

## QUESTION 111

### The Divisions of Grace

Next we have to consider the divisions of grace. On this topic there are five questions: (1) Is grace appropriately divided into gratuitously given grace (*gratia gratis data*) and sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*)? (2) Is sanctifying grace appropriately divided into operating grace (*gratia operans*) and cooperating grace (*gratia cooperans*)? (3) Is sanctifying grace appropriately divided into prevenient grace (*gratia preveniens*) and subsequent grace (*gratia subsequens*)? (4) What are the divisions of gratuitously given grace? (5) What is the relation between sanctifying grace and gratuitously given grace?

#### Article 1

##### Is grace appropriately divided into sanctifying grace and gratuitously given grace?

It seems that grace is not appropriately divided into sanctifying grace and gratuitously given grace (*gratia non convenienter dividatur per gratiam gratum facientem et gratiam gratis datam*):

**Objection 1:** As is clear from what has been explained above (q. 110, a. 1), grace is a certain sort of gift from God. But it is not because something has been given to a man by God that the man is in God's grace or favor (*ideo non est Deo gratus quia aliquid est ei datum a Deo*); instead, it is just the opposite. For something is freely given to someone by God because he is a man in God's grace or favor. Therefore, there is no such thing as sanctifying grace, i.e., grace that puts one in God's grace or favor (*nulla est gratia gratum faciens*).

**Objection 2:** Things that are given but not on the basis of preceding merits are given gratuitously. But the good of nature is itself likewise given to a man without any preceding merit, since nature is presupposed for merit. Therefore, nature itself is likewise gratuitously given by God. But nature is divided off from grace. Therefore, it is inappropriate that *gratuitously given* should be posited as one of the differences that divides *grace*, given that it is also found outside the genus *grace*.

**Objection 3:** Every division should be made by means of opposites. But even sanctifying grace itself, through which we are justified, is given to us gratuitously by God—this according to Romans 3:24 (“... having been justified gratuitously by His grace”). Therefore, sanctifying grace should not be divided off from gratuitously given grace.

**But contrary to this:** The Apostle attributes both things to grace, viz., (a) that it puts one into God's favor (*gratum facere*), and (b) that it is given gratuitously. With respect to the former he says in Ephesians 1:6, “He has graced us in His beloved Son.” With respect to the latter, he says in Romans 11:6, “And if by grace, it is not now by works; otherwise, grace is no longer grace.” Therefore, grace that has just one of these features can be distinguished from grace that has both of them.

**I respond:** As the Apostle says in Romans 13:1, “Things that are from God are well-ordered.” Now as Dionysius says in *De Caelesti Hierarchia*, the order of things consists in some things being led back to God through other things. Therefore, since grace is ordered toward man's being led back to God, this is done in a certain order, viz., with some being led back to God by others.

Accordingly, there are two kinds of grace:

(a) One kind of grace is such that through it a man is himself joined to God, and this is called *sanctifying grace* (*gratia gratum faciens*)

(b) On the other hand, the second kind of grace is such that through it one man cooperates with another in order to be led back to God. Now a gift of this sort is called *gratuitously given grace* (*gratia gratis data*), since (a) it lies beyond the power of nature and (b) is given to a man beyond his personal merits (*supra meritum personae*); however, because it is given not in order that the man himself should be justified by it, but rather in order that he cooperate in the justification of others, it is not called

sanctifying grace. And it is of this kind of grace that the Apostle is speaking in 1 Corinthians 12:7, “To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for its usefulness,” viz., its usefulness for others.

**Reply to objection 1:** Grace is said to put one in God’s favor not as an *efficient* cause, but as a *formal* cause (*non effective sed formaliter*), since through it a man is justified and made worthy of being said to be in God’s grace or favor—this according to Colossians 1:12 (“He has made us worthy of sharing the lot of the saints in light”).

**Reply to objection 2:** Insofar as grace is given *gratuitously*, what is excluded is the character of a debt. Now there are two ways in which a debt can be thought of:

(a) In one way, the debt arises from merit and is owed to the person who does the meritorious works (*quod refertur ad personam cuius est agere meritoria opera*)—this according to Romans 4:4 (“To someone who works, the reward is imputed as a debt and not according to grace”).

(b) In the second way, the debt is based on the constitution of a nature (*ex conditione naturae*), as when we say that it is owed to man that he should have reason and the other things that pertain to human nature.

It is not because God is under obligation to a creature that ‘debt’ is used in either of these senses; rather, it is because a creature ought to be subject to God in order that God’s ordination might be fulfilled in it, and God’s ordination is that such-and-such a nature should have such-and-such a constitution and properties, and that doing such-and-such should follow upon such-and-such a constitution and properties.

Therefore, natural gifts are not owed in the first sense of ‘debt’, but they are owed in the second sense (*dona naturalia carent primo debito, non autem carent secundo debito*). On the other hand, supernatural gifts are not owed in either sense (*dona supernaturalia utroque debito carent*), and so they deserve the name ‘grace’ in a more special way.

**Reply to objection 3:** Sanctifying grace adds something that (a) is over and beyond the character of gratuitously given grace and that also (b) pertains to the character of grace, viz., it puts a man into God’s grace or favor. And so the gratuitously given grace that does not do this retains the name that is common to them, as happens in many other cases. And it is in this sense that the two parts of the division are opposed to one another as *sanctifying* and *non-sanctifying*.

## Article 2

### Is grace appropriately divided into operating grace and cooperating grace?

It seems that grace is not appropriately divided into operating grace and cooperating grace:

**Objection 1:** As was explained above (qu. 110, a. 2), grace is a certain accident. But an accident cannot act on its own subject. Therefore, no kind of grace should be called ‘operating grace’.

**Objection 2:** If grace effects anything within us, then it especially effects justification. But it is not grace alone that effects this within us; for in his commentary on John 14:12 (“The works that I do he also shall do”) Augustine says, “He who created you without you, will not justify you without you.” Therefore, no kind of grace should be called simply ‘operating grace’.

**Objection 3:** Cooperating with someone seems to belong to a lower agent and not to a more principal agent. But grace operates within us as a more principal agent than free choice (*gratia principalius operatur in nobis quam liberum arbitrium*)—this according to Romans 9:16 (“It is not of him who wills or of him who runs, but of God, who shows mercy”) Therefore, no kind of grace should be called ‘cooperating grace’.

**Objection 4:** A division ought to be made by appeal to opposites. But *operating* and *cooperating* are not opposites, since one and the same thing can both operate and cooperate. Therefore, grace is not appropriately divided into operating grace and cooperating grace.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* Augustine says, “By cooperating, God

brings to completion within us what He begins by operating. For He Himself operates at the beginning in order that we might will, and He cooperates with those who will in order to perfect them.” But the operations of God by which He moves us toward the good pertain to grace. Therefore, grace is appropriately divided into operating grace and cooperating grace.

**I respond:** As was explained above (q. 109, aa. 2 and 3 and 9, and q. 110, a. 2), there are two ways in which grace can be thought of: (a) as a divine assistance by which God moves us to will correctly and act correctly, and (b) as a habitual gift that is poured into us by God. Now grace taken in either of these senses is appropriately divided into operating grace and cooperating grace:

(a) The operation with respect to a given effect is attributed not to the thing being moved but instead to the thing that effects the movement. Thus, in the case of that effect in which our mind is moved but is not effecting the movement, whereas God alone is effecting the movement, the operation is attributed to God and the grace is accordingly called *operating grace*. On the other hand, in the case of that effect in which our mind is both effecting the movement and being moved, the operation is attributed not only to God but also to our soul and the grace is accordingly called *cooperating grace*.

Now there are two sorts of acts within us:

(i) The first is an *interior act of the will*. And as regards this sort of act, the will is being moved, whereas God is effecting the movement—especially when the will begins to will what is good after having willed what is bad prior to this (*praesertim cum voluntas incipit bonum velle quae prius malum volebat*). And so insofar as God is moving the human mind to its act, the grace is called *operating grace*.

(ii) The second is the *exterior act*, which, as was explained above (q. 17, a. 9), is commanded by the will; the result is that the operation with respect to this act is attributed to the will. And since God, too, assists us with respect to this act—both by interiorly strengthening the will to arrive at the act and by exteriorly providing the power to operate—the grace is called *cooperating grace* with respect to this act. Hence, after the passage quoted above, Augustine adds, “He operates in order that we might will, and when we will, He cooperates with us in order that we might bring the act to completion.”

Therefore, if ‘grace’ is being taken for the gratuitous motion of God’s by which He moves us to a meritorious good, then grace is appropriately divided into operating grace and cooperating grace.

(b) On the other hand, if ‘grace’ is being taken for a habitual gift, then, just as with any other form, grace has two effects, the first of which is *esse*, and the second of which is *operation*, in the way that the operation of heat is to make something hot and an exterior act of heating (*sicut caloris operatio est facere calidum et exterior calefactio*).

So, then, insofar as habitual grace heals or justifies the soul, or puts the soul into God’s favor, it is called *operating grace*, whereas insofar as it is a principle of the meritorious works that also proceed from free choice, it is called *cooperating grace*.

**Reply to objection 1:** Insofar as grace is a certain accidental quality, it acts on the soul not as an efficient cause but as a formal case, in the way that whiteness is said to make a surface white.

**Reply to objection 2:** God does not justify us without us in the sense that while we are being justified we consent to God’s justice by a movement of free choice. However, that movement is an *effect* of grace and not a *cause* of grace. Hence, the operation as a whole belongs to grace.

**Reply to objection 3:** Someone is said to cooperate with another not only as a secondary agent with a principal agent, but also as an assisting agent with respect to a presupposed end. Now through operating grace a man is assisted by God in order to will the good. And so, with the end already presupposed, the result is that the grace cooperates with us.

**Reply to objection 4:** Operating grace and cooperating grace are the same grace, but, as is clear from what has been said, they are distinguished by their diverse effects.

### Article 3

#### Is grace appropriately divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace?

It seems that grace is not appropriately divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace:

**Objection 1:** Grace is an effect of God's love. But God's love is always prevenient and never subsequent—this according to 1 John 4:10 (“It is not that we have loved God, but that He has first loved us”). Therefore, one should not posit both prevenient grace and subsequent grace.

**Objection 2:** Sanctifying grace is just a single thing in a man, since it is sufficient—this according to 2 Corinthians 12:9 (“My grace is sufficient for you”). But being prior is not the same as being posterior. Therefore, grace is not appropriately divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace.

**Objection 3:** Grace is known through its effects. But grace has infinitely many effects, one of which precedes another. Therefore, if, given this, grace were to be divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace, it seems that there would be infinitely many species of grace. But infinities are ignored by every art. Therefore, grace is not appropriately divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace.

**But contrary to this:** God's grace proceeds from His mercy. But we read both things in the Psalms: “His mercy shall precede me,” and, again, “His mercy shall follow me.” Therefore, grace is appropriately divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace

**I respond:** Just as grace is divided into operating grace and cooperating grace because of its diverse effects, so, too, in whatever sense ‘grace’ is taken, grace is divided into prevenient grace and subsequent grace.

Now there are five effects of grace in us:

- (a) The soul is healed.
- (b) The soul wills the good.
- (c) The soul efficaciously does the good that it wills.
- (d) The soul perseveres in the good.
- (e) The soul attains glory.

And so insofar as grace causes the first effect in us, it is called *prevenient* with respect to the second effect, and insofar as it causes the second effect in us, it is called *subsequent* with respect to the first effect. And just as a given effect is posterior to one effect and prior to another, so as regards one and the same effect, grace can be called both prevenient and subsequent in different respects. This is the point Augustine is making in *De Natura et Gratia*: “It is prevenient in order that we might be healed, and it is subsequent in order that, having been healed, we might be invigorated; it is prevenient in order that we might be called, and it is subsequent in order that we might be glorified.”

**Reply to objection 1:** ‘God's love’ names something eternal, and so it can never be called anything but prevenient. But ‘grace’ signifies a temporal effect that can precede one thing and be subsequent to another. And so grace can be called prevenient and subsequent.

**Reply to objection 2:** The fact that it is both prevenient and subsequent does not make grace diverse *in its essence*, but instead makes it diverse *only with respect to its effects*—in the same sense that was explained above (a. 2) concerning operating grace and cooperating grace.

Likewise, the fact that subsequent grace pertains to glory does not make it numerically different from the prevenient grace through which we are now justified. For just as the charity of our earthly pilgrimage (*caritas viae*) is not laid aside in heaven but is instead perfected, so the same should be said of the light of grace. For in their concepts, neither charity nor grace implies any imperfection.

**Reply to objection 3:** Even if the effects of grace can be infinitely many, in just the way that human acts are infinitely many, still, all of them are traced back to things that are determinate in species. Furthermore, all agree in the fact that one precedes another.

#### Article 4

##### Does the Apostle appropriately distinguish the kinds of gratuitously given grace ?

It seems that the Apostle does not appropriately distinguish the kinds of gratuitously given grace:

**Objection 1:** Every gift that is given to us gratuitously by God can be called a gratuitously given grace. But there are infinitely many gifts which (a) are given to us gratuitously by God, among both goods of the soul and goods of the body, and yet which (b) are not sanctifying (*quae tamen nos Deo gratos non faciunt*). Therefore, gratuitously given grace cannot be comprehended under any fixed divisions.

**Objection 2:** Gratuitously given grace is distinguished from sanctifying grace. But faith (*fides*) has to do with sanctifying grace, since we are justified by it—this according to Romans 5:1 (“... having therefore been justified by grace, etc.”). Therefore, it is inappropriate to put faith among the gratuitously given graces, especially since the other virtues such as hope and charity are not put there.

**Objection 3:** The working of healings (*operatio sanitarum*), along with speaking in different tongues (*loqui diversa genera linguarum*), are miracles of a certain sort. Again, the interpretation of tongues (*interpretatio sermonum*) pertains to wisdom or knowledge—this according to Daniel 1:17 (“And to these young men God gave knowledge and learning in every book and wisdom”). Therefore, it is inappropriate to divide the grace of the working of healings and speaking in different of tongues from the working of miracles (*operatio virtutum*), and to divide the interpretation of tongues from the word of wisdom and knowledge (*sermo sapientiae et sermo scientiae*).

**Objection 4:** Just as wisdom and knowledge are certain gifts of the Holy Spirit, so too, as was explained above (q. 68, a. 4), are understanding, counsel, piety, fortitude, and fear. Therefore, these, too, should have been posited among the gratuitously given graces.

**But contrary to this:** In 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 the Apostle says, “To one, indeed, by the Spirit is given the word of wisdom (*sermo sapientiae*); and to another, the word of knowledge (*sermo scientiae*), according to the same Spirit; to another, faith (*fides*), in the same Spirit; to another, the grace to work healings (*gratia sanitarum*); to another, the working of miracles (*operationes virtutum*); to another, prophecy (*prophetia*); to another, the discerning of spirits (*discretio spirituum*); to another, diverse kinds of tongues (*genera linguarum*); to another, the interpretation of tongues (*interpretatio sermonum*).”

**I respond:** As has been explained (a. 1), gratuitously given grace is ordered toward one man’s cooperating with others in order that they might be led back to God. But a man cannot accomplish this by effecting an interior movement in the others, since this belongs to God alone; rather, he can accomplish it only exteriorly, by teaching and persuading. And so gratuitously given graces include those which a man needs for instructing others in those divine matters that lie beyond reason.

Now three things are required for this: (a) that the man be given a fullness of cognition of divine things, so that on this basis he might be able to instruct others; (b) that he be able to confirm or prove the claims he makes, since otherwise his teaching might not be efficacious; and (c) that he be able to present the things he understands to his hearers in an appropriate way.

As regards the first of these, three things are necessary, as is obvious in the case of a human teacher:

First of all, the one who is charged with instructing another in a given science has to be such that the principles of that science are absolutely certain to him. And in this regard what is posited is *faith*, which is certitude with respect to the invisible realities that are presupposed as principles in Catholic doctrine.

Second, the teacher has to have the correct relation to the main conclusions of the science. And in this regard what is posited is the *word of wisdom*, i.e., the cognition of divine matters.

Third, he has to abound in examples and in his cognition of the effects through which he must sometimes make known their causes. And in this regard what is posited is the *word of knowledge*, i.e.,

the cognition of human matters; for “the invisible things of God ... are clearly seen ... through the things that have been made” (Romans 1:20).

Now in those things that are subject to reason, confirmation comes through arguments. By contrast, in those things that are revealed by God beyond reason, confirmation comes through the things proper to God’s power—and this in two ways:

First, in such a way that the teacher of sacred doctrine does, in miraculous works, what only God is able to do, whether (a) these works are ordered toward the health of bodies, and in this regard what is posited is the grace *to work healings*, or whether (b) they are ordered solely to the manifestation of God’s power, e.g., the sun’s standing still or being darkened, or the sea’s being divided, and in this regard what is posited is the *working of miracles*.

Second, in such a way that the teacher of sacred doctrine is able to make manifest things that only God knows. And these things are (a) future contingents, and in this regard what is posited is *prophecy*, and also (b) the secrets of the heart, and in this regard what is posited is the *discerning of spirits*.

Now the power of proclaiming (*facultas pronuntiandi*) can occur either (a) with respect to the languages in which someone can be understood, and accordingly what is posited is the *diverse kinds of tongues*, or (b) with respect to understanding the things that are said, and in this regard what is posited is the *interpretation of tongues*.

**Reply to objection 1:** As was explained above (a. 1), not all gifts that are given to us by God are called gratuitously given graces, but only those that exceed the power of nature, e.g., that a fisherman should abound in the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge, etc. And these are the sorts of gifts that are included here under *gratuitously given grace*.

**Reply to objection 2:** Faith is counted here not insofar as it is a virtue that justifies a man in himself, but insofar as it implies a certain preeminent certitude of faith, on the basis of which a man is especially capable of instructing others about those things that pertain to the faith. By contrast, hope and charity pertain to the appetitive power, since it is through the appetitive power that a man is ordered toward God.

**Reply to objection 3:** The grace to work healings is distinguished from the general working of miracles by the fact that it has a special character that induces one to faith. For someone is rendered more ready for faith through the gift of corporeal health which he has received through the power of faith.

Similarly, speaking in various tongues and interpreting tongues have certain special characters for moving others to faith, and so they are posited as special gratuitously given graces.

**Reply to objection 4:** Wisdom and knowledge are not counted among the gratuitously given graces by reason of the fact they are enumerated among the gifts of Holy Spirit, viz., insofar as a man’s mind is able to be moved easily by the Holy Spirit to what belongs to wisdom or knowledge; for, as was explained above (q. 68, aa. 1 and 4), this is how it is with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Instead, wisdom and knowledge are counted among the gratuitously given graces insofar as they imply a certain abundance of knowledge and wisdom, with the result that the man is not only able to be appropriately wise about divine things in his own case, but is also able to instruct others and to refute opponents. And the reason why the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge are prominently placed among the gratuitously given graces is that, as Augustine puts it in *De Trinitate* 14, “It is one thing to know merely what a man ought to believe in order to attain the happy life; it is another thing to know the way in which this enriches the pious and is defended against the impious.”

## Article 5

### Is gratuitously given grace superior to sanctifying grace?

It seems that gratuitously given grace is superior to (*dignior quam*) sanctifying grace:

**Objection 1:** As Aristotle says in *Ethics* 1, “The good of a nation is better than the good of one man.” But sanctifying grace is ordered toward the good of just one man, whereas gratuitously given grace, as was explained above (aa. 1 and 4), is ordered toward the common good of the whole Church. Therefore, gratuitously given grace is superior to sanctifying grace.

**Objection 2:** It takes more power (*maioris virtutis est*) for a given thing to act on another than for it simply to be perfected in itself; for instance, the brightness of a body that is also able to illuminate other bodies is greater than the brightness of a body that shines in its own right in such a way that it is unable to illuminate other bodies. For this reason, in *Ethics* 5 the Philosopher says, “The most outstanding virtue is justice, through which a man is correctly related to others as well.” But it is through sanctifying grace that a man is perfected in his own right, whereas it is through gratuitously given grace that a man works for the perfection of others. Therefore, gratuitously given grace is superior to sanctifying grace.

**Objection 3:** What is proper to those who are better is more excellent than what is common to the many; for instance, to reason discursively, which is proper to man, is more excellent than sensing, which is common to all the animals. But sanctifying grace is common to all the members of the Church, whereas gratuitously given grace is the proper gift of the more excellent members of the Church. Therefore, gratuitously given grace is more excellent than sanctifying grace.

**But contrary to this:** In 1 Corinthians 12:31, after having enumerated the gratuitously given graces, the Apostle adds, “I show you a still more excellent way,” and as become clear from what follows, he is talking about charity, which pertains to sanctifying grace. Therefore, sanctifying grace is more excellent than gratuitously given grace.

**I respond:** A power (*virtus*) is more excellent to the extent that it is ordered to a higher good. And it is always the case that the end is more important (*potior*) than the means to that end.

Now sanctifying grace orders a man directly to being joined with his ultimate end. By contrast, gratuitously given graces order a man toward things that are preparatory for the ultimate end; for instance, through prophecies and miracles and other things of this sort men are led toward being joined to their ultimate end. And so sanctifying grace is much more excellent than gratuitously given grace.

**Reply to objection 1:** As the Philosopher says in *Metaphysics* 7, the good of a multitude is twofold. There is one sort of good that exists within the multitude itself, e.g., the ordering within an army. But there is another sort of good that is separate from the multitude, e.g., the good of the leader; and this good is better, because the other good is also ordered toward it.

Now gratuitously given grace is ordered toward the common good of the Church, which is the ordering within the Church (*ordo ecclesiasticus*); but sanctifying grace is ordered toward a common separate good, viz., God Himself. And this is why sanctifying grace is more excellent.

**Reply to objection 2:** If gratuitously given grace were able effect in another what a man attains through sanctifying grace, then it would follow that gratuitously given grace is more excellent, in just the way that the brightness of the illuminating sun is more excellent than the brightness of an illuminated body. But a man is not able, through gratuitously given grace, to cause another to be joined to God, which is what he himself has through sanctifying grace. And so gratuitously given grace need not be more excellent—just as, in the case of a fire, the heat that manifests the fire’s species and through which the fire acts to induce heat in another is not more excellent than the substantial form of the fire.

**Reply to objection 3:** Sensing is ordered toward discursive reasoning as its end, and this is why discursive reasoning is more excellent. But in the present case the opposite holds, since what is proper is ordered toward what is common as its end. And so there is no parallel.