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## Aquinas on Virtue

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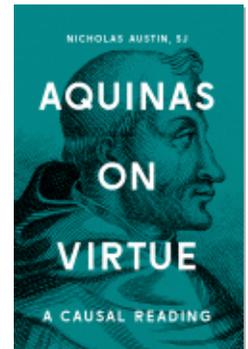
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## CHAPTER 10

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# Graced Virtue

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Suggested reading: *Summa Theologiae* I.II 51, 52, 62, 63, 65.1–2; II.II 23.6–8, 47.11, 81.1; *On the Virtues* 1.8–11

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When Aquinas finally comes to the last of virtue's causes—the efficient or agent cause—he corrects Peter Lombard's definition once again: “The efficient cause of infused virtue, about which the [Augustinian] definition is given, is God. This is why it is said, ‘which God works in us without us.’ If this particular element were taken out, the remainder of the definition would be common to all virtues, both acquired and infused” (I.II 55.4c).<sup>1</sup> In this dual recognition of virtue acquired by human action and virtue infused by God, we encounter the most controversial aspect of Aquinas's virtue theory. Is this another example of a harmonious synthesis of Aristotelian and Augustinian perspectives for which Aquinas is so well known, or is it not rather an undesirable dichotomy between human and divine agency? It is important to establish what Aquinas claims about virtue's efficient cause before proposing a rethinking of virtue's infusion; interpretation needs to precede critical evaluation.

It will help to clarify some terms. Aquinas initially acknowledges two ways efficient causation operates positively in regard to virtue: by *generating* or by *increasing* it (51 pr). To generate a virtue is to cause it to come into being; virtues already generated can then be augmented. Elsewhere Aquinas implies that moral virtue is not only generated and increased but also *maintained* in existence (53.3; 109.10c). Negatively, a virtue can be *decreased* or even go out of being altogether—that is, *corrupted*.

Aquinas distinguishes two ways in which a habit can increase: either *extensively* or *intensively* (51.2; 66.1; II.II 24.5). A habit increases extensively when it extends to more objects, as when a grammarian learns about some new aspect of grammar; a habit increases intensively when it is possessed more

perfectly by its bearer, as when a person becomes still more temperate concerning matters she was already somewhat temperate about.

Aquinas unexpectedly claims a virtue by definition has maximum extension, and so cannot increase extensively (*On the Virtues* 1.11 ad 15). “Whoever has some virtue, for example, temperance, has this as regards all things to which temperance extends itself” (66.1).<sup>2</sup> This is not clearly convincing. If the nature of virtue as a maximum rules out extensive increase, it should also rule out intensive increase (an unacceptable result, which Aquinas himself rules out, since we can certainly become more just or temperate). The rejection of extensive increase also seems to run counter to experience: I may be temperate with most foods, but not salted peanuts; with time I may conquer this deficiency. The core question, however, is this: What brings about the generation, increase, and maintenance of a virtue? Let us begin with the human causes.

### BECOMING VIRTUOUS THROUGH ACTION

Aquinas begins his discussion of virtue’s efficient cause by asking, “Whether virtue is in us by nature?” (I.II 63.1; cf. *On the Virtues* 1.8). If virtue is in us by nature, there is no need of an efficient cause. Complete virtue (*virtus perfecta*) is not from nature; if it were, every human would be virtuous from birth. However, while virtue in its completed form is not *from* nature, it is nevertheless *according to* nature: “For, as the Philosopher says (*Physics* 7.17), ‘virtue is a certain disposition of the perfect, where “perfect” refers to what is disposed according to nature’” (110.3c).<sup>3</sup>

We therefore naturally possess virtue only according to “germ” (*inchaotio*) (63.1, 65.1; *On the Virtues* 1.8). This germ of virtue in human nature is two-fold: either it lies in the nature of the human species (in the natural inclination of the will toward the good, the natural obedience of the sensitive appetite to reason, and *synderesis*) or in the nature of an individual (in that one individual may have a temperament inclining her to one or another virtue).

If moral virtues are not in us by nature except germinally, how are they generated in us? The fundamental principle is this: “similar acts cause similar habits” (*similes actus similes habitus causant*) (52.3c). Just as a person becomes a good builder by frequently building well, and a person becomes a bad builder by frequently building badly, so we become just or temperate from doing just or temperate deeds. Human action can be the efficient cause of at least some virtues (63.2c).

Aquinas makes two qualifications to the claim that human action causes moral virtue. First, just as many drops of water are required to wear away the stone, many acts are required to cause moral virtue (52.3). This is evidently

an experiential truth, but Aquinas wants to offer a fuller explanation. A virtue, like any operative habit, is a quasi-nature (56.5) because it gives a certain reliable inclination toward some one operation (justice toward just acts, temperance toward temperate acts, and so on). However, the appetitive power that moral virtue perfects is “inclined in diverse ways, to many things” (51.3).<sup>4</sup> This is why it takes many acts for reason to “conquer” the appetitive power and change it from being *ad multa* to *ad unum* (ibid.). Second, a virtue will increase by repeated action only if these acts are equal or greater in “intensity” (*intensio*) to that of the respective virtue (52.3). Intensity here is a technical term: it does not mean emotional intensity but rather the degree to which a form is possessed. A person does not grow further in virtue if she performs only marginally virtuous acts. The idea that virtue is acquired by habituation is, however, easily misunderstood.

### Reasoned Habituation

Just as a habit does not incline to unthinking, nonvoluntary action, so neither can it be acquired by action of this kind. If a habit is a principle of human act (*actus humanus*), not the mere act of a human (*actus hominis*), then it can be acquired only by the former, not the latter. Since human action is deliberate action, reason and will are necessarily involved in the acquisition of moral virtue.

The role of reason is clarified if we examine what we may term “the problem of causal circularity.” How can virtuous actions cause virtue if we are not already virtuous (*On the Virtues* 1.9 arg 13)? Aquinas’s core solution is to distinguish two principles within the human soul. As long as the agent is conceived of as non-complex, there will remain the paradox of an agent causing itself to possess what it does not have. However, the paradox is dissolved if one of the principles (namely, reason) is characterized as active, emitting, more perfect, and forming, and the other principle (namely, the appetitive power) is characterized as passive, receiving, less perfect, and being formed. As Aquinas states, “An agent, insofar as it is acting, does not receive anything. But insofar as it acts having been moved by another, thus it receives something from the moving [cause], and it is in this way a habit is caused” (51.2 ad 1; cf. ad 2).<sup>5</sup>

For Aquinas, then, it is an incomplete account of the acquisition of moral virtue to say that virtue is acquired by acts. Rather, it is acquired by appetitive acts *as moved by reason*: “The virtue of man directed to the good that is measured according to the rule of human reason, can be caused by human acts, *insofar as acts of this kind proceed from reason*” (63.3, emphasis added).<sup>6</sup> Virtue is generated and increased only by reasoned habituation, not by mindless repetition.

## Facility as the Sign of Virtue

Aquinas offers the following nuance to the claim that virtuous acts cause virtues:

Virtue is generated from acts that are in some way virtuous and in some way not virtuous. For acts preceding virtue are indeed virtuous as far as *that which is done*, namely, insofar as a man does brave and just works; not, however, as regards *the manner of acting*. For, before an acquired habit of virtue, a man does not do the works of virtue in the manner in which a virtuous person acts, namely, promptly without hesitation, and delightedly without difficulty. (*On the Virtues* 1.9 ad 13, emphasis added)<sup>7</sup>

Even the nonvirtuous person can perform acts that are virtuous in *substance*; only the virtuous can perform acts that are virtuous also in *manner*. To act virtuously in the manner of virtue (*modus virtutis*) one must employ the four general modes of virtue: to act knowingly (prudence); to act from choice, not mere passion (temperance); to act for a due end (justice); and to act firmly and immovably (fortitude) (I.II 61.4 arg 3, ad 3; 96.3 ad 2; 100.9).

A person who lacks the habit of a virtue cannot yet perform virtuous acts in the manner of virtue, since the last condition presupposes the firm possession of the habit; she can, however, perform acts that are virtuous in substance or species in that they fulfil the other requirements—namely, acting prudently and choosing with an intention of a due end. A person becomes virtuous by actions that are virtuous in substance; once the virtue is acquired, the actions that flow from virtue are virtuous in manner as well as in substance.

The sign or mark of virtue (*signum virtutis*) is, therefore, that virtuous action is done delightedly and without difficulty and promptly and without hesitation (*On the Virtues* 1.9). This facility in virtuous action is a sign that the habit is possessed firmly and immovably.

Aquinas's account of how appetitive virtue is acquired by rational agency can be summarized as follows: Human nature contains certain “germs” of virtue: the naturally known principles of practical reason, the natural appetite of the will for the rational good, and the natural aptitude of the sensitive appetite to obey reason. Individuals also may possess inclinations of temperament toward specific virtues. Repetition of action according to reason is required to bring these germs to sprout into virtue. Through this reasoned habituation the form of reason impresses itself on the appetite, which thereby acquires a quasi-natural inclination to operate according to reason. The sign that such a second nature has been acquired is the facility of virtuous action.

## BECOMING VIRTUOUS THROUGH GRACE

Aquinas claims that, in addition to virtues acquired through human agency, there are virtues “infused” by God. Here even questions of interpretation are contested.

### The Idea of Infusion

Today we easily accept the idea that virtue is acquired by human effort, and we ask for explanation of how virtue can be infused by God. In Aquinas’s day it was the other way around. As István P. Bejczy shows, the challenge for Aquinas and other thirteenth-century theologians was not so much to explain the category of infused virtue as that of acquired virtue, since to acknowledge true and complete virtue outside of grace was to risk the Pelagian heresy that eternal life can be merited by one’s own unaided natural powers.<sup>8</sup>

What does it mean to say virtues are “infused” (*infunditur*) by God alone (I.II 62.1)? The image has scriptural roots.<sup>9</sup> Aquinas quotes the following texts: “The Lord fills him with the spirit of wisdom and understanding” (Ecclesiasticus 15:5); “She teaches sobriety and justice, prudence and virtue.” (Wisdom 8:7); and “The love of God is poured forth in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which is given to us” (Romans 5:5). Infusion, pouring out, inflowing, filling: these metaphorical terms with scriptural origins identify virtue as originating in God’s free giving.

Aquinas also brings another terminology to hand, that of “divine virtue” (*virtus divina*) versus “human virtue” (*virtus humana*): “Human virtue, which disposes to an act fitting to human nature, is distinguished from divine or heroic virtue, which disposes to an act fitting to a certain superior nature” (54.3).<sup>10</sup> This latter distinction is based more on formal and final than efficient causality: human virtue corresponds to a nature oriented to natural happiness, while divine virtue corresponds to a nature ordered to the supernatural happiness of the next life. In the same way we might follow later Thomists and refer to “natural” versus “supernatural” virtue.<sup>11</sup> Natural virtues (not Aquinas’s terminology) tend to beatitude within the natural order, whereas supernatural virtues tend to supernatural beatitude.

Infusion can also be understood in terms of the Augustinian definition: infused virtues are qualities God works in us “without us” (*sine nobis*). For Aquinas this part of the definition applies only to the infused virtues, not to acquired virtues (55.4c). The infused virtues “are infused by God alone” (62.1).<sup>12</sup>

This *sine nobis* clause is problematic. If God infuses virtue in us without us, are we entirely passive in its generation? Aquinas replies, “Infused virtue

is caused in us by God without us acting, not however without us consenting. And thus we are to understand the words, ‘which God works in us without us’” (55.4 ad 6).<sup>13</sup> Here is yet another qualification of Peter Lombard’s definition. God works virtue in us without our acting (*sine nobis agentibus*) but not without us consenting (*non sine nobis consentientibus*). Elsewhere Aquinas insists, “In the infusion of charity, a motion of freewill is required” (II.II 24.10 ad 3).<sup>14</sup> Although God does not need our cooperation to infuse virtue, He also does not violently force it on us without our consent: virtue’s infusion is noncoercive.

The contrast between the causes of acquired virtue and infused virtue should therefore not be overestimated. Just as infused virtue requires human consent, so does acquired virtue’s generation have a divine cause: “A man can have no good unless God gives it; but certain [goods] are had from God without our cooperating (for example, those [virtues] which are infused), and some with us cooperating (for example, the acquired [virtues]).”<sup>15</sup> Both infused *and* acquired virtue are caused by God; furthermore, *neither* infused *nor* acquired virtue are attained without free will. The difference lies in this: God causes acquired virtue through the medium of human action—that is, with our cooperation—whereas God causes infused virtue without the mediation of our action, although not without our consent.

Aquinas also explains virtue’s infusion through the idea of habitual grace. He notes that Lombard thought that grace and virtue were the same in essence, although different in rationale (110.3). “Grace” signifies what makes a human pleasing to God (*gratum*) or what is given freely by God (*gratis*); “virtue” signifies what perfects for acting well. However, Aquinas insists on a real as well as a conceptual difference: grace is a habit in the essence of the soul, whereas virtue is in the powers of the soul (110.4c; cf. III 62.2c).<sup>16</sup> If grace perfects the essence of the soul, and virtue perfects the powers of the soul, then how are they related? Aquinas states: “Just as from the soul’s essence flow its powers, the principles of deeds, so also from grace itself flow the virtues in the powers of the soul, by which powers are moved to act” (I.II 110.4 ad 1).<sup>17</sup> Grace is virtue’s “principle and root” (110.3c and ad 3). Virtue’s infusion, then, is its flowing from habitual grace.

### Increasing Infused Virtues

If God alone generates infused virtues, is God alone likewise the cause of their increase? Like acts produce like habits, so it may seem that our actions can play a direct role here. Aquinas at one point says that “acts that are produced by an infused habit . . . confirm a pre-existing habit” (I.II 51.4 ad 3).<sup>18</sup> He even goes so far as to say that a preexistent habit is “increased” by acts of infused virtue

(*On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 10). Yet Aquinas's full view seems to be that "charity and the other infused virtues are not increased actively by actions, but only dispositively and meritoriously" (*On the Virtues* 1.11 ad 14).<sup>19</sup> Actions increase virtue *actively* when they are the direct cause of increase, as with acquired virtue. What does Aquinas mean by actions increasing infused virtue *dispositively* and *meritoriously*?

By acts of charity we *merit* an increase in charity, Aquinas says, although it is only God who causes that increase (cf. II.II 24.6 ad 1). This is a way of preserving infused virtue as an unexacted gift. For human merit does not imply that God, morally speaking, has no choice but to reward: we cannot force God's hand. Rather, it implies that we become more fit to receive the gift through living well, also through God's gift.

What does it mean that charitable acts increase charity *dispositively*? The concept of dispositive causation comes from Avicenna. As Aquinas explains: "A disposing [cause], however, does not induce the ultimate form that perfects something, but only prepares the matter for that form; just as he who hews timbers and stones is said to make a house. This is not properly called an efficient [cause], since that which he makes is not a house except in potentiality."<sup>20</sup> Acts of infused virtue prepare us to receive an increase of them from their divine source, but they do not directly cause the virtue to increase (*On the Virtues* 1.11c). This is not to lapse into quietism: in his discussion of the increase of charity, Aquinas says that though acts of charity increase charity only dispositively, nevertheless a person may strive (*conetur*) to progress in this virtue (II.II 24.6). Yet God's action alone directly causes the increase. By performing acts of a virtue we may hew the timber but not build the house.

Aquinas asserts that it is necessary to restrict the causal role of habituation in the increase of infused virtue by assigning it only dispositive causality, in order to recognize the graced origin of infused virtue's increase: "Just as acquired virtues are increased by the acts through which they are caused, so the infused virtues are increased through the action of God, by which they are caused" (*On the Virtues* 1.11c).<sup>21</sup> God alone is the *per se* efficient cause of the increase, as well as the generation, of infused virtue.

### Do Infused Virtues Exist?

Is there sound reason for positing infused virtues? Church teaching, both before and after Aquinas, is relevant to this question. In 1201 Pope Innocent III recognized three theological opinions on the infusion of the theological virtues at infant baptism, without adjudicating between them: first, since babies cannot consent, the virtues are not infused at baptism; second, although baptism

forgives sins, no grace and hence no virtues are conferred; and third, the virtues are infused as habits, although infants are unable to exercise them until the age of discretion. Pope Clement V, at the Council of Vienne (1311–1312), saw the third opinion as the more probable opinion.<sup>22</sup> In the Decree on Justification, the Council of Trent states: “A human being, in the said justification, receives together with the remission of sins all these [gifts], namely, faith, hope and charity, infused together through Jesus Christ, to whom he is grafted.”<sup>23</sup> John Poinsett argues on this basis that “the existence of infused virtues can in no way be denied, since it is evident from the Council of Trent.”<sup>24</sup>

Aquinas’s own primary argument is causal: “Because habits must be proportionate to that [end] to which man is disposed by them, therefore it is necessary that those habits disposing to such an end [that is, ultimate and complete beatitude] exceed the capacity of human nature [to produce]. Whence such habits can never exist in man except by divine infusion, just as is the case with all gratuitous virtues” (I.II 51.4; cf. 62.1, *On the Virtues* 1.10).<sup>25</sup> The *efficient* cause of virtue that directs us to the *final* cause of the vision of God can only be God Himself since there are no germs in our created nature that can germinate of themselves in a disposition to such an exalted end.

## MORAL VIRTUE: INFUSED AND ACQUIRED

Having outlined Aquinas’s account of virtue’s efficient cause, we now turn to the problematic idea of infused *moral* virtue and its relationship to acquired moral virtue. For it is not merely that Aquinas recognizes faith, hope, and charity, the theological virtues infused by God, in addition to the acquired moral virtues (I.II 62.1). He also posits infused moral virtues. These are virtues at the service of the theological virtues in directing the whole of our lives to God (63.3). The interpretation of this category is contested.

### The Necessity of Infused Moral Virtue

Aquinas argues for the necessity of this third kind of virtue by distinguishing its role from that of the theological and the acquired moral virtues. First, then, Aquinas resists the Augustinian view that the cardinal virtues are facets of charity (I.II 62.2 arg 3, ad 3). While the infused moral virtues derive their intrinsic finality to perfect beatitude from charity (65.2), they are distinct from the theological virtues: “The theological virtues sufficiently ordain us to a supernatural end, according to a certain germ, namely, to the extent [that they ordain us] immediately to God himself. But it is necessary that the soul

be perfected through other infused virtues concerning other matters, in order, however, to God” (63 ad 3).<sup>26</sup> To be fully directed to God involves not merely relating to Him *immediately* but also *mediately*—that is, by living prudently, justly, bravely, and temperately in the ordinary moral matters of life for the sake of God and our supernatural beatitude in Him. We need the theological virtues to orient us directly to the supernatural end, whereas we need other virtues to order the means to that end, literally, “those things that are for the end” (*ea quae sunt ad finem*) (61.1 arg 2, ad 2; II.II 161.5). The infused moral virtues do not target God Himself (this is the role of the theological virtues); they do orient our more proximate aims to the ultimate aim of happiness with God.

It is important not to misinterpret Aquinas here. He is not saying that prudent, just, brave, and temperate action has value only as a mere means. Since the formal object of any moral virtue is always some particular species of moral goodness, its target always has some moral goodness or “honesty” (*honestas*). This target is no less a good in itself for being ordered to a further end. As the Salamancans put it: “The objects of the moral virtues are not related to the object of charity as ‘means’ properly and strictly so-called . . . but as ends intermediate to the ultimate end, in which, beside the goodness of an actual relation to the ultimate end itself, there exists a characteristic honesty and conformity of matter with the rule of reason.”<sup>27</sup> Yet for Aquinas the infused moral virtues are distinct from the theological virtues because, while both share the same overall end, they differ in their matter and consequently their target. The theological virtues’ target is God Himself; the target of infused moral virtues is the more proximate ends of the moral life. The two sets of virtue are therefore distinct.

Aquinas distinguishes infused moral virtue not only from theological but also from acquired moral virtue: the infused and acquired moral virtues “differ in species” (*differunt specie*) (I.II 63.4). It is not the efficient or material causes that account for the difference. It is possible that God miraculously infuses a human virtue (63.4 ad 3). Furthermore, the two kinds of moral virtue share the same matter. For example, “infused and acquired temperance agree in matter, for each is about the pleasurable things of touch” (*On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 8).<sup>28</sup> Aquinas’s argument for specific difference is that a difference in final cause leads to a difference in formal cause.

For example, take temperance: “For infused temperance looks for the mean according to the reasons of the divine law, which are taken from order to the ultimate end; whereas acquired temperance takes the mean according to inferior reasons, in order to the good of the present life” (*On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 8).<sup>29</sup> Since the formal cause (mean or mode) indicates a way of achieving the good in a specific matter, a difference in final cause indicates a difference in formal cause: “For example, in the consumption of foods, the mode is established by human reason that one not harm the health of the body, nor impede the act

of reason, whereas according to the rule of the divine law, it is required that ‘a human castigate his body, and bring it into servitude’ (1 Corinthians 9:27)” (I.II 63.4).<sup>30</sup> The supernatural motive leads to a more exacting standard for the restraint of temperance. As the Salamancans point out, then, “Many infused virtues have the same matter as the acquired, but they respect it under a different formal rationale, and from a distinct and supernatural motive.”<sup>31</sup>

A key objection can be raised. The specification of an act or a habit is derived from its object or target (*finis operis*) rather than from its overall end (*finis operantis*). Why should a difference in ultimate end indicate a difference in species between acquired and infused moral virtues? Aquinas replies: “The ultimate end does not specify in morals except insofar as there is a due proportion to the ultimate end in the proximate end. For what is for the end must be proportioned to the end” (*On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 9).<sup>32</sup> While the overall end of a virtue does not directly distinguish it from other virtues, it does so indirectly, by influencing the virtue’s target. The target is prudentially determined precisely by proportion to the ultimate end, so a difference in overall end leads to a difference in target and therefore in species.

Aquinas also argues from two kinds of citizenship: of the earthly city and of the heavenly city. Aristotle had noted that the citizens of different political systems will have different virtues insofar as the *telos* of each polis differs. Aquinas similarly contrasts the moral virtues required for the civil good versus those ordered to the good of eternal glory. Whereas the acquired moral virtues dispose us to be good citizens of the earthly city, the infused moral virtues dispose us to be “fellow-citizens with the saints, and [citizens] of the household of God (Ephesians 2:19)” (I.II 63.4; cf. *On the Virtues* 1.9).<sup>33</sup> Here again the infused moral virtues are needed because the life of grace introduces a new order of final causality into the life of virtue.

### The Question of “Pagan Virtue”

How are infused moral virtue and acquired moral virtue related? Is it possible to possess one set of virtues without the other, or can they coexist within a single person? Aquinas thinks infused moral virtue can exist without its acquired counterpart (see chap. 11). First let us focus on the opposite question, whether acquired virtue can exist without infused virtue. This debate is currently conducted under the rubric of Aquinas’s view of “pagan virtue,” an unfortunate term, given that it is an inauspicious way for Christians to talk of the moral character non-Christians today, and is not Aquinas’s own phrase.

There is evidence that, for Aquinas, acquired virtue without charity is a possibility, indeed a reality evidenced in the lives of some pagans or nonbelievers.

He claims that human (as opposed to divine) virtues can be caused in us by habituation: “A virtue of a human ordained to a good that is modified according to the rule of human reason, can be caused by human acts, insofar as acts of this kind proceed from reason, under whose power and rule such a good stands” (I.II 63.2).<sup>34</sup> He repeats this when he discusses whether moral virtues can exist without charity: “Moral virtues, insofar as they are operative of the good in order to some end that does not exceed the natural capacity of man, can be acquired through human works. And thus they can be acquired without charity, just as they were in many gentiles” (65.2).<sup>35</sup> Aquinas therefore seems to modify the strong Augustinian position, according to which the “virtue” of the pagans is not true virtue. As Brian Shanley comments, it is reasonable to suppose that when Aquinas says virtues can be caused by human acts, he is not referring to humans in the hypothetical state of “pure nature” but rather in the “existential state” of fallen nature: humans really can become virtuous by their natural agency.<sup>36</sup>

However, Aquinas quickly goes on to relativize acquired moral virtue in those lacking grace. Moral virtue is imperfect if it is not oriented to the supernatural end of human life: “Only infused virtues are perfect, and are virtues simply so called, for they ordain a human well to the ultimate end simply. Other virtues, however, namely the acquired virtues, are virtues in some way, not however simply, for they ordain a human well in respect of the ultimate end in some genus, not however in respect of the ultimate end simply” (65.2).<sup>37</sup> Acquired moral virtue, unlike infused moral virtue, is only virtue *in some way*. It is therefore imperfect virtue since it involves an orientation to the overall end of human life “in some genus”—that is, to the imperfect beatitude that is the ultimate end in the natural order.

Aquinas also seems to say that virtue in a person lacking charity and grace but oriented to a particular good, such as the good of the city, is true but imperfect virtue unless oriented to supernatural beatitude:

True virtue simply [speaking] is that which orders to a human’s principal good. . . . And in this sense there can be no true virtue without charity. But if virtue is taken insofar as it exists in order to some particular end, in this way it can be said that there is some virtue without charity, insofar as it is ordered to some particular good. . . . If, however, that particular good be a true good, for example, preservation of the city, or something of this kind, it will indeed be true virtue, but imperfect, unless it be referred to a final and perfect good. (II.II 23.7c)<sup>38</sup>

Once again, Aquinas seems to acknowledge that the virtue possessed by a pagan (and therefore acquired not through grace but human action) is truly virtue, albeit lacking in the perfection of virtues directed to a supernatural end.

Thomas M. Osborne Jr. claims that the acquired virtues as they exist in a person lacking the infused virtues are imperfect, not merely in the sense that they do not direct to the end simply speaking but also in the sense that they must exist in a state of disconnection from prudence. His Augustinian interpretation seems to reduce the pagan's virtue to mere germinal virtue: "Although Thomas thinks that pagans without charity can have true virtues, he does not think that they can lead morally virtuous lives. By 'true virtues' he means only habits or dispositions for performing good actions. Without charity someone can perform good actions, but he can never be good."<sup>39</sup> Osborne supports this viewpoint by showing that Aquinas, at least in his later writings, takes the Augustinian anti-Pelagian stance: in the state of fallen nature, human beings are morally deficient without the help of healing grace (e.g., I.II 109.4). In particular, while Gentiles can know through natural reason of the duty to love God above all, they cannot fulfil this obligation without supernatural assistance. Because of the effects of the fall, a person without grace can avoid any particular mortal sin but cannot avoid mortally sinning at some point (109.8).<sup>40</sup> So, while acquired virtue would have been possible in a state of pure or integral nature—perfect and connected within its own natural order—acquired virtue is not possible in the state of fallen nature without grace.

While Osborne refers to his view as the "traditional" view, it is notable that it is not the same as Cajetan's (in I.II 65.2; 63.3 n.2; in II.II 23.7). Cajetan worries that this kind of reading of the text will "excite laughter among the philosophers and the wise of this world" (in II.II 23.7). He insists, "In reality there can indeed be true virtues absolutely considered in a human without charity, and perfect with the perfection required for human virtue." Is this not a straight contradiction of Aquinas (I.II 65.2; II.II 4.7c, 23.7c)? Cajetan distinguishes the theologian's and the philosopher's perspective. For the theologian, who knows about supernatural beatitude, acquired virtue is "perfect in genus but not simply." In contrast, "The philosopher, who constitutes the good human in order to the natural ultimate end, and does not know the superior end, says that human virtues without faith and charity are true and perfect virtues simply." There is no contradiction here, Cajetan claims, because each correctly judges from within his own perspective and order: the one supernatural, the other natural. Because of a lack of charity, an act lacking due ordination to the ultimate end can still be *morally* good, even if it is not good *simply* (in II.II 23.7). Cajetan would say, against Osborne, that even a pagan without charity could be morally good, although not able to merit eternal life. Given that Aquinas expressly says that the acquired moral virtues existed in many Gentiles, Cajetan infers that this applies to humans in the state of fallen nature (in I.II 65.2). He further insists that, while Aquinas says a human cannot avoid mortal sin without grace, it still stands that he may have

acquired virtues. A single act of mortal sin does not remove an acquired habit, and “there are certain mortal sins of another order from vices contrary to the acquired virtues, namely, that that are contrary to the precepts of the acts of the theological virtues” (in I.II 63.3 n.2). For Cajetan, then, a pagan can be morally good within the natural order.

In light of Henri de Lubac’s famous criticism, theologians today will worry that Cajetan’s viewpoint here reflects a “two-tier” theology that unduly separates nature from grace and philosophy from theology. Cajetan, so the argument goes, remains within the confines of an Aristotelian conception of nature and fails to acknowledge that, for Aquinas, there is a natural desire for supernatural beatitude.<sup>41</sup> There are not two ends of human life, a natural and supernatural one; there is only a supernatural one. Yet a more thoroughly theological argument defense of pagan virtue can be offered, as has been shown in detail by David Decosimo, for whom the acquired moral virtues, in their connected state, “were attained by pagans and are attainable by postlapsarian humanity.”<sup>42</sup> Decosimo claims that Aquinas acknowledges and “welcomes” pagan virtue precisely for theological reasons. His ethics is a “work of charity” because Aquinas “enacts the very welcome of the pagan and his virtue that he commends.”<sup>43</sup> Decosimo also entertains the thought (contra Osborne) that for Aquinas the pagan is capable of at least an imperfect form of the virtue of religion, which recognizes the need to worship the creator.<sup>44</sup>

We may once again be in the realm of “incommensurable readings” of Aquinas. Decosimo’s argument that Aquinas is exercising charity in welcoming the virtues of “outsiders,” and thereby recognizing the way God’s goodness can be manifested outside the boundaries we construct, has much to recommend it. Aquinas’s claim that the acquired moral virtues existed “in many gentiles,” combined with his extended treatment of the acquisition of virtue by human action and his high regard for Aristotle and the other ancient philosophers, all argue in favor of a strong affirmation of the possibility of non-Christian virtue.

## THE COEXISTENCE THESIS

Aquinas claims that infused and acquired moral virtue are not “connected”: acquired moral virtues may exist without their infused counterparts, and vice versa. We now consider the possibility that both infused and acquired moral virtue can coexist in the same person. This possibility has recently been questioned. For example, William Mattison states forthrightly, “My thesis is that Christians cannot possess acquired cardinal virtues.”<sup>45</sup> Can there be any prospect, then, for the integration of infused and acquired moral virtue in a single person?

## Commanding and Eliciting

It helps to begin by considering the way Aquinas thinks that different virtues (and their acts) can inform each other. The metaphor of “command” is used by Aquinas to account for actions that express one virtue but are motivated by a different virtue. Take, for example, the virtue of religion (*religio*), the virtue of offering due reverence to God through sacrifice, adoration, and so on (II.II 81ff.).<sup>46</sup> Aquinas believes religion is a virtue directed toward God alone (I.II 81.1), yet he has to explain a scriptural text that apparently sees religion as expressed in acts of mercy or temperance: “Religion pure and undefiled in the face of God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself unstained from this world” (James 1:27; II.II 81.1 arg 1).<sup>47</sup> How can God-regarding religion be expressed in neighbor-regarding mercy and self-regarding temperance?

Aquinas’s solution is to make a distinction between the acts a virtue “commands” through the medium of another virtue and the acts a virtue “elicits” of itself: “Nothing prevents the act that is proper to one virtue as eliciting, to be attributed to another virtue as commanding and ordaining it to its end” (II.II 32.1 ad 2).<sup>48</sup> The acts a virtue elicits are its proper and immediate acts (81.1 ad 1). That is, they are the acts it characteristically disposes a person toward (proper acts) and which it produces without the mediation of any other virtue (immediate acts). The acts a virtue commands are the acts it disposes a person to through the mediation of another virtue, by ordaining the elicited act of that virtue to its own end. Visiting the widow and the orphan is an act of the virtue of mercy as eliciting; if done not only to relieve the suffering but in so doing also to honor God, it is an act of religion as commanding (81.1 ad 1).

Some might object that to speak of one virtue as commanding another is to enter “homunculus territory,” as though virtues could behave like agents themselves, commanding and obeying on their own. However, the metaphor is merely a way of saying that a single action may express one virtue and yet be motivated by another.

Causally, the relationship between commanding and eliciting virtue is one of form to matter. In the realm of moral acts and habits, the proximate final cause and the objective cause coincide since moral acts are specified by their targets (4.3). It follows that one habit’s act has the potential to receive the form of another habit when performed for that habit’s target: “For the act of one vice, as ordained to the end of another vice, receives its form: for example, someone who thieves in order to fornicate, is materially a thief, but formally intemperate” (*On the Virtues* 2.3).<sup>49</sup> What applies to vices also holds for virtues (81.1 ad 2; 85.3; 147.2 ad 2).

This form-matter relationship applies not only to the acts of the virtues but to the virtues themselves. We see this in Aquinas's explanation of his thesis that charity is the form of the virtues: "Through charity the acts of all the other virtues are ordained to the ultimate end. And therefore it gives the form to the acts of all the other virtues. And in this sense it is called the form of the virtues, for these are called 'virtues' in relation to formed acts" (23.8).<sup>50</sup> For example, a temperate person who loves God performs acts that receive the additional form of charity. Hence, just as an accident further perfects a substance, the commanding virtue (charity) informs the eliciting virtue (temperance).

### Distinction and Union

The commanding-eliciting distinction helps to see how infused and acquired moral virtue may coexist in a unity by Aquinas's reckoning: the former are related to the latter as commanding virtues to eliciting virtues, and therefore as form to matter.

While the *intrinsic finality* of acquired moral virtue is toward some particular good, in the person with charity it acquires an *extrinsic finality* toward perfect beatitude, just as mercy has an intrinsic finality toward the good of one's neighbor but through the command of religion may acquire an extrinsic finality toward honoring God. Thus Aquinas says that virtue ordained to some particular good (rather than the universal good of perfect beatitude) is true virtue but imperfect, *unless it be referred to the final and perfect good* (I.II 23.7). Its orientation to ultimate end derives from the commanding virtue of charity.

Aquinas sees a hierarchical relationship of command, not just between, say, charity and prudence or justice and fortitude, but also between different kinds of prudence or fortitude. Aquinas notes that habits, as telic dispositions, are diversified in species according to diversity of ends (II.II 47.11). Thus he distinguishes three kinds of prudence: "One is prudence simply so-called, which is ordained to one's own good; another is domestic prudence, which is ordained to the common good of the household or family; and the third is political prudence, which is ordained to the common good of the city or kingdom" (ibid.).<sup>51</sup> Aquinas points out, however, that the individual's good is ordained to the political good (II.II 47.11 arg 3, ad 3). So there is also a relationship of command and obedience between the different kinds of prudence: "The habit that is ordained to the ultimate end is more principal, and commands the other habits" (47.11 ad 3).<sup>52</sup> Political prudence commands domestic prudence, which in turn commands self-regarding prudence.

Since the virtue ordained to the more ultimate end commands the other virtues, it makes sense that a prudence oriented not just to the common good

of the earthly city but to God's kingdom itself is at the highest point of this hierarchy. If so, then the prudence ordained to the universal good of perfect beatitude commands all three forms of acquired prudence: infused moral virtue commands acquired moral virtue and perfects it as form perfects matter.

This picture is most strongly suggested by a text from *On the Virtues*. Aquinas raises an Occam's razor-like objection to positing the very existence of infused virtue: acquired moral virtue, when informed by grace, can be meritorious and therefore orient us to perfect beatitude without further need of infused virtue (1.10 arg 4). Aquinas replies:

Since no merit may exist without charity, the act of acquired virtue cannot be meritorious without charity. However, with charity, the other virtues are infused at the same time; whence the act of acquired virtue cannot be meritorious unless by the mediation of infused virtue. For virtue ordained to an inferior end does not produce an act ordained to a superior end, unless by the mediation of a superior virtue, just as the fortitude that is the virtue of a human insofar as he is human does not ordain its act to the political good, unless by the mediation of the fortitude that is the virtue of a human insofar as he is a citizen. (*On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 4)<sup>53</sup>

A reasonable interpretation of this passage is that Aquinas envisages the possibility of charity making the act of acquired virtue meritorious by the mediation of infused (moral) virtue. He explains this in terms of superior (commanding) virtues ordering inferior (eliciting) virtues to their own end: the act of individual fortitude can be commanded by political fortitude and so be ordained to this higher, more universal good. Similarly, it is reasonable to infer that a fortitude ordained to the absolutely universal good (namely, God) would command both of these human fortitudes.

This view preserves the distinction between infused moral virtue and acquired moral virtue while unifying them in a single integral whole. The two virtues differ because of their *intrinsic finalities*. The acquired moral virtues are intrinsically oriented to particular goods, the infused moral virtues to perfect beatitude. However, under the command of the infused moral virtues their acquired counterparts acquire a new *extrinsic finality* to perfect beatitude. The infused moral virtues therefore perfect the acquired moral virtues just as form perfects matter: by raising their finality to a new level.

### Differing Readings

William Mattison argues to the contrary: that the infused and acquired virtues cannot coexist in a person and that the virtuous Christian possesses only

infused moral virtues. His argument is both interpretive and systematic. His first argument is based on the idea that the virtuous Christian has only one last end, namely supernatural beatitude. The acquired virtues are directed toward natural happiness as the last end. Since the Christian's last end is not natural happiness, for Mattison she cannot possess the acquired virtues, since that would corrupt her telic orientation toward supernatural beatitude as her only last end.<sup>54</sup>

Mattison's argument does not distinguish intrinsic and extrinsic finality. But because the intrinsic finality of the acquired virtues is toward natural happiness or some particular good, their extrinsic finality, in the person possessing charity and the infused moral virtues, is supernatural beatitude. The acquired virtues are indeed directed to natural happiness as the last end *in the person lacking grace*; but in the graced person this end becomes intermediate to the last end of supernatural beatitude. The end of natural beatitude is, after all, an end with its own goodness that can therefore be further oriented to supernatural beatitude. When Aquinas says that virtue oriented to a particular good will be true but imperfect virtue unless it is referred to the final and perfect good (II.II 27.3), it is natural to interpret him as saying that an acquired virtue can be referred to the final good as its extrinsic end by charity and the other infused virtues.

Mattison insists that "If an act is ordered toward supernatural happiness, it is no longer an act of an acquired cardinal virtue."<sup>55</sup> However, a single act can be expressive of a commanding as well as an eliciting virtue. There is no reason why an act ordered toward supernatural happiness cannot be an act of infused virtue as commanding and acquired virtue as eliciting. As Renée Mirkes explains, "In the Christian moral life, a perfect moral act directed to a single material object but performed from two ordered motives, natural and supernatural, is able to realize a created good that is a means to attaining the absolutely ultimate end."<sup>56</sup>

Mattison's second argument points out that the means of acquired and of infused moral virtue differ since they are based on two distinct rules, those of human reason and of divine wisdom. But then a Christian possessing both kinds of virtue "would have to perform actions concerning the very same activity based upon two distinct rules, namely, the rule of human reason and divine rule."<sup>57</sup> This argument unduly dichotomizes the twofold rule of the human will (*duplex regula*), which is not two rules but a single double-sided rule. Aquinas states: "Good and evil in human acts is considered according to whether the act is concordant with reason informed by divine law, whether naturally, or by doctrine, or by infusion."<sup>58</sup> Human reason has an "obediential potency" to being informed by divine reason. As we have seen, Aquinas thinks a prudence oriented to more encompassing goods can command the act of a prudence oriented to more particular goods, as when political prudence commands

domestic or self-regarding prudence. In this case, Aquinas envisages no conflict in rule or mean. Similarly, when an acquired virtue is under the command of an infused virtue, there is no conflict in rule or mean. The mean of acquired moral virtue unconnected with infused virtue differs from the mean of infused moral virtue, but when it is connected to infused prudence informing acquired prudence it does not, due to its “obediential potency” to be conformed to a higher prudence.

In the *Commentary on the Sentences*, Aquinas argues for a difference of species between infused and acquired virtue: “Two forms of the same species cannot be in one subject. But infused virtue exists simultaneously with acquired virtue, as is clear in an adult who, having acquired virtue, comes to Baptism, and who receives the infused virtues not less than an infant.”<sup>59</sup> Interpretively, this text has to be treated with some care, as it is one of his early texts and comes in a *sed contra*. Nevertheless, the argument is plausible. Baptism may wipe away sin but not virtue; an adult convert therefore does not lose the moral virtues acquired before faith any more than she loses the intellectual virtues. Christians may possess acquired moral virtues.

While this reading differs from Mattison’s, I share his systematic concern that the Christian life is not split into distinct compartments of human agency and God’s gracious action. It is necessary to turn, then, to the aspects of Aquinas’s account of virtue’s infusion that may need rethinking.

## NOTES

1. I.II 55.4c: “Causa autem efficiens virtutis infusae, de qua definitio datur, Deus est. Propter quod dicitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur. Quae quidem particula si auferatur, reliquum definitionis erit commune omnibus virtutibus, et acquisitis et infusis.”

2. 66.1: “Quicumque autem habet aliquam virtutem, puta temperantiam, habet ipsam quantum ad omnia ad quae se temperantia extendit.”

3. 110.3c: “Quia ut philosophus dicit, in VII Physic., virtus est quaedam dispositio perfecti, dico autem perfectum, quod est dispositum secundum naturam.”

4. 51.3: “appetitiva potentia se habet diversimode et ad multa.”

5. 51.2 ad 1: “agens, in quantum est agens, non recipit aliquid. Sed in quantum agit motum ab alio, sic recipit aliquid a movente, et sic causatur habitus.”

6. 63.3: “Virtus igitur hominis ordinata ad bonum quod modificatur secundum regulam rationis humanae, potest ex actibus humanis causari, in quantum huiusmodi actus procedunt a ratione.”

7. *On the Virtues* 1.9 ad 13: “virtus generatur ex actibus quodammodo virtuosus et quodammodo non virtuosus. Actus enim praecedentes virtutem, sunt quidem virtuosus quantum ad id quod agitur, in quantum scilicet homo agit fortia et iusta; non autem

quantum ad modum agendi: quia ante habitum virtutis acquisitum non agit homo opera virtutis eo modo quo virtuosus agit, scilicet prompte absque dubitatione et delectabiliter absque difficultate.”

8. István Pieter Bejczy, “The Problem of Natural Virtue,” in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Richard Newhauser and István Pieter Bejczy (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 133–54; *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 182–221.

9. I.II 51.4sc; 63.3sc; II.II 24.2sc; *On the Virtues* 1.10c. Renée Mirkes, “Aquinas on the Unity of Perfect Moral Virtue and Its Significance for the Nature-Grace Question” (PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 1995), 127.

10. 54.3: “virtus humana, quae disponit ad actum convenientem naturae humanae, distinguitur a divina virtute vel heroica, quae disponit ad actum convenientem cuidam superiori naturae.”

11. John Harvey, “The Nature of the Infused Moral Virtues,” in *Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 10 (1955): 174–75. Aquinas uses the term “supernatural virtues” in I.II 63.3 arg 2.

12. 62.1: “a solo Deo nobis infunduntur.”

13. 55.4 ad 6: “virtus infusa causatur in nobis a Deo sine nobis agentibus, non tamen sine nobis consentientibus. Et sic est intelligendum quod dicitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur.”

14. II.II 24.10 ad 3: “in infusione caritatis requiritur motus liberi arbitrii.”

15. *Super Sent.*, lib. 3 d. 33 q. 1 a. 2 qc. 2 ad 1: “nullum bonum potest homo habere, nisi Deus det; sed quaedam habentur a Deo non cooperantibus nobis, sicut ea quae sunt infusa; et quaedam nobis cooperantibus, sicut acquisita.”

16. On the distinction between the essence and the powers of the soul, see Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae 1a*, 75–89 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 151–57.

17. I.II 110.4 ad 1: “sicut ab essentia animae effluunt eius potentiae, quae sunt operum principia; ita etiam ab ipsa gratia effluunt virtutes in potentias animae, per quas potentiae moventur ad actus.”

18. I.II 51.4 ad 3: “actus qui producuntur ex habitu infuso . . . confirmant habitum praeeistentem.”

19. *On the Virtues* 1.11 ad 14: “caritas et aliae virtutes infusae non augentur active ex actibus, sed tantum dispositive et meritorie.”

20. *Comm. Metaph.*, lib. 5 l. 2 n.5: “Disponens autem quod non inducit ultimam formam perfectivam, sed tantummodo praeparat materiam ad formam; sicut ille, qui dolat ligna et lapides, dicitur domum facere. Et haec non proprie dicitur efficiens domus; quia id, quod ipse facit, non est domus nisi in potentiam.”

21. *On the Virtues* 1.11c: “Unde sicut virtutes acquisitae augentur ex actibus per quos causantur, ita virtutes infusae augentur per actionem Dei, a quo causantur.”

22. Florence Caffrey Bourg, “God Working in Us without Us? A Fresh Look at Formation of Virtue,” Yamauchi Lecture Series, Loyola University, New Orleans, November 7, 2004, 9, <http://cas.loyno.edu/sites/cas.loyno.edu/files/god-working-in-us-without-us.pdf>.

23. *Conc. Trident.*, Sess. 6, cap. 7.

24. *Cursus Theologicus*, in I.II, Disp.16, Art.3.

25. I.II 51.4: “quia habitus oportet esse proportionatos ei ad quod homo disponitur secundum ipsos, ideo necesse est quod etiam habitus ad huiusmodi finem disponentes, excedant facultatem humanae naturae. Unde tales habitus nunquam possunt homini inesse nisi ex infusione divina, sicut est de omnibus gratuitis virtutibus.”

26. 63 ad 3: “virtutes theologicae sufficienter nos ordinant in finem supernaturalem, secundum quandam inchoationem, quantum scilicet ad ipsum Deum immediate. Sed oportet quod per alias virtutes infusas perficiatur anima circa alias res, in ordine tamen ad Deum.”

27. *Cursus Theologicus*, Tract. 12, *De Virtutibus*, Disp.3, Dub.1, n.15 (6:339–40).

28. *On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 8: “temperantia infusa et acquisita conveniunt in materia, utraque enim est circa delectabilia tactus.”

29. *On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 8: “Nam temperantia infusa exquirat medium secundum rationes legis divinae, quae accipiuntur ex ordine ad ultimum finem; temperantia autem acquisita accipit medium secundum inferiores rationes, in ordine ad bonum praesentis vitae.”

30. I.II 63.4: “Putat in sumptione ciborum, ratione humana modus statuitur ut non noceat valetudini corporis, nec impediatur rationis actus, secundum autem regulam legis divinae, requiritur quod homo castiget corpus suum, et in servitum redigat, per abstinentiam cibi et potus, et aliorum huiusmodi.”

31. *Cursus Theologicus*, Tract. 13, *De Vitiis et Pecacatis*, Disp.1, Dub.2, n.10 (7:15).

32. *On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 9: “ultimus finis non dat speciem in moralibus nisi quatenus in fine proximo est debita proportio ad ultimum finem; oportet enim ea quae sunt ad finem, esse proportionata fini.”

33. I.II 63.4: “cives sanctorum et domestici Dei.”

34. I.II 63.2: “Virtus igitur hominis ordinata ad bonum quod modificatur secundum regulam rationis humanae, potest ex actibus humanis causari, in quantum huiusmodi actus procedunt a ratione, sub cuius potestate et regula tale bonum consistit.”

35. 65.2: “virtutes morales prout sunt operativae boni in ordine ad finem qui non excedit facultatem naturalem hominis, possunt per opera humana acquiri. Et sic acquisite sine caritate esse possunt, sicut fuerunt in multis gentilibus.”

36. Brian J. Shanley, “Aquinas on Pagan Virtue,” *The Thomist* 63, no. 4 (1999): 556.

37. 65.2: “virtutes infusae sunt perfectae, et simpliciter dicendae virtutes, quia bene ordinant hominem ad finem ultimum simpliciter. Aliae vero virtutes, scilicet acquisite, sunt secundum quid virtutes, non autem simpliciter, ordinant enim hominem bene respectu finis ultimi in aliquo genere, non autem respectu finis ultimi simpliciter.”

38. II.II 23.7c: “virtus vera simpliciter est illa quae ordinat ad principale bonum hominis, sicut etiam philosophus, in VII Physic., dicit quod virtus est dispositio perfecti ad optimum. Et sic nulla vera virtus potest esse sine caritate. Sed si accipiatur virtus secundum quod est in ordine ad aliquem finem particularem, sic potest aliqua virtus dici sine caritate, in quantum ordinatur ad aliquod particulare bonum. [. . .] Si vero illud bonum particulare sit verum bonum, puta conservatio civitatis vel aliquid huiusmodi, erit quidem vera virtus, sed imperfecta, nisi referatur ad finale et perfectum bonum.”

39. Thomas M. Osborne Jr., “The Augustinianism of Thomas Aquinas’s Moral Theory,” *The Thomist* 67, no. 2 (2003): 301.

40. *Ibid.*, 283–89.

41. Denis J. M. Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good: Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas’s Moral Science* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997).

42. David Decosimo, *Ethics as a Work of Charity: Thomas Aquinas and Pagan Virtue* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), 154.

43. *Ibid.*, 253.

44. *Ibid.*, 247–48.

45. William C. Mattison III, “Can Christians Possess the Acquired Cardinal Virtues?,” *Theological Studies* 72, no. 3 (2011): 559. See also two works by Angela McKay Knobel: “Can Aquinas’s Infused and Acquired Virtues Coexist in the Christian Life?,” *Studies in Christian Ethics* 23, no. 4 (2010): 381; and “Relating Aquinas’s Infused and Acquired Virtues: Some Problematic Texts for a Common Interpretation,” *Nova et Vetera (English Edition)* 9, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 411–31.

46. For an account of this virtue see Nicholas Austin, “Thomas Aquinas on the Virtue of Religion,” in “*Ahne Nach, Was Du Vollziehst*” *Positionsbestimmungen Zum Verhältnis von Liturgie Und Ethik*, ed. Martin Stuflesser and Stephan Winter (Regensburg: Pustet, 2009), 85–99.

47. II.II 81.1 arg 1: “religio munda et immaculata apud Deum et patrem haec est, visitare pupillos et viduas in tribulatione eorum, et immaculatum se custodire ab hoc saeculo.”

48. II.II 32.1 ad 2: “nihil prohibet actum qui est proprie unius virtutis elicitive, attribui alteri virtuti sicut imperanti et ordinanti ad suum finem.”

49. *On the Virtues* 2.3: “Actus enim unius vitii, secundum quod ordinatur ad finem alterius vitii, recipit formam eius; utpote qui furatur ut fornicetur, materialiter quidem fur est, formaliter vero intemperatus.”

50. 23.8: “per caritatem ordinantur actus omnium aliarum virtutum ad ultimum finem. Et secundum hoc ipsa dat formam actibus omnium aliarum virtutum. Et pro tanto dicitur esse forma virtutum, nam et ipsae virtutes dicuntur in ordine ad actus formatos.” For more on the development in Aquinas’s thought about how to explain charity as the form of the virtues see Michael S. Sherwin, *By Knowledge and By Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 192–202.

51. II.II 47.11: “una sit prudentia simpliciter dicta, quae ordinatur ad bonum proprium; alia autem oeconomica, quae ordinatur ad bonum commune domus vel familiae; et tertia politica, quae ordinatur ad bonum commune civitatis vel regni.”

52. 47.11 ad 3: “habitus qui ordinatur ad finem ultimum sit principalior, et imperet aliis habitibus.”

53. *On the Virtues* 1.10 ad 4: “cum nullum meritum sit sine caritate, actus virtutis acquisitae, non potest esse meritorius sine caritate. Cum caritate autem simul infunduntur aliae virtutes; unde actus virtutis acquisitae non potest esse meritorius nisi mediante virtute infusa. Nam virtus ordinata in finem inferiorem non facit actus ordinatum ad

finem superiorem, nisi mediante virtute superiori; sicut fortitudo, quae est virtus hominis qua homo, non ordinat actum suum ad bonum politicum, nisi mediante fortitudine quae est virtus hominis in quantum est civis.”

54. Mattison, “Can Christians Possess?,” 560–65.

55. *Ibid.*, 568.

56. Renée Mirkes, “Aquinas on the Unity,” 204.

57. Mattison, “Can Christians Possess?,” 565–66.

58. *De Malo* 2.4c: “bonum et malum in actibus humanis consideratur secundum quod actus concordat rationi informatae lege divina, vel naturaliter, vel per doctrinam, vel per infusionem.”

59. *Super Sent.* lib. 3 d. 33 q. 1 a. 2 qc. 4 s.c. 2: “duae formae ejusdem speciei non possunt esse in uno subjecto. Sed virtus infusa est simul cum virtute acquisita, ut patet in adulto qui habens virtutem acquisitam ad Baptismum accedit, qui non minus recipit de infusis quam puer.”