin original seem to be a revision of the previous seven numbered sections, on page 8]

The Natural Desire to See God through His Essence

1 The intellect in the strict sense (*intus legere*, to see into, grasp inwardly) is a potency that is at the same time active and passive, producing and receiving intelligible species in order to have quidditative knowledge.

In a more general sense the intellect is this same potency which, conscious of itself, proceeds discursively through concepts and judgments. And in this way it proceeds to being and truth.

Accordingly, this discursive process is by nature an intermediary: the starting point of the whole intellectual process is wonder, inquiring about causes; its end is the contemplation of intelligible truth; but both wonder and contemplation pertain to the intellect taken in the strict sense, while the discursive process mediates between the initial wonder and the final contemplation.

2 An intellect of this sort is naturally proportionate to the contemplation of all truth through species derived from sensible objects.

Contemplation extends to all truth: for the object of the discursive intellect is being and truth without restriction.

Contemplation is had through species derived from sensible things because the intellect in the strict sense is only wonder, and after the discursive process is contemplation. Our intellect is reason participating in an intellectual nature rather than just intellect simply so called.

3 But this intellect of ours is naturally capable of conceiving of a higher and more perfect end than this natural end.

Because it knows the quiddities of sensible things and also thinks about all being and all truth and understands that every being has a quiddity, it knows that there exists some quidditative contemplation of all being and truth, that is, a vision of God through his essence. Besides that, it knows that such a vision is extremely desirable; more likely it is not sure whether such a vision is possible for itself, but nevertheless it is able to desire both that it be possible and that God in his goodness may deign to bestow this vision upon it.

4 Such a desire is said to be natural by reason of its origin. It arises from the combination of the tendency of our intellect towards quiddities and its tendency towards the totality of being and truth. In putting these two together it immediately grasps the possibility, absolutely speaking, of quidditatively contemplating total being, and recognizes the extreme desirability of such a vision.

But although natural in its origin, this desire is also conditional in itself both by reason of its fulfilment and by reason of its will for fulfilment.

It is conditional in itself because it is not entirely clear that such a vision is possible for us.

It is conditional by reason of its fulfilment, for the attainment of such a vision, even though possible for us, still does not depend upon us but upon God's gracious will.

It is conditional by reason of the will to fulfil it, for a good man does not will this absolutely, but rather on the condition that God so wills.

5 This desire is natural in the same way as it is natural for a man to think of political utopias and wonder about them and contemplate them. For the vision of God is the utopia of all utopias; it is the tendency towards this vision that is the inspiration behind all utopias.

This tendency is truly natural: for in reaching out to quiddities, the discursive process of the intellect orders all being and truth; naturally it reaches out as far as it can, and would go further if it could; and it could if that were possible and if God would grant it ...

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The Vision of God through His Essence Is Absolutely Supernatural

1 There are three principles of division for cognitive operations:

First, there is the object known, e.g., an ox, a man, an angel, God.

Second, there is the way in which the object is attained, such as through an intelligible species proportionate to the object, or through an analogical species to which is applied the way of negation, of preeminence, and of affirmation.

Third, there is the potency in which the object is attained.

2 Seeing God through his essence is infinite in the first and second ways, but not in the third.

It is infinite in the first way, that is, by reason of the object in itself, for God is infinite.

It is infinite in the second way, that is, by reason of its formal object, for to see God through a species proportionate to God is to see God through a species that is infinite, God himself.

It is finite in the third way, for the act of seeing is not ours unless it is received in a potency of ours that has been properly disposed for its reception; but neither is our intellectual potency infinite, nor is its disposition by the light of glory infinite; for the light of glory is itself a created reality.

3 That knowledge whereby God knows himself is infinite in three ways: its object in itself is infinite; it is attained through what is itself infinite; and it is not received in a finite intellectual potency. This divine knowledge is called 'comprehension'; it is possible to God alone, for a creature necessarily knows only to the extent that its own potency is actuated; but if there is an actuation of a potency, the third mode of infinity is excluded.

4 Our knowledge of God in this life is infinite in one way: the object known is infinite. But the species whereby God is known is finite and analogical, and is received in a potency.

5 Our vision of God in heaven is infinite in two ways: by reason of the object and by reason of the species whereby the object is attained; not, however, by reason of the power being actuated.

6 Our vision of God in heaven is absolutely supernatural. For it is had through a species that is proportionate to what is infinite; but what is proportionate to what is infinite exceeds the proportion of any created or creatable nature; therefore ...

7 The fact that this heavenly vision is absolutely supernatural does not exclude that our intellect is naturally remote matter for such a vision. Remote matter's proportion to form is not the proportion of a nature that is exceeded by what is supernatural; for the proportion of remote matter indicates only a remote possibility, and a remote possibility alone does not constitute either what is owed or what is required; otherwise everything that is remotely possible would be owed, which is absurd.

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The Essential Meaning of Supernaturality

That is supernatural which exceeds the proportion of a nature.

A nature is a substance (substantial essence, that which is such as to be able to exist by itself) considered according to its ordination to operation.

The *proportion* of a nature is its proportion to everything that belongs to that nature either by its constitution, or as consequent upon it, or as required by it, that is, for which it has an exigency.

A nature is constituted either by form alone (angels, God) or by form and matter.

What is consequent upon a nature are in the strict sense the potencies and other accidents that flow from the substantial essence; in a broad sense also existence for form or essence, and operations for the accidental powers.

That for which a nature has an exigency includes all that are required by a nature in order that it be and operate in accordance with its substantial essence.

That which exceeds the proportion of a nature is whatever is of a higher degree of being or perfection than anything that can be found within the proportion of that nature.

That which exceeds the proportion of a particular nature is relatively supernatural; for example, the life of an angel exceeds the proportion of human nature.

That which exceeds the proportion of any finite nature, whether actually created or creatable, is absolutely supernatural; what is absolutely supernatural, therefore, is anything that belongs to the order of the infinite, to the proportion to the infinite alone.

Exigencies as defined above are exigencies in the strict sense.

In the broad sense exigencies are those necessary requirements which, although not belonging to our nature by reason of our nature itself, nevertheless are in some way owed to it by reason of God's infinite goodness. The Augustinians say that grace is among our nature's exigencies in the broad sense. This opinion is rejected by all other theologians, and rightly so, since no meaning can be given to something owed in this way (what is owed is either owed to someone or it is not owed at all; and the Augustinians admit that it is not owed to anyone).

Those things that are not at all required but express mere possibilities are improperly called exigencies. For example, it is possible that a particular chemical be absorbed by a tree or some other living thing and so participate in life in a material way; but such a participation in life is not owed to or required by chemical elements. And in general, those things to which a nature stands as remote matter are indeed possible and yet are beyond the proportion of that nature.

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This Natural Desire for the Beatific Vision is Not Incompatible with its Supernaturality.

1 This desire arises from nature; but what is desired is not sought by nature; this is not knowable to one relying on nature's own powers. The desire consists in the fact that something is hoped for from God.

2 This desire arising from nature and hoping for the greatest good from God's goodness is not absolute but conditional. It desires it from God so long as God wills. [Hand: This desire is natural by reason of its origin, supernatural by reason of its object or end. Hence it is a natural desire, but is conditioned as to its fulfilment and will for fulfilment.]

3 If this desire is not fulfilled because God does not elevate one to supernatural life, one can have everything one desires; for a good man wants nothing that God does not wish to lavish upon him.

But the case is different if this desire is not fulfilled because man rejects the elevation freely offered to him by God. For then the desire lacks fulfilment through the fault of the one desiring. The damned forever bewail their sin, not out of love of God, of course, but out of self-love.

4 Natural beatitude is the ultimate end or ultimate perfection of an intellectual nature proportionate to that nature.

Such beatitude does not satisfy all possible human desire, but it does satisfy every desire that a good person actually wants satisfied.

Besides, it is a mistake to suppose that man endowed with intellect cannot desire other and better things than those which are natural to him. For man can conceive and judge all things; as long as what he has is less than infinite, he can conceive of something better and judge that it is better, and because it is better he can desire it if God so wills and grants.

5 Hence it is not incongruous for a supernatural end to be desired naturally. For nature does not desire a supernatural end as if it were natural; it desires it precisely as supernatural and expects it not from itself but from God, if God so wills. Nor are natural desires restricted to natural ends: natural desires and their effectiveness for those things which nature can by itself attain are, it is true, so restricted, but not those natural conditional desires for those things which God can lavish upon nature.

6 The futile natural desire postulated in the hypothesis of pure nature does not follow from this. Such a futile desire would follow if it were unconditioned. But a conditional desire is not futile simply because its condition is not fulfilled. In order that a desire be futile there is required either that the desire be unconditioned and unfulfilled, or that a conditional desire whose condition is fulfilled not be itself fulfilled.

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Objections

But not even remotely does [our nature] tend towards the infinite.

Response: It is question of fact; there are some who know it and some who don't.

(a) The difference between Augustine and Aquinas is not that the former's thinking was profound and the latter's superficial, as some would say; rather, both were profound thinkers, but the former was a lover, the latter a specialist.

Augustine placed in us a certain vision of immutable truth, i.e., of the absolute itself, to explain our most common judgments and any judgments whatever.

Aquinas did not at all deny this. But what Augustine said was something seen, Aquinas asserted to be not something seen but our intellectual nature itself. Cf. 1, 89, 3, ad 1m; 84, 5; De Spiritualibus Creaturis 10 c. and ad 8m.

(b) What it means to know truth.

To know truth does not mean seeing the identity between being as known and being as unknown, i.e., making a comparison between intellect and reality. This is a childish absurdity: what is unknown is not a term of a comparison.

We arrive at truth in two steps: (1) I cannot judge otherwise; I exclude the contradictory from my mind; (2) that which is necessary in my mind is absolutely necessary, at all times, in every place, in the whole of the universe, in any possible world. Why? Because my mind is commensurate with all being; it is capable of all things. Cf. De Veritate, 1, q. 1, a. 9.

(c) What it means to have a concept of being.

It is not a question of a spoken word or the meaning of a word, but of an act of rational consciousness, of an interior utterance.

It has nothing to do with that act whereby that which is potentially intelligible in the phantasm becomes actually intelligible in the intellect; God alone is an actually intelligible being: cf. Contra Gentiles, II, c. 98.

It is not an abstraction in the ordinary sense of prescinding: it abstracts from nothing, whether actual or possible.

It does not have a sufficient cause in the senses: for it includes all things, not only the sensible; it includes what is immaterial, whereas sensing is of what is material; it includes the necessary, and sensing is of the contingent.

That sense is not the total cause, cf. 1, q. 84, a. 6 c. at the end; also ad 1m and ad 3m.

It has its sufficient cause in 'being capable of producing all things'; it pertains to 'being capable of becoming all things,' not by its passive act in which it is moved by the phantasm, but by its active act by which it intends, reflects, defines.

It is the first step in every definition; it is the reflective intention of one who speaks [an inner word]; it is a total abstraction in this sense, that this intention of one who utters the word 'being' is not yet an intention of any determinate object. For as soon as there is some determination, 'being' ceases to be and becomes

some genus; it is the rational conscious expression of itself as capable of producing and becoming all things.

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Difficulties

(1) If God himself is a species as to the completion of the act, then the vision of God would not be our operation.

That it would not be an actuation of our potency, we deny. That this actuation would not be produced by us, but is only received in us, we grant.

(2) But in order that it be our immanent operation it has to be produced by us.

Many theologians teach this, we admit; but we deny that it is taught by the best. (It is explicitly denied by Cajetan, and implicitly but very directly by St Thomas concerning sensation).

The act of sensing is an act produced in us by the sensible object (1, q. 85, a. 2, ad 3m; Quod. 5, 9, ad 2m; In 4 Sent., d. 50, 1, 4, sol.; In 2 De Anima, lect. 13, 393).

The sensible in act is the sense in act (Roland-Gosselin).

Cf. 1, 77, 3 c.; In 2 De Anima, lect. 6, 305;

1, 18, 3 c.

1, 56, 1 (heat is twofold, and therefore also production; but there is one species); not 'from which' but 'by which', De Spiritualibus Creaturis 9, ad 6m (formal object by-which);

De veritate 8, 6; as effect to cause; cf. 1, 9, 2 (Ottawa edition, 1, col. 48a, line 11 ff.).

It is impossible that an act produced by us be to God as act to potency, as existence to form. What we would produce would be either infinite or finite; but seeing God is not something finite, and [to produce] the infinite is impossible for us.

The act of understanding is something passive, 1, 79, 2; what we produce is an inner word (Suppl. 92, 1, ad 4m).

(3) But then we should be seeing God not by our act but by the act by which God knows himself.

That we should then be seeing God by an act not produced by us, we admit; but we deny that that vision would be effected by an act not received in us, at least in an eminent way.

That the vision would be effected by the act by which God knows himself: *adequately*, we deny; *inadequately*, we subdistinguish:

we see [God] by way of a subject, by a potency, a radical capacity, a disposition to the act, and the act itself; and if one of these goes, the vision goes.

But God comprehends himself inasmuch as he is the very act by which he exists, is a subject, a potency, capacity, proximate disposition, species, and act;

Inadequately, we subdistinguish: by a knowledge that is numerically or specifically the same, we deny; by one that is specifically different, we grant (God comprehends himself; we see, look at).

Suppl., 92, 1, ad 2m.

[Hand: Pure act is that which is knowledge in God; it is that by which there will be our vision [of God]. Pure act itself does not suffice for this vision to be ours, but [there is needed] also our potency as actuated.]

(4) An act which actuates a potency cannot exist prior to that potency.

We answer from the analogy of the mysteries, DB 1796: a separated soul is the first act of a resurrected body; yet it exists prior to it, since before its union with the body to be resurrected there is not yet a body, except in an equivocal sense.

(5) One act cannot simultaneously actuate many different potencies.

If an act's reception in a potency restricts it to that potency to the exclusion of others, that is true; but this objection does not hold in this case where after its reception the act remains infinite.

(6) Act is limited by the potency in which it is received.

Act is limited by a potency to what is finite, but not by a potency to what is infinite.

(7) But there is no such thing as potency to what is infinite.

Note first: potency is ordination to act; there is a diversity among these ordinations or proportions according to the diversity of potencies.

The proportion of essence to existence (without prejudice to the theory of the Incarnation) is one of equality; an essence limits existence to a such and such a category of being.

The proportion of matter to form is not one of equality: a material body has a potency with a proportion to an immaterial, intellectual, and immortal soul.

To the objection that there is no such thing as potency to the infinite, we reply as follows: leaving aside the case of essence as potency to existence, we admit that there is no proximate natural potency to the infinite, but affirm that there does exist a remote natural potency to the infinite.

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What Is Meant by ‘Seeing God through His Essence’?

First: what is any vision of an essence?

Second: how to conceive the essence of God? [hand: how to conceive our tendency towards seeing this essence?]

Third: what is required and suffices that this proposition be true: ‘This man sees God through God’s essence’?

First: What is any vision of an essence?

(1) ‘To understand’ can be taken in two ways: *properly*, according to which the object of the intellect is the ‘what,’ the ‘because-of-what,’ the quiddity, essence, nature; and *commonly*, according to which the object of the intellect is truth and being.

In the proper sense, to understand refers to that sudden and illuminating insight of the intellect, a simple apprehension of the intelligible: it is *intus-legere*, ‘to see within,’ Eureka!, Newton.

In the common sense, understanding refers to rational discourse, a process from one thing to another, in accordance with the principle of sufficient reason, by way of intending, uttering [an inner word], expressing.

L’intuition intellectuelle; la pensée pensante.

(2) Understanding in the common meaning of the term, that is, thinking, includes three acts: defining, so as to know what what we are thinking about; judging, in which we combine or separate what have been defined; and reasoning, whereby we proceed from one or several judgments to a further one.

(3) Understanding in the proper sense also includes three acts: the intellect as the principle of reason, which looks in the phantasm but precedes definition; the intermediate or critical intellect, which follows upon definitions but precedes judgment; the contemplative intellect, which follows upon judgment and contemplates intelligible truth.

(4) Intellect as the principle of reason.

Four questions: Is it? What is it? Is it that? Why is it?

Their differences: A centaur: is it? what is it? Man is an animal: is he? why?

The proportion among them: lunar eclipse.

The senses tell us whether something is, in a global way, without distinct quiddities.

The intellect wondering, illuminating the phantasm, asks what and why. The what: i.e., the cause of matter, explanatory medium between sensible data and the categories of thought, form, *to ti ēn einai*. [Hand: Pre-conceptual stage - *avant le morcelage*, ‘before the dividing up’]

After the grasp of the intelligible in the phantasm, the intellect either reflectively knows the singular or directly forms a universal, *to ti estin*, i.e., form + common matter; common matter = that which in the phantasm is in the nature of a form, flesh and bone but not this flesh and these bones.

Once universals have been formed, there follow distinctions and definitions.

(5) The question ‘Is it?’ recurs in a clear and distinct form. Besides, there are universals to be combined or separated, hence judgment.

Judgment presupposes an elaborate scheme of categories: the age of reason, maturity (no adolescents in ethics), specialization.

Judgment presupposes the exclusion of contradictories: hence reason analyzes into principles, intellectual, sense, imagination.

Then the intellect apprehends this multiplicity as one [hand: illative sense]: there is a formal motive for judging; the perceived necessity for making this judgment from these facts known through the intellect and the senses.

Again and more profoundly the question recurs, whether something is really true, absolutely, universally valid, at all times and in all possible worlds?

Wherein do we see what is true? For Augustine, in eternal reasons; for Thomas, in the nature of an active principle. Wondering about all things, able to produce all things, infinite potential.

Reason, with this all grasped, says ‘It is’: [hand: and in this word the intellect contemplates intelligible truth].

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Second: How to Conceive the Essence of God

The Analogy of Quiddity

We come to know through the senses, the intellect, and rational consciousness, because the object of our knowledge is not purely intelligible: it consists not of pure form but also of matter and of contingent existence. Matter is not intelligible in itself but through its relation to form, and contingent existence is not intelligible in itself but through its relation to necessary existence. Hence besides

our intellect by which we know forms, we have senses for directly apprehending matter, and rational consciousness for knowing contingent existence.

Through our senses we in some way know existence, but we do not yet know the ‘what’: it requires rational consciousness to bring these two together into one act and to know them in this one act.

But any separate substance lacks both matter and sensation; hence it is not rational but intellectual: it does not understand by asking ‘what?’ about sensible data.

Besides, in us the intelligible in act and the intellect in act are identical, whereas the intelligible in potency and the intellect in potency are not identical. The intellect [in potency] is our faculty; the intelligible in potency is the form of a material thing. This is not the case with separate substances, since the intelligible for them is not the form of a material thing.

In those beings that are non-material, intellect and the understood are the same: cf. 1, 14, 2; 14, 4 c. & ad 3m; 56, 1, c. at the end; 87, 1, ad 3m.

Finally, in God there is not only form without matter but also existence that is not contingent but necessary, that is, intelligible in itself; hence in God knowledge in every way is through understanding properly so called: God is his understanding, a pure act of understanding as also of existence.

Hence to understand God is to be God.

Hence an understanding of God properly so called, that is, a comprehension of God through the intellect, is impossible for any creature whatsoever.

Seeing the essence of God is a middle way between the understanding of God that is the same as being God and, on the other side, knowing God analogically through the concept of being, and so on. But just what this seeing is we must now try to find out.

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Third: What Is Required That This Statement Be True: ‘This Person Sees God Through God’s Essence’?

1 Truth is the correspondence between the intellect and reality. The conditions for the truth of a proposition are the conditions for the reality expressed through that proposition.

2 (a) subject; (b) intellective potency; (c) at least a remote capacity of this potency for this act; (d) a species whereby the potency is assimilated to the object; (e) the actuation of this species if it is not actuated as to the completion of the act (1, 79, 6, ad 3m); (f) the potency's proximate disposition for the species if it is not proximately disposed by itself.

3 (a) If there is no subject there is no knower.

(b) If there is no intellective potency as a potency, there will be no knowledge in the knower; there will not be what is called a vital act on the part of the subject.

Against the Averroists, who denied that each individual has a possible intellect, Aquinas replied that in that case it would not be true that this particular individual understands.

Without an intellective potency as intellective there would be no remote capacity for seeing God; for a spiritual cognitive potency is required for the direct knowledge of an immaterial reality.

(c) Along with an intellective potency there is a remote (generic) capacity for act: for the intellect has being as its object, being that is infinite because within itself it includes all the differences of being and outside of it there is nothing but impossibility; yet it is only a virtual infinite (not an actual infinite in the way that God in knowing himself actually knows all things actual and possible).

(d) Without a species there is no knowledge of an object. According to the principle of assimilation, a cognitive act is knowledge of that to which it has a similarity; to know an object is to be that object, at least by way of assimilation.

[In the case of the beatific vision] this species is nothing other than God himself; for that which is similar to the infinite is itself infinite; it in no way differs from the infinite, and therefore is the same as the infinite. There cannot be two infinities: one would be either different from the other or not; if one were different, it would not be infinite, but something less than infinite; if it is not different, then it is the same. Cf. 1, 12, 2.

(e) A species is to understanding as form is to existence (1, 14, 4 c.; 34, 1, ad 2m).

Form is to existence as potency is to act as God is only to God. Therefore, God as species is necessarily understood as the species in regard to the completion of the act.

(f) Since the intellect is only remotely capable of this act, a proximate disposition is required for it, and this is called the 'light of glory' (1, 12, 5).

[Hand: 4 The following therefore are required: (a) a subject, which we are; (b) an intellective potency, which we have, a virtual infinite; (c) disposition of this

potency for the actual infinite; (d) the actuation of the potency so disposed through pure act in the nature of an intelligible species.

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Natural and Supernatural Desire

1 There are two efficient causes of our intellectual knowledge.

Most of you, no doubt, deny this; you believe that sensing alone suffices.

a: Sense, phantasm is an instrument, the matter of the cause, 1, 84, 6 c. at the end; it is not the total cause: *ibid.* c., ad 1m, ad 3m.

b: The agent intellect: capable of producing all things [not because I say ‘being’ and mistakenly believe that I know what I am saying]; present in each individual person, 1, 89, 3, ad 1m; 1, 84, 5; *De Spir. Creaturis* 10, c. and ad 8m. [hand: What Augustine says that a person sees in immutable truth, Aquinas asserts to be not something seen but our intellectual nature itself.]

The fact that we wonder, ask questions, arrive at the intelligible in act, that we can reflect upon our knowledge and define, that we can judge what is true – none of this comes from the senses.

Truth: not by comparing known being with being as unknown, but through an analysis of our intellectual nature, its active principle (*De Ver.* 1, 9), [S.T.] 1, 84, 6, ad 1m; 84, 8 – because this act is necessary for us, and what is necessary for us is absolutely necessary because that which is capable of all things is a participation in the absolute as absolute.

c: The concept of being [hand: not a judgment that something exists: this requires the senses]

Not a Scotistic concept, by abstracting from the phantasm; it is not an abstraction in any sense, it prescind from no real entity, actual or possible; it is not direct knowledge of the intelligible, for it includes matter and contingency; it cannot be caused by sensible data [for it is transcendent]. [hand: the sensible datum is required only by way of a stimulus, *il faut declencher*, ‘has to get the process started’].

It is the first step of the intellect that is conscious and reflecting upon something; it is the pure intention of reflection itself, before there is any determination about what it is reflecting upon [hand: as soon as it receives any determination, it is no longer being but some particular genus]; it is the expression of the very nature of the agent intellect, as capable of all things; for it proceeds

not from the senses, although it is verified in sensible data, but from the agent intellect wherein lies its sole sufficient cause, and proximately from the possible intellect as actually understanding. See Adamczyk on the formal object, p. 74: 'being that fundamentally and potentially is proximately found in all quiddities.'

2 It tends to 'knowing the totality of being' as its object, and tends to it according to its own proper mode, through virtually infinite being, not through actually infinite being.

What is it to assert a natural desire for the vision?

It is an assertion that the tendency is primarily to the object and secondarily to a particular way of attaining the object.

An actual exigency is measured according to the tendency to a formal object, from the object along with the way of attaining it. Hence there is no exigency for this vision.

But the desire itself first wants the object, and then on account of the object wants the way of attaining it.

Because in an elicited act it wants a way [of attaining the object] that is different from the one nature has given it, there is a rebellion against God and against its own nature. [hand: Hence it can have absolutely all that it wants (in an elicited reasonable act) without seeing God]

But if there is added to it another way of tending [to the object], an added new desire for the object is not required. The natural desire suffices whichever way it tends, and whichever way it tends, the object is the same.

There is a natural tendency to the object. By virtue of this same radical tendency, it tends either naturally or supernaturally, for the object is the same in either case, namely total being.

Besides, since it can reflect and measure itself, this tendency and intellectual force can know that it can never be satisfied by way of a tendency that is connatural to it; it participates in God to the extent that without seeing God [hand: it is not satisfied – and yet without seeing God it can possess all that it wants in an elicited rational act.]

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3 Objection against the supernaturalism of this vision:

Therefore the natural desire remains futile unless grace is given.

Reply: That it remains futile properly speaking, we deny. For it proves the possibility of vision, and is the principle whereby we can know all that we know, and without which we should have no intellectual knowledge of anything, for we are able to apprehend truth by reason of the fact that we conceive being in its full

extent. Without this potential infinity, our knowledge would not be transcendent; metaphysics would be impossible; truth would be relative, it would be only what we are thinking, not a knowledge of reality because not a knowledge of being.

That [without grace] this desire remains futile improperly speaking, that is, it remains unfulfilled, we agree.

But a desire of nature has to be fulfilled, it demands its fulfilment.

Reply: That a desire arising from a proportion to form or essence has to be fulfilled, we agree; from proportion to proximate matter, we let this pass; but from proportion to remote matter, we agree that it demands the possibility of fulfilment, but deny that it demands actual fulfilment.

Soil found on the surface of the moon could be apt matter for growing trees, but it does not require that it actually be matter for a tree. Otherwise all remote possibilities would also be necessary.

[Hand: Our natural desire is that heuristic impulse itself, wonder, inquiry that is *in itself* absolutely universal.

We do not hold with Kant that the heuristic impulse in itself is restricted to sensible things, so that metaphysics is impossible.

We do not hold that a desire that is not natural but elicited requires the beatific vision as man's natural end – we see that this goes beyond our natural powers.

But we hold that *in itself* it is absolutely universal, so that after reflection we make this distinction: without grace, no vision is possible; with grace it is possible because naturally desired.]

No wise person complains because he cannot actually fly like a bird, or that he is not a king or emperor; he could fly, he could be a king, but this does not entail a true exigency to fly or be made king.

In 2 Sent. d 33, 2, 2; De Malo 5, 3 adds that infants dying without baptism lack supernatural knowledge.

From this we must conclude that we know the possibility of this vision because we know revelation and we understand from the analogy of revelation; otherwise our human intellect would not see the possibility of the actuation of our potency through infinite act.

Regarding the proportion to matter, see In 4 Sent. d. 49, 2, 1, ad 6m (Suppl. 92, 1, ad 6m) and Quodl. 10, 8, 17, ad 1m.

The natural desire to see God is not the solution to the critical problem (Maréchal) but the sign of a solution: the solution is that the adequate object of our intellect is the potential infinite. There is nothing that we cannot conceive; we

have or can have as many categories of thought as there are categories of possible reality; hence the mind's correspondence with reality.

It is through such a system of categories that we know reality. We have to develop such a system before we know reality. This is why children who cannot distinguish between fact and fiction are said to lack the use of reason, and adolescents who have to some extent developed a system can make general judgments but as yet lack sufficient development to consider ethical questions. Finally, we give credence to specialists in specialized areas, and everyone is to be believed in his own field because they have a sufficiently well-developed system for discerning and judging what is really so.

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The Natural Desire to See God through His Essence

1 It is of the utmost importance for an understanding of the relationship between nature and grace; grace perfects nature; because what nature most keenly desires is attained through grace.

Hence its importance for the spiritual life. The spiritual life is governed by our ultimate end; we do not yet know our ultimate end in itself, but in our nature itself we know our tendency to that end.

I do not mean that by some deductive process we can determine from our nature what to do in our spiritual life. God has given us proximate norms (faith, vocation) that are safer than our personal deductions. Nevertheless, there is and there is seen to be a fundamental reconciliation: the Jansenists and Puritans err in considering grace to be simply a denial of nature.

2 Within us, then, there is an intellectual light in which we understand and judge everything. 1, 89, 3, ad 1m.

It is a participation in uncreated light (*ibid.*); cf. 1, 84, 5; *De Spiritualibus Creaturis* 10, c. and ad 8m).

It is the source of wonder (What?), of reflection (Is it so?) and of contemplation.

It is infinite in its own way (1, 54, 2; 79, 2); it refers to being, which contains all differences within itself, not actually, however, as in God who knows all things through his essence, but potentially (1, 86, 2); it is capable of producing (agent) and of becoming (passive, receiving) all things.

But our knowledge begins from the senses (asking 'What?' about sensible data) and is grounded upon the senses (otherwise you have relations without related things); whatever the heights to which our natural knowledge may soar, there remains this relation to the senses. We know God as the first cause of perceptible

realities; we conceive immaterial realities by imagining material things and negating matter.

Although our knowledge begins from the senses and remains grounded on them, nevertheless it reduces all things to God: the first efficient cause, operating every operation; the ultimate end of all things, from whose goodness all things are good; pure act, from participation in which all other things actually exist. We do not know act directly except as combined with potency; we do not know a cause except one which is caused. The entire center of our knowledge is God; and yet we know nothing about God except by extrapolating from sensible data. All the knowledge possible to us is a structure built around a center, and the center itself, from which and in which and towards which all things exist, remains hidden. The better and greater is our knowledge, the more we know that all our knowing would be truly knowledge if only we knew God.

Hence all our desire to know is a desire to know God. We are naturally inclined towards the beatific vision as to our ultimate end. If we had this vision we should know all things in their cause; thus, we should truly have knowledge, a true and perfect insight.

And with this we should have all that we desire: the keenest delight (think of Newton, who never left his room for months); the most lovable, everlastingly present, hence the greatest love; the most perfect union, hence the greatest joy. Thy kingdom come!

[Hand: marriage--what a pale image]

[Hand: However: although the potential infinite naturally tends to the actual infinite as to its ultimate end, nevertheless this tendency is only a remote passive possibility; it does not mean an exigency; much less does it mean a reasonable and explicit act of willing in merely natural matters. Nature rightly judges such a vision as something proximately impossible; and, I believe, of itself and without faith it does not see that remote natural possibility.]

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To Assert Such a Desire is to Assert the Following:

1 It asserts a certain fact, namely, that ‘our hearts are not at rest, O Lord, until they rest in Thee.’

2 This fact is expressed in a reflective analysis thus:

(a) man tends to quidditative knowledge;

(b) the natural proportion of this tendency is towards the quiddities of material things perceptible by the senses;

- (c) but man can conceive all being analogically;
- (d) and therefore conceive quidditative knowledge of being itself;
- (e) and know that such knowledge is good and desirable;
- (f) and in fact that is it only through such knowledge that absolutely all desire can be satisfied [hand: that is, not only the desires of man as man but also as one who transcends himself through his analogical knowledge];
- (f) but since such knowledge exceeds the proportion of man and yet is required for the complete satisfaction of human desire, these two are reconciled in the fact that man desires that God elevate him to the supernatural order and conduct him to that supernatural end.

3 This assertion does not deny that grace and glory are absolutely supernatural; indeed, it supposes it. It affirms that the knowledge of God, a quidditative knowledge of being, exceeds the proportion of any actual or possible creature: that it cannot belong to the constitution or to the consequences or to the exigencies of any created or creatable substance. In fact, this assertion concerning the supernaturality of grace cannot be demonstrated from intrinsic reasons except by those who know what is meant by a quidditative knowledge of being.

4 This assertion entails various denials:

- (a) it denies the opinion of those who hold that man's entire desire is equally satisfied by either natural or supernatural beatitude;
- (b) it denies the opinion of those who hold that man's natural desire can be perfectly satisfied by a created good;
- (c) it denies the opinion of those who see no distinction between the satisfaction of every human desire and the satisfaction of desire according to the proportion of human nature;
- (d) it denies the opinion of those who do not distinguish between the satisfaction of every desire and something that is owed to or required by nature;
- (e) it denies the opinion of those who, [hand: not understanding what is meant by the transcendence of natural reason, rashly utter all kinds of false opinions. By the very fact that man knows himself and makes a comparison with other natures, there is in him a certain transcendence; this transcendence is in the order of cognition, not in the order of execution. Desire is in the order of cognition; execution is actively from God, and obedientially passive from man praying.]

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Summa Contra Gentiles III, 50 at end: 'When man's felicity is actually to be found so sublime, those who look for it in the meanest things should blush.'

Ibid., III, 57, 4: 'It was proved above that every intellect naturally desires a vision of the divine substance. A natural desire, however, cannot be in vain. Hence any created intellect can attain a vision of the divine substance, the lowliness of its nature notwithstanding.'

Ibid., III, 63: That in that felicity all desire is fulfilled.

§ 2: 'For there is a certain desire on the part of man inasmuch as he is intellectual with respect to knowing truth, which is in fact attained through the pursuit of a contemplative life. This will actually be fulfilled to the greatest extent when through the vision of the Prime Truth the intellect will come to know all things that it naturally desires to know ...'

The following sections prove the fulfilment of all desire from this principle.

Compendium Theologiae, ch. 104: see the whole chapter.

The nature of this natural desire:

It is our intellectual power, active and passive, capable of making/doing and becoming all things.

Each nature has a natural inclination to its proper operation. But the intellect is a transcendent faculty, tends towards all things; it wants to understand, and to understand everything. Inquiry, the desire to know, is not satisfied with anything less than a knowledge of infinite being itself.

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1, 80, 1, c.: A natural appetite is the inclination of a form, its tendency toward its proper operation; it is found in every form.

A specific appetite is an inclination that follows some apprehension; that is, a tendency that follows a form that is not innate but acquired through knowledge; and it is divided into sentient and rational.

1, 60, 1, c.: There is a natural appetite in the will; a natural love.

1-2, 5, 8: It is not a question of an elicited act of the will; not everyone in fact wants the same thing.

1, 62, 2, c.: Seems to exclude a natural appetite of the will for the vision of God (? I say 'seems' because he speaks about a natural movement);

and yet this passage is not intelligible if Aquinas understood our natural desire to belong to the will.

It remains that it is a question of the natural inclination of the intellect; for in our spiritual part there is either intellect or will. Besides, Aquinas attributes the principal role in beatitude to the intellect, and to the will as such an incidental role.

[hand: The first line of [Aristotle's] *Metaphysics*: [in Greek] ‘All men have a natural desire for knowledge.’]

CG III, 25, §§ 11-13: There is in man a natural desire to know causes; this is proven from Book I of the *Metaphysics*, where Aristotle speaks about wonder. Nor does inquiry cease until it arrives at the first cause; man’s natural desire tends in its knowing towards some definite end, which is a knowledge of God.

Ibid., III, 48, § 2: There is no complete happiness in this life, because there can be no complete knowledge in this life; therefore, our natural desire cannot cease in this life.

III, 48, § 13: Later individuals discover things different from those found by those who preceded them, as Aristotle says (*Met.* I [II], 993b; In II *Met.*, lect. 1, 288): ‘In their pursuit of truth, therefore, men have not yet reached their ultimate end.’

III, 48, § 14: At least we ought to understand all material things; but this is not the case; therefore, we have not arrived at our ultimate end. Proof of the major premise: ‘The intellect is that which is able to produce and become all things.’

CG III, 50: That the natural desire of separate substances is not satisfied in the knowledge they naturally have of God.

§ 1: everything that is imperfect desires what is perfect in the same species; mere opinion is a stimulus to knowledge; the main thing is to know ‘what it is,’ that is, to know the essence;

§ 2: knowledge of effects stimulates the desire to know their causes;

§ 3: the intellect is not satisfied with knowing ‘that something is’ or ‘whether it is’; it wants to know ‘what it is’ and ‘why’;

§ 4: no finite reality can satisfy the desire of the intellect; inquiry goes on;

§ 5: as there is a natural desire to know, there is also a natural desire to dispel ignorance; but an imperfect knowledge of God is known by an intellectual nature precisely as imperfect; therefore ...

§ 6: the more we understand, the more we want to understand; but we have a desire; therefore, separate substances desire more intensely than we;

§ 7: 'In this it is quite clear that ultimate felicity is to be sought in nothing other than intellectual activity, since no desire aspires to such lofty heights as the desire to know truth. All our desires, for pleasure or whatever else one desires, can find satisfaction in other things; but the aforesaid desire does not come to rest until it reaches the most sublime center and maker of all things.'

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1 Apparently not taught before the Summa Contra Gentiles:

In 2 Sent., d. 33, q. 2, a. 2: Whether children who died without baptism grieve. Nothing is said about the natural desire to see God through his essence; children are not proportionate; there is no ordered desire for the impossible.

In 4 Sent., d. 49, q. 2, a. 1: The question is asked about the vision of God because of faith, as the Arab philosophers say because of the contemplation of separate substances.

De veritate, q. 8, a. 1: Based upon faith; unless one sees God in his essence, beatitude is not in God but in creatures.

De veritate, q. 14, a. 2: Natural powers are not sufficient for obtaining, thinking about, desiring [the beatific vision]; the proportion to a supernatural end, that we may have the desire for it, is through faith ('the conviction of things not seen' [Heb 11.1]). 2-2, q. 4, a. 1, c.: the same general notion, but without this affirmation; faith is the beginning, but is not said to be the beginning of a radical proportion.

In Boet. de Trin. 6, a. 4, ad 5m: inclination to the ultimate end; there is another expression very similar to what comes after; but in fact there is nothing about a natural desire to see God.

[hand: Quodl. X, 8, art. 17: same as in In Sent. and De Ver. 8.]

2 Clearly taught from the Contra Gentiles onward. Treatise on beatitude, III, 25-63

III, 25, §§ 11, 12, 13;

III, 48, §§ 2, 12, 14;

III, 50;

III, 57, § 4;

III, 63

III, 51 ff., on the possibility of vision which he treated earlier.

Summa 1, 12, 1, c.; 62, 1, c.; 1-2, 3, 8; (implicitly but clearly, III, 9, 2, ad 3m).

Compendium Theologiae, ch. 104.

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Argument from theological reason

1 We speak of man's natural desire that cannot be satisfied except by God.

‘Our hearts are not at rest until they rest in Thee.’

This is a preachers' commonplace. But what exactly is this restlessness?

2 Knowledge of its end contributes greatly to the entire knowledge of a thing. But our end is in itself unknown to us: ‘Eye hath not seen nor ear heard ...’ But what we can know is this tendency of ours to the infinite.

For a knowledge of human nature. Sexual, political, and economic excesses are explained through aberration: they seek the infinite where it is not to be found.

For a knowledge of the spiritual life. Its first principle and foundation. The insertion of grace in nature: grace is not a simple negation of nature (Jansenism, Puritanism), but its perfection, helping to obtain what nature wants.

For an understanding of theology. Our tendency to the infinite does not only explain, to some extent, beatitude, but also the punishment of hell, the seriousness of sin, the justice of God. It is also of help from the interdependence of various treatises, from the common store of ideas, from the fact that end has a certain primacy.

Note: The Relation of Revelation to Theology

Consider systematization, which we shall explain forthwith as an example of Anselm's dictum, 'Faith seeking understanding.'

There are many things in the bible. The question is, how we can grasp all these things in a unity (i.e., synthetically) and coherently with everything else in scripture?

This is how the dynamic aspect of theology occurs.

Its static aspect is found in theological arguments; after systematization takes place, the conclusions that follow are deduced from foregoing premises.

The question here is the construction of the argument which establishes:

- 1- that God is our essential objective beatitude;
- 2- that God is attained by acts of vision, love, joy;
- 3- that this vision is the first principle from which all the rest follow,
- 4- from which follow all that we read in Scripture;
- 5- and that this argument does not do away with the notion and the reality of absolute supernaturality (DB 1796).

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Note: Concerning Beatitude

A dispute having arisen as to whether beatitude begins immediately after purgatory or only after the final judgement, Benedict XII defined the following [A.D. 1336, DB 530]:

- 1 that souls go to heaven immediately after purgatory;
- 2 that in an intuitive, face-to-face and immediate vision they behold the divine essence;
- 3 that seeing it is thoroughly enjoyable;
- 4 that by reason of this vision and their enjoyment of it, they are truly happy, they have eternal life and eternal rest;
- 5 that faith and hope cease;
- 6 that once this vision and their enjoyment of it has begun, it will continue without interruption or cessation until the final judgement and from then into eternity.

Hence:

- 1 The point at issue here is beatitude in the strict sense: concerning this controversy, whether true beatitude [is] immediate or something less.

2 It is defined that by reason of this vision and enjoyment of the divine essence the Blessed are truly happy, they have eternal life and rest.

3 and that this vision and enjoyment is everlasting and uninterrupted.

4 The direct object of the definition is that true beatitude begins immediately and perdures for ever.

In addition to this clear definition of its direct object there are statements about the vision itself, its enjoyment, beatitude, the cessation of faith and hope, and eternity; these points, of course, are supposed as known and acknowledged by everyone.

5 Hence this thesis is at least ‘theologically certain’; it is presupposed in the definition.

Inasmuch as it has been a constant theme in the church’s preaching, it is ‘of catholic faith.’

If the various sections are considered as included in its direct object and the same are found in revelation, it can be given the note ‘of defined faith.’ But Dugas is better: the definition supposes the thesis, it does not express and define the thesis.

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Therefore:

Beatitude = to be happy = to be in a perfect state and know this fact:
the ultimate perfection of a rational or intellectual nature.

through essence: for whom to be and be happy are the same;

through participation: for whom to be and to be happy are two different things.

If through participation, then through the potency for the operation whereby the end is attained.

For to be in a perfect state and to know this is an act; not an act of one’s essence, because in that case beatitude would be through essence; hence an act of an accidental, but spiritual, potency.

[Various kinds of beatitude]

objective: the end itself.

formal: the actual attainment of the end.

essential: that which pertains to the very existence of beatitude; that is, without which there one is not blessed.

accidental: that which belongs to the perfection of beatitude; that is, without which one is not truly blessed.

Accidental beatitude is radically in the multiplicity of potencies.

supernatural: through an operation that exceeds the proportion of nature.

natural: through an operation that is in line with the proportion of nature.

principal: that from which all the rest necessarily flow.

derivative: that which is a property, that flows necessarily from principal beatitude.

[Translated by Michael Shields at the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, February 1994]