

## PROLOGUE TO PART 1

Since, according to the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 (“As unto little ones in Christ, I gave you milk to drink, not meat”), a teacher of Catholic truth not only ought to instruct those who are advanced, but is also charged with teaching beginners, our intention in the present work is to propound the things belonging to the Christian religion in a way consonant with the education of beginners. For we have noticed that newcomers to this study are commonly hampered by the writings of different authors—partly because of the proliferation of superfluous questions, articles, and arguments; partly because the things they need to know are taught not according to the order of learning, but instead as is required for the exposition of texts or as opportunities for disputing certain questions present themselves; and partly because frequent repetition in these same writings generates both antipathy and confusion in the minds of the listeners. In an effort to avoid these and other such problems, we will try, with trust in God’s help, to set forth what belongs to sacred doctrine as briefly and clearly as the subject matter allows.

## QUESTION 1

### The Nature and Extent of Sacred Doctrine

In order to situate our goal within certain set limits, we must first inquire into what sacred doctrine (*sacra doctrina*) is and how far it extends.

On this matter there are ten questions to be asked: (1) Is this doctrine necessary? (2) Is it a science? (3) Is it a single science or more than one science? (4) Is it a speculative science or a practical science? (5) How does it compare to the other sciences? (6) Does it constitute wisdom? (7) What is its subject? (8) Does it make use of arguments? (9) Is it appropriate for it to make use of metaphorical or symbolic locutions? (10) Should the Sacred Scripture relevant to this doctrine be expounded by means of multiple senses?

### Article 1

#### Is it necessary to have a doctrine over and beyond the philosophical disciplines?

It seems unnecessary to have any doctrine over and beyond the philosophical disciplines:

**Objection 1:** According to Ecclesiasticus 3:22 (“Seek not the things that are too high for you”), man should not strive for things that lie beyond reason. But the things that fall under reason are adequately treated in the philosophical disciplines. Therefore, it seems superfluous to have a doctrine over and beyond the philosophical disciplines.

**Objection 2:** There cannot be a doctrine that is not about some being, since nothing is known except the true, which is convertible with *being*. But all beings are treated in the philosophical disciplines, even God—this is why one part of philosophy is called theology or divine science, as is clear from the Philosopher in *Metaphysics* 6. Therefore, it was unnecessary to have another doctrine over and beyond the philosophical disciplines.

**But contrary to this:** 2 Timothy 3:16 says: “All scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice.” But divinely inspired Scripture is not pertinent to the philosophical disciplines, which have been devised according to human reason. Therefore, it is advantageous that, over and beyond the philosophical disciplines, there should be another science that is divinely inspired.

**I respond:** It was necessary for human salvation that, over and beyond the philosophical disciplines devised by human reason, there should be a doctrine conformable with divine revelation.

For, first of all, according to Isaiah 64:4 (“The eye has not seen, O God, apart from You, what things You have prepared for them that wait for You”), man is ordered toward God as an end who exceeds the comprehension of reason. But the end must first be known to men, since they have to order their intentions and actions toward the end. Hence, it was necessary for man’s salvation that certain things exceeding human reason should be made known to him through divine revelation.

In addition, it was necessary for man to be instructed by divine revelation even with respect to those things about God that can be discovered by human reason. For the truth about God that is discovered by reason would come to man only from a few, and after a long time, and mixed in with many errors. But the whole of man’s salvation, which lies in God, depends on the cognition of this truth. Therefore, in order that salvation should come to men more suitably and more surely, it was necessary for them to be instructed in divine things through divine revelation.

Therefore, over and beyond the philosophical disciplines discovered by human reason, it was necessary that a sacred doctrine be had through revelation.

**Reply to objection 1:** Even if man should not inquire through human reason into things that are too high for human cognition, such things should nonetheless be accepted through faith when they are revealed by God. This is why in the same place it is added, “For many things are shown to you above the understanding of men.” Sacred doctrine consists in things of this sort.

**Reply to objection 2:** Diverse conceptual characteristics (*ratio cognoscibilis*) make for diverse sciences. For instance, the astronomer and the natural philosopher demonstrate the same conclusion, viz., that the earth is round. But the astronomer does this through a mathematical middle term—i.e., a middle term abstracted from matter—whereas the natural philosopher does it through a middle term considered materially. Hence, nothing prevents it from being the case that the same things that the philosophical disciplines treat insofar as they are knowable by the light of natural reason should be treated by another science insofar as they are known by the light of divine revelation. Hence, the theology associated with sacred doctrine differs in kind from the theology that is posited as a part of philosophy.

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## Article 8

### Is the name ‘God’ the name of a nature or an operation?

It seems that the name ‘God’ is not the name of a nature:

**Objection 1:** In [*De Fide Orthodoxa*] 1 Damascene says, “‘God’ (*théos*) is taken either from *théein*, i.e., to course through and nurture all things, or from *aíthein*, i.e., to burn (for God is our fire who consumes all malice), or from *theásthai*, i.e., to consider all things.” But all of these pertain to operation. Therefore, the name ‘God’ signifies an operation and not a nature.

**Objection 2:** A thing is named by us insofar as it is known. But God’s nature is unknown to us. Therefore, the name ‘God’ does not signify God’s nature.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Fide* 1 Ambrose says that ‘God’ is the name of a nature.

**I respond:** *What* a name is imposed to signify is not always the same as *that because of which* the name is imposed to signify. For just as we know the substance of a thing from its properties or operations, so sometimes we denominate the substance of the thing from some operation or property of it. For instance, we denominate the substance of a rock (*lapis*) from one of its actions, viz., that it hurts the foot (*laedit pedem*); still, the name 'rock' is imposed to signify the substance of the rock and not this action.

On the other hand, if the things in question are known to us in themselves—e.g., cold, heat, whiteness, etc.—then we do not denominate them from other things. Hence, in such cases what a name signifies is the same as that because of which it is imposed to signify.

Therefore, since God is not known to us in His nature, but is instead known to us from His operations and effects, it is possible for us to name Him from these operations and effects, as was explained above (a. 1). Hence, as regards that because of which the name is imposed to signify, the name 'God' is the name of an operation. For this name is imposed because of His universal providence over things, since everyone who talks about God intends to name God from the fact that He has universal providence over things. Thus, in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 12, Dionysius says, "The deity is the one who oversees all things with perfect providence and goodness." Nonetheless, the name 'God', having been taken from this operation, is imposed to signify God's nature.

**Reply to objection 1:** All the things Damascene posited pertain to the providence because of which the name 'God' is imposed to signify.

**Reply to objection 2:** Insofar as we can have cognition of the nature of a given thing from its properties and effects, we are able to signify it by a name. Hence, because from its properties we can have cognition of the substance of a rock in itself, by knowing what (*quid est*) a rock is, the name 'rock' signifies the very nature of a rock as it is in itself. For it signifies the definition of a rock, through which we know what a rock is. For, as *Metaphysics* 4 says, the concept that the name signifies is the definition (*ratio quam significat nomen est definitio*).

However, from God's effects we cannot have cognition of God's nature as it is in itself, i.e., we cannot have cognition of it in such a way as to know of it what it is; instead, as was explained above (q. 12, a. 12), we know it through the ways of preeminence and causality and negation (*per modum eminentiae et causalitatis et negationis*). And so the name 'God' signifies God's nature. For the name is imposed to signify something which exists above all things, which is a principle of all things, and which is denied of all things. For this is what those who name God intend to signify.

## Article 9

### Is the name 'God' a shareable name?

It seems that the name God is shareable (*communicabilis*):

**Objection 1:** If the thing signified by a name is shared, then the name itself is shared. But, as has been explained (a. 8), the name 'God' signifies God's nature, which can be shared by others, according to 2 Peter 1:4 ("He has given us great and precious promises: that by these we may be made partakers of the divine nature"). Therefore, the name 'God' is shareable.

**Objection 2:** It is only proper names that cannot be shared. But the name 'God' is an appellative name and not a proper name; this is clear from the fact that it has a plural form, according to Psalm 81:6 ("I have said: you are gods"). Therefore, the name 'God' is shareable.

**Objection 3:** As has been explained (a. 8), the name 'God' is imposed because of an operation.

But other names imposed on God because of His operations or effects are shareable, e.g., ‘good’, ‘wise’, etc. Therefore, the name ‘God’ is shareable as well.

**But contrary to this:** In speaking of the name ‘God’, Wisdom 14:21 says, “They gave the incommunicable name to stones and wood.” Therefore, the name ‘God’ is unshareable.

**I respond:** A name can be shareable in two ways: (a) *properly (proprie)* and (b) *through a likeness (per similitudinem)*. A name is *properly* shareable insofar as the entire signification of the name is shareable by many, whereas a name is shareable *through a likeness* insofar as it is shareable with respect to some of the things included in the name’s signification. For instance, the name ‘lion’ is properly shareable by all those things in which the nature signified by the name ‘lion’ is found, whereas it is shareable through a likeness by things that participate in some feature of lions—say, audacity or courage—and that are called lions metaphorically.

Now to determine which names are properly shareable, we must take into account that every form that exists in a singular suppositum that individuates it is shareable by many, either in reality or at least conceivably (*vel secundum rem vel secundum rationem saltem*). For instance, human nature is common to many both in reality and conceivably, whereas the nature of the sun is common to many not in reality, but only conceivably; for the nature of the sun can be conceived of as existing in many supposita. This is because the intellect understands the nature of a given species by abstraction from the singular. Hence, the question of whether the nature actually exists in just one suppositum or in many supposita lies beyond our conception (*intellectus*) of the nature of the species. So if we keep the conception of the nature of the species fixed, that nature can be conceived of as existing in many.

However, a singular thing, by the very fact that it is singular, is divided off from all other things. Hence, every name imposed to signify a singular thing as such is unshareable both in reality and conceivably; for it is impossible for us even to conceive of more than one of *this* individual. Hence, no name that signifies an individual as such is properly shareable by many; rather, it is shareable only through a likeness—in the way, for instance, that someone can be called an Achilles metaphorically because he has one of Achilles’s properties, e.g., courage.

On the other hand, in the case of forms that are individuated not by some suppositum but by themselves (because they are subsistent forms), if they are conceived of as they exist in themselves, then they cannot be shared either in reality or conceivably—though perhaps they can be shared through a likeness, in the way just explained for individuals. However, because simple forms that subsist *per se* cannot be understood by us as they exist in themselves, but are instead understood by us in the manner of composite entities that have forms in matter, it follows that, as was explained above (a. 1), we impose on them concrete names that signify a nature in some suppositum. Hence, as far as the nature of the names is concerned (*quantum pertinet ad rationem nominum*), the same explanation holds both for the names that we impose to signify the natures of composite entities and for the names that we impose to signify simple subsistent natures.

So since, as has been said (a. 8), the name ‘God’ is imposed to signify God’s nature, and since, as was shown above (q. 11, a. 3), God’s nature is not multipliable, it follows that the name ‘God’ is not shareable in reality, though it is shareable according to opinion—in the way that the name ‘sun’ would be shareable according to the opinion of someone who claimed that there were many suns. This is why Galatians 4:8 says, “You served them who, by nature, are not gods”; and a Gloss adds, “They were gods not by nature, but in the opinion of men.”

Still, the name ‘God’ is shareable through a sort of likeness—not according to its entire signification, but according to some part of it. For instance, they are called gods who participate in something divine through a likeness, in keeping with the verse “I have said: you are gods.”

However, if there were a name imposed to signify God not on the part of the nature but on the part of the suppositum—i.e., insofar as He is thought of as a *this-something (hoc aliquid)*—then that

name would not be shareable in any way at all, as perhaps is the case with God's four-letter name (*tetragrammaton*) among the Hebrews. The same thing would hold if someone were to impose on the sun a name that designated just *this* individual.

**Reply to objection 1:** The divine nature is shareable only through participation in a likeness.

**Reply to objection 2:** The reason that the name 'God' is an appellative name, and not a proper name, is that it signifies the divine nature as existing in one who has that nature—even though God Himself is in reality neither universal nor particular. For names correspond not to the mode of being that is found in things, but rather to the mode of being insofar it is found in our cognition.

Nonetheless, according to the truth of the matter, the name 'God' is unshareable in the sense explained for the case of the name 'sun'.

**Reply to objection 3:** The names 'good', 'wise', etc. are imposed because of the perfections that proceed from God to creatures, but they are not imposed to signify God's nature. Rather, they are imposed to signify the perfections themselves absolutely speaking. And so, according to the truth of the matter, they are shareable by many. The name 'God', however, is imposed to signify God's nature because of an operation proper to God that we continually experience.

Part 2-2, Question 1

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## QUESTION 1

### The Object of Faith

As for the theological virtues, we must consider, first, faith (questions 1-16); second, hope (questions 17-22); and, third, charity (questions 23-46).

As regards faith, there are four things to consider: first, faith itself (questions 1-7); second, the gifts of understanding and knowledge, which correspond to faith (questions 8-9); third, the vices opposed to faith (questions 10-15); and, fourth, the commandments that belong to this virtue (question 16).

As regards faith itself, we must consider, first, the object of faith (question 1); second, the act of faith (questions 2-3); and, third, the very habit of faith (questions 4-7).

On the first topic there are ten questions: (1) Is the object of faith the First Truth? (2) Is the object of faith something complex (*complexum*) or something non-complex (*incomplexum*)—that is, is it a proposition (*enuntiabile*) or an entity (*res*)? (3) Can anything false fall under faith? (4) Can the object of faith be something that is seen? (5) Can the object of faith be something that is known scientifically (*aliquid scitum*)? (6) Are the things to be taken on faith (*credibilia*) appropriately divided into certain articles of the Faith? (7) Do the same articles fall under faith at all times (*secundum omne tempus*)? (8) How many articles are there? (9) What of the manner of handing down the articles in a creed (*in symbolo*)? (10) Whose role is it to put together a creed of the Faith (*fidei symbolum constituere*)?

### Article 1

#### Is the object of faith the First Truth?

It seems that the object of faith is not the First Truth:

**Objection 1:** It seems that the object of faith is what is proposed to us to be taken on faith (*nobis proponitur ad credendum*). But what is proposed to us to be taken on faith are not just those things that pertain to the divine nature, which is the First Truth, but also things that pertain (a) to Christ's human nature (*ad humanitatem Christi*), (b) to the sacraments of the Church (*ad Ecclesiae sacramenta*), and (c) to the creation of creatures (*ad creaturatum conditionem*). Therefore, it is not only the First Truth that is the object of faith.

**Objection 2:** Since faith and unbelief (*fides et infidelitas*) are opposites, they have to do with the same thing. But each thing contained in Sacred Scripture is such that unbelief can be about it, since if a man denies any one of those things, then he is counted as an unbeliever. Therefore, faith likewise has to be about all the things contained in Sacred Scripture. But Sacred Scripture contains many things that have to do with men and other created entities. Therefore, the object of faith includes not only the First Truth, but also created truth.

**Objection 3:** As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 62, a. 3), faith is divided off from charity on the same level (*fides caritati dividitur*). But by charity we love not only God, who is the highest goodness, but also our neighbor. Therefore, the object of faith is not just the First Truth.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 7, Dionysius says, "Faith has to do with the truth that is simple and everlasting (*circa simplicem et semper existentem veritatem*)." But this is the First Truth. Therefore, the object of faith is the First Truth.

**I respond:** The object of a cognitive habit has two aspects: (a) what is known *materially*, and this is, as it were, the *material object*, and (b) *that through which* it is known, and this is the *formal character of the object* (*formalis ratio obiecti*). For instance, in the science of geometry the conclusions are what is known *materially*, whereas the *formal* character of the knowing is the medium of demonstration through which the conclusions are known.

So, then, in the case of faith, if we are thinking about the *formal character of the object*, this is none other than the First Truth; for the sort of faith we are speaking of assents to something only because it has been revealed by God, and so it relies on divine truth as a medium.

On the other hand, if we are thinking *materially* about the things to which faith assents, then this is not only God Himself, but many other things as well. Still, these things fall under the assent of faith only insofar as they have a relation to God, viz., because it is through certain of God's effects that man is assisted in tending toward the enjoyment of God. And so even on this score the object of faith is the First Truth, since nothing falls under faith except in relation to God—in the same way that the object of the medical art is health because it takes nothing into account except in relation to health.

**Reply to objection 1:** Things pertaining to Christ's human nature or to the sacraments of the Church or to any creatures whatsoever fall under faith insofar as we are ordered toward God through them. And we likewise assent to them because of divine truth.

**Reply to objection 2:** The same thing should be said, in reply to the second objection, with respect to all the things that are handed down in Sacred Scripture.

**Reply to objection 3:** Charity likewise loves one's neighbor because of God, and so, as will be explained below (q. 25, a. 1), the object of charity is, properly speaking, God Himself.

## Article 2

### Is the object of faith something complex in the manner of a proposition?

It seems that the object of faith is not anything complex in the manner of a proposition (*non sit aliquid complexum per modum enuntiabilis*):

**Objection 1:** As has been explained (a. 1), the object of faith is the First Truth. But the First Truth is something non-complex. Therefore, the object of faith is not anything complex.

**Objection 2:** The exposition of the Faith is contained in the creed (*expositio fidei in symbolo continetur*). But it is things (*res*) and not propositions that are posited in the creed; for instance, the creed does not say 'God is almighty', but instead says 'I believe in God the almighty'. Therefore, the object of faith is a thing and not a proposition.

**Objection 3:** Faith is succeeded by sight—this according to 1 Corinthians 13:12 ("We see now through a glass darkly, but then face to face"). But the vision that belongs to heaven is of something non-complex, since it is a vision of God's essence itself. Therefore, the same likewise holds for faith in this life (*ergo etiam fides viae*).

**But contrary to this:** Faith (*fides*) lies between scientific knowledge (*scientia*) and opinion (*opinio*). But what lies in the middle is of the same species as the extremes. Therefore, since scientific knowledge and opinion have to do with propositions, it seems that faith likewise has to do with propositions. And so since faith has to do with propositions, the object of faith is something complex.

**I respond:** What is known exists in the knower in the manner of the knower. But as was explained in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 85, a. 5), the proper mode of the human intellect is to have cognition of the truth by composing and dividing. And so it is with a certain complexity that the human intellect has cognition of things that are simple in their own right—just as, conversely, the divine intellect has cognition in a non-complex way of things that are complex in their own right.

So, then, the object of faith can be thought of in two ways: In one way, on the part of *the thing itself that is taken on faith*, and in this sense the object of faith is something non-complex, viz., the very thing with respect to which one has faith. In the second way, on the part of *the one who has faith*, and in this sense the object of faith is something complex in the manner of a proposition.

This is why both opinions were held with truth by the ancients, and why both are true in a certain respect.

**Reply to objection 1:** This argument goes through with respect to the object of faith on the part of the very thing that is taken on faith.

**Reply to objection 2:** As is clear from the very manner of speaking, in the creed the things with respect to which there is faith are touched upon insofar as they terminate the act of the believer. But the act of the believer is terminated in the thing and not in a proposition, since we form propositions only in order that through them we might have cognition of the things—and this holds in the case of faith, just as it holds in the case of scientific knowledge.

**Reply to objection 3:** The vision that belongs to heaven will be of the First Truth as it exists in

itself—this according to 1 John 3:2 (“When He appears, we shall be like Him, and we will see Him as He is”). And so that vision will exist in the manner of a simple act of understanding and not in the manner of a proposition. By contrast, we do not through faith apprehend the First Truth as He is in Himself. Hence, the arguments are not parallel.

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### Article 1

#### Is the act of faith (or the act of believing) the same as the act of thinking something through with assent?

It seems that the act of faith (or the act of believing) (*credere*) is not the same as the act of thinking something through with assent (*cum assensione cogitare*):

**Objection 1:** ‘Act of thinking something through’ (*cogitatio*) implies a sort of inquiry; for to think something through (*cogitare*) is, as it were, to turn it over all together (*simul agitare*). But in *De Fide Orthodoxa* 4 Damascene says that faith is “consent without inquiry” (*non inquisitus consensus*). Therefore, the act of thinking something through is not relevant to the act of faith.

**Objection 2:** As will be explained below (q. 4, a. 2), the act of faith exists in reason (*fides in ratione ponitur*). But as was explained in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 78, a. 4), the act of thinking something through is an act of the cogitative power, which belongs to the sentient part of the soul. Therefore, the act of thinking something through is not relevant to the act of faith.

**Objection 3:** The act of faith is an act of the intellect, since its object is what is true. But assenting seems to be an act of the will and not an act of the intellect—just like consenting, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 15, a. 1). Therefore, the act of faith is not the act of thinking something through with assent.

**But contrary to this:** This is how Augustine defines the act of faith in *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum*.

**I respond:** There are three senses of ‘the act of thinking something through’ (*cogitare*):

In one sense, it is taken *generally* for any sort of act of considering on the part of the intellect; as Augustine puts it in *De Trinitate* 14, “What I am here calling ‘discernment’ (*intelligentia*) is the act by which we discern something while thinking it through” (*qua intelligimus cogitantes*).

In a second sense, the act of thinking something through is, more properly, the intellect’s act of considering something, accompanied by a sort of inquiry, in the time before it reaches the perfection of understanding the thing through a certitude of vision. In accord with this sense, Augustine says in *De Trinitate* 15, “The Son of God is called the *Word* (*verbum*) of the Father and not the *Thinking* (*cogitatio*) of the Father.” Indeed, when our own thinking arrives at what we know scientifically and is then fully informed (*formata*), we have our own true word. And so in this sense God’s Word should be understood as involving no act of thinking something through, since it does not have anything which is able to become fully informed and able to be unformed (*non aliquid habens formabile quod possit esse informe*). Accordingly, the act of thinking something through is properly speaking a movement of the soul during the time in which it is deliberating and in which it has not yet been brought to perfection through a full vision of the truth.



However, since such a movement can belong to the soul either (a) when it is deliberating with respect to universal intentions, which belong to the intellective part of the soul, or (b) when it is deliberating with respect to particular intentions, which belong to the sentient part of the soul, it follows that 'the act of thinking something through' (*cogitare*) is taken in the second sense for an act of the deliberating *intellect*, whereas 'the act of thinking something through' is taken in a third sense for an act of the *cogitative power*.

Therefore, if 'the act of thinking something through' is taken broadly (*communiter*), in accord with the *first sense*, then the act of thinking something through with assent does not express the whole character of what it is to have an act of faith. For in this sense even someone who is considering what he knows scientifically or what he understands intellectually is thinking something through with assent.

However, if 'the act of thinking something through with assent' is taken in the *second sense*, then it expresses the whole character of that act which is the act of faith. For some acts belonging to the intellect involve firm assent without an act of thinking something through in this sense—as when someone is considering what he knows scientifically or what he understands intellectually, given that a consideration of this sort is already fully informed (*iam est formata*). On the other hand, some acts of the intellect involve an act of thinking something through that is unformed and without firm assent—whether (a) these acts lean (*declinent*) toward neither part [of a contradiction], as happens with someone who has an act of hesitating or doubting (*sicut accidit dubitanti*), or whether (b) they lean more toward one part but are held on some slight evidence (*tenentur aliquo levi signo*), as happens with someone who has an act of suspecting (*sicut accidit suspicanti*); or whether (c) they adhere to one part and yet with a fear of the other part, as happens with someone who has an act of having an opinion (*quod accidit opinanti*).

By contrast, the act which is the act of faith (a) involves *firm adherence to one part*, which the act of faith shares in common with the act of scientific knowing and the act of intellective understanding [of first principles], and yet (b) *its cognition is not brought to perfection by a clear vision*, and this it shares in common with the act of hesitating, the act of suspecting, and the act of having an opinion.

This is the sense in which it is proper to one who is having an act of faith that he is thinking something through with assent. And it is in this way that the act which is the act of faith is distinguished from all the other acts of the intellect that have to do with what is true and what is false.

**Reply to objection 1:** Faith does not involve an inquiry of natural reason in the sense that reason demonstrates the things that are taken on faith. However, it does involve a sort of inquiry into those things by which a man is induced to these take things on faith, viz., because they have been spoken by God and confirmed by miracles.

**Reply to objection 2:** As has been explained, the act of thinking something through is being understood here insofar as it belongs to the intellect and not as an act of the cogitative power.

**Reply to objection 3:** The intellect of the one who has an act of faith is directed toward a single object (*determinatur ad unum*) by the will and not by reason. And so 'assent' is being taken here for an act of the intellect insofar as that act is directed toward a single object by the will.

## Article 2

### Is it appropriate to divide the act of faith into *believing God*, *believing that God ...*, and *believing in God*?

It seems that it is not appropriate to divide the act of faith into *believing God* (*credere Deo*), *believing that God ...* (*credere Deum*), and *believing in God* (*credere in Deum*):

**Objection 1:** A single habit has a single act. But faith is a single habit, since it is a single virtue. Therefore, it is inappropriate to posit more than one act for it.

**Objection 2:** What is common to every act of faith should not be posited as a particular act of faith. But *believing God (credere Deo)* is found universally in every act of faith, since faith depends upon the First Truth. Therefore, it seems inappropriate to distinguish it from other acts of faith.

**Objection 3:** What is appropriate even for non-believers should not be posited as an act of faith. But *believing that God ...* also belongs to non-believers. Therefore, it should not be posited among the acts of faith.

**Objection 4:** Being moved toward an end belongs to the will, the object of which is the good and the end. But *believing or having faith* is an act of the intellect and not of the will. Therefore, *believing in God*, which implies movement toward an end, should not be posited as one of the divisions of faith.

**But contrary to this:** Augustine posits the division in question in *De Verbis Domini* and *Super Ioannem*.

**I respond:** The acts of a power or habit are understood by reference to the ordering of the power or habit to its object. Now there are three possible ways to think of the object of faith. For since, as has been explained (a. 1), the act of faith (*credere*) belongs to the intellect insofar as the intellect is moved by the will to assent, the object of faith can be taken either (a) on the side of the intellect itself or (b) on the side of the will insofar as it moves the intellect.

If it is taken on the side of the *intellect*, then, as was explained above (q. 1, a. 1), there are two things that can be thought of in the object of faith:

The *first* of these is the *material object of faith*. And this is the sense in which the act of faith is posited as *believing that God ... (credere Deum ...)*. For as was explained above (q. 1, a. 1), nothing is proposed to us to be taken on faith except insofar as it pertains to God.

The *second* is the *formal object of faith*, which is like a middle term in virtue of which one assents to what is to be taken on faith. And this is the sense in which the act of faith is posited as *believing God (credere Deo)*. For, as was explained above (q. 1, a. 1), the formal object of faith is the First Truth, to which a man adheres in order to assent to what he takes on faith because of it.

On the other hand, if the object of faith is thought of in the *third* way, insofar as the intellect is *moved by the will*, then in this sense the act of faith is posited as *believing in God (credere in Deum)*, since the First Truth is related to the will insofar as the First Truth has the character of an end.

**Reply to objection 1:** It is not three diverse acts of faith that are designated by these three expressions, but rather one and the same act having diverse relations to the object of faith.

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

**Reply to objection 3:** *Believing that God ...* does not belong to non-believers with the same character with which the act of faith is posited (*sub ea ratione qua ponitur actus fidei*). For they do not believe that there is a God under the conditions that are fixed by the Faith (*non credunt Deum esse sub his conditionibus quas fides determinat*). And so they do not truly believe that God exists (*nec vere credunt Deum*), since, as the Philosopher explains in *Metaphysics* 9, in the case of things that are simple, the only sort of defect in cognition is to fail to grasp them at all (*in simplicibus defectus cognitionis solum non attingendo totaliter*).

**Reply to objection 4:** As was explained above (*ST* 1, q. 82, a. 4 and *ST* 1-2, q. 9, a. 1), the will moves the intellect and the other powers of the soul toward their end. This is why *believing in God* is posited as an act of faith.