

## QUESTION 8

### The Gift of Understanding

Next we have to consider the gift of understanding (*donum intellectus*) (question 8) and the gift of knowledge (*donum scientiae*) (question 9).

As regards the gift of understanding, there are eight questions: (1) Is understanding a gift of the Holy Spirit? (2) Can the gift of understanding exist together with faith in the same individual? (3) Is the understanding which is a gift only speculative or also practical? (4) Does everyone who is in the state of grace (*qui sunt in gratia*) have the gift of understanding? (5) Is this gift found in some individuals who are not in the state of grace (*in aliquibus absque gratia*)? (6) How is this gift related to the other gifts? (7) What in the beatitudes corresponds to this gift? (8) What in the fruits [of the Holy Spirit] corresponds to this gift?

### Article 1

#### Is understanding a gift of the Holy Spirit?

It seems that understanding (*intellectus*) is not a gift of the Holy Spirit:

**Objection 1:** The gifts of grace (*dona gratuita*) are distinct from natural gifts, since they are added to them. But *understanding* (*intellectus*) is a certain natural habit in the soul by which, as is clear from *Ethics* 6, we have cognition of naturally known principles. Therefore, understanding should not be posited as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Objection 2:** As is clear from Dionysius in *De Divinis Nominibus*, creatures participate in God's gifts according to their capacity and mode (*secundum earum proportionem et modum*). But as is clear from Dionysius in *De Divinis Nominibus*, chap. 7, the mode of human nature is to have cognition of the truth not *simply*, which belongs to the character of *understanding*, but *discursively*, which is proper to *reason*. Therefore, the divine cognition that is given to men should be called the gift of *reasoning* (*donum rationis*) rather than the gift of *understanding*.

**Objection 3:** As is clear from *De Anima* 3, among the powers of the soul, the intellect or understanding (*intellectus*) is divided off from the will (*voluntas*). But no gift of the Holy Spirit is called the gift of willing. Therefore, no gift of the Holy Spirit should be called the gift of understanding.

**But contrary to this:** Isaiah 11:2 says, "The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding" (*spiritus sapientiae et intellectus*).

**I respond:** The name *intellectus* (understanding) implies a sort of intimate cognition (*cognitio intima*), since *intelligere* (to understand) is, as it were, *intus legere* (to read inwardly). This is manifestly clear when we consider the difference between understanding (*intellectus*) and sensing (*sensus*). For sentient cognition is taken up with sensible exterior qualities, whereas intellectual cognition penetrates to the essence of a thing, since, as *De Anima* 3 says, the object of the intellect is what a thing is (*quod quid est*).

Now there are many types of things which lie hidden within and which man's cognition has to penetrate interiorly, so to speak. For instance, the substantial nature of things lies hidden under their accidents; and what words signify (*significata verborum*) lies hidden under the words; and prefigured truth lies hidden under similitudes and figures; and, again, intelligible things are in some sense interior with respect to the sensible things that are sensed exteriorly; and effects lie hidden in their causes, and vice versa. Hence, we can speak of *understanding* (*potest dici intellectus*) with respect to all these things.

But since a man's cognition begins with the sensory power—from the outside, as it were—it is clear that the stronger the light of understanding is, the further it is able to penetrate into what is interior (*tanto potest magis ad intima penetrare*). Now the natural light of our intellect (*lumen naturale nostri*

*intellectus*) has limited power (*est finitae virtutis*) and so there is some fixed thing (*ad determinatum aliquid*) that it is able to reach through to. Therefore, a man needs a supernatural light in order to penetrate further, so that he might have cognition of certain things that he is unable to have cognition of by the natural light. And this supernatural light that is given to a man is called the gift of understanding.

**Reply to objection 1:** Through the natural light that is instilled in us we have cognition of certain common principles that are naturally known. But since, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 3, a. 8), man is ordered toward supernatural beatitude, a man must further attain certain higher principles. And this is what the gift of understanding is required for.

**Reply to objection 2:** Discursive reasoning always begins with understanding and ends with understanding, since we reason discursively by proceeding from things that are understood, and discursive reasoning is completed when we arrive at the point of understanding what we were previously ignorant of. Therefore, whatever we reason discursively to proceeds from some prior understanding.

By contrast, a gift of grace does not proceed from the natural light but is instead added to it in the sense of perfecting it. And so this addition is not called *reason*, but is instead called *understanding*, since this added light is related to the things that become known to us supernaturally in the way that the natural light is related to the things that we have cognition of from the beginning.

**Reply to objection 3:** ‘Will’ (*voluntas*) names the appetitive power absolutely speaking, without specifying any excellence. By contrast, ‘intellect’ or ‘understanding’ names the cognitive excellence of penetrating to what is within. And this is why a supernatural gift is named by the name ‘understanding’ rather than by the name ‘will’.

## Article 2

### Is the gift of understanding had together with faith?

It seems that the gift of understanding is not had together with faith:

**Objection 1:** In *83 Quaestiones* Augustine says, “What is understood is limited by the comprehension of the one who understands.” But what one takes on faith is not comprehended—this according to the Apostle in Philippians 3:12 (“Not that I had already comprehended or was already perfect”). Therefore, it seems that faith and understanding cannot exist together in the same individual.

**Objection 2:** Everything that is understood is seen by the intellect. But as was explained above (q. 1, a. 4 and q. 4, a. 1), faith is had with respect to things that are not apparent. Therefore, faith cannot exist together with understanding in the same individual.

**Objection 3:** Understanding is more certain than scientific knowledge (*intellectus est certior quam scientia*). But as was established above (q. 1, a. 5), there cannot be scientific knowledge and faith with respect to the same thing. Therefore, *a fortiori*, there cannot be understanding and faith with respect to the same thing.

**But contrary to this:** In *Moralia* Gregory says, “Understanding illuminates the mind about the things that have been heard.” But someone who has faith can be mentally illuminated about the things that he has heard; thus, Luke 24:45 says that our Lord “opened the meaning of the Scriptures to His disciples, in order that they might understand them.” Therefore, understanding can exist together with faith.

**I respond:** Two distinctions are necessary here, one on the part of *faith*, and the other on the part of *understanding*.

On the part of *faith*, the distinction is that certain things fall *per se* and directly under the Faith, viz., those which exceed natural reason, e.g., that God is three and one and that the Son of God has become incarnate, whereas other things fall under the Faith in the sense that they are ordered toward the former in

some way, e.g., all the things contained in the divine Scriptures.

On the part of *understanding*, the distinction is that there are two ways in which we can be said to understand given things:

In one way, we understand them *perfectly*, viz., we attain to a cognition of the essence of the understood thing in its own right, and of the very truth of the understood proposition in its own right (*secundum quod in se est*). And we are unable to understand what falls directly under the Faith in this way for as long the state of having faith remains, though we are able to understand in this way some of those other things that are ordered toward the Faith.

In the second way, something can be understood *imperfectly*, viz., when there is no cognition of the very essence of the thing or of the truth of the proposition, i.e., no cognition of what the thing is or how it is, and yet it is understood that what appears outwardly is not contrary to that truth; more specifically, a man understands that he should not withdraw from what belongs to the Faith because of what appears outwardly. Accordingly, nothing prevents one, during the time in which he has faith, from understanding in this sense even the things that fall *per se* under the Faith.

**Reply to objection 1 and objection 2 and objection 3:** This makes clear the replies to the objections. For the first three arguments are talking about something that is understood perfectly, whereas the last argument [from Gregory] is talking about the understanding of things that are ordered toward the Faith.

### Article 3

#### Is the understanding which is posited as a gift of the Holy Spirit only speculative, or is it practical as well?

It seems that the understanding which is posited as a gift of the Holy Spirit is not practical, but only speculative:

**Objection 1:** As Gregory says in *Moralia* 1, “Understanding penetrates certain higher things.” But the things that pertain to the practical intellect are very low and not high, viz., singular things, which actions have to do with. Therefore, the understanding which is posited as a gift of the Holy Spirit is not practical understanding.

**Objection 2:** The understanding which is a gift of the Holy Spirit is something more dignified than the understanding which is an intellectual virtue. But as is clear from the Philosopher in *Ethics* 6, the understanding which is an intellectual virtue is directed only toward necessary things. Therefore, *a fortiori*, the understanding which is a gift is directed only toward necessary things. By contrast, the practical intellect has to do not with necessary things, but with contingent things which can be otherwise and which can be done by human action. Therefore, the understanding which is a gift is not practical understanding.

**Objection 3:** The gift of understanding illuminates the mind with respect to things that exceed natural reason. But human actions, which the practical intellect has to do with, do not exceed natural reason, which, as is clear from what was said above (*ST* 1-2, q. 58, a. 2 and q. 71, a. 6), directs one in things to be done. Therefore, the understanding which is a gift is not practical understanding.

**But contrary to this:** Psalm 110:10 says, “... a good understanding for all who do it.”

**I respond:** As was explained above (a. 2), the gift of understanding has to do not only with those things that fall under the Faith principally and in the first place, but also with all the things that are ordered toward the Faith.

Now certain good operations are ordered toward the Faith, since, as the Apostle says in Galatians 5:6, “Faith operates through love.” And so the gift of understanding extends even to certain

actions—not, to be sure, as what it is principally concerned with, but insofar as, according to Augustine in *De Trinitate* 12, we are regulated in our actions “by the eternal conceptions (*rationibus aeternis*), which higher reason adheres to by looking to them and consulting them.” And it is higher reason that is perfected by the gift of understanding.

**Reply to objection 1:** Human actions, considered in themselves, do not have the height of excellence. But insofar as they are referred to the rule of eternal law and to the end of divine beatitude, they have a height such that understanding can have to do with them.

**Reply to objection 2:** The very fact that the gift which is understanding considers eternal and necessary intelligible things not only as they exist in their own right, but also insofar as they are certain rules for human acts, pertains to its dignity. For the more things a cognitive power extends itself to, the more noble it is.

**Reply to objection 3:** As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 71, a. 6), the rule of human acts is both human reason and the eternal law. But the eternal law exceeds natural reason. And so a cognition of human acts insofar as they are regulated by eternal law exceeds natural reason and requires the supernatural light of a gift of the Holy Spirit.

#### Article 4

##### Does the gift of understanding exist in all men who have grace?

It seems that the gift of understanding does not exist in all men who have grace:

**Objection 1:** In *Moralia* 2 Gregory says that the gift of understanding is given “to counter dullness of mind” (*contra hebetudinem mentis*). But many who have grace still suffer from dullness of mind. Therefore, the gift of understanding does not exist in everyone who has grace.

**Objection 2:** Among the things that pertain to cognition, only faith seems to be necessary for salvation, since it is “through faith that Christ dwells in our hearts,” as Ephesians 3:17 says. But not everyone who has faith has the gift of understanding—in fact, as Augustine says in *De Trinitate*, “Those who believe should pray that they might understand.” Therefore, the gift of understanding is not necessary for salvation. Therefore, the gift of understanding does not exist in everyone who has grace.

**Objection 3:** What is common to everyone who has grace is never removed from those who have grace. But the grace of understanding and of the other gifts sometimes removes itself to our advantage (*se utiliter subtrahit*); for as Gregory says in *Moralia* 2, “Sometimes when the mind elevates itself to elation by the understanding of sublime things, it becomes sluggish with a heavy dullness in lowly and ordinary matters” (*in rebus imis et vilibus*). Therefore, the gift of understanding does not exist in everyone who has grace.

**But contrary to this:** Psalm 81:5 says, “They have not known or understood; they walk in darkness.” But no one who has grace walks in darkness—this according to John 8:12 (“He who follows me walks not in darkness”). Therefore, no one who has grace lacks the gift of understanding.

**I respond:** It is necessary for there to be rectitude of will in everyone who has grace, since, as Augustine says, “It is through grace that a man’s will is prepared for the good.” But the will cannot be correctly ordered toward the good except by a prior cognition of the true, since, as *De Anima* 3 says, the object of the will is a good that is understood.

Now just as through the gift of charity the Holy Spirit orders a man’s will so that it is directly moved toward a supernatural good, so, too, through the gift of understanding He illuminates a man’s mind so that it has cognition of the supernatural truth toward which a rightly ordered will has to tend. And so just as the gift of charity exists in everyone who has sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*), so, too, does the gift of understanding.

**Reply to objection 1:** Some who have sanctifying grace can suffer from dullness with respect to certain things that lie beyond the necessity for salvation. But with respect to what is necessary for salvation they are sufficiently instructed by the Holy Spirit—this according to 1 John 2:27 (“His anointing teaches you all things”).

**Reply to objection 2:** Even though not all who have faith fully understand the things that are proposed to be taken on faith, they nonetheless understand that these things are to be taken on faith and that there should be no deviations from them for any reason.

**Reply to objection 3:** The gift of understanding never removes itself from the saints with respect to what is necessary for salvation. However, it does remove itself with respect to other things, with the result that the saints are not able to penetrate all things clearly with their intellects (*non omnia ad liquidum per intellectum penetrare possunt*)—and this in order that an occasion for pride (*materia superbiae*) might be removed.

## Article 5

### Does the gift of understanding exist in individuals who do not have sanctifying grace?

It seems that the gift of understanding exists even in individuals who do not have sanctifying grace:

**Objection 1:** Commenting on Psalm 118:20 (“My soul longs to desire your justifications”), Augustine says, “The intellect flies ahead, and slow affection, or no affection, follows.” But in everyone who has sanctifying grace the affections are prompt, because of charity. Therefore, the gift of understanding can exist in individuals who do not have sanctifying grace.

**Objection 2:** Daniel 10:1 says, “There is a need for discernment (*intelligentia*) in the case of a prophetic vision,” and so it seems that prophecy does not exist without the gift of understanding (*intellectus*). But prophecy can exist without sanctifying grace; this is clear from Matthew 7:22-23, where to those who say, “We prophesied in your name,” the reply is, “I never knew you.” Therefore, the gift of understanding can exist without sanctifying grace.

**Objection 3:** The gift of understanding corresponds to the virtue of faith—this according to Isaiah 7:9, alternative text (“If you do not believe, you will not understand”). But faith can exist without sanctifying grace. Therefore, the gift of understanding can, too.

**But contrary to this:** In John 6:45 our Lord says, “Everyone who has listened to the Father and learned comes to me.” But as is clear from Gregory in *Moralia* 1, it is through understanding that we learn more deeply, or penetrate into, what we have heard. Therefore, whoever has the gift of understanding comes to Christ. But one does not come to Christ without sanctifying grace. Therefore, the gift of understanding does not exist without sanctifying grace.

**I respond:** As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 68, aa. 1-3), the gifts of the Holy Spirit perfect the soul in the sense that it becomes easily moveable by the Holy Spirit (*secundum quod est bene mobile a spiritu sancto*). So, then, the gift of understanding is posited as an intellectual light of grace insofar as man’s intellect becomes easily moveable by the Holy Spirit.

Now the thinking (*consideratio*) involved in this movement lies in a man’s apprehending the truth concerning his end. Hence, unless the human intellect is moved by the Holy Spirit to the point of having a correct estimation of its end, it has not yet received the gift of understanding—no matter how much it understands about certain preambles [to the Faith] because of the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Now a correct estimation of the final end is had only by someone who is not mistaken about the end and who adheres firmly to it as the best. But this belongs only to one who has sanctifying grace—just as, in moral matters, it is through the habit of virtue that a man has a correct estimation of the end. Hence, no one has the gift of understanding without sanctifying grace.

**Reply to objection 1:** Augustine is using the name ‘intellect’ for any sort of intellectual illumination. But intellectual illumination does not reach the complete character of a gift unless a man’s mind is led to the point that the man has a correct estimation of his end.

**Reply to objection 2:** The discernment (*intelligentia*) that is necessary for prophecy is a certain illumination of the mind with respect to those things that are revealed to the prophets. But this is not an illumination concerning a correct estimation of the ultimate end, which is what is pertinent to the gift of understanding.

**Reply to objection 3:** Faith involves only an assent to the things that are proposed. But understanding involves a certain sort of perception of the truth, which, as has been explained, cannot be had about the end except in the case of one who has sanctifying grace. And so the arguments concerning faith and understanding are not parallel.

## Article 6

### Does the gift of understanding differ from the other gifts?

It seems that the gift of understanding does not differ from the other gifts:

**Objection 1:** If their opposites are the same, then the things themselves are the same. But as is clear from Gregory in *Moralia 2*, *wisdom* is opposed to foolishness, *understanding* is opposed to dullness of mind, *counsel* is opposed to precipitateness, and *knowledge* is opposed to ignorance. But foolishness, dullness of mind, ignorance, and precipitateness do not seem to differ from one another. Therefore, neither is understanding distinct from these other gifts.

**Objection 2:** The understanding which is posited as an intellectual virtue differs from the other intellectual virtues by the fact that it is proper to it that it has to do with principles that are known in their own right (*per se nota*). But the gift of understanding does not have to do with any principles that are known in their own right, since the natural habit with respect to first principles is sufficient for things that are naturally known in their own right, whereas faith is sufficient for things that are supernatural; for, as has been explained (q. 1, a. 7), the articles of the faith are like first principles in the realm of supernatural cognition. Therefore, the gift of understanding is not distinct from the other intellectual gifts.

**Objection 3:** Every intellectual cognition is either speculative or practical. But as has been explained (a. 3), the gift of understanding is related to both. Therefore, it is not distinct from the other intellectual gifts, but includes them all.

**But contrary to this:** Things that are enumerated together must in some way be distinct from one another. But as is clear from Isaiah 11:2-3, the gift of understanding is enumerated together with the other gifts. Therefore, the gift of understanding is distinct from the other gifts.

**I respond:** The distinction between the gift of *understanding* and three of the other gifts, viz., *piety*, *fortitude*, and *fear*, is clear, since the gift of understanding belongs to the cognitive power, whereas the three gifts just named belong to the appetitive power. However, the difference between this gift of understanding and the other three gifts, viz., *wisdom*, *knowledge*, and *counsel*, is not so clear.

Now it seems to some that the gift of understanding is distinguished from the gifts of knowledge and counsel by the fact that the latter two belong to practical cognition, whereas the gift of understanding belongs to speculative cognition. On the other hand, it is distinguished from the gift of wisdom, which likewise belongs to speculative cognition, in that judgment belongs to wisdom, whereas what belongs to understanding is the capacity for understanding the things that are proposed, i.e., a penetration of their depths (*sive penetratio ad intima eorum*). This was how we ourselves accounted for the number of the gifts above (*ST 1-2*, q. 68, a. 4).

However, to one who studies the matter diligently, the gift of understanding, as has been explained (a. 3), deals not only with matters to be speculated about, but also with things to be done (*non solum habet se circa speculanda sed etiam circa operanda*); and, similarly, as will be explained below (q. 9, a. 3), the gift of knowledge also deals with both. And so the distinction among the gifts has to be thought about in a different way.

All four of the gifts under discussion are ordered toward supernatural cognition, which has its foundation in us through faith. But “faith comes from hearing,” as Romans 10:17 says. Hence, it is necessary that some things should be proposed to a man not as something seen, but as something heard, and that he assent to these things through faith. Now faith has to do primarily and principally with the First Truth, and it has to do secondarily with certain things that have to be considered concerning creatures. And, as is clear from what was said above (a. 3 and q. 4, a. 2), faith extends itself further to the direction of human acts as well, insofar as it operates through love.

So, then, there are two requirements on our part with respect to those things that belong to the Faith and are proposed to us to be taken on faith. The first is that they be penetrated or grasped by our intellect, and this belongs to the gift of *understanding*. Secondly, a man has to have right judgment concerning these things (*de eis*), so that he judges that certain things are to be adhered to and their opposites withdrawn from. Thus, as regards divine things, this judgment belongs to the gift of *wisdom*; as regards created things, it belongs to the gift of *knowledge*; and in its application to singular actions, it belongs to the gift of *counsel*.

**Reply to objection 1:** The distinction just explained among the four gifts fits in with the distinction that Gregory posits among their opposites.

For dullness (*hebetudo*) is opposed to sharpness (*acuitas*), and understanding is called sharp by a similitude when it is able to penetrate to the depths of the things that are proposed (*penetrare ad intima eorum quae proponuntur*). Hence, dullness of mind is that because of which the mind is not sufficient to penetrate to the depths.

One is called foolish (*stultus*) from the fact that he judges in a perverse way about the common end of life. And so foolishness is properly opposed to wisdom (*sapientia*), which makes correct judgments concerning the universal cause.

Ignorance (*ignorantia*) involves a defect of mind with respect to any given sort of particular thing as well. And so it is opposed to knowledge (*scientia*), through which a man makes correct judgments concerning particular causes, i.e., concerning creatures.

On the other hand, precipitateness (*praecipitatio*) is clearly opposed to counsel (*consilium*), in virtue of which a man does not rush into action prior to reason’s deliberation.

**Reply to objection 2:** The gift of understanding has to do with the first principles of grace-filled cognition, but in a way different from faith. For it belongs to faith to assent to these principles, whereas it belongs to the gift of understanding to mentally penetrate the things that are spoken.

**Reply to objection 3:** The gift of understanding is relevant to both sorts of cognition, viz., speculative and practical, not with respect to judgment but rather with respect to apprehension, so that the things that are spoken might be grasped.

## Article 7

### **Does the sixth beatitude, viz., “Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God,” correspond to the gift of understanding?**

It seems that the sixth beatitude, viz., “Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God,” does not correspond to the gift of understanding:

**Objection 1:** Cleanness of heart (*munditia cordis*) seems to have to do especially with the affections. But the gift of understanding has to do rather with the intellectual power and not with the affections. Therefore, the beatitude in question does not correspond to the gift of understanding.

**Objection 2:** Acts 15:9 says, "... purifying your hearts with faith." But cleanness of heart is acquired through the purification of the heart. Therefore, the beatitude in question pertains to the virtue of faith rather than to the gift of understanding.

**Objection 3:** The gifts of the Holy Spirit perfect a man in the present life. But seeing God does not belong to the present life, since, as was established above (*ST* 1, q. 12, a. 1 and *ST* 1-2, q. 3, a. 8), it beatifies men (*beatos facit*). Therefore, the sixth beatitude, which contains the vision of God, does not pertain to the gift of understanding.

**But contrary to this:** In *De Sermone Domini in Monte* Augustine says, "The sixth operation of the Holy Spirit, i.e., understanding, belongs to the clean of heart, who, with their eye cleansed, can see what the eye does not see."

**I respond:** As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 69, a. 2), there are two things contained in the sixth beatitude, as in the others as well: one in the mode of *merit*, viz., cleanness of heart, and the other in the mode of *reward*, viz., seeing God. And both of them pertain in some way to the gift of understanding.

For there are two sorts of cleanness. The one sort, which cleans the affective part of the soul of disordered affections, prepares and disposes an individual for seeing God. And this sort of cleanness of heart is effected through the virtues and gifts that belong to the appetitive power. By contrast, the other sort of cleanness of heart is a cleanness which brings the vision of God to completion, as it were (*quae est quasi completiva respectu visionis divinae*), and this is the cleanness of a mind that has been purged of phantasms and errors, with the result that what is proposed about God is not taken in the manner of corporeal phantasms or according to heretical perversions. It is this sort of cleanness that the gift of understanding effects.

Similarly, there are two types of vision of God. The one, through which God's essence is seen, is perfect. The other, imperfect vision is such that through it, even if we do not see what God is, we at least see what He is not, and our cognition of God is the more perfect in this life to the extent that we understand more and more that He exceeds whatever is comprehended by our understanding.

Both types of vision of God belong to the gift of understanding. The first belongs to the consummated gift of understanding as it will exist in heaven; the second belongs to the inchoate gift of understanding as it is had in this life (*secundum habetur in via*).

**Reply to objection 1 and objection 2 and objection 3:** This makes clear the reply to the objections. For the first two arguments are talking about the first sort of cleanness. On the other hand, the third argument is talking about the perfect vision of God, whereas the gifts perfect us even in the present life (*et hic*) in a certain inchoative manner, and, as has been explained, these gifts will be brought to completion in the future.

## Article 8

### Among the fruits of the Holy Spirit, does faith correspond to the gift of understanding?

It seems that, among the fruits of the Holy Spirit, it is not faith (*fides*) that corresponds to the gift of understanding:

**Objection 1:** Understanding is a fruit of faith; for Isaiah 7:9 says, "If you do not believe, you will not understand" (*non intelligetis*). (This is an alternative text, where what we have is, "If you do not believe, you will not remain [in power]" (*non permanebitis*.) Therefore, it is not the case that faith is a fruit of understanding.



**Objection 2:** What is prior is not a fruit of what is posterior. But faith seems to be prior to understanding, since, as was explained above (q. 4, a. 7), faith is the foundation of the whole spiritual building. Therefore, faith is not a fruit of understanding.

**Objection 3:** There are more gifts that belong to the intellect than to the appetite. But among the fruits there is only one that belongs to the intellect, viz., faith, whereas all the others belong to the appetite. Therefore, faith does not seem to correspond more to understanding than to wisdom or knowledge or counsel.

**But contrary to this:** The end of each thing is its fruit. But the gift of understanding seems mainly ordered toward the certitude of faith, which is posited as a fruit; for a Gloss on Galatians 5:22 says that the faith which is a fruit is “certitude with respect to invisible things.” Therefore, among the fruits of the Holy Spirit, it is faith that corresponds to the gift of understanding.

**I respond:** As was explained above when we were talking about the fruits (*ST* 1-2, q. 70, a. 1), the fruits of the Spirit are certain ultimate and delectable things that come to exist in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Now what is ultimate and delectable has the character of an end, which is the proper object of the will. And so what is ultimate and delectable in the will must in some sense be the fruit of everything else that belongs to the other powers.

So, then, there are two possible fruits of a gift or virtue that perfects a power, one which belongs to its own power, and the other of which is, as it were, ultimate and belongs to the will.

Accordingly, one should reply that *faith*, i.e., the certitude of faith, corresponds to the gift of understanding as its own proper fruit, whereas *joy*, which belongs to the will, corresponds to it as its ultimate fruit.

**Reply to objection 1:** Understanding is a fruit of the faith which is a virtue. But this is not how ‘faith’ is being taken when faith is called a fruit. Rather, it is being taken for faith’s certitude, which a man arrives at through the gift of understanding.

**Reply to objection 2:** Faith cannot in all cases (*universaliter*) precede understanding, since a man could not assent by belief to anything proposed to him unless he in some sense understood it. However, the perfection of understanding does follow upon the faith which is a virtue, and the certitude of faith follows upon this perfection of understanding.

**Reply to objection 3:** The fruit of practical cognition cannot exist in practical cognition itself, since this sort of cognition is known not for its own sake but for the sake of something else. By contrast, speculative cognition has its fruit within itself, viz., the certitude of the things that it is concerned with. And so there is no proper fruit that corresponds to the gift of counsel, which belongs solely to practical cognition.

On the other hand, there is just one fruit, viz., the certitude signified by the name ‘faith’, that corresponds to the gifts of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, which can belong to speculative cognition as well as to practical cognition.

By contrast, several fruits are posited that belong to the appetitive part of the soul, since, as has already been explained, the character of an end, which is implied by the name ‘fruit’, belongs more to the appetitive power than to the intellectual power.