

“Spiritual Theology” by Jordan Aumann, OP

Study Questions - Chapter Four

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-The Supernatural Organism-

References: CCC

Definition of Grace: p. 881
Grace: (actual) 2000-2004
Charisms: 799, 951, 2003, 2004
As Gift: 33, 54, 388, 957
See Additional References on Grace: page 801
Definition of Beatitude: p. 868
Beatitudes: 1024, 1716-1716, 1721

Other Suggested References:

Liturgy of the Hours, Vol.I, pp. 320-321; 404-405; 1434-1435
Research Bernard of Clairvaux –he is noteworthy for his doctrine on spirituality and his devotion to the passion of Christ – You will find his writings in almost any anthology of Spiritual Classics. Also: in the book, “Light from Light” by Louis Dupre’ and James A. Wiseman, O.S.B., see Chapter Five, pp. 95-98

Questions

1. Define each of the following:
 - a. *living subject*
the living subject is the soul
 - b. *the formal principle of life (when one thing proceeds from another)*
the formal principle of supernatural life is sanctifying grace
 - c. *the faculties or powers*
the faculties are the infused virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - d. *and the operations of those faculties*
 - e. *the operations are the acts of those virtues and gifts.*

2. How is one “*elevated to the supernatural order*”?

The virtues and the gifts, which are the dynamic elements in the supernatural organism, reside in the human faculties or powers and elevate them to the supernatural order.

3. How does one “*enter into the sphere of the divine*”?

Grace is clearly supernatural, as the formal principle that elevates us and constitutes us in the supernatural life. It far excels all natural things and makes us enter into the sphere of the divine (the Theological Virtues)

4. What are the effects of Grace?

Grace inheres in the soul

God creates goodness in an object by the mere fact of loving it

God loves with a supernatural love, and since God's love is the cause of goodness, it follows that he produces in the person he loves the supernatural goodness that is grace.

5. In addition to the three principal effects of grace, what are some of the other effects?

Sanctifying grace gives us a physical, formal, analogous and accidental participation in the divine nature.

6. What is the difference between *sanctifying grace* and *actual grace*?

Sanctifying Grace is the action of God within our lives; whereas, actual grace is more closely related to man's cooperation with God

CCC 2017 The grace of the Holy Spirit confers upon us the righteousness of God. Uniting us by faith and Baptism to the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, the Spirit makes us sharers in his life.¹

GRACE: The free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As sanctifying grace, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As actual grace, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. Sacramental grace and special graces (charisms, the grace

¹ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (489). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

of one's state of life) are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation (1996, 2000; cf. 654).²

7. What are the three functions of the *actual graces*?

Actual graces have three functions: to dispose the soul for the reception of the infused habits of sanctifying grace and the virtues, to actuate these infused habits, and to prevent their loss.

8. What is the difference between the *infused* and *acquired virtues*?

The infused virtues may be defined as operative habits infused by God into the faculties of the soul to dispose them to function according to the dictates of reason enlightened by faith.... "Infused by God" is a radical difference between the infused and acquired virtues.... The infused virtues dispose the faculties to follow the dictate or command, not of reason alone, as do the acquired virtues, but of reason illumined by faith

The natural or acquired virtues are engendered in us by means of repeated acts

The natural or acquired virtues are habits in the strict sense of the word.

The supernatural or infused virtues give the power to act

9. What is the difference between *efficient cause* and *final cause*?

By reason of the efficient cause. The natural virtues are acquired by our own proper acts; the supernatural virtues are infused by God together with sanctifying grace.

By reason of the final cause. The acquired, natural virtues enable us to conduct ourselves rightly in regard to human acts in accordance with our rational nature

10. What are the three *theological virtues*?

The theological virtues are gifts infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life; they are: faith, hope, and charity (1813).³

² Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (881). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

11. Although St. Thomas studied and discusses more than fifty moral virtues in the *Summa Theologiae*, it is the custom to reduce them to four *moral virtues*. What are they?

Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance,

12. One text from Isaiah is usually quoted as the scriptural foundation for the doctrine on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine on the gifts of the Holy Spirit rests almost exclusively on the text from Isaiah. Read Isa. 11:1-3.

But a shoot shall sprout from the stump* of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.
The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:
a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
A spirit of counsel and of strength,
a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD,
and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.⁴

13. Scripture only names six gifts of the Holy Spirit. Why does the Church speak of *seven gifts*?

Various explanations have been offered for the omission of *the gift of piety* in the text of Isaiah, but it is explicitly mentioned in the patristic tradition, in the official teachings of the Church, and in the unanimous teaching of theologians. To prescind from this weight of authority because of certain textual obscurities would seem to be unwarranted. Many things formally revealed in Sacred Scripture did not appear in their fullness except through the interpretation of the Fathers and the Magisterium of the Church.

14. The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are divided into *cognitive faculties and appetitive powers*. *Understanding, Knowledge, Wisdom and Counsel* belong to which of the two divisions? Where does *Piety, Fortitude and Fear of the Lord* located?

³ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (903). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

⁴ *New American Bible*. 2011 (Revised Edition) (Is 11:1–3). Washington, DC: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Cognitive faculties:

speculative intellect:

deeper insight into divine truths: **Understanding**

proper judgment concerning truths of faith: **Knowledge**

judgment according to divine norms: **Wisdom**

practical intellect:

decisions regarding human actions: **Counsel.**

Appetitive powers:

volitional appetite (the will):

in relation to others: **Piety**

sensitive appetites (the emotions):

proper use of the irascible emotions: **Fortitude**

proper use of pleasure emotions: **Fear of the Lord**

15. The fruits of the Spirit are highly perfected virtuous acts; they are called fruits precisely because of the spiritual delight that they produce. Still more perfect than the fruits are the beatitudes. Each beatitude contains two parts; the first part refers to a meritorious act, and the second part refers to a reward. The reward applies primarily to the life to come, and yet there is likewise the promise of happiness even in this life. St. Thomas discusses the beatitudes by linking them with the three types of life in which we hope to find happiness: the life of pleasure, the active life, and the contemplative life. Associate each of the Beatitudes with the three types of life:

- a. The life of pleasure
- b. The active life
- c. The contemplative life

a. Life of pleasure

the first three beatitudes refer to the detachment required from worldly pleasures and satisfactions:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

b. Active Life

the fourth and fifth beatitudes refer to the active life:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

c. Contemplative Life

the sixth and seventh beatitudes refer to the effects of the active life that are proximate dispositions for the contemplative life:

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

the eighth beatitude, according to St. Thomas, is a manifestation and confirmation of all those that precede it:

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3-10).

CCC

Definitions:

BEATITUDES: The teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount on the meaning and way to true happiness (cf. *Mt* 5:1–12; *Lk* 6:20–23). These teachings reflect the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham; they portray the countenance of Christ and describe his charity. Moreover, by shedding light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life, they describe the vocation of all the faithful (1716).⁵

⁵ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (868). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

CHARISM: A specific gift or grace of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefits the Church, given in order to help a person live out the Christian life, or to serve the common good in building up the Church (799, 951).⁶

GRACE: The free and undeserved gift that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As sanctifying grace, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As actual grace, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. Sacramental grace and special graces (charisms, the grace of one's state of life) are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation (1996, 2000; cf. 654).⁷

II. GRACE

1996 Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favor*, the *free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life. (153)

1997 Grace is a *participation in the life of God*. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church. (375; 260)

1998 This vocation to eternal life is *supernatural*. It depends entirely on God's gratuitous initiative, for he alone can reveal and give himself. It surpasses the power of human intellect and will, as that of every other creature. (1719)

1999 The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the *sanctifying* or *deifying grace* received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification: (1966)

Therefore if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself.

2000 Sanctifying grace is an habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul itself to enable it to live with God, to act by his love. *Habitual grace*, the permanent disposition to live and act in keeping with God's call, is distinguished from *actual graces* which refer to God's interventions, whether at the beginning of conversion or in the course of the work of sanctification.

⁶ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (870). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

⁷ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (881). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

2001 The *preparation of man* for the reception of grace is already a work of grace. This latter is needed to arouse and sustain our collaboration in justification through faith, and in sanctification through charity. God brings to completion in us what he has begun, “since he who completes his work by cooperating with our will began by working so that we might will it.” (490)

Indeed we also work, but we are only collaborating with God who works, for his mercy has gone before us. It has gone before us so that we may be healed, and follows us so that once healed, we may be given life; it goes before us so that we may be called, and follows us so that we may be glorified; it goes before us so that we may live devoutly, and follows us so that we may always live with God: for without him we can do nothing.

2002 God’s free initiative demands *man’s free response*, for God has created man in his image by conferring on him, along with freedom, the power to know him and love him. The soul only enters freely into the communion of love. God immediately touches and directly moves the heart of man. He has placed in man a longing for truth and goodness that only he can satisfy. The promises of “eternal life” respond, beyond all hope, to this desire: (1742; 2550)

If at the end of your very good works . . . , you rested on the seventh day, it was to foretell by the voice of your book that at the end of our works, which are indeed “very good” since you have given them to us, we shall also rest in you on the sabbath of eternal life.

2003 Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. There are *sacramental graces*, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore *special graces*, also called *charisms* after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning “favor,” “gratuitous gift,” “benefit.” Whatever their character—sometimes it is extraordinary, such as the gift of miracles or of tongues—charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church. (1108; 1127; 799–801)

2004 Among the special graces ought to be mentioned the *graces of state* that accompany the exercise of the responsibilities of the Christian life and of the ministries within the Church:

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

2005 Since it belongs to the supernatural order, grace *escapes our experience* and cannot be known except by faith. We cannot therefore rely on our feelings or our works to conclude that we are justified and saved. However, according to the Lord’s words—“Thus you will know them by their fruits”⁵⁷—reflection on God’s blessings in our life and in the lives of the saints offers us a guarantee that grace is at work in us and spurs us on to an ever greater faith and an attitude of trustful poverty.

A pleasing illustration of this attitude is found in the reply of St. Joan of Arc to a question posed as a trap by her ecclesiastical judges: “Asked if she knew that she was in God’s grace, she

replied: 'If I am not, may it please God to put me in it; if I am, may it please God to keep me there.'⁸

IN BRIEF: GRACE

- 2017** The grace of the Holy Spirit confers upon us the righteousness of God. Uniting us by faith and Baptism to the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, the Spirit makes us sharers in his life.
- 2018** Like conversion, justification has two aspects. Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, and so accepts forgiveness and righteousness from on high.
- 2019** Justification includes the remission of sins, sanctification, and the renewal of the inner man.
- 2020** Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ. It is granted us through Baptism. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who justifies us. It has for its goal the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life. It is the most excellent work of God's mercy.
- 2021** Grace is the help God gives us to respond to our vocation of becoming his adopted sons. It introduces us into the intimacy of the Trinitarian life.
- 2022** The divine initiative in the work of grace precedes, prepares, and elicits the free response of man. Grace responds to the deepest yearnings of human freedom, calls freedom to cooperate with it, and perfects freedom.
- 2023** Sanctifying grace is the gratuitous gift of his life that God makes to us; it is infused by the Holy Spirit into the soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it.
- 2024** Sanctifying grace makes us "pleasing to God." Charisms, special graces of the Holy Spirit, are oriented to sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. God also acts through many actual graces, to be distinguished from habitual grace which is permanent in us.
- 2025** We can have merit in God's sight only because of God's free plan to associate man with the work of his grace. Merit is to be ascribed in the first place to the grace of God, and secondly to man's collaboration. Man's merit is due to God.
- 2026** The grace of the Holy Spirit can confer true merit on us, by virtue of our adoptive filiation, and in accordance with God's gratuitous justice. Charity is the principal source of merit in us before God.

⁸ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (483–486). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

- 2027** No one can merit the initial grace which is at the origin of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit, we can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal life, as well as necessary temporal goods.
- 2028** “All Christians ... are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity” (*LG* 40 § 2). “Christian perfection has but one limit, that of having none” (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Mos.*: PG 44, 300D).
- 2029** “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (*Mt* 16:24).⁹
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IN BRIEF: VIRTUES

- 1833** Virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good.
- 1834** The human virtues are stable dispositions of the intellect and the will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct in accordance with reason and faith. They can be grouped around the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.
- 1835** Prudence disposes the practical reason to discern, in every circumstance, our true good and to choose the right means for achieving it.
- 1836** Justice consists in the firm and constant will to give God and neighbor their due.
- 1837** Fortitude ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good.
- 1838** Temperance moderates the attraction of the pleasures of the senses and provides balance in the use of created goods.
- 1839** The moral virtues grow through education, deliberate acts, and perseverance in struggle. Divine grace purifies and elevates them.
- 1840** The theological virtues dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity. They have God for their origin, their motive, and their object—God known by faith, God hoped in and loved for his own sake.
- 1841** There are three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. They inform all the moral virtues and give life to them.
- 1842** By faith, we believe in God and believe all that he has revealed to us and that Holy Church proposes for our belief.
- 1843** By hope we desire, and with steadfast trust await from God, eternal life and the graces to merit it.

⁹ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (489–490). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.

- 1844** By charity, we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for love of God. Charity, the form of all the virtues, “binds everything together in perfect harmony” (*Col* 3:14).
- 1845** The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon Christians are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.¹⁰

¹⁰ Catholic Church. (2000). *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (2nd Ed.) (451–452). Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference.