

The Many Evils of Liberal Charity

(Compiled by T. Stanfill-Benns, 2012; all emphasis within quotes is the editor's.)

“You make yourself infamous by your actions and I will endeavor to cover you with that infamy by my writings.” This quote, from Rev. Felix Sarda who attributes it to “a great Catholic historian” is what I wish to say to those who insist that Rev. Sarda’s brand of charity — the brand I myself have personally adopted and endorse — is intolerable, unCatholic and no longer, in this “enlightened” day and age what is taught by the Church. Liberal charity has been with us for nearly two centuries and has evolved into an absolute disregard for anything even remotely connected to charity as it was once known and understood. Rev. Sarda foresaw this and wrote his invaluable little book, “Liberalism Is a Sin,” over 100 years ago. The Sacred Congregation of the Index, asked to condemn Fr. Sarda’s book in 1887 instead wrote the following: “[Fr.] Sarda merits great praise for his exposition and defense of the sound doctrine therein set forth with solidity, order and lucidity, without personal offense to anyone,” (Introduction to Sarda’s book). I therefore make no apologies for what follows, and consider myself in perfect accord with the charity Christ’s Church teaches and has always taught.

“Give the enemy no quarter,” Rev. Felix Sarda commands in his 1899 book, “What Is Liberalism?” Warning that God’s rights and human respect must never be sacrificed on the altar of liberal charity, Sarda writes: “Liberalism prefers the tactics of recrimination, and under the sting of a just flagellation, whiningly accuses Catholics of a lack of charity...Narrow! Intolerant! Uncompromising! These are the epithets of odium hurled by Liberal votaries...Are not Liberals our neighbors like other men? Do we not owe to them the same charity we apply to others? Are not your vigorous denunciations, it is urged against us, harsh and uncharitable, in the very teeth of the teaching of Christianity which is essentially a religion of love? Such is the accusation continually flung in our face. Let us see what its value is. Let us see what the word charity signifies. The catechism, that most authoritative epitome of Catholic theology, gives us the most complete and succinct definition...

“Charity is a supernatural virtue which induces us to love God above all things and our neighbors as ourselves for the love of God... ‘To love is to wish good to those we love,’” the philosopher says; to God, to our neighbor, that is to everyone. “True love wishes...first of all, supernatural good, ‘for the love of God.’...It follows therefore that we can love our neighbor when displeasing him, when opposing him, when causing him some material injury, and on certain occasions, when depriving him of life...If it is shown that in displeasing or offending our neighbor we act for his good, it is evident that we love him even when opposing or crossing him...***When we correct the wicked by restraining or by punishing them, none the less do we love them. This is charity and perfect charity,*** (all emph. within Rev. Sarda’s quotes here are mine).

“It is often necessary to displease or offend one person, not for his own good but to deliver another from the evil he is inflicting. It is then an obligation of charity to repel the unjust violence of the aggressor; ***one may inflict as much injury on the aggressor as is***

necessary for the defense... The love due to a man inasmuch as he is our neighbor ought always to be subordinated to that which is due to our common Lord. For His love and in His service we must not hesitate to offend men. The degree of our offense toward men can only be measured by the degree of our obligation to Him. Charity is primarily the love of God, secondarily the love of our neighbor for God's sake. ***Therefore to offend our neighbor for the love of God is a true act of charity. Not to offend our neighbor for the love of God is a sin.***

“Modern Liberalism reverses this order. It imposes a false notion of charity; our neighbor first and, if at all, God afterwards. By its reiterated and trite accusations of intolerance, it has succeeded in disconcerting even some staunch Catholics. But our rule is too plain and too concrete to admit of misconception. It is: ***sovereign Catholic inflexibility is sovereign Catholic charity. This charity is practiced in relation to our neighbor when in his own interests he is crossed, humiliated, and chastised. It is practiced in relation to a third party, when he is defended from the unjust aggression of another, as when he is protected from the contagion of error by unmasking its authors and abettors and showing them in their true light as iniquitous and pervert, by holding them up to the contempt, horror and execration of all.*** It is practiced in relation to God when, for His glory and in His service, it becomes necessary to silence all human considerations, to trample underfoot all human respect, to sacrifice all human interests and even life itself to attain this highest of all ends... The saints are the type of this unswerving and sovereign fidelity to God, the heroes of charity and religion...

“Liberal charity is condescending, affectionate, even tender in appearance, but at bottom it is an essential contempt for the true good of men, of the supreme interests of truth and of God. It is human self-love usurping the throne of the Most High, and demanding that worship which belongs to God alone... The propagators and abettors of heresy have at all times been called heretics as well as its authors. As the Church has always considered heresy a very grave evil, so has she always called its adherents evil and pervert. Run over the list of ecclesiastical writers — you will then see how the Apostles treated the first heretics, how the Fathers and modern controversialists and the Church Herself in her official language has pursued them. ***There is then no sin against charity in calling evil, evil, its authors, abettors and disciples, bad; all its acts, words and writings iniquitous, wicked, malicious. In short, the wolf has always been called the wolf, and in so calling it no one ever believed that wrong was done to the flock and to the shepherd.***

“If the propagation of good and the necessity of combating evil require the employment of terms somewhat harsh against error and its supporters, this usage certainly is not against charity... The authors of heretical doctrines are soldiers with poisoned weapons in their hands... Is it sufficient to dodge their blows? Not at all; the first thing necessary is to demolish the combatant himself... It is thus lawful, in certain cases, to expose the infamy of a Liberal opponent, to bring his habits into contempt and to drag his name in the mire... ***The only restriction is not to employ a lie in the service of justice. This never. Under no pretext may we sully the truth, even to the dotting of an ‘i.’ As a French writer says: ‘Truth is the only charity allowed in history,’ and, we may add, in the***

defense of religion and society... When it strikes, let the sword of the Catholic polemicist wound, and wound mortally... This is the only real and efficacious means of waging war.”

But shouldn't Catholics seek to be united one to the other? Not if it involves the least bit of moral or doctrinal compromise. Rev. Sarda tells us that, “The bond of union should never be neutrality or the conciliation of interests essentially opposed... This neutrality or conciliation has been condemned by the Syllabus and... is a false basis. Such union would be a betrayal, an abandonment of the Catholic camp... Such union with any group, for any enterprise whatsoever, would [not only] be unfavorable to Catholics, but actually [would be] detrimental. Instead of augmenting our forces, it would paralyze and nullify the vigor of those who would be able, if alone, to do something for the defense of the truth... The kind of soldiers we need go into the deadly breach and never flinch. No compromising, no minimizing with them. They plant their banner on the topmost height and form a solid, invincible phalanx around it that not all the legions of earth and hell combined can budge a single inch. *They make no alliance, no compromise with a foe whose single aim, disguised or open, is the destruction of the truth. They know the enemy by nature is implacable, and his flag of truce but a cunning device of treachery.*”

Judgment rests on evidence and evidence is not an inference or an assumption or even a strong suspicion, but is based on solid facts and observations made over a sufficient period of time. We observe an incident, we watch an event unfold and over time we discern a pattern of behavior. Rev. John H. Stapleton tells us under “Rash Judgment” in his “Moral Briefs,” (1904): *“When the conduct of our neighbor is plainly open to interpretation, if we may not judge immediately against him, neither are we bound to give him the benefit of the doubt... Nor are we bound to overlook all evidence that points to a man's guilt for fear of judging him unfavorably. It is not wrong to judge a man according to his merits, to have a right opinion of him, even when that opinion is not to his credit. All that is necessary is that we have a good reason on which to base that opinion. If a neighbor does evil in our presence or to our knowledge, he forfeits, and justly, our good opinion; he is to blame, and not we. We are not obliged to close our eyes to the truth of facts, and it is on facts that our judgments are formed.”*

In their “Moral Theology: A Complete Course,” Vol. II, (1930), Revs. McHugh and Callan tell us that, “One may be frequently in error by this judging well of mankind, since man is inclined to evil from his youth, (Gen. 8: 21) and the number of fools is infinite, (Eccles., 1: 15).” As Abp. Emile Guerry wrote in 1957 in his “In the Whole Christ: *“Kindness is not synonymous with naivety, or with stupid susceptibility to illusion and fraud. It does not mean that we are to read into others qualities that they clearly do not possess. Kindness sees things as they are: the bad as well as the good. Where there is evil, it does not regard that evil as other than evil. Indeed, a person who lives by faith has a marked aptitude even for discerning evil — an aptitude given to him by his knowledge of Original Sin and its consequences in man even after the Redemption. He knows the limitations and the miseries of mankind and is therefore not surprised to meet them in others, as he has met them in himself.”* Very Rev. J. Guibert, in his 1947 work “On Kindness,” notes that “Weakness and kindness are widely different things... [Weakness]

puts everybody at his ease, it bears with everything and stands in nobody's way. Just because it never opposes, it makes no one suffer, and so passes for kindness... The rule of the weak man is marked by lack of restraint, want of discipline... Weakness... favors idleness, emasculates the faculties, tolerates improvidence and unfits one for the battle of life..." In short, not opposing people when one is obliged to do so and for their better good is not charity or kindness at all but weakness, as Rev. Sarda says.

Rev. Guibert goes on to point out that flattery also is a counterfeit of kindness, for it often "extols weakness... makes virtues out of vices" and can even be "inspired by cold calculation and truly contemptible self-seeking; it is then above all that it is base and culpable... Our praise should be a wholesome encouragement, not a poison." Kindness also can be indiscreet, Guibert says, and the indiscreet benefactor insists that, "their advice has to be asked about everything. In return for what they give they expect not only gratitude and deference but absolute submissiveness." ***Then there is the emotional affection that is interpreted by so many as true kindness, and "leads to mistakes very common and very dangerous... We think we are sacrificing ourselves, whilst in reality we are seeking self-gratification; we flatter ourselves that we are acting out of pure love of our neighbor, whereas, as a matter of fact, we are merely aiming at our own satisfaction. It is not that our heart is touched, it is only that our nerves are excited; our self-love is masquerading as Christian charity...*** Wisdom bids us keep a hand on our heart. We must be watchful and careful lest under the guise of kindness we give the hospitality of our hearts to the most degrading of its counterfeits. " And here I believe it is not out of place to quote a Protestant author in full agreement with Rev. Guibert, who places a thoroughly modern twist on the subject.

In his "Toxic Love," author Malcolm Smith wrote in 1992: "In this fallen world, there are plenty of people with real needs and many more who are working out their sinfulness by wanting others to be responsible for them, to make them the center of attention, and to enable them to continue their sinful habits... ***True love would support the problem person while making them face the devastating results of the choices they have made.... Toxic love is counterfeit... [It] does not want to face the truth about the person or persons it is seeking to rescue, but rather denies the real problem...*** Humility, which is the key to peace of mind in the world, is simply living in reality, coming to terms with the way things really are... Christianity is not idealistic, it is pre-eminently realistic... ***Christians are called to obey God, not to go around laying down their lives for everyone who asks them to, ending up on the ash heap and whimpering that no one cares.***" Smith advises those practicing this toxic love to re-evaluate all their relationships in the eyes of faith and ask God to show them their true worth through His own eyes, "to make it a matter of prayer whether or not you have any involvement with them." In conclusion he tells his readers not to be "a self-pleaser, a people pleaser, nor a need meeter, but a Father pleaser... Learn to live in submission to Jesus and not to needs and people. When all is said and done, the only way you can meet anyone's needs is by being submitted to HIM."

Still other convoluted situations can be imagined, such as the moral dilemmas posed by married persons who abuse drugs and alcohol and endanger the lives of others, or who suffer from some mental condition and are allowed to remain among society on

medication although they pose a certain danger to themselves and/or others. Many heartbreaking cases could be cited on these topics, but the Church is clear about what should be done where children are involved or even the other spouse is affected. According to Canon De Smet S.T.L., “Betrothment and Marriage,” 1912, Vol. I, pgs. 258-261: “The Church teaches that separation or divorce...between married persons is lawful *for various causes*...in Matthew 19:29 we read: ‘And everyone who hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children...for my name’s sake shall receive an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting.’ ...Causes justifying separation include adultery,” [unless the innocent party accepts the offending party once again into the marriage bed]; ... “Heresy and provocation to sin...since the embracing of heresy is looked upon as an act of spiritual fornication; ...Danger to the soul, when one of the parties compels the other to sin,” [or is a continuous near occasion of sin, such as the sin of impurity or anger, or frequent and vicious quarrels, or constant dissension and disruption of family life, or anything that would amount to a cooperation in sin.]”

And according to St. Alphonsus Liguori, Doctor of the Church, one need not worry, in dealing with heretics, when those espousing Liberal charity accuse their neighbors of failing to give a warning, rash judging or being judgmental. St. Alphonsus writes, under the heading *The Duty of Accusing or Denouncing Another*: “Here it is asked whether fraternal correction must precede accusation. Several distinctions must be made... (1) If the crime is public, since for this reason infamy or notoriety is already present, (e.g., before a number of people in the street), then no correction ought to precede. Thus St. Thomas, Sanchez, Sotus, Paludanus and Salmant with the common opinion. In such a case, to quote St. Thomas, ‘The remedy must not be applied only to him who has sinned that he may improve, but also to those who notice the crime has come.’ And for this reason, a public crime ought to be punished. The truth is you do not sin either against charity or against justice if you accuse without warning (1) When the crime gives injury to the common weal as in...heresy... ***For with these crimes, scarcely, if ever, is it to be hoped that correction will be fruitful, and delay can be exceedingly harmful,***” (Theologia Moralis).

“Christians must strive not to attribute the sin of heresy to their neighbor as long as another explanation remains possible. ***But charity does not require mental gymnastics in order to excuse what is manifest, [evident, obvious, not obscure].*** However, the thesis here defended does not depend on identifying pertinacity as defined by the moralists, but as defined by *canonists*: conscious rejection of dogma on the part of a baptized person. This prescind from the moral order, forming a judgment which need concern ***only the external forum***, yet which has no connection with the error of those who ‘presume’ pertinacity where some other reasonable explanation of the external data remains available, such as simple ignorance or inadvertence. ***“Obstinacy may be assumed when a revealed truth has been proposed with sufficient clearness and force to convince a reasonable man.”*** (Dom Charles Augustine: A Commentary on Canon Law, Vol. 8, pg. 335.)

“St Paul commands Titus: “A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition avoid, knowing that he that is such a one is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment,” (3:10,11) Cornelius a Lapide and ***St. Robert Bellarmine***

understand(s) this passage as meaning that the warnings are required when it is doubtful whether or not someone is truly pertinacious in heresy. In the case of manifest heresy, no warning would be necessary.

“Cardinal de Lugo, considered by St. Alphonsus to be the greatest theologian since St. Thomas, devoted the most detailed study we are aware of to the subject of the pertinacity required to make someone a heretic. ***He discusses whether a warning is needed in order to establish that someone is a heretic, and concludes, after considering the opinions of all the noted theologians and canonists, that such warnings are not always necessary - nor are they always required in practice by the Holy Office.*** The reason for this is that the warning serves only to establish that the individual is aware of the opposition existing between his opinion and the Church's teaching. If that were already evident, the warning would be superfluous,” (Disputationes Scholasticae et Morales, Disp. XX, De Virtute Fidei Divinae, Sectio vi, n. 174 et seq.); quoted from Britton's Catholic Library Letters. It should be noted here that the very law used as the old law for the canons on heresy, Cum ex Apostolatus Officio, which we are bound to consult should any questions arise concerning the law, states that where heresy is concerned no warning or declaratory sentence is required for the censure to take effect. This also was reiterated in a decision from the Holy Office in the 1930s.

If this is no-holds-barred attitude fostered by Rev. Sarda is not forbidden according to the laws of charity, but rather is actively counseled by the Church to preserve the faith and physical well-being of the other parties, how can anyone believe that what he said above is too harsh and that to counsel such measures is uncharitable? In his work, “As I Have Loved You,” that great Irish catechist, Rev. John Kearney tells readers that it is important to have charity for their own souls, but this is not charity as one might think. He warns Catholics to resist the influence of evil, encouraging true Catholic independence of those who would lead us into sin. ***“When we resist the infection of evil, we are charitable to our own souls,”*** he writes. ***“[But] our resistance to evil will be very much more pleasing to God if we also try to do something to eradicate the evil we meet, i.e., cause the evil to cease. If we do this for the honor of God and for the good of the soul of our neighbor, we are doing a work of supreme divine charity and of supreme fraternal charity.”*** But from the liberal charity buffs and bleeding hearts, we will receive only insults for our troubles and heated accusations of a lack of love for the brethren. St. Thomas Aquinas lists the order of charity as God first, self, THEN neighbor for God's sake, and cautions Catholics also about being drawn into sin when trying to convert a neighbor. In this day and age when self-deceit is practically the order of the day and evil so very widespread, this caution should be taken very much to heart. St. Thomas' confirmation of the above is listed from his Summa below, following a basic rundown of sins against the eighth commandment.

Sins Against the Eighth Commandment

(What follows below was taken almost verbatim from Revs. McHugh and Callan, "Moral Theology: A Complete Course," Vols. I & II, 1929. The authors, in their preface, state that their work is "...based on St. Thomas Aquinas and the best modern authorities.")

The following questions will be answered:

- I. What is the true order of charity?**
- II. What is contumely?**
- III. What is defamation?**
- IV. What is whispering?**
- V. What is derision?**
- VI. What is hypocrisy?**
- VII. What is mental reservation?**
- VIII. What is rash judgement and prejudice?**
- IX. Cooperation in sin**
- X. The order of fraternal correction**

I. The order of charity as commanded by the Church is as follows: Parents, friends and relatives are owed more love than others, being nearer to us in affections, but we are bound to show more esteem to the truly holy (such as respect due to their excellence) and to aid relatives and friends more assistance temporally and spiritually. More signs of affection should also be shown relatives and friends, such as visits, conversation, etc., however, even a saintly acquaintance is more deserving of love than a sinful relative.

The order of preference is as follows: parents, children, spouse, [father, mother, spouse, children, (friends)]. The order is reversed after marriage to [children, wife, parents, (friends)], but the objective order, "(esteem shown the more virtuous) must prevail here if one parent is holier than another.

Exceptions to this order are to be made when in making public appointments for the common welfare of a group. Then the common good, not ties of kinship, must guide one's selection for office. Also, while blood relationship arises naturally, and is more stable, ties of friendship may be preferred even to kinship (especially where warranted spiritually). The order of preference may also be disregarded whenever a relative has forfeited his/her right to affection such as a son who wastes the family fortune, or a daughter who lives in concubinage. In such cases even self-sacrificing STRANGERS who promote some holy cause may be preferred

II. Contumely injures honor. It is failure to show a person the honor due him. (See Matt. 5:22, Rom. 1:30) Honor is due those in authority, the virtuous, those of rank, the wealthy, teachers, clerics, etc..., also the elderly. Yet everyone, regardless of rank is due ordinary respect. Dishonor is shown one in his presence by name-calling; offensive cartoons, caricatures, "poison-pen" letters, mimicry, evil gestures or acts; also by reproach (accusing another of sin); revilement (ascribing faults or their consequences to another); taunting or twitting another with his misfortunes or inferiority, or with-holding signs of affection to make another conscious of these.

Contumely is a 'mortal sin if it is committed with the direct intention to inflict serious disgrace or from the indirect intention, not to harm materially, but to wound feelings; when committed against a superior or when committed by one whose words are usually taken seriously.

Contumely is a venial sin when committed by one suddenly, in anger; when language is only slightly disrespectful; when uttered by someone known to be of a rude and abusive character or when uttered out of a lack of forethought.

An act is NOT contumely when given to those deserving of reproof, or when directed toward the **IRRETRIEVABLY WICKED**. Nor is it contumely when done in banter or "pleasantry," such as when one KNOWS another will not be offended and bears him no ill will. When parents or teachers berate their students as fools, blockheads, etc., (although this is undesirable for other reasons) it is not an act of contumely.

How should one deal with contumely? Internally, it should be accepted (Matt. 5:39) meekly, with patience and resignation. Externally it should be repelled when there are good and sufficient reasons (John 28: 23), such as the good of the offender in order to correct his boldness, (Prov. 26:5) and prevent future offenses; or the good of others to repair scandal and if silence will appear to be a sign of weakness, carelessness or guilt. Also, when the good of self is concerned, for to enjoy the respect of others helps good people live up to others' opinions of them and restrains the sinner and it enables others to continue works of charity. (Eccl. 51:15; Prov. 221).

Most theologians agree that an apology will suffice whether made in person or by letter, in reparation for contumely. Generally, an offender is also duty bound to build up with praise, honor and other marks of good will that which has been destroyed by contumely, detraction, defamation and/or other sins. Apologies should be made with as much formality as was the insult. If the offender is a superior an apology to an inferior is not necessary lest he lose the prestige of his position by abasing himself. forgiveness by the offended person or danger of causing further damage excuses from making reparation. Reparation should not be made, however, if this would ruin another's reputation, and when in truth, silence is required. Always, the advice of a spiritual director should be sought in such cases.

III. Defamation includes both calumny and detraction. Calumny (slander) is the injuring of another's reputation by untrue stories. Detraction is the revealing of real faults or defects of another. Defamation is either direct (public) or indirect (private), and may be committed in the following ways: by faint praise, as when one indicates he does not hold a high opinion of someone, for example: "Tertullius has not yet committed murder", insinuating that he is potentially capable of it; by silence which can be a hidden form of defamation when evil is spoken unopposed, or a good account of one defamed is silenced; by depreciation, as when hints are made to others that someone is not as good as he appears, has a racy past, etc.; and by denial of good qualities that make one commendable, such as virtuous habits and dispositions, learning, quickness of mind, strength, health, comeliness, etc.

Direct defamation occurs when good acts or words, or those at least open to good interpretation, are said to have been dictated by pride, ambition, greed, etc.; or as the result of detraction, or unjust revelation, when secret faults or crimes are revealed. When exaggeration magnifies a fault into a venial sin, a venial sin into a mortal sin, a mortal sin into a more heinous species, or an exceptional or indeliberate fault into an habitual or deliberate sin, this is direct defamation. This can also include condemning an entire group or race because of the actions of one or a few, as is commonly done with Jews, blacks, etc... ***The worst kind of defamation is false accusation, or calumny, condemned in a special manner by Innocent XI.***

Direct defamation is committed by plain words or insinuation and defamations by innuendo, ambiguous expressions and half-veiled-accusations often do more damage than plain accusations. Defamation by plain speech is either calumny or detraction depending on whether or not the accusation is true, and/or well-known; whether it was made deliberately and with

malicious intent; whether it is made against one known to have a good and true reputation (a false reputation being that of being known as good when secretly one is not.); and whether it is made to those likely to believe it or likely to discredit it. Calumny is more serious than detraction, adding lying to unjust revelation.

Gossip, which is criticism or talk about real and known defects with others is not mortally sinful, nor unjust, nor is it a sin, per se, if done for a just reason. ***Grave harm cannot be done to one who already has a bad reputation***, but the malice prompting the speaker, disedification of the listeners, and pain caused the one spoken of are reasons to abstain from it. Gossip is dangerous, for it prepares the way for detraction and calumny, and also leads to further sins of curiosity.

Revealing what is privately known concerning another is not defamation if not revealing such information would injure the common good seriously or if the common good would be injured when one is under oath, and the truth is needed to reach a just decision. Even a false reputation should be left undisturbed unless the common good dictates otherwise.

Revealing what is known privately is also necessary if otherwise an individual would be seriously injured, spiritually or physically, or honor is attacked; or if a third party would be so injured were the information not revealed. In certain cases, to preserve the life or honor of the one holding the secret, it must be told. ***All the above is true even concerning committed secrets, in some cases.*** A committed secret is one where a party is specifically requested, before information is divulged, to keep what is about to be revealed a strict secret. Canon Law also declares this to be the case, in Canons 1618, 1935, 1938, 2223, 2355 and elsewhere.

Television contributes to the defamation of public figures both living and dead, because sufficient and weighty reasons must exist to justify such revelations and many half-truths and "white lies" are set forth. A common form of calumny is the mixture of truth and falsehood (adding something untrue to a list of crimes, for example) ***or half-truths that give the impression of what is untrue, (failure to mention mitigating circumstances, for example).*** "White lies" are commonly held to mean lies told to make others laugh or to excuse oneself; but even these lies, called white because they do not injure ANOTHER, injure the TRUTH, and are considered venial sins. Talk show hosts and commentators delight in discussing the living and dead who are yet entitled to their reputations and the good qualities of these individuals are not also set forth. Those in the public eye for some reason or those running for public office are often subject to unjust revelation, where their faults or sins are unnecessarily revealed, to satisfy the demands of "democracy."

Often (usually) the testimony of heretics and apostates is the only testimony admitted and the Church does not admit such testimony against others in Her ecclesiastical courts. Whenever such shows (talk shows, documentaries, docudramas or even the nightly news) are run they should be viewed with discretion. In the case of the news, portions that offend in this regard should be muted, and one viewing of the news a day is usually enough. Unless these precautions are taken, one could be guilty of co-operation. Whether in a newspaper or on TV, sensationalism and speculation are sins against modesty and curiosity as well veil as the eighth commandment. "Scandal sheets", such as the Enquirer, Sun, Star; etc., are sources of gossip and detraction, as well.

IV. Also contrary to the eighth commandment is whispering (or tale-bearing). Whispering is speech unfavorable to another person, with the intent of breaking up friendships. It is unfavorable (evil or apparently so) yet not necessarily defamatory: it is secret, or given in confidence, and is often given to the parties targeted simultaneously, in different senses.

Example: Claudia tells me you have said I am a malingerer; she tells you I have said you do not value your good health as a gift from God, etc. Whispering has as its goal the dissolution of a friendship, or intent to destroy the respect and affection between two people, (Eccl. 18: 11; Prov". 26:20). But the friendship must be a VIRTUOUS one, for there is no sin, but rather charity, in ending a sinful or harmful relationship. Here, the intent of the third party is the determining factor: does he have a "vested interest"? Is he claiming that a friendship is sinful or harmful when in truth it is not? In such cases the judgement of a superior should be sought.

Whispering is a mortal sin (Prov. 6:19) since it deprives man of a virtuous friendship, one of his greatest external goods. (Eccl. 6:14-16) It is a greater sin than contumely or defamation, since friendship is valued more than honor, ordinarily; reputation being only a means to friendship. Whispering is a sin against justice and charity and it is seldom a venial sin, since breaking up a friendship is always the intent and does not often admit of slight matter or lack of perfect malice. It can also include a new species of sin, separate from itself as when a husband is separated from his wife so the whisperer can court her (adultery); or when a business partnership is broken up so that the whisperer can extort funds, or attract scandalized patrons to his own business (theft); or when the lax Catholic causes good Catholics to question their faith (heresy). What was said about the third party having a vested interest does not, however, apply to those who counsel others to leave a putative marriage to safeguard faith, for such a friendship is not virtuous to begin with.

V. Derision is another species of sin against the Eighth Commandment. It is a jest reproaching another with some defect or evil to confuse him. It is spoken in fun, but makes the defects or handicaps of another the object of laughter or amusement. It intends to rob another of the good opinion others have of him, or his peace of conscience, but when the intention is primarily to have or create a laugh at the expense of another, the intention is often material (venial sin).

Moderate jesting at another's expense is not derision, nor sinful if justified by a reasonable motive. Fraternal correction can be made in an amusing manner; a person making a fool of himself can often be corrected by jesting or derision; a satirical rebuke often silences the proud. Good-natured banter can be recreational (over trivial personal defects), yet jesting can become sinful if done offensively or immoderately. Derision is a mortal sin when the derider makes light of a grave evil, by treating what is a grave matter to another lightly. For this reason, derision is more serious than contumely, for at least the contumelious person treats the matter as a grave one. Grave punishment is promised deriders by God (Prov. 3:34) when the one derided is God, a superior, or a holy person. Derision is venially sinful when what is derided is light matter, or when the one derided does not take it seriously and when the one derided is an equal or inferior.

VI. Hypocrisy is here treated also because of the confusion concerning its true definition. Hypocrisy is a species of lie, and lies are either spoken or acted out, with the purpose to deceive (called simulation). Simulation signifies the contrary of what one has in mind, and hypocrisy makes a show of virtue that one does not possess at all, or not in the degree pretended. It is not hypocrisy to wear wigs, jewelry, make-up, etc., when no intention to mislead exists. Hypocrisy is not committed by those who seek to conceal their sins: for this is praiseworthy (Isa. 3:9), and there is no hypocrisy in showing the virtue one really has, but someone who pretends to be bad when he is good would be guilty of sin. Hypocrisy is an especially heinous sin, condemned in a most stern manner by Our Lord (Matt. 23:23 & 26:24, Luke 22: 8. All according to McHugh and Callan.)

VII. Mental reservation and its use. Strict mental reservation is nothing more than a lie, for it

excludes the possibility that the hearer could perceive the true meaning. Broad mental reservation may be used when one is bound to keep the truth from another for reasons of charity, a committed secret, or the seal of the confessional; when some serious spiritual or temporal harm would befall one if reservation was not employed, or if the public welfare (as in time of war) would be endangered.

Reservation should not be employed when evasion or silence would do the job as well; if use of it would injure a third party (for example: I allow someone to think I have no knowledge of where the Holy Eucharist is hidden by deflecting suspicion on another); when a private good would be served but a common good injured. The use of mental reservation has been much abused by Traditionalists, who use it excessively, for light reasons, and call use of strict reservation wide or broad reservation. For this reason it should be used sparingly, and with caution.

VIII. Rash judgement is a sin against the virtue of justice. It is defined as a firm assent of the mind, based on prejudice or insufficient data, which tends to the view or favors the view that a neighbor is guilty of sin. Opinion, suspicion and doubt are rash if there is no sufficient reason to warrant them. The fact that two men whisper together and enjoy each other's company does not mean they are homosexuals. There is no reason to suspect that a man of good reputation who enters a house of an absent neighbor, through the front door, is a robber.

Rash judgement is a mortal sin whenever it deprives a man of his reputation or gravely injures it. Such judgement injures the law itself (James 4:11, Luke 6:37), but a judgement is not a mortal sin unless the one judging is conscious at the time that one is committing a GRAVE sin against his neighbor. The deliberation must be perfect. The malice is usually present when one is aware, even in a confused way that there is no real reason for such a judgment. ***Yet judging things to be sin and certainly so when great probability or near certainty only exists is no serious sin.*** For the sin to be mortal, there must be GRAVE contempt, or GRAVE injury. Perfect advertance means one must consider all aspects of the deed to be committed realizing that it is a serious sin, will cause grave spiritual injury to self and/or others and must do it anyway. Perfect advertance occurs when the one rash judging KNOWS the reasons for an unfavorable judgement are insufficient. Ignorance is no excuse; if one could and SHOULD perceive the reasons are insufficient, one is still guilty. If the cause of such a judgment is prejudice, hatred or envy of the one falsely judged, one is guilty of rash judgment.

Rash judgement is a venial sin when the act is imperfect or incomplete or the matter is not serious (one suspects another known to him stole a 35-cent candy bar), or if the rash judgment is made concerning a superior in whom slight faults are or may be a grievous thing. Usually rash conclusions are made by evildoers who are so addicted to sin they cannot imagine others do not find it delightful also, or that all are not as drawn to it as they are (Eccl. 10:3). If one hates or envies another, or is angered against him, even the slightest trifles will become pretexts to find him guilty of sin. This condition of the mind is known as prejudice, or a foregone judgment that has made a marked impression on (in) the mind, where it is rooted in the memory and imagination. False early training creates prejudice and it is one of the most common obstacles to conversion; it is often synonymous with invincible ignorance.

Prejudice often acts as a "brake" on the intellect, making it impossible for the individual to form a fair opinion of a matter or a person. It is the stepchild of ignorance, for it cannot be implanted without a false idea of matters of faith. The judgment of one who is prejudiced is never taken seriously, for such a judgment is false. Long experience in dealing with human nature will often cause the elderly and some of a

melancholy temperament to become unduly cynical. It is lawful to suspend judgment in cases of reasonable doubt where one is not obliged to decide a matter. If rash judgment may result, doubts must be solved in favor of the neighbor, but this does not prevent one from taking precautions should such a judgment be mistaken, such as forbidding one's children to keep company with others who may be corrupt. Care must be taken, however, not to sadden or anger others by making such precautions too conspicuous.

IX. Cooperation in Sin. One scarcely would be charitable towards a neighbor if this meant aiding another in committing sin in any way. The moral theologians Revs. Sabetti and Barrett tell us in their Compendium of Moral Theology that cooperation is “participation in the sinful act of another.” This can happen in nine different ways concerning the evil done: by commanding, counseling, consenting, praising, providing recourse, partaking in the action or benefiting from it, keeping silent, not resisting and not reporting. The authors say that material cooperation is sometimes permitted for good reasons but never formal cooperation. They admit, however, that it is often difficult to tell which is material and which is formal cooperation, true especially today when no one knowledgeable can be consulted. In compiling modern day examples of cooperation a little booklet has even been used that was compiled by a Novus Ordo priest, (Sins of Cooperation, Rev. John H. Hampsch, 1990s). So let no one say that what is stated on this subject doesn't apply; the Conciliar Church apparently teaches no differently on this particular matter than the Church has always taught.

One cannot command another to commit any kind of sin. A boss who tells his employee to falsify the books or a mother who orders her son to lie about his age to save money on a movie commands sin. Counseling sin can consist in persuading someone to experiment with drugs, sex or alcohol; attend a non-Catholic church, or ignore rules laid down by their parents. Consenting occurs when a parent fails to attempt to prevent an invalid marriage, an employee does not protest unethical business practices, a wife buys alcohol for her alcoholic husband or gives him the money to buy it. Provocation happens when one goads another into doing something they might not otherwise do. Examples include: seduction, sharing pornography, deliberately provoking fights to cause or widen rifts between family members and friends, inciting others to civil disobedience. Praising applies when someone tells another they look great in a new outfit when it is immodest, or complimenting someone on their lavish outlay for a new home, car, etc.. when one knows it will mean they do not pay other debtors. Providing recourse means sheltering a known sinner or criminal and thereby making it easier for them to commit sin, or hiding their ill-gotten goods. It also could mean allowing such persons to borrow vehicles, clothing, etc., necessary to perpetrate such acts as well.

Knowingly purchasing stolen goods from another or using them until they are illegally sold; driving the getaway car in a robbery, being the lookout for a drug dealer, all involve formal cooperation. Remaining silent about evil done is regularly practiced today. Human respect prevents many from correcting others, and this can apply to careless driving, not watching over children properly and endangering their welfare, allowing a child to become a glutton and endanger his/her health, neglecting to tell an employer that a fellow employee is stealing profits, and so forth. Many also defend evil by practicing false charity and refusing to grasp the gravity of a situation, running interference, making excuses, lying for children and spouses who are engaged in sinful activities to help them avoid the consequences. These same persons routinely take on the duties and responsibilities of family members who refuse to be accountable, allowing them to continue to sin. Sabetti and Barrett hold all who sin by cooperation to the strict duty of restitution, often difficult to practice. The wisest course to take

concerning cooperation then, given its many difficulties and serious consequences for both parties, is to avoid even the appearance of it by way of constant vigilance.

X. Why fathers should correct children rather than mothers. The act of judging and disciplinary procedure in the Church is a role performed by one who possesses jurisdiction. In the case of the clergy, this comes ultimately from the pope. In other cases it proceeds from divine and natural law. Now men possess this power, known as dominative power, by divine preference, for God made man the head of woman and women are told by St. Paul to be subject to their husbands. The Levites were commanded by God in the Old Testament to constitute a strictly all-male, familial priesthood; and Christ chose male apostles.

Therefore men, not women, are more fit to rule and discipline subjects, which in the married state are the wife and children of the marriage. Authority, however, carries a heavy obligation on the part of the one exercising it to act strictly in accordance with an INFORMED conscience, obtained only by diligent study of religion. A good example must be set in all things. Avoid above all LAXITY (in these days, especially) and severity so injurious to the continued good will of the subjects. Never correct in anger, per se, (although holy anger is often obligatory and praiseworthy), less physical injury be inflicted.

In the case of correction, the model given us by Our Lord concerning fraternal correction should be followed concerning wives, for a husband is the most qualified to correct his wife, and the wife, her husband. For the same reason, men are therefore also better qualified to discipline children, by God's own laws. Yet women would be allowed to correct if a male suited to the task was not available or willing to fulfill this obligation, especially in offenses injurious to faith or morals. Women would also be allowed to correct as a co-worker, or "helpmeet" in the marriage if delegated such dominative power by the husband for some good reason or when the husband is at work, away, etc. But such delegation should never be general, and/or permanent; also, when the father is silent in such matters, the child or others may take this to mean approval of evil.

The rules governing the use of fraternal correction state that no obligation to correct exists of one better qualified to make the correction can do so or when there is little hope of amendment (rarely applicable in the case of children). Several scriptural passages declare that it is a grave sin for men to ignore their duties to correct. One Old Testament figure failed to discipline his sons and was struck dead (I Kings 3:13 & 4:17-18). Finally, the principle is the same as that which permitted the laity to elect a pope, for obligations and rights devolve (descend downward) whenever they cannot be exercised by those among whom they normally would repose.

Therefore, when a father is unable or unwilling to instruct and/or correct, the duty falls to the mother. Such provisions are also made in the structuring of governments, for when a president dies in office, the vice-president succeeds him; if both die, the Secretary of State, etc., down to the Speaker of the House.

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS



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AETERNI PATRIS

Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy

31. While, therefore, We hold that every word of wisdom, every useful thing by whomsoever discovered or planned, ought to be received with a willing and grateful mind, We exhort you, venerable brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences. The wisdom of St. Thomas, We say; for if anything is taken up with too great subtlety by the Scholastic doctors, or too carelessly stated - if there be anything that ill agrees with the discoveries of a later age, or, in a word, improbable in whatever way - it does not enter Our mind to propose that for imitation to Our age...

33. Therefore in this also let us follow the example of the Angelic Doctor, who never gave himself to reading or writing without first begging the blessing of God, who modestly confessed that whatever he knew he had acquired not so much by his own study and labor as by the divine gift; and therefore let us all, in humble and united prayer, beseech God to send forth the spirit of knowledge and of understanding to the children of the Church and open their senses for the understanding of wisdom. And that we may receive fuller fruits of the divine goodness, offer up to God the most efficacious patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is called the seat of wisdom; having at the same time as advocates St. Joseph, the most chaste spouse of the Virgin, and Peter and Paul, the chiefs of the Apostles, whose truth renewed the earth which had fallen under the impure blight of error, filling it with the light of heavenly wisdom.

LEO XIII

"The doctrine of this Doctor, beyond all others, has fitness of words, manner of expression, and truth of opinions; so that he who holds it will never swerve from the path of truth; and, on the contrary, he who attacks it must always be suspected."

- Pope Innocent V

*"Against **scholastic** philosophy and theology they use the weapons of ridicule and contempt. Whether it is ignorance or fear, or **both**, that inspires this conduct in them, certain it is that the **passion for novelty is always united in them with hatred of scholasticism**, and there is no surer sign that a man is tending to Modernism than when he begins to show his dislike for the scholastic method." - Pope St. Pius X, Pascendi Dominici Gregis (On the Doctrine of the Modernists.)*

*"The manifold honours paid by the Holy See to St. Thomas Aquinas exclude forever any doubt from the mind of Catholics with regard to his being **raised up by God as the Master of Doctrine to be followed by the Church through all ages.**" - Pope Benedict XV, (from His Papal Brief Approving the Catechism Of The "Summa Theologica" of Saint Thomas Aquinas For the Use of the Faithful, Feb. 5, 1919)*

Obj. 5. Further, it is proper to friends to associate together, according to *Ethic.* viii. But we ought not to associate with sinners, according to 2 Cor. vi. 17: *Go ye out from among them.* Therefore we should not love sinners out of charity.

On the contrary, Augustine says (*De Doctr. Christ.* i. 30) that *when it is said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor," it is evident that we ought to look upon every man as our neighbor.* Now sinners do not cease to be men, for sin does not destroy nature. Therefore we ought to love sinners out of charity.

I answer that, Two things may be considered in the sinner, his nature and his guilt. According to his nature, which he has from God, he has a capacity for happiness, on the fellowship of which charity is based, as stated above (A. 3: Q. 23, AA. 1, 5), wherefore we ought to love sinners, out of charity, in respect of their nature.

On the other hand their guilt is opposed to God, and is an obstacle to happiness. Wherefore, in respect of their guilt whereby they are opposed to God, all sinners are to be hated, even one's father or mother or kindred, according to Luke xiv. 26. For it is our duty to hate, in the sinner, his being a sinner, and to love in him, his being a man capable of bliss; and this is to love him truly, out of charity, for God's sake.

Reply Obj. 1. The prophet hated the unjust, as such, and the object of his hate was their injustice, which was their evil. Such hatred is perfect, of which he himself says (Ps. cxxxviii. 22): *I have hated them with a perfect hatred.* Now hatred of a person's evil is equivalent to love of his good. Hence also this perfect hatred belongs to charity.

Reply Obj. 2. As the Philosopher observes (*Ethic.* ix. 3), when our friends fall into sin, we ought not to deny them the amenities of friendship, so long as there is hope of their mending their ways, and we ought to help them more readily to regain virtue than to recover money, had they lost it, for as much as virtue is more akin than money to friendship. When, however, they fall into very great wickedness, and become incurable, we ought no longer to show them friendliness. It is for this reason that both Divine and human laws command such like sinners to be put to death, because there is greater likelihood of their harming others than of their mending their ways. Nevertheless the judge puts this into effect, not out of hatred for the sinners, but out of the love of charity, by reason of which he prefers the public good to the life of the individual. Moreover the death inflicted by the judge profits the sinner, if he be converted, unto the expiation of his crime; and, if he be

not converted, it profits so as to put an end to the sin, because the sinner is thus deprived of the power to sin any more.

Reply Obj. 3. Such like imprecations which we come across in Holy Writ, may be understood in three ways: first, by way of prediction, not by way of wish, so that the sense is: *May the wicked be,* that is, *The wicked shall be, turned into hell.* Secondly, by way of wish, yet so that the desire of the wisher is not referred to the man's punishment, but to the justice of the punisher, according to Ps. lvii. 11: *The just shall rejoice when he shall see the revenge,* since, according to Wis. i. 13, not even God *hath pleasure in the destruction of the wicked* (Vulg.,—*living*) when He punishes them, but He rejoices in His justice, according to Ps. x. 8: *The Lord is just and hath loved justice.* Thirdly, so that this desire is referred to the removal of the sin, and not to the punishment itself, to the effect, namely, that the sin be destroyed, but that the man may live.

Reply Obj. 4. We love sinners out of charity, not so as to will what they will, or to rejoice in what gives them joy, but so as to make them will what we will, and rejoice in what rejoices us. Hence it is written (Jerem. xv. 19): *They shall be turned to thee, and thou shalt not to be turned to them.*

Reply Obj. 5. The weak should avoid associating with sinners, on account of the danger in which they stand of being perverted by them. But it is commendable for the perfect, of whose perversion there is no fear, to associate with sinners that they may convert them. For thus did Our Lord eat and drink with sinners as related by Matthew (ix. 11-13). Yet all should avoid the society of sinners, as regards fellowship in sin; in this sense it is written (2 Cor. vi. 17): *Go out from among them . . . and touch not the unclean thing, i.e., by consenting to sin.*

SEVENTH ARTICLE

Whether Sinners Love Themselves?

We proceed thus to the Seventh Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that sinners love themselves. For that which is the principle of sin, is most of all in the sinner. Now love of self is the principle of sin, since Augustine says (*De Civ. Dei* xiv. 28) that it *builds up the city of Babylon.* Therefore sinners most of all love themselves.

Obj. 2. Further, sin does not destroy nature. Now it is in keeping with nature that every man should love himself: wherefore even irrational creatures naturally desire their own good, for instance, the preservation of their being, and so forth. Therefore sinners love themselves.

consequently, of charity: because the act of love includes goodwill whereby a man wishes his friend well, as stated above (Q. 23, A. 1: Q. 27, A. 2). Now the will carries into effect if possible, the things it wills, so that, consequently, the result of an act of love is that a man is beneficent to his friend. Therefore beneficence in its general acceptation is an act of friendship or charity.

But if the good which one man does another, be considered under some special aspect of good, then beneficence will assume a special character and will belong to some special virtue.

Reply Obj. 1. According to Dionysius (*Div. Nom. iv*), *love moves those, whom it unites, to a mutual relationship: it turns the inferior to the superior to be perfected thereby; it moves the superior to watch over the inferior:* and in this respect beneficence is an effect of love. Hence it is not for us to benefit God, but to honor Him by obeying Him, while it is for Him, out of His love, to bestow good things on us.

Reply Obj. 2. Two things must be observed in the bestowal of gifts. One is the thing given outwardly, while the other is the inward passion that a man has in the delight of riches. It belongs to liberality to moderate this inward passion, so as to avoid excessive desire and love for riches; for this makes a man more ready to part with his wealth. Hence, if a man makes some great gift, while yet desiring to keep it for himself, his is not a liberal gift. On the other hand, as regards the outward gift, the act of beneficence belongs in general to friendship or charity. Hence it does not detract from a man's friendship, if, through love, he give his friend something he would like to keep for himself; rather does this prove the perfection of his friendship.

Reply Obj. 3. Just as friendship or charity does, in the benefit bestowed, the general aspect of good, so does justice see therein the aspect of debt, while pity considers the relieving of distress or defect.

SECOND ARTICLE

Whether We Ought to Do Good to All?

We proceed thus to the Second Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that we are not bound to do good to all. For Augustine says (*Doctr. Christ. i. 28*) that we are *unable to do good to everyone*. Now virtue does not intend one to the impossible. Therefore it is unnecessary to do good to all.

Obj. 2. Further, it is written (Ecclus. 3: 3): *Give to the good, and receive not a reward*. But many men are sinners. Therefore we need not do good to all.

Obj. 3. Further, *Charity dealeth not perversely* (1 Cor. xiii. 4). Now to do good to some is to deal perversely: for instance if one were to do good to an enemy of the common weal, or if one were to do good to an excommunicated person, since, by doing so, he would be holding communion with him. Therefore, since beneficence is an act of charity, we ought not to do good to all.

On the contrary, The Apostle says (Gal. vi. 10): *Whilst we have time, let us work good to all men*.

I answer that, As stated above (A. 1, ad 1), beneficence is an effect of love in so far as love moves the superior to watch over the inferior. Now degrees among men are not unchangeable as among angels, because men are subject to many failings, so that he who is superior in one respect, is or may be inferior in another. Therefore, since the love of charity extends to all, beneficence also should extend to all, but according as time and place require: because all acts of virtue must be modified with a view to their due circumstances.

Reply Obj. 1. Absolutely speaking it is impossible to do good to every single one: yet it is true of each individual that one may be bound to do good to him in some particular case. Hence charity binds us, though not actually doing good to someone, to be prepared in mind to do good to anyone if we have time to spare. There is however a good that we can do to all, if not to each individual, at least to all in general, as when we pray for all, for unbelievers as well as for the faithful.

Reply Obj. 2. In a sinner there are two things, his guilt and his nature. Accordingly we are bound to succor the sinner as to the maintenance of his nature, but not so as to abet his sin, for this would be to do evil rather than good.

Reply Obj. 3. The excommunicated and the enemies of the common weal are deprived of all beneficence, in so far as this prevents them from doing evil deeds. Yet if their nature be in urgent need of succor lest it fail, we are bound to help them: for instance, if they be in danger of death through hunger or thirst, or suffer some like distress, unless this be according to the order of justice.

THIRD ARTICLE

Whether We Ought to Do Good to Those Rather Who Are More Closely United to Us?

We proceed thus to the Third Article:—

Objection 1. It would seem that we are not bound to do good to those rather who are more closely united to us. For it is written (Luke xiv. 12): *When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren*.

to Eccles. vii. 14, *No man can correct God hath despised.* Hence it is (Jo. v. 16): *He that knoweth his sin a sin which is not to death, let and life shall be given to him, who not to death.* Now just as the benefit of prayer must not be refused to any man who lives here below, because we can conquer the predestined from the reproach, Augustine says (*De Correp. et*), so too no man should be denied the prayer.

It is also to pray for the just for three reasons. First, because the prayers of a multitude are more easily heard, wherefore a gloss on 1 Pet. v. 30, *Help me in your prayers,* the Apostle rightly tells the lesser to pray for him, for many lesser prayers they be united together in one mind, and great, and it is impossible for the prayer of a multitude not to obtain that which is possible to be obtained by prayer. Secondly, that many may thank God for the graces conferred on the just, which graces are to the profit of many, according to 1 Cor. (2 Cor. i. 11). Thirdly, that the effect may not wax proud, seeing that they need the prayers of the just.

EIGHTH ARTICLE

Whether We Ought to Pray for Our Enemies?

Proceed thus to the Eighth Article:—

Question 1. It would seem that we ought not to pray for our enemies. According to 1 Pet. 3. 9, *what things soever were written, were written for our learning.* Now Holy Writ contains many imprecations against enemies; as is written (Ps. vi. 11): *Let all my enemies be ashamed and be . . . troubled, let them be ashamed and be troubled* very much.* Therefore we too should pray rather than for our enemies.

Further, to be revenged on one's enemies is harmful to them. But holy men pray for the vengeance of their enemies according to 1 Pet. 3. 10, *How long, . . . dost Thou not avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth.* Wherefore they rejoice in being revenged on their enemies, according to Ps. 78. 10, *The just shall rejoice when he shall see vengeance.* Therefore we should not pray for the enemies, but against them.

Further, man's deed should not be hindered by his prayer. Now sometimes men pray to attack their enemies, else all wars would be unlawful, which is opposed to what is said above (Q. 40, A. 1). Therefore we should not pray for our enemies.

—*Let them be turned back and be ashamed.*

On the contrary, It is written (Matth. v. 44): *Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.*

I answer that, To pray for another is an act of charity, as stated above (A. 7). Wherefore we are bound to pray for our enemies in the same manner as we are bound to love them. Now it was explained above in the treatise on charity (Q. 25, AA. 8, 9), how we are bound to love our enemies, namely, that we must love in them their nature, not their sin; and that to love our enemies in general is a matter of precept, while to love them in the individual is not a matter of precept, except in the preparedness of the mind, so that a man must be prepared to love his enemy even in the individual and to help him in a case of necessity, or if his enemy should beg his forgiveness. But to love one's enemies absolutely in the individual, and to assist them, is an act of perfection.

In like manner it is a matter of obligation that we should not exclude our enemies from the general prayers which we offer up for others: but it is a matter of perfection, and not of obligation, to pray for them individually, except in certain special cases.

Reply Obj. 1. The imprecations contained in Holy Writ may be understood in four ways. First, according to the custom of the prophets to foretell the future under the veil of an imprecation, as Augustine states (*De Serm. Dom. in Monte* i. 21). Secondly, in the sense that certain temporal evils are sometimes inflicted by God on the wicked for their correction. Thirdly, because they are understood to be pronounced, not against the men themselves, but against the kingdom of sin, with the purpose, to wit, of destroying sin by the correction of men. Fourthly, by way of conformity of our will to the Divine justice with regard to the damnation of those who are obstinate in sin.

Reply Obj. 2. As Augustine states in the same book (i. 22), *the martyrs' vengeance is the overthrow of the kingdom of sin, because they suffered so much while it reigned:* or as he says again (*QQ. Vet. et Nov. Test.* lxxviii), *their prayer for vengeance is expressed not in words but in their minds, even as the blood of Abel cried from the earth.* They rejoice in vengeance not for its own sake, but for the sake of Divine justice.

Reply Obj. 3. It is lawful to attack one's enemies, that they may be restrained from sin: and this is for their own good and for the good of others. Consequently it is even lawful in praying to ask that temporal evils be inflicted on our enemies in order that they may mend their ways. Thus prayer and deed will not be contrary to one another.