

Objection 1. It would seem that an aureole is not due to martyrs. For an aureole is a reward given for works of supererogation, wherefore Bede commenting on Ex. 25:25, “Thou shalt also make another . . . crown,” says: “This may be rightly referred to the reward of those who by freely choosing a more perfect life go beyond the general commandments.” But to die for confessing the faith is sometimes an obligation, and not a work of supererogation as appears from the words of Rom. 10:10, “With the heart, we believe unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Therefore an aureole is not always due to martyrdom.

Objection 2. Further, according to Gregory (*Moral. ix**) “the freer the service, the more acceptable it is.” Now martyrdom has a minimum of freedom, since it is a punishment inflicted by another person with force. Therefore an aureole is not due to martyrdom, since it is accorded to surpassing merit.

Objection 3. Further, martyrdom consists not only in suffering death externally, but also in the interior act of the will: wherefore Bernard in a sermon on the Holy Innocents distinguishes three kinds of martyr—in will and not in death, as John; in both will and death, as Stephen; in death and not in will, as the Innocents. Accordingly if an aureole were due to martyrdom, it would be due to voluntary rather than external martyrdom, since merit proceeds from will. Yet such is not the case. Therefore an aureole is not due to martyrdom.

Objection 4. Further, bodily suffering is less than mental, which consists of internal sorrow and affliction of soul. But internal suffering is also a kind of martyrdom: wherefore Jerome says in a sermon on the Assumption[†]: “I should say rightly that the Mother of God was both virgin and martyr, although she ended her days in peace, wherefore: Thine own soul a sword hath pierced—namely for her Son’s death.” Since then no aureole corresponds to interior sorrow, neither should one correspond to outward suffering.

Objection 5. Further, penance itself is a kind of martyrdom, wherefore Gregory says (*Hom. iii in Evang.*): “Although persecution has ceased to offer the opportunity, yet the peace we enjoy is not without its martyrdom; since even if we no longer yield the life of the body to the sword, yet do we slay fleshly desires in the soul with the sword of the spirit.” But no aureole is due to penance which consists in external works. Neither therefore is an aureole due to every external martyrdom.

Objection 6. Further, an aureole is not due to an unlawful work. Now it is unlawful to lay hands on oneself, as Augustine declares (*De Civ. Dei i*), and yet the Church celebrates the martyrdom of some who laid hands upon themselves in order to escape the fury of tyrants, as in the case of certain women at Antioch (Eu-

sebius, *Eccles. Hist. viii, 24*). Therefore an aureole is not always due to martyrdom.

Objection 7. Further, it happens at times that a person is wounded for the faith, and survives for some time. Now it is clear that such a one is a martyr, and yet seemingly an aureole is not due to him, since his conflict did not last until death. Therefore an aureole is not always due to martyrdom.

Objection 8. Further, some suffer more from the loss of temporal goods than from the affliction even of their own body and this is shown by their bearing many afflictions for the sake of gain. Therefore if they be despoiled of their temporal goods for Christ’s sake they would seem to be martyrs, and yet an aureole is not apparently due to them. Therefore the same conclusion follows as before.

Objection 9. Further, a martyr would seem to be no other than one who dies for the faith, wherefore Isidore says (*Etym. vii*): “They are called martyrs in Greek, witnesses in Latin: because they suffered in order to bear witness to Christ, and strove unto death for the truth.” Now there are virtues more excellent than faith, such as justice, charity, and so forth, since these cannot be without grace, and yet no aureole is due to them. Therefore seemingly neither is an aureole due to martyrdom.

Objection 10. Further, even as the truth of faith is from God, so is all other truth, as Ambrose[‡] declares, since “every truth by whomsoever uttered is from the Holy Ghost.” Therefore if an aureole is due to one who suffers death for the truth of faith, in like manner it is also due to those who suffer death for any other virtue: and yet apparently this is not the case.

Objection 11. Further, the common good is greater than the good of the individual. Now if a man die in a just war in order to save his country, an aureole is not due to him. Therefore even though he be put to death in order to keep the faith that is in himself, no aureole is due to him: and consequently the same conclusion follows as above.

Objection 12. Further, all merit proceeds from the free will. Yet the Church celebrates the martyrdom of some who had not the use of the free will. Therefore they did not merit an aureole: and consequently an aureole is not due to all martyrs.

On the contrary, Augustine says (*De Sancta Virg. xlv*): “No one, methinks, would dare prefer virginity to martyrdom.” Now an aureole is due to virginity, and consequently also to martyrdom.

Further, the crown is due to one who has striven. But in martyrdom the strife presents a special difficulty. Therefore a special aureole is due thereto.

I answer that, Just as in the spirit there is a conflict with the internal concupiscences, so is there in man a

* Cf. St. Augustine, *De Adult. Conjug. i, 14* † *Ep. ad Paul. et Eustoch.* ‡ Spurious work on 1 Cor. 12:3: “No man can say,” etc.

conflict with the passion that is inflicted from without. Wherefore, just as a special crown, which we call an aureole, is due to the most perfect victory whereby we triumph over the concupiscences of the flesh, in a word to virginity, so too an aureole is due to the most perfect victory that is won against external assaults. Now the most perfect victory over passion caused from without is considered from two points of view. First from the greatness of the passion. Now among all passions inflicted from without, death holds the first place, just as sexual concupiscences are chief among internal passions. Consequently, when a man conquers death and things directed to death, his is a most perfect victory. Secondly, the perfection of victory is considered from the point of view of the motive of conflict, when, to wit, a man strives for the most honorable cause; which is Christ Himself. Both these things are to be found in martyrdom, which is death suffered for Christ's sake: for "it is not the pain but the cause that makes the martyr," as Augustine says (*Contra Crescon.* iii). Consequently an aureole is due to martyrdom as well as to virginity.

Reply to Objection 1. To suffer death for Christ's sake, is absolutely speaking, a work of supererogation; since every one is not bound to confess his faith in the face of a persecutor: yet in certain cases it is necessary for salvation, when, to wit, a person is seized by a persecutor and interrogated as to his faith which he is then bound to confess. Nor does it follow that he does not merit an aureole. For an aureole is due to a work of supererogation, not as such, but as having a certain perfection. Wherefore so long as this perfection remains, even though the supererogation cease, one merits the aureole.

Reply to Objection 2. A reward is due to martyrdom, not in respect of the exterior infliction, but because it is suffered voluntarily: since we merit only through that which is in us. And the more that which one suffers voluntarily is difficult and naturally repugnant to the will the more is the will that suffers it for Christ's sake shown to be firmly established in Christ, and consequently a higher reward is due to him.

Reply to Objection 3. There are certain acts which, in their very selves, contain intense pleasure or difficulty: and in such the act always adds to the character of merit or demerit, for as much as in the performance of the act the will, on account of the aforesaid intensity, must needs undergo an alteration from the state in which it was before. Consequently, other things being equal, one who performs an act of lust sins more than one who merely consents in the act, because in the very act the will is increased. In like manner since in the act of suffering martyrdom there is a very great difficulty, the will to suffer martyrdom does not reach the degree of merit due to actual martyrdom by reason of its difficulty: although, indeed it may possibly attain to a higher reward, if we consider the root of merit since

the will of one man to suffer martyrdom may possibly proceed from a greater charity than another man's act of martyrdom. Hence one who is willing to be a martyr may by his will merit an essential reward equal to or greater than that which is due to an actual martyr. But the aureole is due to the difficulty inherent to the conflict itself of martyrdom: wherefore it is not due to those who are martyrs only in will.

Reply to Objection 4. Just as pleasures of touch, which are the matter of temperance, hold the chief place among all pleasures both internal and external, so pains of touch surpass all other pains. Consequently an aureole is due to the difficulty of suffering pains of touch, for instance, from blows and so forth, rather than to the difficulty of bearing internal sufferings, by reason of which, however, one is not properly called a martyr, except by a kind of comparison. It is in this sense that Jerome speaks.

Reply to Objection 5. The sufferings of penance are not a martyrdom properly speaking, because they do not consist in things directed to the causing of death, since they are directed merely to the taming of the flesh: and if any one go beyond this measure, such afflictions will be deserving of blame. However such afflictions are spoken of as a martyrdom by a kind of comparison. and they surpass the sufferings of martyrdom in duration but not in intensity.

Reply to Objection 6. According to Augustine (*De Civ. Dei* i) it is lawful to no one to lay hands on himself for any reason whatever; unless perchance it be done by Divine instinct as an example of fortitude that others may despise death. Those to whom the objection refers are believed to have brought death on themselves by Divine instinct, and for this reason the Church celebrates their martyrdom*.

Reply to Objection 7. If any one receive a mortal wound for the faith and survive, without doubt he merits the aureole: as instanced in blessed Cecilia who survived for three days, and many martyrs who died in prison. But, even if the wound he receives be not mortal, yet be the occasion of his dying, he is believed to merit the aureole: although some say that he does not merit the aureole if he happen to die through his own carelessness or neglect. For this neglect would not have occasioned his death, except on the supposition of the wound which he received for the faith: and consequently this wound previously received for the faith is the original occasion of his death, so that he would not seem to lose the aureole for that reason, unless his neglect were such as to involve a mortal sin, which would deprive him of both aurea and aureole. If, however, by some chance or other he were not to die of the mortal wound received, or again if the wounds received were not mortal, and he were to die while in prison, he would still merit the aureole. Hence the martyrdom of some saints is celebrated in the Church for that they died in prison, having been wounded long before, as in the case of Pope Marcel-

* Cf. *Ila Ilae*, q. 64, a. 5

lus. Accordingly in whatever way suffering for Christ's sake be continued unto death, whether death ensue or not, a man becomes a martyr and merits the aureole. If, however, it be not continued unto death, this is not a reason for calling a person a martyr, as in the case of the blessed Sylvester, whose feast the Church does not solemnize as a martyr's, since he ended his days in peace, although previously he had undergone certain sufferings.

Reply to Objection 8. Even as temperance is not about pleasures of money, honors, and the like, but only about pleasures of touch as being the principal of all, so fortitude is about dangers of death as being the greatest of all (Ethic. iii, 6). Consequently the aureole is due to such injuries only as are inflicted on a person's own body and are of a nature to cause death. Accordingly whether a person lose his temporalities, or his good name, or anything else of the kind, for Christ's sake, he does not for that reason become a martyr, nor merit the aureole. Nor is it possible to love ordinally external things more than one's body; and inordinate love does not help one to merit an aureole: nor again can sorrow for the loss of corporeal things be equal to the sorrow for the slaying of the body and other like things*.

Reply to Objection 9. The sufficient motive for martyrdom is not only confession of the faith, but any other virtue, not civic but infused, that has Christ for its end. For one becomes a witness of Christ by any virtuous act, inasmuch as the works which Christ perfects in us bear witness to His goodness. Hence some virgins were slain for virginity which they desired to keep, for instance blessed Agnes and others whose martyrdom is celebrated by the Church.

Reply to Objection 10. The truth of faith has Christ for end and object; and therefore the confession thereof,

if suffering be added thereto, merits an aureole, not only on the part of the end but also on the part of the matter. But the confession of any other truth is not a sufficient motive for martyrdom by reason of its matter, but only on the part of the end; for instance if a person were willing to be slain for Christ's sake rather than sin against Him by telling any lie whatever.

Reply to Objection 11. The uncreated good surpasses all created good. Hence any created end, whether it be the common or a private good, cannot confer so great a goodness on an act as can the uncreated end, when, to wit, an act is done for God's sake. Hence when a person dies for the common good without referring it to Christ, he will not merit the aureole; but if he refer it to Christ he will merit the aureole and he will be a martyr; for instance, if he defend his country from the attack of an enemy who designs to corrupt the faith of Christ, and suffer death in that defense.

Reply to Objection 12. Some say that the use of reason was by the Divine power accelerated in the Innocents slain for Christ's sake, even as in John the Baptist while yet in his mother's womb: and in that case they were truly martyrs in both act and will, and have the aureole. others say, however, that they were martyrs in act only and not in will: and this seems to be the opinion of Bernard, who distinguishes three kinds of martyrs, as stated above (obj. 3). In this case the Innocents, even as they do not fulfill all the conditions of martyrdom, and yet are martyrs in a sense, in that they died for Christ, so too they have the aureole, not in all its perfection, but by a kind of participation, in so far as they rejoice in having been slain in Christ's service; thus it was stated above (a. 5) in reference to baptized children, that they will have a certain joy in their innocence and carnal integrity†

* Cf. IIa IIae, q. 124, a. 5 † Cf. IIa IIae, q. 124, a. 1, ad 1, where St. Thomas declares that the Holy Innocents were truly martyrs.