QUESTION 47

Prudence in its own right

After the theological virtues, what we first need to consider, concerning the cardinal virtues, is prudence: first, prudence in its own right (question 47); second, the parts of prudence (questions 48-51); third, the gift that corresponds to prudence (question 52); fourth, the opposed vices (questions 53-55); and, fifth, the precepts that pertain to prudence (question 56).

On the first topic there are sixteen questions: (1) Does prudence exist in the will or in reason? (2) If prudence exists in reason, does it exist just in the practical reason or also in the speculative reason? (3) Does prudence have cognition of singular things? (4) Is prudence a virtue? (5) Is prudence a specific virtue? (6) Does prudence set the end for the moral virtues? (7) Does prudence establish the mean in the moral virtues? (8) Is commanding (*praecipere*) the proper act of prudence? (9) Does care or solicitude (*sollicitudo*) belong to prudence? (9) Does prudence extend to the governance of a multitude? (11) Is the prudence that has to do with one's own proper good the same in species as the prudence that extends to the common good? (12) Does prudence exist in the subjects or only in their rulers? (13) Is prudence found in bad individuals? (14) Is prudence found in all good individuals? (15) Does prudence exist in us by nature? (16) Is prudence lost through forgetfulness?

Article 1

Does prudence exist in a cognitive power or in an appetitive power?

It seems that prudence exists in an appetitive power and not in a cognitive power:

Objection 1: In *De Moribus Ecclesiae* Augustine says, "Prudence is love choosing wisely the things by which one is aided instead of the things by which one is hindered." But love exists in an appetitive power and not in a cognitive power. Therefore, prudence exists in an appetitive power.

Objection 2: As is clear from the definition just mentioned, it belongs to prudence to choose wisely. But as was established above (*ST* 1, q. 83, a. 3 and *ST* 1-2, q. 13, a. 1), choosing is an act of an appetitive power. Therefore, prudence exists in an appetitive power and not in a cognitive power.

Objection 3: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "In the case of an art or craft, it is better (*eligibilior*) to make a mistake on purpose; but this is not so in the case of prudence, just as it is not so in the case of the virtues." But the moral virtues, which he is talking about here, exist in the appetitive part of the soul, whereas an art or craft exists in reason. Therefore, prudence exists in the appetitive part of the soul rather than in reason.

But contrary to this: In *83 Quaestiones* Augustine says, "Prudence is the cognition of what should be desired and what should be avoided."

I respond: As Isidore says in *Etymologia*, "The prudent individual is one who sees, as it were, from afar, since he is perspicacious and sees how things that are uncertain will turn out." But seeing belongs to a cognitive power and not to an appetitive power. Hence, it is clear that prudence belongs directly to a cognitive power.

However, prudence does not belong to a sentient power, since the things known through a sentient power are just those that are present (*praesto sunt*) and offered to the senses. By contrast, to have cognition of what is future on the basis of what is present and past—and this is what prudence has to do with—belongs properly to reason. For such cognition is accomplished through a certain sort of comparison.

Hence, it follows that prudence exists properly in reason.

Reply to objection 1: As was explained above (*ST* 1, q. 82, a. 4 and *ST* 1-2, q. 9, a. 1), the will moves all the powers to their own acts; and as was also explained above (*ST* 1, q. 20, a. 1 and *ST* 1-2, q. 25, aa. 1-3), the first act of an appetitive power is love. So, then, prudence is called love not, to be

sure, by its essence (*non quidem essentialiter*), but rather insofar as love moves one to an act of prudence. This is why Augustine adds afterwards, "Prudence is love distinguishing correctly those things by which one is aided in moving toward God from those things by which one is hindered"—where love is said to make distinctions insofar as it moves reason to make distinctions.

Reply to objection 2: The prudent individual considers things that are a long way off insofar as they are ordered toward helping or hindering what is to be done at the present moment. Hence, it is clear that the things considered by prudence are ordered toward other things as their end. But it is reason's deliberating (*consilium in ratione*) and the appetite's choosing (*electio in appetitu*) that have to do with the means to an end. And of these two things, it is the act of deliberating that more properly belongs to prudence; for in *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says that the prudent individual "deliberates well" (*est bene consiliativus*). However, since an act of choosing presupposes an act of deliberating—for, as *Ethics* 3 says, an act of choosing is a desire for what has been deliberated about beforehand (*appetitus praeconsiliati*)—it follows that choosing can be attributed to prudence as its consequence, viz., insofar as prudence directs an act of choosing through its act of deliberating.

Reply to objection 3: The value of prudence (*laus prudentiae*) consists not just in thinking, but in the application of the thinking to an action (*in applicatione ad opus*), which is the end of practical reason. And so if a defect occurs in the application of the thinking to an action, then this is especially contrary to prudence, since just as the end is the most important thing in any matter, so, too, a defect with respect to the end is the worst sort of defect. Hence, in the same place the Philosopher adds that prudence "does not exist only with reason," as an art or a craft does; for, as has been explained, prudence has an application to an action, and this is effected through the will.

Article 2

Does prudence have to do only with practical reason or with speculative reason as well?

It seems that prudence has to do not only with practical reason but with speculative reason as well:

Objection 1: Proverbs 10:23 says, "Wisdom is prudence for a man." But wisdom consists mainly in contemplation. Therefore, so does prudence.

Objection 2: In *De Officiis* 1 Ambrose says, "Prudence is concerned with investigating the truth, and it infuses one with a desire for a fuller knowledge." But this has to do with speculative reason. Therefore, prudence consists in speculative reason as well as in practical reason.

Objection 3: As is clear from *Ethics* 6, the Philosopher places art and prudence in the same part of the soul. But as in clear from the case of the liberal arts, art is not only practical but also speculative. Therefore, prudence is likewise both practical and speculative.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says that prudence is right reason with respect to things that can be done. But this pertains only to practical reason. Therefore, prudence exists only in practical reason.

I respond: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "It belongs to the prudent individual to be able to deliberate well." And deliberation concerns things that we must do in relation to some end. But reason with respect to what is to be done for the sake of an end is practical reason. Hence, it is clear that prudence consists only in practical reason.

Reply to objection 1: As was explained above (q. 45, a. 1), wisdom considers the highest cause absolutely speaking. Hence, in any given genus, considering the highest good belongs to wisdom with respect to that genus.

Now in the genus of human acts the highest cause is the end that is common to the whole of human life. And this is the end that prudence looks to; for in *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher claims that just as one

who reasons well with respect to some particular end—say, victory—is said to be prudent with respect to a certain genus—in this case, matters of war—and not prudent absolutely speaking, so one who reasons well with respect to living a whole life well is said to be prudent absolutely speaking.

Hence, it is clear that prudence is wisdom in human affairs, but not wisdom absolutely speaking, since it does not have to do with the highest cause absolutely speaking. For it has to do with the human good, and man is not the best of the things that exist. And this is why the passage explicitly says that prudence is "wisdom for a man" —and not wisdom absolutely speaking.

Reply to objection 2: Ambrose, and Tully as well, take the name 'prudence' in a broader sense for any sort of human cognition, both speculative and practical—though one could concede that insofar as the act of speculative reason is voluntary, speculative reason falls under choice and deliberation as far as its *exercise* is concerned and, as a result, falls under the ordering that belongs to prudence. However, as regards its *species*, i.e., in relation to its object, which is necessary truth, speculative reason does not fall under either deliberation or prudence.

Reply to objection 3: Every application of right reason to something that can be *made* belongs to an art or craft.

By contrast, what belongs to prudence is nothing other than the application of right reason to those matters about which there is deliberation. And as *Ethics* 3 points out, these matters are such that there are no determinate ways of arriving at the end.

Therefore, since speculative reason *makes* certain things—e.g., syllogisms, propositions, and things of this sort—in which one proceeds along fixed and determinate paths, it follows that the character of an *art* can be preserved with respect to these things, but that the character of *prudence* cannot be preserved with respect to them. And so there are speculative arts, but there is no such thing as speculative prudence.

Article 3

Does prudence have cognition of singular things?

It seems that prudence does not have cognition of singular things (*non sit cognoscitiva singularium*):

Objection 1: As has been explained (a. 1), prudence exists in reason. But as *Physics* 1 says, "Reason has to do with universals." Therefore, prudence has cognition only of universals.

Objection 2: There are infinitely many singular things. But reason cannot comprehend infinitely many things. Therefore, prudence, which is right reason, does not have to do with singular things.

Objection 3: The cognition of singular things comes through the senses. But prudence does not exist in the senses, since many individuals who have very sharp exterior senses are not prudent. Therefore, prudence does not have to do with singular things.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "Prudence has to do not only with universals; instead, it must have cognition of singular things as well."

I respond: As was explained above (a. 1), what belongs to prudence is not only reason's consideration, but also its application to an act, which is the end of practical reason. But no one can appropriately apply one thing to another unless he has cognition of both of them, viz., that which is to be applied and that to which it is to be applied. But actions (*operationes*) have to do with singular things. And so the prudent individual must have cognition of the universal principles of reason and must also have cognition of the singulars that his actions have to do with.

Reply to objection 1: To be sure, reason has to do first and principally with universals, and yet it is able to apply universal concepts to particulars (thus, the conclusions of syllogisms are not only

universal but also particular). For as *De Anima* 3 says, the intellect extends to matter by a sort of turning back (*per quandam reflexionem*).

Reply to objection 2: Human reason cannot comprehend infinitely many singulars, and this is why, as Wisdom 9:14 puts it, "our counsels are uncertain." Still, through experience the infinitely many singulars are reduced to a finite number which occur in a great number of cases (*ut in pluribus accidunt*) and the cognition of which suffices for human prudence.

Reply to objection 3: As the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 6, prudence is seated not in the exterior senses by which we have cognition of proper sensibles, but rather in the interior sense, which is perfected by memory and experience in order to make prompt judgments about experienced particulars—not, however, in the sense that prudence has the interior sense as its principal subject. Instead, it exists principally in reason and reaches the interior sense through a sort of application.

Article 4

Is prudence a virtue?

It seems that prudence is not a virtue:

Objection 1: In *De Libero Arbitrio* 1 Augustine says that prudence is "knowledge (*scientia*) of what should be desired and what should be avoided." But as is clear from the *Categories*, knowledge is divided off as a contrary from virtue (*contra virtutem dividitur*). Therefore, prudence is not a virtue.

Objection 2: A virtue does not belong [accidentally] to a virtue (*virtutis non est virtus*). But as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 6, virtue belongs [accidentally] to art (*artis est virtus*). Therefore, an art is not a virtue. But there is prudence in an art; for 2 Paralipomenon 2:14 says of Hiram that he knew "how to do all kinds of engraved work and to devise prudently whatever is necessary for the work." Therefore, prudence is not a virtue.

Objection 3: No virtue can be immoderate. But prudence is immoderate; otherwise, it would be useless for Proverbs 23:4 to say, "Set a limit to your prudence." Therefore, prudence is not a virtue.

But contrary to this: In *Moralia* 2 Gregory claims that prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice are four virtues.

I respond: As was explained above when we were talking about the virtues in general (*ST* 1-2, q. 55, a. 3 and q. 56, a. 1), a virtue is something that makes the one having it good and renders his act good. But there are two ways in which 'good' is said, viz. (a) *materially*, for that which is good, and (b) *formally*, for the character of goodness (*secundum rationem boni*).

Now the good is, as such, the object of an appetitive virtue. And so if there are habits that effect the correct thinking on the part of reason without having a relation to rectitude of appetite, then they have less of the character of a virtue because they order one toward the good *materially*—i.e., to what is good, but not insofar as it is good. By contrast, habits that have a relation to rectitude of appetite have more of the character of a virtue because they look to the good not only *materially*, but also *formally*, i.e., to that which is good under the character of the good.

Now as was explained above (a. 1 and a. 3), what belongs to prudence is the application of right reason to an act, and this does not happen without an upright appetite. And so prudence not only has the character of virtue had by the other intellectual virtues, but it also has the character of virtue had by the moral virtues, among which it is likewise numbered.

Reply to objection 1: Augustine was here taking 'knowledge' (*scientia*) in a broad sense for any instance of right reason.

Reply to objection 2: The Philosopher claims that virtue "belongs [accidentally]" to art (*artis esse virtutem*) because art does not imply rectitude of appetite. And so in order for a man to use an art or

craft in an upright way, he must have virtue, which effects rectitude of appetite.

However, prudence does not have a place among those things that belong to an art, both because (a) an art or craft is ordered toward some particular end, and also because (b) an art or craft has determinate means through which it reaches its end.

Nonetheless, one is said to operate 'prudently' in what pertains to an art or craft through a certain sort of similitude. For in some of the arts, because of the lack of fixity in those things by which it arrives at its end, deliberation is necessary, e.g., in the medical art and in the navigational art, as *Ethics* 3 points out.

Reply to objection 3: This passage is to be understood not in such a way that prudence itself needs to be moderated, but rather in the sense that moderation is to be imposed on other things in accord with prudence.

Article 5

Is prudence a specific virtue?

It seems that prudence is not a specific virtue:

Objection 1: No specific virtue is posited in the general definition of a virtue. But prudence is posited in the general definition of a virtue, given that in *Ethics* 2 virtue is defined as "an elective habit that exists in the mean determined by reason for our own case (*quoad nos*), in the way that a wise man will determine it." But as *Ethics* 6 points out, reason is understood to be right when it accords with prudence. Therefore, prudence is not a specific virtue.

Objection 2: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "Moral virtue makes one act in the right way with respect to the end, whereas prudence does so with respect to the means to the end." But in every virtue there are some things to be done for the sake of the end. Therefore, prudence exists in every virtue whatsoever. Therefore, it is not a specific virtue.

Objection 3: A specific virtue has a specific object. But prudence does not have a specific object. For as *Ethics* 6 says, prudence is right reason with respect to things that can be done, but the things that can be done are all the acts of the virtues. Therefore, prudence is not a specific virtue.

But contrary to this: Prudence is distinguished from the other virtues and counted among them. For Wisdom 8:7 says, "She teaches temperance (*sobrietas*) and prudence, justice and virtue."

I respond: Since, as is clear from what was said above (*ST* 1-2, q. 18, a. 2 and q. 54, a. 2), acts and habits take their species from their objects, a habit to which there corresponds a specific object, distinct from other objects, is a specific habit, and if it is a good habit, then it is a specific virtue.

Now as is clear from what was said above (*ST* 1-2, q. 54, a. 2), an object is called specific not as a result of considering it materially (*non secundum materialem considerationem ipsius*), but rather according to its *formal* character. For one and the same entity falls under the acts of diverse habits—and even under the acts of diverse powers—in accord with diverse characters (*secundum rationes diversas*). Moreover, a greater diversity of object is required for a diversity of power than for a diversity of habit, since, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 54, a. 1), several habits may be found in a single power. Therefore, the sort of diversity in an object's character that diversifies a power is much greater than the sort of diversity in an object's character that diversifies a habit.

So, then, one should reply that since, as has been explained (a. 1), prudence exists in reason, it is diversified from the other intellectual virtues by a material diversity in their objects. For wisdom, scientific knowledge, and understanding have to do with what is necessary, whereas art and prudence have to do with what is contingent. Again, art has to do with things that are *makeable* and that are, more specifically, constituted in an exterior matter, e.g., a house, a knife, and other such things, whereas

prudence has to do with things that are *doable* and that, more specifically, as was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 4), exist within the one who operates. On the other hand, prudence is distinguished from the moral virtues by the distinctive formal character of the powers, viz., the *intellective* power, in which prudence exits, and the *appetitive* power, in which moral virtue exists.

Hence, it is clear that prudence is a specific virtue distinct from all the other virtues.

Reply to objection 1: This definition is given not for virtue in general, but for moral virtue; and within the definition of moral virtue it is appropriate to posit an intellectual virtue, viz., prudence, which shares its subject matter with moral virtue. For just as the subject of moral virtue is something that participates in reason, so moral virtue has the character of virtue insofar as it participates in an intellectual virtue.

Reply to objection 2: This objection establishes that prudence assists all the virtues and operates within them. But this is not sufficient to show that prudence is not a specific virtue. For nothing prevents there being in a given genus a species that in some way operates within all the species of that same genus—in the way that the sun in some way has an influence on all corporeal entities.

Reply to objection 3: Things that are doable are the subject matter of prudence insofar as they are an object of reason, i.e., insofar as they fall under the character *true*, whereas they are the subject matter of the moral virtues insofar as they are the object of an appetitive power, i.e., insofar as they fall under the character *good*.

Article 6

Does prudence set the end for the moral virtues?

It seems that prudence sets the end for the moral virtues:

Objection 1: Since prudence exists in reason, whereas a moral virtue exists in an appetitive power, it seems that prudence is related to moral virtue in the way that reason is related to an appetitive power. But reason sets the end for an appetitive power. Therefore, reason sets the end for the moral virtues.

Objection 2: A man exceeds non-rational entities by his reason, but he shares other things in common with them. So, then, the other parts of a man are related to reason in the way that non-rational creatures are related to man. But as *Politics* 1 explains, man is the end of non-rational creatures. Therefore, the other parts of a man are ordered toward reason as their end. However, as has been explained (a. 2), prudence is right reason with respect to what is doable. Therefore, all doable things are ordered toward prudence as their end. Therefore, prudence sets the end for all the moral virtues.

Objection 3: It is proper to a virtue, art, or power to which an end belongs that it should command the other virtues or arts that pertain to the means to that end. But prudence orders (*disponit*) the other moral virtues and commands (*praecipit*) them. Therefore, it sets their end.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "Moral virtue effects an upright intending of the end, whereas prudence makes the means to this end upright." Therefore, it belongs to prudence not to set the end for the moral virtues, but only to determine the means to the end (*solum disponere de his quae sunt ad finem*).

I respond: The end of the moral virtues is the human good. But as is clear from Dionysius in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 4, the good of the human soul is to be in accord with reason. Hence, the ends of the moral virtues preexist in reason.

Now just as, in the case of speculative reason, there are (a) certain things which are naturally known and with respect to which there is *understanding* (*intellectus*) and (b) certain things which are known through them, viz., conclusions, and with respect to which there is scientific knowledge (*scientia*), so, too, in the case of practical reason, there preexist (a) certain things which are naturally known

principles and among which are the ends of the moral virtues—for, as was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 4), among doable things the end behaves in the way that a principle does among speculative things—and (b) certain things that exist in practical reason as conclusions—and among them are the means to the end—which we arrive at from the ends themselves. And prudence has to do with the latter, applying universal principles to particular conclusions about things to be done.

And so it belongs to prudence not to set the end for the moral virtues but only to determine the means to the end.

Reply to objection 1: As was established in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 79, a. 12), what sets the end for the moral virtues is *natural reason*, which is called synderesis—and not *prudence*, for the reason just explained.

Reply to objection 2: This likewise makes clear the reply to the second objection.

Reply to objection 3: The end belongs to the moral virtues not in the sense that they themselves set the end, but in the sense that they tend toward an end set by natural reason. They are assisted in this by prudence, which prepares the way for them by determining the means to the end. Hence, it follows that prudence is more noble than the moral virtues and moves them. But synderesis moves prudence in the same way that the understanding of principles (*intellectus principiorum*) moves scientific knowledge (*scientia*).

Article 7

Does it belong to prudence to find the mean in the moral virtues?

It seems that it does not belong to prudence to find the mean in the moral virtues:

Objection 1: It is the end of the moral virtues to attain the mean. But as has been shown (a. 6), prudence does not set the end for the moral virtues. Therefore, it does not find the mean in them.

Objection 2: What exists in its own right (*est per se*) does not seem to have a cause; instead, its very being (*esse*) is a cause of itself, since each thing is said to exist through its cause. But as is clear from what has been said (a. 5), to exist in the mean belongs to a moral virtue in its own right as something posited in its definition. Therefore, it is not the case that prudence causes the mean in the moral virtues.

Objection 3: Prudence operates in the manner of *reason*. But a moral virtue tends toward the mean in the manner of a *nature*; for as Tully says in *Rhetoric* 2, "A virtue is a habit consonant with reason in the manner of a nature." Therefore, prudence does not set the mean for the moral virtues.

But contrary to this: In the definition of moral virtue posited above it says that a moral virtue "exists in the mean determined by reason ... in the way that a wise man will determine it."

I respond: The very state of being conformed to right reason is the end proper to every moral virtue. For instance, temperance intends this, lest a man deviate from reason because of excessive desires; and, similarly, fortitude intends it, lest a man deviate from right reason because of fear or audacity. And this is the end set for a man by natural reason, since natural reason dictates to each individual that he operate in accord with reason.

But how, and through what means, a man in his acting attains to the mean of reason belongs to the determination of prudence (*pertinet ad dispositionem prudentiae*). For even though attaining the mean is the end of a moral virtue, it is nonetheless the case that the mean is found through the correct determination of the means to that end.

Reply to objection 1: This makes clear the reply to the first objection.

Reply to objection 2: Just as a natural agent brings it about that the form exists in the matter without bringing it about that what exists *per se* in the matter agrees with that form, so, too, prudence sets

the mean for passions and actions without bringing it about that seeking the mean belongs to the virtue.

Reply to objection 3: It is in the manner of a nature that moral virtue tends toward arriving at the mean. But since the mean is not the same in everyone (*non eodem modo invenitur in omnibus*), the inclination of the nature, which always operates in the same way, is not sufficient for this; rather, the character of prudence is required.

Article 8

Is commanding the principal act of prudence?

It seems that commanding (*praecipere*) is not the principal act of prudence:

Objection 1: Commanding has to do with good things that have to be done. But in *De Trinitate* 14 Augustine claims that the act of prudence "guards against snares" (*praecavere insidias*). Therefore, commanding is not the principal act of prudence.

Objection 2: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "It seems to belong to the prudent man to deliberate well." But as is clear from what was said above (*ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 6), deliberating and commanding seem to be different acts. Therefore, commanding is not the principal act of prudence.

Objection 3: Commanding or giving an order (*praecipere vel imperare)* seems to belong to the will, which moves the other powers of the soul and the object of which is the end. But prudence exists in reason and not in the will. Therefore, commanding is not an act that belongs to prudence.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "Prudence gives precepts" (*prudentia praeceptiva est*).

I respond: As has been explained (a. 2), prudence is right reason with respect to what is doable. Hence, the main act of prudence has to be the main act of reason with respect to what is doable.

Now there are three relevant acts of reason. The first is to *deliberate* or *take counsel* (*consiliari*), and this pertains to discovery, since, as was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 14, a. 1), to deliberate is to seek out. The second act is to *pass judgment about what has been discovered* (*iudicare de inventis*), and this is where speculative reason stops (*hic sistit speculativa ratio*). However, practical reason, which is ordered toward action, proceeds further, and its third act is to *command*; this act consists in the application of what has been deliberated and judged about to acting. And since this act is closer to the end of practical reason, it follows that it is the principal act of practical reason and, consequently, of prudence.

An indication of this is that the perfection of an art consists in judging and not in commanding. This is why an artist is reputed to be a better artist, in the sense of having correct judgment, if he goes wrong intentionally in his art than if he goes wrong unintentionally, where the latter seems to stem from a defect in his judgment. By contrast, it is just the opposite with prudence, as *Ethics* 6 points out. For someone who sins intentionally—failing, as it were, in the main act of prudence, which is to command—is more imprudent than someone who goes wrong unintentionally.

Reply to objection 1: The act of commanding extends both to goods that ought to be pursued and to evils that ought to be avoided. Still, Augustine attributes guarding against snares to prudence not because this is its principal act, but rather because this act of prudence does not remain in heaven.

Reply to objection 2: Goodness of deliberation is required in order that what is correctly discovered might be applied to action. And this is why commanding belongs to prudence, which involves deliberating well.

Reply to objection 3: To effect movement belongs to the will absolutely speaking. But commanding implies movement along with a certain ordering. And so, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 17, a. 1), it is an act of reason.

Article 9

Does solicitude belong to prudence?

It seems that care or solicitude (*sollicitudo*) does not belong to prudence:

Objection 1: Solicitude implies a certain sort of unrest; for in *Etymologia* Isidore says, "The one who is called solicitous is restless." But movement belongs especially to an appetitive power. Therefore, so does solicitude. But as was established above (a. 1), prudence exists in reason and not in an appetitive power. Therefore, solicitude does not belong to prudence.

Objection 2: Certitude in the truth seems to be opposed to solicitude; hence, in 1 Kings 9:20 Samuel said to Saul, "Do not be solicitous about the asses that you lost three days ago, since they have been found." But certitude in the truth belongs to prudence, since it is an intellectual virtue. Therefore, solicitude is opposed to prudence instead of belonging to it.

Objection 3: In *Ethics* 4 the Philosopher says that the magnanimous individual is "slow and leisurely" (*pigrum et otiosum*). But solicitude is opposed to slowness. Therefore, since prudence is not opposed to magnanimity—given that, as the *Categories* explain, one good is not the contrary of another—it seems that solicitude does not belong to prudence.

But contrary to this: 1 Peter 4:7 says, "Be prudent ... and be watchful in your prayers." But watchfulness is the same as solicitude. Therefore, solicitude belongs to prudence.

I respond: As Isidore says in *Etymologia*, "An individual is called solicitous (*sollicitus*) in the sense that he is clever and alert (*solers citus*)," i.e., insofar as, with a certain alertness, he is quick to pursue what needs to be done. But this belongs to prudence, the principal act of which is to give commands about what needs to be done that are based on what has been deliberated about and judged beforehand. Hence, in *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "One must deliberate slowly, but one must act quickly on what has been deliberated." And this is why care or solicitude belongs properly to prudence. It is because of this that in *De Moribus Ecclesiae* Augustine says, "The vigilance and watchfulness of prudence are diligent, lest, little by little, we be misled unawares by bad advice."

Reply to objection 1: Movement belongs to an appetitive power as the principle that effects the movement, but in accord with the direction and command of reason, in which the character of solicitude resides.

Reply to objection 2: According to the Philosopher in *Ethics* 1, "Certitude is not to be sought in similar ways in all things, but is to be sought in each subject matter according to its proper mode." But since the subject matter of prudence consists of singular contingent things with respect to which there are human operations, the certitude that belongs to prudence cannot be such that all solicitude is removed.

Reply to objection 3: The magnanimous individual is said to be "slow and leisurely" not because he is not solicitous about anything, but rather because he is not unnecessarily solicitous about many things; instead, he puts his trust in what he should put his trust in and is not unnecessarily solicitous about those things. For unnecessary fear and timidity make for unnecessary worry, given that, as was explained above when we were talking about fear (*ST* 1-2, q. 44, a. 2), fear makes individuals deliberate.

Article 10

Does prudence extend to the rule of a multitude?

It seems that prudence extends only to the rule of oneself and not to the rule of a multitude:

Objection 1: In *Ethics* 5 the Philosopher says that the virtue related to the common good is justice. But prudence differs from justice. Therefore, prudence is not directed toward the common good.

Objection 2: A prudent individual seems to be one who seeks the good, and acts, for himself. But it is often the case that those who seek common goods neglect their own goods. Therefore, they are not prudent.

Objection 3: Prudence is divided off at the same level from temperance and fortitude (*dividitur contra temperantiam et fortitudinem*). But temperance and fortitude seem to be predicated only in relation to one's own proper good. Therefore, the same holds for prudence as well.

But contrary to this: In Matthew 24:45 our Lord says, "Who, do you think, is a faithful and prudent servant whom the lord has set over his family?"

I respond: As the Philosopher explains in *Ethics* 6, some have claimed that prudence extends only to one's own proper good and not to the common good—and this because they were thinking that a man need not seek any good except his own proper good.

But this way of thinking is incompatible with *charity*, which, as 1 Corinthians 13:5 says, "does not seek what is her own." Hence, in 1 Corinthians 10:33 the Apostle likewise says of himself, "... not seeking what is advantageous to me, but rather what is advantageous to the many, that they might be saved."

Again, this way of thinking is incompatible with *right reason*, which judges that the common good is better than the good of an individual.

Therefore, since it belongs to prudence to deliberate, judge, and command in an upright manner concerning those things that lead to the appropriate end, it is clear that prudence has to do not only with the private good of an individual man (*bonum privatum unius hominis*), but also with the common good of the multitude (*bonum commune multitudinis*).

Reply to objection 1: The Philosopher is speaking here about moral virtue. Now just as all the moral virtues as related to the common good are called 'legal justice', so, too, prudence as related to the common good is called 'political prudence', with the result that political prudence is related to legal justice in the same way that prudence simply speaking is related to the moral virtues.

Reply to objection 2: One who seeks the common good of the multitude also seeks his own good as a consequence—and this for two reasons:

First, because his own good cannot exist without the common good either of the family or of the city or kingdom. This is why Valerius Maximus says of the ancient Romans, "They preferred to be paupers in a rich empire than rich men in a poor empire."

Second, because, given that a man is a part of a household and of a city, he must think about what his own good is on the basis of his being prudent with respect to the good of the multitude. For the good disposition of a part has to do with its relation to the whole, since, as Augustine says in *Confessiones* 3, "Any part that is not congruent with its whole is unseemly."

Reply to objection 3: Even temperance and fortitude can be referred back to the common good, and this is why, as *Ethics* 5 points out, precepts of law are given for their acts. Yet this applies even more to prudence and justice, since they belong to the rational part of the soul, which what is common pertains to in the same way that what is singular pertains to the sentient part of the soul.

Article 11

Is the prudence that has to do with one's proper good the same in species as the prudence that extends to the common good?

It seems that the prudence that has to do with one's proper good is the same in species as the prudence that extends to the common good:

Objection 1: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "Prudence and political prudence are the same

habit, but their *esse* is not the same."

Objection 2: In *Politics* 3 the Philosopher says, "The virtue of the good man is the same as the virtue of the good ruler." But political prudence exists especially in the ruler, in whom it is architectural, so to speak. Therefore, since prudence is the virtue of the good man, it seems that prudence and political prudence are the same habit.

Objection 3: Things that are such that one is ordered toward the other do not make for a diversity in the species or substance of habits (*non diversificant speciem aut substantiam habitus*). But one's own good, which pertains to prudence simply speaking, is ordered toward the common good, which pertains to political prudence. Therefore, prudence and political prudence differ in neither the species nor the substance of the habit.

But contrary to this: *Political science*, which is ordered toward the common good of a city, and *economic science*, which has to do with what belongs to the common good of a household or family, and *monastic science*, which has to with the good of an individual person, are diverse sciences. Therefore, by parity of reasoning, there are likewise diverse species of *prudence* corresponding to this diversity of subject matters.

I respond: As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 54, a. 2), the species of habits are diversified by the diversity of their objects, which has to do with their formal character. And as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 1, intro.), the formal character of everything that is ordered toward an end has to do with the end. And so species of habits have to be diversified by their relation to diverse ends.

Now (a) the proper good of a single individual (*bonum proprium unius*), (b) the good of the family (*bonum familiae*), and (c) the good of the city and of the kingdom (*bonum civitatis et regni*) are diverse ends. Hence, it must be the case that prudence differs in species according to the differences among these ends—so that, namely, there is (a) *prudence simply speaking*, (b) *economic prudence*, which is ordered toward the common good of a household or family, and (c) *political prudence*, which is ordered toward the common good of a city or kingdom.

Reply to objection 1: The Philosopher meant to claim not that political prudence is the same habit in substance as just any sort of prudence, but rather that it is the same as the prudence that is ordered toward the common good. This sort of prudence is said to be in accord with the general notion of prudence, viz., insofar as it is a certain sort of right reason with respect to what is doable, but it is called 'political prudence' insofar as it is ordered toward the common good.

Reply to objection 2: As the Philosopher says in the same place, "It belongs to the good man to be able to rule well and to be able to be ruled well." And this is why even the virtue of the ruler is included in the virtue of the good man. But the virtue of the ruler and the virtue of the subject differ in species—in the same way, as is explained in this same place, that the virtue of a male and the virtue of a female differ in species.

Reply to objection 3: Even diverse ends which are such that one is ordered toward the other make for diverse species of habit, in the way that military equestrianship and civilian equestrianship differ in species, even though the end of the one is ordered toward the end of the other. Similarly, even though the good of an individual is ordered toward the good of the multitude, this does not prevent it from being the case that such diversity makes the habits differ in species. But from this it follows that the habit that is ordered toward the last end is more central and rules the other habits.

Article 12

Does prudence exist in the subjects or only in the rulers?

It seems that prudence exists only in the rulers and not in their subjects:

Objection 1: In *Politics* 3 the Philosopher says, "Prudence alone is the proper virtue of a ruler, whereas the other virtues are common to the subjects and the ruler. Moreover, it is not prudence that is the virtue of the subject, but rather true opinion."

Objection 2: *Politics* 1 says, "A servant does not have anything at all to deliberate about." But as *Ethics* 2 says, "Prudence makes individuals deliberate well." Therefore, prudence does not belong to servants or to subjects.

Objection 3: As was explained above (a. 8), prudence gives precepts. But commanding belongs only to rulers and not to servants or to subjects. Therefore, prudence exists only in rulers and not in subjects.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says that there are two species of political prudence: (a) one of which "makes laws" (*est legum positiva*), and this belongs to the rulers; and (b) the other of which retains the general name 'political' and has to do with singular matters. But to deal with singular matters of this sort belongs also to the subjects. Therefore, prudence belongs not only to the rulers but also to their subjects.

I respond: Prudence exists in reason, and it belongs to reason to rule and to govern well. And so to the extent that each individual participates in ruling and governing, it is appropriate for him to have reason and prudence.

Now it is clear that insofar as a subject is a subject, or a servant a servant, it does not belong to him to rule and to govern; instead, it belongs to him to be ruled and to be governed. And so prudence is not a virtue of a servant insofar as he is a servant, or of a subject insofar as he is a subject. However, since each man, insofar as he is rational, has some participation in ruling according to the judgment of his reason, it is appropriate for him to have prudence. Hence, as *Ethics* 6 explains, it is clear that prudence exists in the ruler in the manner of the architectural art, whereas in the subjects prudence exists in the manner of an art or craft that belongs to one who works with his hands.

Reply to objection 1: In this passage the Philosopher should be interpreted as speaking *per se*, since the virtue of prudence is not a virtue of the subject as a subject.

Reply to objection 2: A servant is not deliberative insofar as he is a servant, for in that role he is an instrument of his master. And yet he is deliberative insofar as he is a rational animal.

Reply to objection 3: Through prudence a man not only commands others but commands himself as well, viz., insofar as reason is said to command the lower powers.

Article 13

Can prudence exist in sinners?

It seems that prudence can exist in sinners:

Objection 1: In Luke 16:8 our Lord says, "The children of this world are more prudent than the children of light in their own generation." But the children of this world are sinners. Therefore, prudence can exist in sinners.

Objection 2: Faith is a more noble virtue than prudence. But faith can exist in sinners. Therefore, prudence can, too.

Objection 3: As *Ethics* 6 says, "We say that the work of the prudent man is especially to deliberate well." But many sinners are good at deliberating (*sunt boni consilii*). Therefore, many sinners have prudence.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "It is impossible to be prudent if one is not good." Therefore, no sinner is prudent.

I respond: 'Prudence' is said in three ways:

For there is a certain sort of prudence which is *false prudence* and which is called 'prudence' by appeal to a similitude. For given that a prudent individual is good at determining what should be done in pursuit of some good end, someone who, in pursuit of a bad end, arranges things in a way congruent with that end has false prudence, insofar as what he takes as his end is not truly good but good by a similitude, in the way that someone is called a 'good thief'. For instance, a thief who discovers methods that are appropriate for stealing can be called 'prudent' by appeal to a similitude. And this is the sort of prudence about which the Apostle says in Romans 8:6, "The prudence of the flesh is death"—viz., because it sets its ultimate end in the pleasures of the flesh.

The second sort of prudence is *genuine prudence* (*prudentia vera*), since it discovers methods accommodated to a genuinely good end, but it is *imperfect*—and this in one of two ways:

(a) in one way, because the good that it accepts as an end is not the common end of human life, but instead the good of some specific sort of activity; for instance, when someone discovers methods appropriate for doing business or for sailing, he is called a prudent businessman or a prudent sailor.

(b) in a second way, because the prudence falls short in the principal act of prudence—as, for instance, when someone deliberates well and judges correctly even concerning things that pertain to his whole life, but does not command efficaciously with respect to them.

The third sort of prudence is *prudence that is both genuine and perfect*, and it deliberates, judges, and commands correctly with respect to the good end of the whole of life. And this sort of prudence is the only one that is called *prudence simply speaking*, and it cannot exist in sinners. On the other hand, the first sort of prudence exists only in sinners, whereas imperfect prudence is common to both good and bad individuals, especially prudence which is imperfect because it has a particular, [and not common], end. For the prudence which is imperfect because of a defect in its principal act likewise does not exist except in bad men.

Reply to objection 1: This passage from our Lord is interpreted as being about the first sort of prudence. Hence, He does not say just that they are prudent, but that they are prudent "in their own generation."

Reply to objection 2: In its own essence (*in sui ratione*) faith does not imply any conformity to an appetite for upright actions; instead, the essence of faith consists in cognition alone. By contrast, prudence implies an ordering toward upright appetite. There are two reasons for this:

First, the principles of prudence are the ends of doable things, and one has a correct estimation of these ends through the habits of the moral virtues, which rectify one's appetite (*quae faciunt appetitum rectum*). Hence, as was shown above (*ST* 1-2, q. 58, a. 5), prudence cannot exist without the moral virtues.

Second, prudence commands upright acts, and this does not occur unless there is an upright appetite. Hence, even though faith is more noble than prudence because of its object, prudence by its own character is nonetheless more opposed to sin, which stems from a perverted appetite (*ex perversitate appetitus*).

Reply to objection 3: Sinners can, to be sure, deliberate well with respect to a bad end or with respect to some particular good, but they do not deliberate well or perfectly with respect to the good end of a whole life. For deliberation does not guarantee the effect (*consilium ad effectum non perducunt*). Hence, prudence, which is related only to the good, does not exist in sinners; instead, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 6, what exists in such individuals is either *deinotika*, i.e. natural diligence, which is related to both the good and the bad, or *cunning* (*astutia*), which is related only to what is bad and which we called 'false prudence' or 'the prudence of the flesh' above.

Article 14

Does prudence exist in all who have grace?

It seems that prudence does not exist in all who have grace:

Objection 1: A certain sort of diligence (*industria*) is required for prudence, and by means of this diligence individuals know how to provide well for what should be done. But many who have grace lack this sort of diligence. Therefore, not everyone who has grace has prudence.

Objection 2: As has been explained (aa. 8 and 13), a prudent individual deliberates well. But many who have grace do not deliberate well, but instead have to be guided by someone else's deliberation (*necesse habent regi consilio alieno*). Therefore, not everyone who has grace has prudence.

Objection 3: In *Topics* 3 the Philosopher says, "It is not clear that young people are prudent." Therefore, prudence is not found in everyone who has grace.

But contrary to this: No one has grace unless he is virtuous. But no one can be virtuous unless he has prudence. For in *Moralia* 2 Gregory says, "If the other virtues do not do prudently what they desire, then they cannot in any way be virtues." Therefore, everyone who has grace has prudence

I respond: As was shown above (*ST* 1-2, q. 65), the virtues must be connected, so that anyone who has one virtue has them all. But if someone has grace, then he has charity. Hence, he must have all the other virtues. And so, since, as has been shown (a. 4), prudence is a virtue, he must have prudence.

Reply to objection 1: There are two kinds of diligence (*industria*):

One of them suffices for what is necessary for salvation. And this sort of diligence is given to all who have grace and whom "His anointing teaches all things," as 1 John 2:27 puts it.

The other kind of diligence is more full, and through it one is able to provide for himself and others not only in those matters that are necessary for salvation, but also in everything that pertains to human life. And this sort of diligence is not found in everyone who has grace.

Reply to objection 2: If those who need to be guided by someone else's deliberation have grace, then they at least know by their own counsel that they require the counsel of others and that they should distinguish good advice from bad advice (*et discernant consilia bona a malis*).

Reply to objection 3: Acquired prudence is caused by the exercise of the acts, and so, as *Ethics* 2 explains, "it needs experience and time in order to be generated." Hence, it cannot be found in young people, either as a habit or in its act.

By contrast, the prudence given with grace (*prudentia gratuita*) is caused by God's infusing it, and so in baptized children who do not yet have the use of reason prudence exists as a habit but not in its act; it is like this also in those who are mindless (*in amentibus*).

Now in those who already have the use of reason, prudence exists also in its act with respect to what is necessary for salvation, but through its exercise it merits an increase up to the point of its being perfected, just as in the case of the other virtues. Hence, in Hebrews 5:14 the Apostle says, "Solid food is for the perfect, who by rote have their senses exercised for distinguishing between what is good and what is bad."

Article 15

Does prudence exist in us by nature?

It seems that prudence exists in us by nature:

Objection 1: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says that what belongs to prudence "seems to be natural," e.g.., *synesis*, *gnome*, and things of this sort (cf. q. 51, aa. 3 and 4, and *ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 6), whereas this is

not the case with what belongs to speculative reason. But the character of the origin of things that belong to a single genus is the same. Therefore, prudence likewise exists in us by nature.

Objection 2: What varies by age stems from nature (*aetatum variatio est secundum naturam*). But prudence follows upon age—this according to Job 12:12 ("In the elderly is wisdom, and in length of days prudence"). Therefore, prudence is natural.

Objection 3: Prudence belongs to human nature more than to the nature of non-rational animals. But as is clear from the Philosopher in *De Historia Animalium* 8, non-rational animals have certain kinds of natural prudence. Therefore, prudence is natural.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 2 the Philosopher says, "For the most part, intellectual virtue has its generation and increase from teaching, and so it needs experience and time." But as was established above (a. 1 and *ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 5), prudence is an intellectual virtue. Therefore, prudence exists in us by teaching and experience and not by nature.

I respond: As is clear from what has gone before (a. 3), prudence includes the cognition both of universals and of the singular acts to which prudence applies the universal principles.

Therefore, as regards the *universal cognition*, the character of prudence is the same as that of speculative scientific knowledge. For as is clear from what was said above (a. 6), in both cases the first universal principles are naturally known—though the common principles of prudence are more connatural to a man (*magis connaturalia homini*). For as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 10, "A life that is led in accord with speculative reason (*secundum speculationem*) is better than a life that is human (*secundum hominem*)." However, other universal principles that are posterior, regardless of whether they belong to speculative reason or to practical reason, are had not by nature, but are instead had either through discovery by way of experience or through teaching.

Moreover, as regards the *particular cognition* of the things the actions have to do with, we must again draw a distinction. For an action has to do with something either as an end or as a means to an end. Now the ends of an upright human life are determinate, and so there can be a natural inclination with respect to those ends—in the way that, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 51, a. 1 and q. 63, a. 1), some individuals have by natural disposition certain virtues by which they are inclined to the correct ends and, as a result, they also have by nature correct judgment about those ends. By contrast, the means to the end in human affairs are not determinate, but are instead diversified by the diversity of persons and human affairs. Hence, since an inclination of nature is always directed toward something determinate, this sort of cognition cannot exist in a man naturally, even though by natural disposition one individual is more able to discern such things than another is—as likewise happens with the conclusions of the speculative sciences.

Therefore, since, as was established above (a. 6 and *ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 5), prudence has to do not with ends, but with the means to an end, it follows that prudence is not natural.

Reply to objection 1: The Philosopher is speaking here about the things that belong to prudence insofar as they are ordered toward the ends; hence, he had previously said that the principles belong to that which is "for the sake of which," i.e., the end. And because of this he does not mention *euboulia*, which has to do with deliberating about the means to the end (cf. q. 51, a. 1, and *ST* 1-2, q. 57, a. 6).

Reply to objection 2: Prudence exists more in older people not only because of a natural disposition, once the movements of the sentient passions have been quieted, but also because of their experience over a long time.

Reply to objection 3: In non-rational animals there are determinate ways of reaching an end; hence, we see that all animals of the same species operate in a similar way. But this cannot be the case with man because of his reason, which, since it has cognition of universals, extends to infinitely many singulars.

Article 16

Can prudence be lost through forgetfulness?

It seems that prudence can be lost through forgetfulness (*per oblivionem*):

Objection 1: Since scientific knowledge is of what is necessary, it is more certain than prudence, which has to do with contingent actions. But scientific knowledge is lost through forgetfulness. Therefore, *a fortiori*, so is prudence.

Objection 2: In *Ethics* 2 the Philosopher says, "Virtue is generated and corrupted by the same things, but occurring in contrary ways." But what is necessary for the generation of prudence is experience, which, as the beginning of the *Metaphysics* points out, comes to be from many memories. Therefore, since forgetfulness is opposed to remembering, it seems that prudence can be lost through forgetfulness.

Objection 3: Prudence does not exist without the cognition of universals. But the cognition of universals can be lost through forgetfulness. Therefore, so can prudence.

But contrary to this: In *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "Forgetfulness belongs to art and not to prudence."

I respond: Forgetfulness has to do only with cognition. And so through forgetfulness one can lose an art or craft totally—and the same thing holds for scientific knowledge, which exists in reason. By contrast, prudence does not exist in cognition alone, but in the appetite as well. For as has been explained (a. 8), the principal act of prudence is to command, i.e., to apply the cognition that one has to desiring and acting.

And so prudence is not directly destroyed by forgetfulness, but is instead corrupted by the passions. For in *Ethics* 6 the Philosopher says, "What is pleasurable and what is sorrowful pervert prudence's thinking." Hence, Daniel 13:56 says, "Pleasing appearances have deceived you, and excessive desire has subverted your heart." And Exodus 23:8 says, "Do not accept bribes, which blind even the prudent."

Still, forgetfulness can impede prudence insofar as prudence proceeds to its command on the basis of a cognition that can be wiped out by forgetfulness.

Reply to objection 1: Scientific knowledge exists only in reason. Hence, as was explained above, there is different line of reasoning with respect to it.

Reply to objection 2: The experience that belongs to prudence is not acquired by memory alone, but is also acquired by the exercise of commanding in an upright way.

Reply to objection 3: As has been explained, prudence consists mainly not in the cognition of universals, but in their application to actions. And so forgetfulness concerning universal cognition does not corrupt what is most important in prudence, but, as has been explained, it does impede it.