

QUESTION 154

The Species of Lust

Next we have to consider the parts of lust (*de luxuriae partibus*). And on this topic there are twelve questions: (1) How are the parts of lust divided? (2) Is simple fornication (*fornicatio simplex*) a mortal sin? (3) Is fornication the greatest of sins? (4) Is mortal sin involved in touches and kisses and other pleasurable acts of this sort (*tactus et oscula et alia huiusmodi illecebra*)? (5) Is nocturnal emission [of semen] (*nocturna pollutio*) a sin? (6) Is seduction (*stuprum*) a species of lust? (7) Is rape (*raptus*) a species of lust distinct from seduction? (8) Is adultery (*adulterium*) a determinate species of lust distinct from the other species? (9) Is incest (*incestus*) a determinate species of lust? (10) Can sacrilege (*sacrilegium*) be a species of lust? (11) Is sin contrary to nature (*peccatum contra naturam*) a species of lust? (12) Are sins contrary to nature the greatest sins among the species of lust?

Article 1

Are the species of lust appropriately designated?

It seems inappropriate to designate the following six species of lust: (a) *simple fornication*, (b) *adultery*, (c) *incest*, (d) *seduction*, (e) *rape*, and (f) *sin contrary to nature*:

Objection 1: A diversity of subject matter does not make for a diversity in species. But the division in question is taken from a diversity of subject matter—more specifically, from the fact that an individual has sexual intercourse with a married woman or with a virgin or with a woman of some other status. Therefore, it seems that the species of lust are not thereby diversified.

Objection 2: It does not seem that the species of one vice are diversified by something that pertains to another vice. But *adultery* differs from *simple fornication* only in the fact that an individual has sexual intercourse with a woman (*accedit ad eam*) belonging to another and so commits an injustice. Therefore, it seems that adultery should not be posited as a species of lust.

Objection 3: Just as it happens that an individual might have sexual intercourse with a woman who is obligated to another man by matrimony, so it also happens that an individual might have sexual intercourse with a woman who is obligated to God by a vow. Therefore, just as *adultery* is posited as a species of lust, so, too, *sacrilege* should be posited as species of lust.

Objection 4: An individual who is joined in matrimony commits a sin not only if he has sexual intercourse with a different woman, but also if he is intimate with his own wife in a disordered way. But this latter sin is included under lust. Therefore, it should be counted among the species of lust.

Objection 5: In Corinthians 12:21 the Apostle says, "... again, in order that, when I have arrived, God might not humble me in your presence and I might not mourn the many of those who have previously sinned and have not done penance for the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness that they have committed." Therefore, it seems that *uncleanness (immunditia)* and *lasciviousness (impudicitia)* should be posited as species of lust in the same way that *fornication* is.

Objection 6: What is divided is not put on the same level with what is doing the dividing. But lust is put on the same level as the aforementioned species. For Galatians 5:19 says, "The works of the flesh are manifest; they are fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, lust ..." Therefore, it seems inappropriate for fornication to be posited as a species of lust.

But contrary to this: The division in question is posited in *Decretals* 36, q. 1.

I respond: As has been explained (q. 153, a. 3), lust consists in an individual's enjoying sexual pleasure in a way that does not accord with right reason. There are two ways in which this can happen: (a) with respect to the matter in which one seeks pleasure of this sort, and (b) insofar as, assuming the appropriate matter, other required conditions are not met. And since a circumstance as such does not confer the species on a moral act, but instead the species is taken from the object, i.e., from the subject

matter of the act, it must be the case that the species of lust are designated on the part of the subject matter or object.

There are two ways in which the matter or object is able not to accord with right reason:

(a) *because it is incompatible with the end of the sexual act.* And on this score, insofar as the *generation* of offspring is impeded, it is a *sin contrary to nature*, which occurs in the case of every sexual act from which generation cannot follow. On the other hand, insofar as what is impeded is the *upbringing and advancement (educatio et promotio)* of the offspring that is born, there is *simple fornication*, which occurs between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman (*quae est soluti cum soluta*).

(b) *because the matter in which the sexual act is exercised cannot conform to right reason in relation to other [relevant] individuals.* This happens in two ways. First, from the side of the woman with whom an individual has sexual intercourse, because the honor owed to her is not preserved. And on this score there is *incest*, which consists in the wrongful use of women who are joined to the individual by blood or affinity. Second, from the side of a man who has the woman living under his power. If she is living under her husband's power, then there is *adultery*, whereas if she is living under her father's power, then there is either *seduction*, if no violence is inflicted, or *rape*, if violence is inflicted.

Now these species are diversified more from the side of the woman than from the side of the man. For in the sexual act the woman behaves as a patient and in the manner of the matter, whereas the man acts in the manner of an agent. But it has been explained that the species in question are designated according to differences in the matter.

Reply to objection 1: The diversity of subject matter in question has adjoined to it a diversity in the formal object, which, as has been explained, is taken from the diverse modes of incompatibility with right reason.

Reply to objection 2: As was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 18, a.7), there is nothing to prevent the deformities of different vices from coming together in one and the same act. And it is in this way that adultery is contained under both lust and injustice. Nor is the deformity of injustice related altogether accidentally to the lust (*nec omnino per accidens se habet ad luxuriam*). For the lust is shown to be more grave when it pursues a disordered desire to such an extent that it leads to an injustice as well.

Reply to objection 3: In vowing continence, a woman enters into a sort of spiritual marriage with God. And so the sacrilege that is committed in violating such a woman is a sort of *spiritual* adultery. And other types of sacrilege are traced back in like manner to other species of lust.

Reply to objection 4: The sin of a married man with his own wife has to do not with inappropriate matter but with the other circumstances, which, as has been explained (*ST* 1-2, q. 18, a. 11), do not constitute the species of a moral act.

Reply to objection 5: As a Gloss on the passage in question says, “‘Uncleanness’ is here being used for lust that is *contrary to nature*. On the other hand, ‘lasciviousness’ (*impudicitia*) is what is done by a man with children (*fit cum liberis a viro*), and so it seems to belong to *seduction*.

A alternative reply is that ‘lasciviousness’ has to do with certain acts that surround the sexual act, such as kisses, touches, and others of this sort.

Reply to objection 6: As a Gloss on this passage points out, ‘lust’ is here being taken for any sort of excess.

Article 2

Is simple fornication a mortal sin?

It seems that simple fornication is not a mortal sin:

Objection 1: Things that are enumerated together seem to be of the same kind. But fornication is

enumerated together with certain other things that are not mortal sins. For Acts 15:29 says, "... that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication." But the use of the things in question is not a mortal sin—this according to 1 Timothy 4:4 ("Nothing is to be rejected that is received with thanksgiving"). Therefore, fornication is not a mortal sin.

Objection 2: No mortal sin falls under a divine command. But in Hosea 1:2 the Lord commands, "Take unto yourself a wife of fornications, and with her make children of fornications." Therefore, fornication is not a mortal sin.

Objection 3: No mortal sin is recorded in Sacred Scripture without disapproval. But simple fornication by the ancient fathers is recorded in Scripture without disapproval. For instance, we read in Genesis 16:4 about Abraham's having intercourse with Agar; and later, in Genesis 30:5-9, we read that Jacob had intercourse with Bala and Zelpha, the maids of his wives; and later, in Genesis 38:15ff., we read that Judah had intercourse with Tamar, whom he thought to be a prostitute. Therefore simple fornication is not a mortal sin.

Objection 4: Every mortal sin is contrary to charity. But simple fornication is not contrary to charity—either with respect to love of God, since it is not directly a sin against God, nor even with respect to love of neighbor, since no human being does injury to another human being through simple fornication. Therefore, simple fornication is not a mortal sin.

Objection 5: Every mortal sin leads to eternal perdition. But simple fornication does not do this; for a Gloss from Ambrose on 1 Timothy 4:8 ("Piety is useful for everything") says, "The whole of Christian teaching lies in mercy and piety: if an individual who follows this way suffers a slip of the flesh (*qui lubricum carnis patitur*), he will, to be sure, be punished, but he will not perish." Therefore, simple fornication is not a mortal sin.

Objection 6: In *De Bono Coniugali* Augustine says, "What food is for a man's well-being, sexual intercourse (*concupitus*) is for the well-being of the [human] race." But not every disordered use of food is a mortal sin. Therefore, neither is every instance of disordered sexual intercourse. But this seems especially to be the case with simple fornication, which is the least among the species that were enumerated above.

But contrary to this:

1. In Tobit 4:13 it says, "Take care to keep away from all fornication and, aside from your own wife, do not endure knowing this crime." But 'crime' implies a mortal sin. Therefore, fornication, and every instance of sexual intercourse with someone other than one's wife, is a mortal sin.

2. Nothing except mortal sin excludes one from the kingdom of God. But fornication does indeed exclude one; this is clear from the Apostle in Galatians 5:19ff., where, having begun with fornication and certain other vices, he adds, "Those who do such things will not possess the kingdom of God." There, simple fornication is a mortal sin.

3. In *Decretals* 12, q. 1 it says, "They should know that the same penance is to be imposed for perjury as for adultery, fornication, wilful homicide, and other criminal offenses." Therefore, simple fornication is a criminal sin, i.e., a mortal sin.

I respond: It should be held without any doubt that simple fornication is a mortal sin, despite what is said in a Gloss on Deuteronomy 23:17 ("There will be no prostitutes among the daughters of Israel"), viz., "This is a prohibition against having intercourse with prostitutes, whose disgrace is venial." For it should be called *venal* or *for sale* (*venalis*) rather than *venial* (*venialis*), since it is the former that is proper to prostitutes.

Now to make this clear, notice that every sin committed directly contrary to a man's life is a mortal sin (*considerandum est quod peccatum mortale est omne peccatum quod committitur directe contra vitam hominis*). But simple fornication involves a disorder which tends toward harming the life of one who is going to be born from such an instance of sexual intercourse. For we see, among all the animals in which care by the male and the female is required for the upbringing of the offspring, that

sexual union between them is not promiscuous (*in eis non est vagus concubitus*), but instead involves a male with respect to determinate females, whether one or many; this is clear in the case of all birds. Things are otherwise in the case of animals among whom (a) the female alone is sufficient for the upbringing of the young and (b) there is promiscuous sexual intercourse; this is clear in the case of dogs and other animals of this sort.

Now it is clear that what is required for the upbringing of a human being is not only the care of the mother, by whom the child is nourished, but much more the care of the father, by whom the child should be instructed, and defended, and helped to advance in both interior goods and exterior goods. And so it is contrary to the nature of man to engage in promiscuous sexual intercourse; instead, the male must have a determinate woman with whom he remains not for a limited time, but for a long time or even for a whole lifetime. And the reason why in the human species it is natural for the males to want certitude about [the identity of] their offspring is that the upbringing of their offspring falls to them. But this certitude would be destroyed if sexual union were promiscuous.

Now this limiting [of a man] to a certain woman is called marriage (*matrimonium*), and that is why marriage is said to belong to the natural law (*ideo esse de iure naturali*). And since sexual intercourse is ordered toward the common good of the whole human race, whereas, as was established above (*ST* 1-2, q. 90, a. 2), common goods fall under the determination of law, it follows that this union of a man to a woman that is called marriage is determined by some law. The way in which it is determined among us will be discussed in the Third Part of this work, when the sacrament of matrimony is treated. [*Note for here and below: St. Thomas stopped writing before undertaking the treatise on Matrimony.*]

Hence, since fornication is promiscuous sexual intercourse in the sense that it exists outside of marriage, it is contrary to the good of the offspring that has to be brought up. And so it is a mortal sin. Nor does it matter if an individual who has [carnal] knowledge of a woman through fornication sufficiently provides for the upbringing of the child. For what falls under the determination of the law is judged in accord with what happens generally speaking and not in accord with what can happen in some particular case.

Reply to objection 1: Fornication is enumerated together with the things in question not because it has the same kind of sinfulness as the others, but because the matters mentioned in this passage were equally liable to generate disagreement between Jews and Gentiles and to prevent their unanimous consent. For among the Gentiles simple fornication was not regarded as illicit—and this because of the corruption of natural reason—whereas the Jews, instructed by divine law, regarded it as illicit.

The other things that are posited in this place were such that the Jews abominated them because of the custom of their ordinary life under the Law. Hence, as was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 103, a. 4), the Apostles forbade these things not because they were illicit in their own right, but because they were abominable to the Jews.

Reply to objection 2: Fornication is said to be a sin insofar as it is contrary to right reason. But a man's reason is right or correct insofar as it is regulated by God's will, which is the first and highest rule. And so the fact that a man does something because of God's will by obeying His command is not contrary to right reason, even though it might seem to be contrary to the usual order of reason—just as it is likewise not contrary to nature that something is done miraculously by God's power, even though it is contrary to the usual course of nature.

And so just as Abraham did not sin by willing to kill his innocent son, because he was obeying God—even though, considered in its own right, this was generally opposed to the rectitude of human reason—so, too, Hosea did not sin by fornicating because of God's command. Nor should sexual intercourse of this sort be called 'fornication', even though it would be called fornication in reference to the usual course of things. Hence, in *Confessiones* 3 Augustine says, "When God commands something that is contrary to the customs or arrangements of any people, then even if it has never been done there, it must be done." And later on he adds, "For just as, among the powers of human society, the greater

authority is to be obeyed in preference to the lesser, so, too, God is to be obeyed in preference to all of them.”

Reply to objection 3: As we shall show below when we discuss matrimony, the sexual intercourse of Abraham and Jacob with their handmaidens was not fornication.

On the other hand, it is unnecessary to exonerate Judah from sin, since it was he who initiated the sale of Joseph.

Reply to objection 4: Simple fornication is contrary to love of neighbor in the sense that, as has been shown, it is incompatible with the good of the offspring to be born—more specifically, since it makes a contribution to generation in a way that does not befit the offspring to be born.

Reply to objection 5: It is through works of piety that an individual who suffers “a slip of the flesh” is liberated from eternal perdition, insofar as (a) through works of this sort he is disposed toward obtaining the grace through which he might repent, and insofar as (b) through works of this sort he makes satisfaction for the slip of the flesh that has been committed—but not in such a way that even if he persevered without repentance in the slip of the flesh up to his death, he would be liberated through acts of piety.

Reply to objection 6: From a single instance of sexual intercourse a human being can be generated. And so a disorder in sexual intercourse that impedes the good of the offspring to be born is by its very genus a mortal sin—and not just because of the disorder in the sentient desire.

By contrast, it is not the case that the good of the whole life of a man is impeded by one instance of eating, and an act of gluttony is not by its genus a mortal sin. However, it would be a mortal sin if someone knowingly ate food which would change the whole condition of his life, as is clear from the case of Adam.

Nor is fornication the least of the sins contained under lust. For instance, an instance of sexual intercourse with one’s wife that is undertaken out of excessive sensual desire (*ex libidine*) is a lesser sin.

Article 3

Is fornication the most serious of sins?

It seems that fornication is the most serious of sins:

Objection 1: A sin seems greater to the extent that it proceeds from a greater degree of sensual desire (*ex maiori libidine procedit*). But the greatest degree of sensual desire exists in fornication, since a Gloss on 1 Corinthians 6:18 says, “The ardor of sensual desire is the greatest in lust.” Therefore, it seems that fornication is the most serious of sins.

Objection 2: An individual sins more seriously to the extent that he wrongs a thing that is more closely connected to him; for instance, he sins more seriously if he strikes his father than if he strikes a stranger. But as 1 Corinthians 6:18 says, “One who fornicates sins against his own body,” which is something connected most closely of all to a man. Therefore, it seems that fornication is the most serious of sins.

Objection 3: To the extent that a good is greater, a sin committed against that good seems to be more serious. But as is clear from what was said above (a.2), the sin of fornication seems to be contrary to the good of the whole human race. It is even contrary to Christ—this according to 1 Corinthians 6:15 (“Shall I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?”). Therefore, fornication is the most serious of sins.

But contrary to this: Gregory claims that sins of the flesh are lesser sins than spiritual sins.

I respond: The seriousness of a sin can be looked at in two ways: *in its own right* (*secundum se*), and *incidentally* (*secundum accidens*). The seriousness of a sin *in its own right* is judged on the basis of

its own species, which is taken from the good to which the sin is opposed. Now fornication is contrary to the good of a human being who is going to be born. And so, according to its own species, fornication is a more serious sin than sins that are contrary to exterior goods, e.g., theft and other sins of that sort, whereas it is a lesser sin than sins that are directly contrary to God or a sin that is contrary to the life of a human being who has already been born, e.g., homicide.

Reply to objection 1: The sensual desire (*libido*) that makes a sin worse is that which is seated in an inclination of the *will*. By contrast, the sensual desire that exists in the *sentient appetite* diminishes a sin, since to the extent that an individual sins with a more passionate impulse, the less serious the sin is. This is why, in *De Agone Christiano*, Augustine says, “Of all the ordeals of Christians, the most difficult are the battles for chastity, where there is a daily skirmish, but rarely a victory.” And in *De Summo Bono* Isidore says, “It is more through the lust of the flesh than through anything else that the human race is subject to the devil”—since it is very difficult to overcome the intensity of this passion.

Reply to objection 2: An individual who fornicates is said to sin against his own body not only because (a) the pleasure of fornication is consummated in the flesh—something that occurs in the case of gluttony as well—but also because (b) he acts in a way contrary to his own body, viz., insofar as he weakens and defiles it in an undue manner and mixes it with another.

However, it does not follow from this that fornication is the most serious of sins. For in a human being reason is more valuable than the body, and so if there is a sin that is more in conflict with reason, then it will be more serious.

Reply to objection 3: The sin of fornication is opposed to the good of the human species insofar as it impedes the singular generation of a human being who is going to be born. But an individual who already actually participates in the species attains to the notion of the species more than does an individual who is a human being in potentiality. Accordingly, homicide is a more serious sin than fornication and all the other species of lust, in the sense of being more opposed to the good of the human species.

Likewise, the divine good is a greater good than the good of the human species. And so sins that are opposed to God are greater sins. But fornication is not a sin against God *directly* (*nec directe*)—as if the fornicator intended to offend God—but, like all mortal sins, it is a sin against God *in what follows from it* (*ex consequenti*).

Again, just as the members of our body are members of Christ, so, too, our spirit is also one with Christ—this according to 1 Corinthians 6:17 (“He who is joined to God is one spirit”). Hence, spiritual sins are more opposed to Christ than fornication is.

Article 4

Is mortal sin involved in touches and kisses?

It seems that mortal sin is not involved in touches and kisses:

Objection 1: In Ephesians 5:3 the Apostle says, “Fornication and all uncleanness, or avarice—let it not be named among you, as befits saints.” And later (verse 4) he adds, “... or anything shameful” [Gloss: “like kisses or embraces”] “or foolish talking” [Gloss: “such as flattering words”] “or scurrilousness” [Gloss: “which foolish people call ‘sophisticated speech’, i.e., droll speech”]. Afterwards (verse 5) the Apostle adds, “For know and understand that no fornicator, or unclean individual, or avaricious individual (which is servitude to idols) has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God”—where he does not repeat anything about shamefulness, or about foolish talking or scurrilousness, either. Therefore, these latter are not mortal sins.

Objection 2: Fornication is said to be a mortal sin because it impedes the good of the offspring

that is going to be generated and brought up. But kissing and touching and embracing do not contribute anything at all to this. Therefore, mortal sin cannot exist in them.

Objection 3: Those things that are mortal sins in their own right can never be done well. But kissing and touching and things of this sort can sometimes be done without sin. Therefore, they are not mortal sins in their own right.

But contrary to this:

1. A lustful look (*aspectus libidinosus*) is less than a touch or an embrace or a kiss. But a lustful look is a mortal sin—this according to Matthew 5:28 (“... every one who looks at a woman in order to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart”). Therefore, *a fortiori*, a lustful kiss or other such thing is a mortal sin.

2. In *Ad Pomponium de Virginitate* Cyprian says, “The very intercourse of the two of them, their conversation and kissing, and their shameful and filthy sleeping together is an acknowledgment of their disgrace and crime.” Therefore, by the actions just mentioned a man becomes guilty of a crime, i.e., of a mortal sin.

I respond: There are two ways in which something is said to be a mortal sin:

(a) *with respect to its species*. And on this score a kiss, embrace, or touch does not by its nature imply a mortal sin. For these can be done without lust (*absque libidine*), either in light of the custom of a region or because of some necessity or reasonable cause.

(b) *in light of its cause*. For instance, an individual who does a work of mercy (*dat eleemosynam*) in order to lead someone into heresy commits a mortal sin because of his corrupt intention. Now it was explained above (*ST* 1-2, q. 74, a. 8) that consenting to the pleasure of a mortal sin is in itself a mortal sin and not simply a consenting to the act. And so, since fornication is a mortal sin—and the other species of lust even more so—it follows that consenting to the pleasure of such a sin is a mortal sin, and not simply a consenting to the act. And so, when kisses and embraces and other acts of this sort are done for the sake of pleasure of the kind in question, it follows that they are mortal sins, and they alone are called lustful (*libidinosa*). Hence, acts of this sort are mortal sins insofar as they are lustful.

Reply to objection 1: The reason that the Apostle does not repeat the three things in question is that they have the nature of a sin only insofar as they are ordered toward what preceded them.

Reply to objection 2: Even though kisses and touches do not in their own right impede the good of human offspring, they nonetheless proceed from lust, which is the root of this impeding. And on this score they have the nature of a mortal sin.

Reply to objection 3: This argument reaches the conclusion that things of the sort in question are not sins *with respect to their species*.

Article 5

Is nocturnal emission a sin?

It seems that nocturnal emission [of semen] (*nocturna pollutio*) is a sin:

Objection 1: Merit and demerit have to do with the same thing. But someone who is sleeping can merit; this is clear from the case of Solomon who, as 3 Kings 3:5ff. and 2 Paralipomenon 1:7ff. report, received the gift of wisdom from the Lord while he was sleeping. Therefore, one can demerit while sleeping. And so it seems that nocturnal emission is a sin.

Objection 2: Anyone who has the use of reason is able to commit a sin. But an individual has the use of reason while sleeping, since often in his dreams he thinks about something and prefers one thing to another, either consenting or dissenting. Therefore, an individual is able to sin while sleeping. And nocturnal emission is not prevented by sleep from being a sin, given that it is a sin by the very genus of

the act.

Objection 3: It is useless to instruct or reprove someone who is unable to act either in accord with reason or contrary to reason. But a man is instructed and reprovved by God in his sleep—this according to Job 33:15-16 (“Through a dream, in a vision at night, when a deep sleep normally occupies men, He opens the ears of men and, teaching, He instructs them with His learning”). Therefore, in dreams an individual is able to act in accord with reason or contrary to reason, i.e., to act well or to sin. And so it seems that nocturnal emission is a sin.

But contrary to this: In *Super Genesim ad Litteram* 12 Augustine says, “When (a) the very image that comes into the mind of a speaker is expressed in the vision of a sleeper in such a way that no distinction is discerned between the image and a real union of bodies, when (b) the flesh is continuously moved, and when (c) what follows is what usually follows such movement, then this is done without sin, just as much as it is without sin for those who are awake to speak about such things and, as they are speaking, to be doubtlessly thinking about those things.”

I respond: There are two ways in which nocturnal emission can be thought of:

First, it can be thought of *in its own right* (*secundum se*). And on this score it does not have the character of being sinful. For every sin depends on the judgment of reason, since the very first movement of sensuality is a sin only insofar as it could have been kept in check by the judgment of reason. And so, if the judgment of reason is subtracted, then the character of being sinful is removed. Now as is clear from what was said in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 84, a. 8), when an individual is sleeping, his reason does not have free judgment, since there is no sleeping individual who does not treat certain similitudes of images as real things. And so what a man without the free judgment of reason does while sleeping is not imputed to him as a sin, in just the same way that what a mad man or mindless man does is not imputed to him as a sin.

Second, nocturnal emission can be thought of *in relation to its cause* (*per comparationem ad suam causam*). There can be three such causes:

(a) One is a *bodily cause*. For when the seminal humor abounds in the body, or when there is a thinning out of the seminal humor, either because of an excessive heating of the body or because of some other sort of agitation, a sleeper dreams of things that pertain to the expulsion of an abundant or thinned out humor of the sort in question—just as also happens when a nature is weighed down by any other sort of excess, with the result that sometimes images are formed in the imagination that pertain to the emission of such excesses. Therefore, if the abundance of such a humor proceeds from a *culpable cause*, as when it proceeds from an excess of food or drink, then the nocturnal emission has the character of a sin because of its cause. On the other hand, if the abundance or thinning does not proceed from a culpable cause, then the nocturnal emission is not a sin, either in its own right or in its cause.

(b) The second possible cause of nocturnal emission is *the inner soul* (*animalis interior*)—as, for instance, when it happens that because of a previous line of thought (*ex cogitatione praecedenti*) a sleeper has an emission. Now the line of thought which precedes in one’s waking state is sometimes purely theoretical, as when someone is thinking about carnal sins because of a philosophical discussion (*causa disputationis*), whereas sometimes it is accompanied by feelings of sentient desire or of abhorrence.

Now nocturnal emission happens more because one’s thinking about carnal vices has been accompanied by a sentient desire for such pleasures, since because of the latter a certain trace and inclination remains within the soul, so that the sleeper is more easily induced in his imagination to consent to acts from which the emission follows. Accordingly, in *Ethics* 1 the Philosopher says, “Insofar as certain movements in some degree pass” from the waking state to the state of sleep, “the dreams of studious men are better than those of any other individuals.” And in *Super Genesim ad Litteram* Augustine says, “Because of the good affections belonging to the soul, certain of its merits shine forth even in its dreams.” And so it is clear how nocturnal emission might have the character of a sin on the

part of its cause.

However, it sometimes happens that emission in one's dreams also proceeds from a previous theoretical consideration of carnal acts—especially as accompanied by abhorrence. And in such a case the emission does not have the character of a sin, either in its own right or in its cause.

(c) The third sort of cause is an *extrinsic spiritual cause*, e.g., when the images had by the sleeper are moved toward the effect in question by the operation of a demon. And sometimes this occurs along with a previous sin, viz., neglecting to prepare oneself against the demon's illusions—hence the words of the hymn that is sung at night: “Repress our enemy, lest our bodies be defiled.” However, sometimes it occurs without any sin on the part of the man and solely because of the demon's wickedness—in the way that we read in *Collationes Patrum* of a man who always suffered from nocturnal emission on feast days, and that the devil procured this in order to prevent him from receiving Holy Communion.

So, then, it is clear that nocturnal emission is never a sin, but that it is sometimes the result of a previous sin.

Reply to objection 1: Solomon did not merit wisdom from God *while sleeping*; instead, as Augustine explains in *Super Genesim ad Litteram* 12, [his receiving wisdom in his sleep] was a sign of his *previous desire*, in light of which his petition is said to have been pleasing to God.

Reply to objection 2: The interior sentient powers are to a greater or lesser degree repressed by sleep, because of the turbulence or the purity of the vapors, and because of this the use of reason is to a greater or lesser degree impeded in sleep. Still, as was explained in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 84, a. 8), it is always the case that the use of reason is impeded with respect to something or other [in sleep], with the result that reason cannot have a judgment that is altogether free. And so what an individual does in such a state is not imputed to him as a sin.

Reply to objection 3: Reason's *apprehension* is not impeded in sleep in the same way as its *judgment*, which is perfected by turning toward the sensible things that are the first principles of human cognition. And so nothing prevents a man's reason from apprehending something new in sleep, either from what is left over from preceding thoughts and from the images presented to him or, again, from divine revelation or from the instigation of a good or bad angel.

Article 6

Should seduction be posited as a species of lust?

It seems that seduction (*stuprum*) should not be posited as species of lust:

Objection 1: As is established in *Decretals* 36, q. 1, seduction involves the illicit deflowering of virgins. But this can occur between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman (*potest esse soluti cum soluta*), which pertains to fornication. Therefore, seduction should not be posited as a species of lust that is distinct from fornication.

Objection 2: In *De Patriarchis* Ambrose says, “Let no one delude himself concerning human laws: all seduction is adultery.” But among species divided by opposites, it is not the case that one is contained under another. Therefore, since adultery is posited as a species of lust, it seems that seduction should not be posited as a species of lust.

Objection 3: To inflict injury on someone seems to pertain more to *injustice* than to *lust*. But an individual who commits seduction inflicts injury on another, viz., on the girl's father, who can “refer the injury to himself as a personal injury” and take legal action against the seducer with respect to the injuries. Therefore, seduction should not be posited as a species of *lust*.

But contrary to this: Seduction consists properly in the sexual act by which a virgin is deflowered. Therefore, since lust has to do properly with sexual acts, it seems that seduction is a species

of lust.

I respond: A determinate species of a given vice should be posited where there is some special deformity having to do with the matter of that vice.

Now, as was explained above (q. 153, a. 1), lust is a sin that has to do with sexual acts. And in the case of a virgin who is under the care of her father, there is a special deformity if she is corrupted—both (a) on the part of the *girl*, who, by the fact that she is violated with no previous marriage compact in place, is prevented from pursuing a lawful marriage and is put on the path to promiscuity (*ponitur in via meretricandi*), which she had been held back from in order not to lose the seal of virginity, and (b) on the part of *her father*, who is solicitous for her as her guardian—this according to Ecclesiasticus 42:11 (“Keep a sure watch over a shameless daughter, lest she ever might make you a laughing-stock to your enemies”).

And so it is clear that seduction, which involves the illicit deflowering of a virgin who is under the care of her parents, is determinately a species of lust.

Reply to objection 1: Even though a virgin is free of the matrimonial bond, she is nonetheless not free of her father’s power. Also, the seal of virginity is a special obstacle to the intercourse of fornication, in that it should be removed only by marriage. Hence, seduction is not simple fornication, which is instead intercourse with promiscuous women (*cum meretricibus*), i.e., women who have already been corrupted. This is clear from a Gloss on 2 Corinthians 12:21 (“... those who have not done penance for the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness that they have committed”).

Reply to objection 2: In this place Ambrose is taking ‘seduction’ (*stuprum*) in a different sense, viz., insofar as it is used generally for *any* sin of lust. Hence, what he is here calling ‘seduction’ (*stuprum*) is a married man’s sexual intercourse with any woman other than his own wife. This is clear from what he adds: “... nor is it licit for the husband to do what it is not licit for the wife to do.” Moreover, this is the way to understand Numbers 5:13, where it says, “If the adultery is hidden and cannot be made manifest to witnesses, then since she has not been discovered in adultery (*in stupro*) ...”

Reply to objection 3: Nothing prevents a sin from becoming more deformed by being joined to another sin. Now a sin of lust becomes more deformed by a sin of injustice, since the excessive sentient desire seems to be more disordered if it does not abstain from what is pleasurable in order to avoid unjust injury (*ut iniuriam vitet*). Now [seduction] has two associated injuries:

(a) One is *on the part of the virgin*, who is such that even if [the man] does not corrupt her by force, he nonetheless seduces her, and so he is obliged to make reparation to her. Hence, Exodus 22:16-17 says, “If a man seduces a virgin who is not yet betrothed and sleeps with her, he shall endow her and have her as his wife. However, if the virgin’s father refuses to give her to him, he shall give money in accord with the dowry that virgins are wont to receive.”

(b) The second injury is *to the girl’s father*. Hence, according the Law he is obligated to pay him a penalty. For Deuteronomy 22:28-29 says, “If a man finds a girl who is a virgin and who is not betrothed to anyone, and if, taking her, he has sexual intercourse with her, and if the matter comes to judgment, then the one who slept with her shall give the girl’s father fifty sicles of silver, and shall have her as his wife; and since he has humiliated the girl, he will be unable to put her away all the days of his life.” And, as Augustine explains, the reason for this is that “he should not seem to have made a mockery of her.”

Article 7

Is rape a species of lust distinct from seduction?

It seems that rape (*raptus*) is not a species of lust distinct from seduction:

Objection 1: In *Etymologia* Isidore says, “Seduction (*stuprum*), i.e., rape (*raptus*), is properly speaking illicit sexual intercourse and takes its name from causing corruption. Hence, whoever perpetrates a rape enjoys a seduction.” Therefore, it seems that rape should not be posited as a species of lust distinct from seduction.

Objection 2: Rape seems to involve violence, since in *Decretals* 36, q. 1 it says, “Rape is committed when a girl is violently abducted from the house of her father, so that, once corrupted, she is had as one’s wife.” But the fact that violence is inflicted on another is related incidentally to lust, which in its own right has to do with the pleasure of sexual intercourse. Therefore, it seems that rape should not be posited as a determinate species of lust.

Objection 3: The sin of lust is restrained by marriage; for instance, 1 Corinthians 7:2 says, “For fear of fornication, let every man have his own woman.” But rape is an impediment to a subsequent marriage, since in the Council of Meaux it says, “We decree that those who rape or abduct or seduce women should in no way have them as their wives—even though, after a while, they may take them in marriage with the consent of their parents.” Therefore, rape is not a determinate species of lust distinct from seduction.

Objection 4: An individual can know his own wife carnally without committing the sin of lust. But it is possible for rape to be committed by an individual’s forcibly carrying off his own wife from the home of her parents and knowing her carnally. Therefore, rape should not be posited as a determinate species of lust.

But contrary to this: As Isidore claims, “Rape is illicit sexual intercourse.” But this involves the sin of lust. Therefore, rape is a species of lust.

I respond: In the sense in which we are now speaking of it, rape (*raptus*) is a species of lust. Sometimes it comes together in the same act with seduction, but sometimes rape occurs without seduction and sometimes there is seduction without rape.

They come together in the same act when an individual uses violence to deflower a virgin illicitly. This violence is sometimes inflicted both on the virgin herself and on her father, and sometimes it is inflicted on the father but not the virgin, viz., when she herself consents to being forcibly taken from the home of her father. There is another way in which the violence associated with rape is different [in different cases]. For sometimes the girl is forcibly abducted from the home of her parents and forcibly corrupted, whereas sometimes, even if she is forcibly abducted, the virgin is nonetheless not forcibly corrupted but by her own will, whether she is corrupted by sexual intercourse that constitutes an instance of fornication or by marital intercourse. For however things stand with the violence, the nature of rape is preserved.

Now rape occurs without seduction when an individual rapes a widow or a girl who has already been corrupted. Hence, Pope Symmachus says, “We detest those who rape widows or virgins, because of the monstrosity of such a crime.”

On the other hand, seduction occurs without rape when an individual deflowers a virgin illicitly without inflicting violence.

Reply to objection 1: The reason why rape and seduction are sometimes posited for one another is that they very often come together in the same act.

Reply to objection 2: The infliction of violence seems to stem from the magnitude of the sensual desire, because of which an individual does not draw back from endangering himself [spiritually] by inflicting violence.

Reply to objection 3: The rape of girls who are betrothed to someone else has to be treated differently from the rape of girls who are not betrothed to anyone else. For those who are betrothed to others must be restored to their spouses, who by the very betrothal have rights in their case (*in eis ius habent*). On the other hand, girls who are not betrothed to anyone else have first to be restored to the power of their fathers and, then, with the consent of the parents, they can licitly take them as their

wives. If it happens in any other way, then the marriage is contracted illicitly; for anyone who steals a thing is obliged to make restitution for it. Nor does rape dissolve a marriage that has already been contracted, even though it does block a marriage that is about to be contracted.

Now what was said by the cited Council was said by way of detesting the crime, and it has been abrogated. Hence, Jerome says something contrary to it: “Three kinds of lawful marriage are written about in the Scriptures. The first is a chaste virgin’s being given away lawfully in her virginity to a man. The second is a virgin’s being discovered by a man in the city and being forced to have sexual relations with him: if her father wants him to, that man shall endow her with as much as the father judges appropriate, and he shall pay that price for her purity [cf. Deuteronomy 22:23-29]. The third is when the virgin is taken away from such a man and is given to another by the father’s will.” Alternatively, we may take the last [sort of lawful marriage] to refer to virgins who have been betrothed to someone else—especially if this betrothal was expressed by words in the present tense.

Reply to objection 4: A betrothed man has, by the very betrothal, a certain right in the case of his betrothed woman. And so even though he sins by resorting to violence, he is excused from the crime of rape. Hence, Pope Gelasius says, “The law of past rulers stated that rape is committed when a virgin with regard to whose marriage nothing has so far been decided is seen to be abducted by force.”

Article 8

Is adultery a determinate species of lust distinct from the others?

It seems that adultery (*adulterium*) is not a determinate species of lust distinct from the others:

Objection 1: As a Gloss on Exodus 20:14 puts it, adultery is predicated on the basis of an individual’s having sexual relations with a woman other than his own (*ex eo quod aliquis ad alteram accedit praeter suam*). But ‘a woman other than his own’ can apply to women in diverse situations, e.g., a virgin living under the power of her father, a promiscuous woman, or a woman of any other status. Therefore, it seems that adultery is not a species of lust distinct from the others.

Objection 2: Jerome says, “It does not matter why a man behaves unreasonably. Hence Sixtus the Pythagorean says: ‘Someone who is an excessively ardent lover with respect to his own wife is an adulterer’”—and, by parity of reasoning, with respect to any other woman. But in every instance of lust there is a sensual love more ardent than is appropriate. Therefore, adultery is found in every instance of lust. Therefore, it should not be posited as a species of lust.

Objection 3: There does not seem to be a different species of sin where the same type of deformity exists. But there seems to be the same type of deformity in seduction and in adultery, since in both cases a woman who is subject to another’s power is violated. Therefore, adultery is not a species of lust distinct from the others.

But contrary to this: Pope Leo says, “Adultery is committed when, whether through the impulse of one’s own sensual desire or because of the consent of the other, there is sexual intercourse with another man or another woman in contravention of the marriage pact.” But this implies a special deformity belonging to lust. Therefore, adultery is a determinate species of lust.

I respond: As its name implies, adultery (*adulterium*) is access to another’s marriage bed (*ad alienum torum*). In this matter there are two ways in which an individual sins against chastity and the good of human generation: first, insofar as he has sexual intercourse with a woman who is not united to him in marriage, which is required for the good of bringing up one’s own offspring; and, second, insofar as he has sexual intercourse with a woman who is joined to another in marriage and so impedes the good of the offspring of another. The same line of reasoning holds for a married woman who is corrupted by adultery. Hence, Ecclesiasticus 23:32-33 says, “Every woman who leaves her husband will be guilty of

sin. For, first of all, she has been unfaithful to the law of the Most High—in which it is commanded, “Thou shall not commit adultery”—“and, second, she has committed an offense against her husband”—by making it uncertain which children are his—“and, thirdly, she has fornicated in her adultery and begotten children of another man”—which is contrary to the good of her offspring. The first of these is common to all mortal sins, whereas the other two pertain to the deformity of adultery.

Hence, it is clear that adultery is a determinate species of lust because it has a special deformity having to do with sexual acts.

Reply to objection 1: If an individual who has a wife has sexual intercourse with another woman, his sin can be named either (a) from his side, in which case it is always adultery, since he is acting against the fidelity that belongs to marriage, or (b) from the side of the woman with whom he has sexual intercourse, and on this score it is sometimes adultery, viz., when a married man has sexual intercourse with someone else’s wife, and it sometimes has the character of seduction—or of something else, depending on the status of the women with whom he has sexual intercourse. Now it was explained above (a. 1) that the species of lust are derived from the diverse situations of the women.

Reply to objection 2: As has been explained (a. 2), marriage is specifically ordered toward the good of human offspring. Moreover, adultery is specifically contrary to marriage insofar as it violates the marital fidelity that one owes to his or her spouse. And it is because an individual who is an excessively ardent lover of his wife does something contrary to the good of marriage by using her in a dishonorable way, even though he is not violating marital fidelity, that he can in some sense be called an adulterer—even more so than someone who is an excessively ardent lover of another woman.

Reply to objection 3: A wife is in the power of her husband in the sense of being joined to him in marriage, whereas a girl is under the power of her father because it has to be through him that she is to be joined in marriage. And so the sin of adultery is contrary to the good of marriage in one way, and the sin of seduction is contrary to the good of marriage in another way. When we discuss matrimony in the Third Part, we will explain other things relevant to adultery.

Article 9

Is incest a determinate species of lust?

It seems that incest is not a determinate species of lust:

Objection 1: Incest is predicated because of a privation of chastity. But lust is universally opposed to chastity. Therefore, it seems that incest is not a species of lust, but is instead lust itself universally.

Objection 2: *Decretals* 31, q. 1 says, “Incest is sexual misuse among those who are related by consanguinity or affinity (*incestus est consanguinearum vel affinium abusus*).” But affinity differs from consanguinity. Therefore, incest is not just one, but more than one, species of lust.

Objection 3: That which does not in its own right imply any sort of deformity does not constitute any determinate species of vice. But to have sexual intercourse with those related to one by consanguinity or affinity is not deformed in its own right—otherwise, it would not have been licit at any time at all. Therefore, incest is not a determinate species of lust.

But contrary to this: The species of lust are distinguished by the status of the women whom individuals misuse. But a specific status of women is implied by incest, since, as has been said, incest involves the misuse of those who are related by consanguinity or affinity. Therefore, incest is a determinate species of lust.

I respond: As has been explained (aa. 1-6), it is necessary for a determinate species of lust to exist where one finds something incompatible with the appropriate use of sexual acts. Now there are

three reasons why something incompatible with the appropriate use of sexual acts is found in sexual intercourse between those related by consanguinity or affinity.

First, because a man naturally owes a certain courteous esteem to his parents and, as a consequence, to his other blood relatives, who are descendants in near degree from the same parents—to such an extent that, as Valerius Maximus reports, among the ancients it was not right for a son to bathe with his father, lest they should see one another naked. Now from what has been said (q. 142, a. 4 and q. 151, a. 4) it is evident that in sexual acts most of all there is a sort of shamefulness inconsistent with courteous esteem, and this is why human beings feel embarrassed with respect to such acts. And so it is incongruous for such persons to be united in sexual intercourse. This reason seems to be indicated in Leviticus 18:7, where we read, “She is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness.” And it says the same thing later on in other cases.

The second reason is that blood relatives have to live in close proximity with one another. Hence, if such persons were not held back from sexual intercourse, opportunities for sexual intercourse would be very frequent and in that case their minds would be softened by lust. And so in the Old Law the prohibition was apparently directed especially to those persons who had to live together.

The third reason is that this would hinder the multiplication of friendships. For when a man takes an outsider as his wife, all of his wife’s blood relatives are joined to him by a special kind of friendship, as if they were his blood relatives. Hence, in *De Civitate Dei* 15 Augustine says, “The most upright sort of charity is had when men, to whom concord is useful and upright, are connected by bonds involving diverse interrelations, so that one man does not have several bonds to a single man, but instead the single bonds are spread out to single individuals.”

In *Politics* 2 Aristotle adds a fourth reason, viz., that since a man has a natural affection for a woman who is his blood relative, if the sensual love associated with sexual intercourse were added to this, there would be an excessive ardor of love and a great incentive to lust—all of which is incompatible with chastity.

Hence, it is clear that incest is a determinate species of lust.

Reply to objection 1: As has been explained, the misuse of closely conjoined persons would especially lead to the corruption of chastity, both because of the opportunities and because of the excessive ardor of sensual love.

Reply to objection 2: A person is joined to someone else by affinity because of a person who is joined to him by consanguinity. And so, since affinity exists because of consanguinity, both make for the same kind of inappropriateness.

Reply to objection 3: In the case of sexual intercourse between closely conjoined persons there is something that is in its own right indecent and repugnant to natural reason, as in the case of sexual intercourse between parents and their children, whose connection from birth is *per se* and immediate; for children ought naturally to show honor to their parents. Hence, in *De Animalibus* 9 the Philosopher tells of a certain horse who, because he was tricked into having intercourse with his own mother, threw himself over a precipice as though horrified at what he had done; for even in certain [non-rational] animals there is a natural reverence for their parents.

However, the other persons, who are joined together not in their own right but in relation to their parents, do not of themselves have the same sort of indecency, but instead the decency or indecency varies according to custom and according to human or divine law. For as was explained above (a. 2), since sexual intercourse is ordered toward the common good, it is subject to law. And so as Augustine says in *De Civitate Dei* 16, “As much as sexual intercourse between brothers and sisters occurred in earlier times when necessity compelled it, so later on it became more subject to condemnation when religion prohibited it.”

Article 10

Is it possible for sacrilege to be a species of lust?

It seems impossible for sacrilege to be a species of lust:

Objection 1: The same species is not found under diverse genera that are not posited in such a way that one is subordinated to another (*non subalternatim*). But as was established above (q. 99, a. 2), sacrilege is a species of irreligiosity. Therefore, sacrilege cannot be posited as a species of lust.

Objection 2: In *Decretals* 36, q. 1 sacrilege is not posited among the other things that are posited as species of lust. Therefore, it seems that sacrilege is not a species of lust.

Objection 3: Just as something can be perpetrated against some sacred thing through lust, so too this can be done through other kinds of vices. But sacrilege is not posited as a species of gluttony or of any other vice of this sort. Therefore, it should not be posited as a species of lust.

But contrary to this: In *De Civitate Dei* 14 Augustine says, “Just as it is wicked to go beyond the boundaries of what is one’s own because of an avid desire to possess more, so, too, it is wicked to subvert the boundaries of morals because of an excessive desire for sexual intercourse.” But to go beyond the boundaries of what is one’s own in the case of sacred things is the sin of sacrilege. Therefore, by parity of reasoning, to subvert the boundaries of morals because of an excessive desire for sexual intercourse in the case of what is sacred is to commit the sin of sacrilege. Therefore, sacrilege is a species of lust.

I respond: As was explained above (q. 85, a. 3 and q. 99, a. 2, and *ST* 1-2, q. 18, aa. 6-7), an act of one virtue or vice that is ordered toward the end of another virtue or vice takes on the species of the latter, in the way that an act of theft that is committed for the sake of adultery passes over into the species of adultery.

Now as is clear from Augustine in *De Virginitate*, the observance of chastity insofar as it is ordered toward the worship of God is clearly an act of [the virtue of] religion and is manifest in those individuals who vow and preserve virginity. Hence, it is clear that even [the vice of] lust, insofar as it violates something that pertains to the worship of God, belongs to the species of sacrilege. It is in this way that sacrilege can be posited as species of lust.

Reply to objection 1: Insofar as lust is ordered toward the end of another vice, it becomes a species of that vice. And in this way a species of lust can also be a species of irreligiosity, in the sense of being a species of a higher genus.

Reply to objection 2: What is being enumerated in that place are those things that are species of lust in their own right (*species luxuriae secundum seipsa*), whereas sacrilege is a species of lust insofar as lust is ordered toward the end of another vice, and that vice can concur with different species of lust.

For instance, if an individual has sexual intercourse with a person who is joined to him by a spiritual relationship, then he commits a sacrilege in the manner of incest. On the other hand, if he has sexual intercourse with a virgin consecrated to God as a spouse of Christ, then it is a sacrilege in the manner of adultery, whereas insofar as she is has been set up under the care of a spiritual father, it will be spiritual seduction and, if violence is inflicted, it will be spiritual rape, which is punished even more severely in civil law than other instances of rape. Hence, the Emperor Justinian says, “If any man dares, I will not say to rape, but even to tempt a consecrated virgin with a view to joining himself to her in marriage, he shall be smote with capital punishment.”

Reply to objection 3: Sacrilege is committed with respect to a sacred thing. But a sacred thing is either a consecrated person whom one desires to have sexual intercourse with, and this pertains to [the vice of] *lust*, or a thing that one desires to possess, and this pertains to [the vice of] *injustice*. Sacrilege can also pertain to [the vice of] *anger*, as when out of anger an individual inflicts injury on a sacred person. Again, if an individual consumes consecrated food *gluttonously*, he commits sacrilege.

Still, sacrilege is in a special way attributed to *lust*, since lust is opposed to chastity, the observance of which certain persons are specifically consecrated to.

Article 11

Is *sin contrary to nature* a species of lust?

It seems that *sin contrary to nature* is not a species of lust (*vitium contra naturam non sit species luxuriae*):

Objection 1: In the enumeration given above (a. 10) there was no mention of sins contrary to nature. Therefore, *sin contrary to nature* is not a species of lust.

Objection 2: Lust is opposed to virtue and so is contained under *malice* (*sub malitia continetur*). But as is clear from the Philosopher in *Ethics 7*, *sin contrary to nature* is contained under *bestiality* and not under *malice*. Therefore, *sin contrary to nature* is not a species of lust.

Objection 3: As is clear from what has been said above (q. 153, a. 2), lust has to do with acts that are ordered toward human generation. But a sin contrary to nature has to do with acts that generation cannot follow from. Therefore, *sin contrary to nature* is not a species of lust.

But contrary to this: In 2 Corinthians 12:21 it is numbered along with other species of lust, when it says, "... have not done penance for the uncleanness (*immunditia*) and fornication and lasciviousness that they have committed"—where a Gloss says, "... uncleanness (*immunditia*), i.e., lust contrary to nature."

I respond: As was explained above (aa. 6 and 9), there is a determinate species of lust when a special kind of deformity occurs that makes a sexual act indecent. There are two possible ways in which this can happen:

In one way, because the act is incompatible with right reason,—and this is common to all the sins of lust.

In a second way, because over and beyond this, the act is incompatible with the sexual act's natural ordering itself, which befits the human species—and this is called a sin contrary to nature. Now this can happen in a number of ways:

First, if, without any sort of sexual intercourse, the emission [of semen] is procured for the sake of sexual pleasure—which some call 'masturbation' or 'self-abuse' (*mollities*).

Second, if it happens through copulation with something that is not of the same species—and this is called 'bestiality' (*bestialitas*).

Third, if it happens through sexual intercourse with the inappropriate sex, viz., males with males and females with females, as the Apostle points out in Romans 1:27—and this is called the sin of Sodom (*sodomiticum vitium*).

Fourth, if the natural manner of sexual intercourse is not observed, either with respect to an inappropriate instrument or with respect to other abnormal and bestial modes of intercourse.

Reply to objection 1: The species enumerated in that place are those which are not incompatible with human nature. This is why *sin contrary to nature* is omitted.

Reply to objection 2: Bestiality differs from malice, which is opposed to virtue, because of some sort of excess having to do with the same matter. And this is why it is traced back to the same genus.

Reply to objection 3: The lustful individual does not intend human generation, but instead intends sexual pleasure, which someone can experience without acts from which human generation follows. And this is what is being sought in a sin that is contrary to nature (*hoc est quo quaeritur in vitio contra naturam*).

Article 12

Are sins contrary to nature the greatest sins among the species of lust?

It seems that sins contrary to nature are not the greatest sins among the species of lust:

Objection 1: A sin is more serious to the extent that it is more opposed to charity. But adultery and seduction and rape, which tend toward injuring one's neighbor, seem to be more opposed to charity than are sins contrary to nature, through which no one injures another. Therefore, sins contrary to nature do not seem to be the greatest among the species of lust.

Objection 2: The sins that seem to be the most serious are those that are committed contrary to God. But sacrilege, which tends toward doing harm to the worship of God, is committed directly against God. Therefore, sacrilege is a more serious sin than a sin contrary to nature.

Objection 3: A sin seems to be more serious to the extent that it is inflicted on a person whom we ought to love more. But according to the order of charity we ought to love persons conjoined to us, who are corrupted by incest, more than persons who are outsiders, who are sometimes corrupted by a sin contrary to nature. Therefore, incest is a more serious sin than a sin contrary to nature.

Objection 4: If sins contrary to nature are the most serious sins, then it seems that they are more serious to the extent that they are more contrary to nature. But the sin of uncleanness or masturbation seems to be maximally contrary to nature, since it seems to be maximally in accord with nature that the thing acting should be different from the thing acted upon. Therefore, on this accounting uncleanness would be the most serious of the sins contrary to nature. But this is false. Therefore, it is not the case that sins contrary to nature are the most serious of the sins of lust.

But contrary to this: In *De Coniugiis Adulterinis* Augustine says, "Of all of these"—i.e., the sins that pertain to lust—"the worst is a sin done contrary to nature."

I respond: In every genus that is a worst genus there is the corruption of a principle on which other things depend. Now the principles of reason are those which are in accord with reason, since *presupposing the things that have been determined by nature*, reason disposes other things in the appropriate way. And this is apparent both in theoretical matters and in matters of action (*tam in speculativis quam in operativis*). And so just as in theoretical matters, the most serious and unseemly error is an error with respect to things the cognition of which is *naturally instilled* in human nature, so, too, in matters of action, the most serious and unseemly error is to act *contrary to those things that are determined by nature*. Therefore, since in the case of the *sins contrary to nature* a man transgresses what is determined by *nature* with respect to sexual acts (*circa usum venereum*), it follows that in such matters this sort of sin is the most serious. After that comes *incest*, which, as was explained above (a. 9), is contrary to the *natural reverence* that we owe to persons closely connected to us.

Now what is neglected by the other species of lust is only what is determined by right reason *while presupposing the natural principles*. And it is more repugnant to reason that someone should use sexual acts not only in a way contrary to what is appropriate for offspring who are to be generated, but also in a way that is accompanied by injury to another. And so *simple fornication*, which is committed without injury to another person, is the least sin among the species of lust.

Now it is a greater injury if one has sexual intercourse with a woman who is subject to the power of another for the purpose of generation rather than for guardianship alone. And so *adultery* is a more serious sin than *seduction*. And both of them are aggravated by violence. For this reason, the *rape of a virgin* is a more serious sin than seduction, and the *rape of a married woman* is a more serious sin than adultery. And, as was explained above (a. 10), all of these sins are aggravated when they fall under the notion of *sacrilege*.

Reply to objection 1: Just as the ordering of *right reason* comes from man, so the ordering of *nature* comes from God Himself. And so in the case of sins contrary to nature, in which the ordering of

nature is violated, there is an injury to God Himself, the one who orders nature. Hence, in *Confessiones* 3 Augustine says, “The shameful acts that are contrary to nature should be everywhere and at all times detested and punished. Such were the acts of the Sodomites, and if all nations were to commit them, they would held guilty of the same crime by God’s law, which did not make man in the way He did so that they might abuse each other in this way. For, indeed, the very union that should exist between God and us is violated when the same nature of which He is the author is polluted by the perversity of lust.”

Reply to objection 2: As has been explained, the sins that are contrary to nature are contrary to God as well. And they are more serious than the corruption of sacrilege to the extent that the order with which human nature is endowed is prior to and more stable than any other order that is added to it.

Reply to objection 3: The nature of the species is more closely joined to each individual than is any other individual. And so the sins that are committed contrary to the nature of the species are more serious sins.

Reply to objection 4: The seriousness of a sin is based more on the abuse of a certain thing than on the omission of its correct use.

And so among the sins contrary to nature the lowest place is occupied by the sin of masturbation (*immunditia*), which consists in the sole omission of intercourse with another. On the other hand, the most serious is the sin of bestiality, where the correct species is not preserved. Hence, a Gloss on Genesis 37:2 (“He accused his brothers ... of the worst crime”) says, “... that they had copulated with cattle.”

Next comes the sin of the Sodomites, where the appropriate sex is not preserved.

After this is the sin of not preserving the appropriate manner of sexual intercourse. This sin is greater if the appropriate orifice is not preserved than if there is a disorder with respect to certain other things pertaining to the manner of intercourse.