

**Objection 1.** It would seem that there is no order in charity. For charity is a virtue. But no order is assigned to the other virtues. Neither, therefore, should any order be assigned to charity.

**Objection 2.** Further, just as the object of faith is the First Truth, so is the object of charity the Sovereign Good. Now no order is appointed for faith, but all things are believed equally. Neither, therefore, ought there to be any order in charity.

**Objection 3.** Further, charity is in the will: whereas ordering belongs, not to the will, but to the reason. Therefore no order should be ascribed to charity.

**On the contrary,** It is written (Cant 2:4): “He brought me into the cellar of wine, he set in order charity in me.”

**I answer that,** As the Philosopher says (Metaph. v, text. 16), the terms “before” and “after” are used in reference to some principle. Now order implies that certain things are, in some way, before or after. Hence wherever there is a principle, there must needs be also order of some kind. But it has been said above (q. 23, a. 1; q. 25, a. 12) that the love of charity tends to God as to the principle of happiness, on the fellowship of which the friendship of charity is based. Consequently there must needs be some order in things loved out of charity, which order is in reference to the first principle of that

love, which is God.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Charity tends towards the last end considered as last end: and this does not apply to any other virtue, as stated above (q. 23, a. 6). Now the end has the character of principle in matters of appetite and action, as was shown above (q. 23, a. 7, ad 2; Ia IIae, a. 1, ad 1). Wherefore charity, above all, implies relation to the First Principle, and consequently, in charity above all, we find an order in reference to the First Principle.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Faith pertains to the cognitive power, whose operation depends on the thing known being in the knower. On the other hand, charity is in an appetitive power, whose operation consists in the soul tending to things themselves. Now order is to be found in things themselves, and flows from them into our knowledge. Hence order is more appropriate to charity than to faith.

And yet there is a certain order in faith, in so far as it is chiefly about God, and secondarily about things referred to God.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Order belongs to reason as the faculty that orders, and to the appetitive power as to the faculty which is ordered. It is in this way that order is stated to be in charity.