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# Aquinas, Instinct and the "Internalist" Justification of Faith

Gregory R. P. Stacey

## **Abstract**

In recent decades, scholars have increasingly reached agreement on how to interpret Aquinas' account of the rational grounding of faith. Drawing comparisons between Aquinas' position and Alvin Plantinga's "Reformed Epistemology", many commentators hold that according to Thomas, belief that the articles of faith are divinely revealed (and thus, true) can be rational even absent naturally perceptible evidence that the articles are so revealed. In Plantinga's terms, belief in the articles of faith is "properly basic". Although this interpretation is plausible, its proponents have further argued or implied that Aquinas' account only renders basic belief in the articles rationally justified in an "externalist" sense. Thomas' observation that there is naturally perceptible evidence (e.g. miracles performed by prophets) that the articles are revealed is supposedly crucially important, because only the perception of such evidence renders belief in the articles justified in an internalist sense. In this article, I argue to the contrary that on Aquinas' account, one with basic belief in the articles can have "internalist" justification for her belief without possessing naturally perceptible evidence that the articles are revealed. Thomas' contention that basic belief in the articles of faith is rationally appropriate need not render him an "externalist" about epistemic justification.

# Keywords

Aquinas, faith, instinct, justification, externalism

When Alvin Plantinga published his seminal article 'Reason and Belief in God', he used Thomas Aquinas as a foil against which to present "Reformed Epistemology". According to Plantinga, Aquinas was an "evidentialist" and a "classical foundationalist", holding that only beliefs formed on the basis of introspection and sense-experience could be "properly basic" (i.e. rationally held without evidential

support from further beliefs). Propositional belief in articles of faith is rational, on this reading, because it is supported by evidence that God, who is omniscient and does not lie, has revealed the relevant propositions. This evidence consists especially of the performance of miracles by preachers of divine revelation, and in the case of Christian revelation the quasi-miraculous growth of the early Church despite persecution.<sup>2</sup> These signs act like the seal on royal letters to confirm the divine origin of preachers' messages, and hence their truth.<sup>3</sup>

Yet whilst Plantinga's initial exegesis of Aguinas has textual support and was typical amongst contemporary scholars, it was widely rejected, and eventually revised by Plantinga.<sup>4</sup> Subsequently, a widely-endorsed reading of Aquinas' religious epistemology has emerged which draws strong comparisons between Aquinas' position and Plantinga's "Reformed Epistemology". Plantinga claims that certain Christian beliefs are "properly basic" (for all Christians can tell).<sup>5</sup> Similarly, Aguinas claims that through faith, one believes the articles of faith without inference, as one believes first principles through natural reason. Moreover, against some Neo-Scholastic interpreters, present-day commentators note Aguinas' insistence that even in the process of conversion, faith is not irrational for one lacking naturally perceptible evidence for the *locus* of divine revelation based on external "signs". Rather, as outlined below, an "interior instinct" (instinctus interior) produces a non-inferential judgement in the convert that faith is epistemically or practically appropriate.<sup>6</sup>

More tentatively, scholars are beginning to agree on how this instinctus putatively makes faith rationally acceptable. Current discussion often references debates in analytic epistemology between "internalist" and "externalist" accounts of epistemic justification. In broad terms, according to "internalist" accounts, in order for one's beliefs to be justified one must be aware (or, potentially aware) of the rational grounds on which they are held. Consequently, internalists often think of justified beliefs as beliefs held on the basis of evidence for their truth. On "externalist" accounts, it is enough for one's beliefs to be justified that they are formed by processes which reliably and appropriately produce true beliefs, even if one is not aware that they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Alvin Plantinga, 'Reason and Belief in God' in Nicholas Wolterstorff and Alvin Plantinga, ed. Faith and Rationality: Reason and Belief in God (London: Notre Dame UP, 1983), pp. 39-44; 55-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Plantinga cites Summa Contra Gentiles (SCG) I.6 as illustrative.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In Symb. Apost. Prol.; STIIIa43.1 resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Alvin Plantinga, Warranted Christian Belief (New York: OUP, 2000), p. 82 n7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Plantinga, 'Reason and Belief in God'. In Warranted Christian Belief, Plantinga argues that basic Christian beliefs also possess warrant, if Christianity is true.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Since what Aquinas means by "instinct" may somewhat diverge from its meaning in other contexts, I will use the term "instinctus" to refer to the cognitive mechanism which Aguinas has in mind.

are so produced.<sup>7</sup> In an exhaustive doctoral dissertation which compares Thomas' analysis of faith to those offered by Plantinga and Richard Swinburne, James Brent argues that the *instinctus* fails to provide internalist justification for faith.<sup>8</sup> Brent further hints at this position in an article summarising Aquinas' religious epistemology.<sup>9</sup> Since the *instinctus* only provides externalist justification for a convert's beliefs, internalist justification for faith is provided solely by the evidence of "signs" on Aquinas' account. 10 Brent's argument resembles the position of Bruno Niedebacher, 11 and is consonant with discussions which explain the rationality of faith on Aguinas' account in externalist terms. 12

In this paper, I dispute the claim that someone who comes to faith solely under the influence of the instinctus lacks internalist justification for her faith. To contextualise my argument (Section I), I summarise Aquinas' understanding of faith, detailing evidence for the current consensus that Thomas allows that faith can be rational in the absence of naturally perceptible "signs" indicating the locus of revelation. In Section II, I outline a plausible interpretation of Aguinas' claim that faith can be epistemically justified by an interior instinctus to believe, and its relation to "internalist" and "externalist" justification. I then argue that one driven by this instinctus has internalist justification for conversion (Section III). Firstly, I suggest that the non-inferential perception that one ought to believe, which the *instinctus* instils, might be characterised in modern jargon as an "appearance" that God has revealed the articles of faith. According to "Phenomenal Conservatism", appearances render beliefs prima facie justified and are internally accessible. Thus, if my portrayal of the interior *instinctus* is accurate, faith inspired by it plausibly possesses prima facie internalist justification. Another way in which faith might be internally justified by the *instinctus* would be if one moved by this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> I further characterise these competing conceptions of justification below.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> James Brent, 'The Epistemic Status of Belief in Thomas Aguinas' (PhD diss. St. Louis University, 2008), pp. 238-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> James Brent, 'Aquinas' in William J. Abraham, ed. The Oxford Handbook of the Epistemology of Theology (Oxford: OUP, 2017), pp. 408-420, especially pp. 415-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Brent, 'Epistemic Status', pp. 215-6; 238-9; 251-2. Cf. Brent, 'Aquinas', pp. 415-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Bruno Niedebacher, 'The Relation of Reason to Faith' in Brian Davies and Eleonore Stump, ed. The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Aguinas (Oxford: OUP, 2012), pp. 337-345;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> E.g. James Ross, 'Aquinas on Belief and Knowledge' in William Frank and Gerard Etzkorn ed. Essays Honoring Frank B. Wolter (New York: Franciscan Inst., 1985), pp. 245-269; Eleonore Stump, Aquinas (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 367-70; Mark Wynn, 'Religious Faith' in Graham Oppy, ed. The Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy of Religion (London, Routledge: 2015), pp/167-79; Richard Cross, 'Testimony, Error and Reasonable Belief in Medieval Religious Epistemology' in Matthew Benton et al. ed. New Insights in Religious Epistemology (Oxford: OUP, 2018), pp. 29-52.

instinct were aware that it is divinely produced, so I next examine texts indicating this possibility.

Finally, in Section IV, I argue that even if the experience of being moved by the *instinctus* does not immediately suffice to (internally) justify one's conversion, one who experiences the instinctus should be able to conclude that faith is rationally justified, given Aquinas' broader philosophical anthropology. On Brent's reading, the *instinc*tus presents faith as good for the human person generally, but not for her intellect particularly. Yet granting Thomas' account of wellbeing, it seems unlikely that faith is beneficial for humans if Christian beliefs are false. Accordingly, one who perceives through the interior instinctus that faith is practically justified can thereby rationally believe that her faith is appropriately truth-directed.

I

I begin by briefly summarising Aquinas' understanding of faith. According to Thomas, faith is a theological virtue<sup>13</sup>: a supernatural disposition (habitus) infused by God<sup>14</sup> which moves a believer to a supernatural end, in this case by assenting to divine truth.<sup>15</sup> Although ultimately grace offers humans the chance to achieve an intimate, unmediated knowledge of God in the beatific vision, in this life humans are offered a foretaste<sup>16</sup> of beatific knowledge by assenting to divine truth as mediated by divinely revealed propositions (faith's "material" object). 17 For assent to these "articles of faith" to qualify as an exercise of faith, it must be made solely on the basis that they are divinely revealed (faith's "formal object"). 18 After the coming of Christ, adults must believe explicitly in Christ as saviour and the Trinity to be saved, <sup>19</sup> and Christians should assent to the contents of Scripture as interpreted by the Church.<sup>20</sup>

In assenting to a proposition with faith, one's assent is psychologically certain (i.e. without "fear of the opposite"), so that faith is stronger than probable assent or *opinio*.<sup>21</sup> Rather, faith shares the firmness of assent possessed by immediate knowledge of quiddities (intellectus) and conclusions logically inferred from such knowledge

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate (DV) 14.3 ad9; Summa Theologiae (ST) IaI-Iae64.1, IIaIIae6a1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> STIIaIIae 6.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> STIIaIIae1.1.

<sup>16</sup> DV 14.2 ad9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> STIIaIIae 1.2, resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> DV 14.10 ad10, STIIaIIae 5.2, resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> DV 14.11 resp.; STIIIIae 2.7-8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> STIIaIIae5.3 resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> DV 14.1 resp; STIIaIIae 2.1 resp.

which are the object of scientific knowledge (scientia).<sup>22</sup> Yet unlike intellectus and scientia, faith is not elicited because it is per se evident to one's intellect that the articles are true, or because they are deduced from truths know per se. Faith is instead effected by the will, which by God's grace<sup>23</sup> moves the intellect to believe with greater certainty than the evidence compels.<sup>24</sup> Belief in the articles of faith is therefore "basic", like belief in first principles.<sup>25</sup> One might describe faith as a basic doxastic practice: a method of belief-formation which is not rationally underpinned by any other.

One might wonder whether on Aquinas' account faith can be epistemically rational, particularly given his emphasis on the role of the will. Granted, Thomas argues that if a proposition is divinely revealed it must be true, since God is omniscient and cannot lie. 26 Yet how can one firmly and rationally believe- or, will to believe- that God has revealed a proposition?

Some commentators have suggested that Aquinas' answer is, in Plantinga's terminology, "evidentialist". 27 On such readings, Aquinas holds that rationally believing a proposition with faith requires evidence that God has revealed the proposition (typically, through human intermediaries). This evidence should prove acceptable to classical foundationalists because it consists of phenomena including miracles worked by prophets, the fulfilment of prophecy and the quasi-miraculous growth of the Church.<sup>28</sup> Whilst these phenomena are impossible or improbable unless divinely caused, they are naturally perceptible to the senses. Three categories of text from Aquinas support this view.<sup>29</sup> Firstly, some passages (often citing Mark 16:20) indicate that faith is generated by the perception of signs which demonstrate that God has revealed propositions through human intermediaries.<sup>30</sup> Hence, "We believe the prophets and apostles because the Lord has been their witness by performing miracles, as Mark

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Scientia differs from modern understandings of "knowledge". Cf. John Jenkins, Knowledge and Faith in Thomas Aguinas (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), pp. 1; 15-17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> *ST*IIaIIae 6.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Expositio Super Librum, Boethii De Trinitate (Boe.) 3.1 ad4; DV14.1 resp; STIIaIIae

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Scriptum Super Libros Sententiarum (In Sent.) I q.1art.3qc2ad2; Boe. 2.2 resp.; DV 28.a4ad8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Boe. 2.3.1 ad5; ST IIaIIae 2.4 resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> E.g. Terrence Penelhum 'The Analysis of Faith in St. Thomas Aguinas', *Religious* Studies 13 (2) (1977), pp. 133-154; Richard Swinburne, Faith and Reason 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: OUP, 2005), pp. 34-36.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> SCG I, 6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Cf. Brent, 'Epistemic Status', p. 98ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Super Evangelium Johannis (In Jn).C9, L1; Quaestiones Quodlibetales (Quodl.) 2.4 ad6.

says". 31 Further passages suggest that the perception of such signs renders faith in revealed propositions rational.<sup>32</sup> Finally, some texts even imply that unless one possesses such evidence that God has revealed propositions, one cannot rationally believe them.<sup>33</sup> According to STIIaIIae 178.a1, for example, "The word [of preachers] needs to be confirmed in order that it be rendered credible. This is done by the work of miracles, according to Mark 16:20". 34 These latter texts provide strong support to "evidentialist" readings of Aquinas.

Yet despite these passages, most commentators reject this exegesis and contend that the "evidentialist" reading undermines Thomas' wider epistemological commitments. Some commentators argue that Thomas cannot have required rational faith to be grounded in the evidence of signs, because this would undermine his commitment to the act of faith being essentially supernatural and completely certain. Since by Aquinas' admission the evidence that God has revealed propositions does not render this fact certain to the intellect, it is difficult to understand how the certain assent of faith can be rationally grounded in such evidence,<sup>35</sup> although one might argue it is practically rational to believe with greater confidence than the evidence warrants. Moreover, choosing to believe a proposition because it is testified to by a competent authority does not seem to be a supernatural act. Thus, evidentialist readings may sit ill with Aguinas' emphasis on the supernatural nature of faith.<sup>36</sup> Further. as noted above, evidentialist readings do not easily account for the comparisons which Aquinas draws between assent to the articles of faith and assent to first principles.<sup>37</sup>

However, whilst these points tell against evidentialist readings which claim that faith is always (synchronically) rationally grounded in the evidence of signs, they fail to disprove one Neo-Scholastic evidentialist interpretation.<sup>38</sup> On this reading, the natural perception of evidence for divine revelation does not enter into or rationally

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> DV 14.10 ad11. Translated in Robert Mulligan et al. trans. Truth (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> DV 14.10 ad 11; SCG I, 6; STIIaIIae 2.9 ad3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> *SCG* III.154.8; *ST*IIaIIae 1.4 *ad*2.

<sup>34</sup> ST translations are from English Dominican Province, trans. The "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. edn. (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1922-35).

<sup>35</sup> Thus Jenkins, *Knowledge and Faith*, 167.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> Thus Brian Shanley, *The Thomist Tradition* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2002), 25-6; Jenkins, Faith and Knowledge 165; Brian Davies, The Thought of Thomas Aquinas (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 283.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>37</sup> Jenkins, Faith and Knowledge, p. 169.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>38</sup> Given by e.g. Ambrose Gardeil (cf. Avery Dulles, *The Assurance of Things Hoped* For: A Theology of Christian Faith (New York: OUP, 1994), pp. 106-7) and Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange in The Theological Virtues: Volume One: On Faith. (St. Louis: Herder, 1965), e.g. pp. 181-5.

undergird the act of faith itself. Rather, the perception of such evidence is required for a natural "judgement of credibility" (i.e. belief that one can rationally believe a proposition because it is revealed), which necessarily precedes a rational act of faith. When one begins to exercise the habit of faith, however, the doxastic practice of faith becomes basic, and is not grounded in the evidence which supported the judgement of credibility. Accordingly, some Neo-Scholastics maintained that the act of faith is essentially supernatural and that its certainty surpasses the evidence for the fact of revelation, whilst retaining an evidentialist requirement in their account of faith's generation.

Yet further texts demonstrate that even this moderate evidentialist interpretation is false. Crucially, Aquinas explicitly considers the question of whether one can or should believe revealed propositions in the absence of miracles confirming their provenance. On several occasions, he maintains that one is obliged to come to faith in such circumstances.<sup>39</sup> In *Qdl*. II.4.1, Aguinas writes that since Christ was the First Truth, people would have been obliged to believe him had he not performed miracles. God motivates faith in three ways: by external preaching, by miracles, and through an inner calling ("per interiorem vocationem")40 which "pertinet ad virtutem prima veritatis". 41 This calling allows Christ's authority to be recognised in the absence of miracles. Moreover, Aguinas elsewhere claims that it is more commendable to come to faith without the evidence of signs.<sup>42</sup> Given these disavowals of the requirement that faith must be rationally underpinned by evidence acceptable to classical foundationalists, most scholars reject Plantinga's original portraval of Aquinas as an "evidentialist" and "classical foundationalist".

П

Notably, however, Aguinas does not hold that faith ungrounded in miraculous evidence is without rational grounds. Faith is rationally acceptable without such evidence because it is the product of an inner "instinct" (instinctus), 43 "inclination" (inclinatio) 44 or "calling" (vocatio). 45 Thomas quotes Aristotle to argue that those "moved [to act] by divine instinct" do not need to consider the action's propriety

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> In Jn C.15 L5 2055., ST HaHae 10.1 ad1; 2.9 ad3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> Qdl. II.4.1, resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> *Ibid. ad*3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> In Jn C4 L5; ST IIaIIae 2.10 resp., IIIa 55.5 ad3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> STIIaIIae2.9 ad3; In Gal. C15 L4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Super Ad Romanos (In Rom.) C10 L2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> In Rom C1 L4: C8 L6: Super Evangelium Matthaei (In Matt.) C4 L2.

according to human reason, because they are moved by a "higher principle". 46 Whilst we have seen passages in which Thomas apparently claims that faith is irrational unless grounded in miraculous evidence, further passages suggest that the interior *instinctus* parallels the role of miracles in rendering the articles credible, and even counts as miraculous itself.<sup>47</sup> In seemingly "evidentialist" passages, Aquinas perhaps merely omits mention of the *instinctus* as an alternative ground for faith.<sup>48</sup>

What is the nature of this *instinctus* and how might it render faith rational? The former question is often overlooked in current literature. The term "instinct" (instinctus) is used by Thomas in various contexts.<sup>49</sup> Aside from its connection to divinely inspired faith and action, the term describes a means by which demons tempt humans,<sup>50</sup> and notably the manner in which animals are moved to action<sup>51</sup> by perceiving "intentiones non sentatae": i.e. objects of perception not derived from sense data.<sup>52</sup> These *intentiones* are often spurs to action, as in the case of sheep, which instinctively perceive through their "estimative power" that wolves should be fled from.<sup>53</sup>

An interior instinctus also guides believers to fulfil God's plans. It inspires prophecy,<sup>54</sup> and actions which seem inappropriate to natural reason but are directed to supernatural goods (e.g. martyrdom<sup>55</sup> or self-mutilation<sup>56</sup>). Broadly, therefore, "instinctus" might be characterised as "an interior principle of appetitive... movement".<sup>57</sup> More narrowly, "natural" instinct forms a spontaneous judgement that an action is appropriate, without that judgement being produced by the free and rational process whereby humans evaluate actions as means to selected ends.<sup>58</sup> Rather, the judgement produced by "instinct" fails to specify the end at which the action is aimed.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> STIaIIae 68.1, resp., quoting Eud. Ethics VII.8.

<sup>47</sup> Odl.II.4.1 ad2; In Rom. C15 L5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> Cf. STIIaIIae 1.4 ad2: "For [a believer] would not believe unless, on the evidence of signs, or of something similar, he saw that they ought to be believed."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>49</sup> Max Seckler, Instinkt und Glaubenwille nach Thomas von Aquin (Mainz: Matthias-Grunewald-Verlag, 1961), pp. 19-68.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> SCG III.120.24; De Malo 3.4 contra.

<sup>51</sup> STIIaIIae 95.7 resp.

<sup>52</sup> STIIaIIae 95.7 resp. Aquinas compares the instinctus fidei to animal instinct in In Rom C8 L6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup> STIa.78.4 resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> STIIaIIae171.5, resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>55</sup> In Sent. IV Dist.49 q5 art3 sol.1 ad3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>56</sup> STIIaIIae185.2 ad3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Brent, 'Epistemic Status', p. 230.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>58</sup> Jan Walgrave, 'Instinctus Spiritus Sancti: een proeve tot Thomas-interpretatie', Ephemerides theologicae Lovanienses, 45 (3) (1969), pp. 417-431; p. 420.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> STIa78.4; 83.1.

It seems that on Aguinas' account the *instinctus* which impels one to faith likewise produces the basic judgement that belief in the articles is appropriate. This is suggested by the close relationship between the *instinctus* which drives the initial adoption of faith and the *lumen fidei*, which makes one who possesses the habit of faith see which propositions are apt for belief.<sup>60</sup> According to Aquinas, the *lumen fidei* produces a "connatural" awareness that propositions are to be believed. 61 By analogy, one who possesses a virtue can intuitively grasp that an action is in/appropriate even if she cannot formalise a moral argument for this conclusion.<sup>62</sup> As Brent argues. therefore, the *instinctus* is an inclination which leads one to faith by likewise producing a simple, non-inferential judgement that the articles of faith should be believed, perhaps without any immediate perception of the end at which such belief aims. 63 As with connatural perception that an action is appropriate, however, this inclination can be sinfully ignored.

One might wonder how the fact that faith is preceded by a noninferential perception that one should believe can make faith epistemically appropriate. Modern commentators sometimes turn to analytic epistemology to trace ways in which faith might be epistemically fitting. Frequently within analytic epistemology, the epistemic propriety of belief is discussed in terms of "justification". Justification can be understood in two ways. Roughly, a subject has propositional justification for belief that p if she is equipped to appropriately form the belief that p (say, by possessing sufficient evidence). A subject has doxastic justification for belief that p if she in fact appropriately believes that p.

There are two broad understandings of what it is for a belief to possess (doxastic) justification.<sup>64</sup> According to "internalists", the believer must be aware (or, potentially aware) of at least some of the conditions which contribute to the belief's justification. Thus, internalists usually hold that at base, justification depends on first-person access via introspection to mental states (viz. those indicating that the belief is true or justified) which are "internal" to the believer. Externalists, by contrast, do not maintain the existence of such an "awareness requirement" on justification. They claim that beliefs can be "justified" by factors which are external to the believer or inaccessible via introspection, such as the environment or causal factors

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>60</sup> The *lumen fidei* is (an aspect of?) the habit of faith (*Boe*. 3.1 ad4; *ST*IIaIIae 1.4 ad3) and the instinctus leads to its adoption (In Jn C6.L4, 919).

<sup>61</sup> STIIaIIae 1.5 ad1.

<sup>62</sup> *ST*IIaIIae 2.3 *ad* 2.

<sup>63</sup> Brent, 'Aquinas', p. 415; 'Epistemic Status', pp. 229-32.

<sup>64</sup> Michael Bergmann, Justification Without Awareness (New York: OUP, 2006), pp. 3-13.

which contribute to their production. In line with their positions, internalists and externalists give different explanations of what renders a belief justified. Internalists tend to consider a belief justified if it is probable according to the believer's evidence or best epistemic lights. By contrast, externalists generally consider beliefs justified if they are produced by doxastic practices which reliably and non-accidentally produce true beliefs. Whilst I lack space here to examine the considerations favouring each view, both positions are defended in modern epistemology.

Whilst Thomas did not consider the propriety of beliefs produced by the interior *instinctus* in these terms, commentators often claim that "basic" belief in the articles of faith would possess "externalist" justification on Aquinas' account.<sup>65</sup> The *instinctus* which impels believers to adopt the habit of faith is infused by God, so that by following it they will adopt a doxastic practice which reliably yields true religious beliefs. Whilst I lack space to give detailed analysis, the practice of believing in line with the promptings of the *instinctus* would, therefore, be reliably aimed at truth in a manner which plausibly fits "externalist" constraints on justification/knowledge such as Plantinga's proper-functionalist criteria for "warrant".<sup>66</sup> Accordingly, religious beliefs formed through following the promptings of the *instinctus* would possess externalist justification/warrant.

However, it seems less obvious that beliefs arrived at under the influence of the *instinctus* would have internalist justification. Admittedly, the instinctus produces a non-inferential judgement that it is appropriate to believe certain propositions because they are revealed. Yet such a judgement would apparently render belief practically rather than epistemically rational. The judgement does not suggest that God has spoken through the relevant channels, and that their pronouncements are therefore true. Accordingly, it does not seem that one moved by the interior instinctus thereby has reason to believe that the *instinctus* is aimed at the adoption of a truth-yielding doxastic practice. Thus, Brent argues that internalist epistemic justification for one's religious beliefs is not conferred by the interior *instinctus*.<sup>67</sup> Rather, Christian faith is only justified in an internalist sense through miraculous evidence of revelation, consideration of which is not essential to the act of faith but a separate (albeit important) intellectual act.

Those sympathetic to Aquinas' religious epistemology should find this analysis noteworthy, but potentially concerning. On the one hand,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>65</sup> E.g. Brent, 'Epistemic Status, p. 245; Niedebacher, 'The Relation of Reason', pp. 343-5; see also the citations in note 10, above.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>66</sup> Warrant is the property which converts true belief into knowledge. For a summary of Plantinga's account, cf. Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, p. 56.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>67</sup> Brent, 'Epistemic Status', pp. 238-9; p. 243.

this reading supports broadly "externalist" presentations of Aquinas' epistemology, which undermine claims that Aguinas is a classical foundationalist. Yet this reading further implies that Thomas' religious epistemology rests on a heavily-disputed understanding of justification. However, I now argue that Aquinas' commitment to the (epistemic) propriety of believing in line with the interior instinctus need not render him an externalist. 68

### Ш

If the interior instinctus causes a basic judgement that faith is somehow appropriate, how might this render faith "internally" justified? I now explore two possible interpretations of Aguinas' comments about the *instinctus* which suggest that the experience of being moved by the *instinctus* provides quite immediate justification for Christian beliefs. Firstly, I suggest that the perception that it is appropriate to believe the articles of faith might, in modern terms, be compared to the "appearance" that they are divinely revealed. According to some epistemologists, this would make belief that the articles are revealed prima facie justified. Secondly, I explore evidence indicating that one moved by the *instinctus* might be intuitively aware that they are being moved to faith by God.

As explained above, the interior *instinctus* and *lumen fidei* make the articles of faith appear credible in a non-inferential way.<sup>69</sup> One way in which this might happen is if it "seems" or "appears" 70 to the believer that God has revealed the articles of faith, or else that the habit of faith yields true beliefs. 71 "Appearances" play an important role in the justification of many of our beliefs according to proponents of "Phenomenal Conservatism" and related positions.<sup>72</sup> Phenomenal Conservatism (PC) holds that:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>68</sup> Since as suggested, the *instinctus* provides religious beliefs with "externalist" justification, Aguinas' account of faith's rationality should be acceptable to both internalists and externalists alike.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>69</sup> Whilst I focus on the initial justification of converts' beliefs by the interior *instinctus*, my remarks apply equally to the ongoing justification of a believer's faith by the lumen fidei.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>70</sup> I use these terms synonymously.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>71</sup> Jenkins, Faith and Knowledge, p. 200 makes a similar suggestion, but implausibly claims that this appearance is instilled by the gifts of understanding and knowledge rather than the interior instinctus.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>72</sup> See Michael Huemer, 'Phenomenal Conservatism and the Internalist Intuition', American Philosophical Quartertly 43 (2006), pp. 147-158; Chris Tucker, 'Why Open-Minded People Should Endorse Dogmatism', Philosophical Perspectives 24 (2010), pp. 529-545.

If it seems to S that p, then, in the absence of defeaters, S thereby has at least some degree of justification for believing that p. 73

How should we understand this notion of "seeming"? Some discussions of PC suggest that for it to seem to S that p is for S to be inclined to believe p. However, whilst most epistemologists connect appearances and inclinations to belief, some cite reasons to distinguish the two. Firstly, in cases such as optical illusions which one knows to be illusory, it can "seem" that p even though one lacks inclination to believe that p. Perhaps, following Trent Dougherty, we should distinguish between two sorts of "seeming": the perception of phenomena which typically incline one to believe a proposition (seeming "as though") and the inclination to believe itself (seeming "that").<sup>75</sup> Yet there can be inclinations to believe which are not appearances at all, such as those based on or constituted by pure desire to believe. In contrast to instances of wishful thinking, the inclination to believe based on or constituted by "seeming" involves "felt veridicality": "the feel of a state whose content reveals how things really are".76 Perhaps an appearance has a similar phenomenology to the mental state which Plantinga describes as "impulsional evidence" or "doxastic experience": an experience in which a "belief... seems right, acceptable, natural; it forces itself upon you; it seems somehow inevitable".77 Thus understood, appearances are internally accessible mental states, of which the subject is typically conscious. Consequently, PC is compatible with awareness requirements on justification affirmed by internalists: if PC holds, beliefs justified by appearances are justified in an internalist sense.<sup>78</sup>

The reader might note that Plantinga's description of "impulsional evidence" for a proposition above seems tantalisingly close to Aquinas' description of the *instinctus* which produces a non-inferential judgement that propositions should be believed with faith. One might construe this latter perception in modern terms as the *appearance* that these propositions are divinely revealed (and therefore true). Or perhaps, it would be better to say that there is impulsional

Michael Huemer, 'Phenomenal Conservatism and the Internalist Intuition', p. 148.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>74</sup> Chris Tucker, 'Seemings and Justification: An Introduction' in Chris Tucker, ed. *Seemings and Justification: New Essays on Dogmatism and Phenomenal Conservatism* (New York: OUP, 2013), pp. 3-5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Trent Dougherty, 'Faith, Trust, and Testimony: An Evidentialist Account' in Laura Callahan and Timothy O'Connor ed. *Religious Faith and Intellectual Virtue*, 101.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>76</sup> William Tollhurst, 'Seemings', *American Philosophical Quarterly* 35 (3) (1998), pp. 293-301; 298-9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>77</sup> Plantinga, Warranted Christian Belief, 110.

 $<sup>^{78}</sup>$  For  $\overrightarrow{PC}$  as internalist, cf. Huemer, 'Phenomenal Conservatism and the Internalist Intuition'.

evidence for engagement in the doxastic practice of faith itself. That is, it "seems right, acceptable, natural" to assent to the articles with faith; this practice appears to "reveal how things really are". If this is a plausible characterisation of the phenomenology occasioned by the *instinctus*, then since faith would be grounded by an appearance on Aquinas' account, it would be prima facie justified in an internalist sense according to PC. Whilst PC is controversial amongst internalists, 79 showing that faith grounded in the interior *instinctus* or *lumen* fidei has justification on PC shows that such faith might possess iustification according to some prominent internalist accounts.

However, one might reasonably object that if the interior instinctus makes the practice of faith seem truth-yielding, the believer would come to faith through persuasion of the intellect (which is an appetite for the true) as opposed to by an act of the will (which is an appetite for the good). Yet Aguinas clearly maintains that faith is produced and given firmness by the will, even when claiming that the lumen fidei imbues basic belief in the articles, analogous to belief in first principles gained through the lumen naturale.80 Thus the interior instinctus induces one to adopt the habit of faith by producing the judgement that it is *good* to assent to the articles with faith, 81 rather than to a judgement that the practice of faith reliably yields true beliefs or that God has revealed the articles.<sup>82</sup>

Admittedly, Aguinas may consider that faith can come through intellectual conviction that God has revealed a proposition. Demons, whose knowledge of God's actions is superior to ours, cannot help but understand that God has revealed certain propositions. 83 Thomas possibly countenances that similarly, humans can embrace faith through overwhelming miraculous evidence that propositions are revealed.<sup>84</sup> Yet as noted above, Aguinas views belief elicited by miracles as less meritorious than belief through following the interior instinctus. One might argue that if the instinctus were construed as an appearance that faith is truth-yielding or that God has revealed propositions, coming to faith on this basis would not be more commendable than belief motivated by miracles.

Whilst this objection to my suggested characterisation of the interior instinctus is powerful, I am unsure that it is conclusive. Firstly, the will can play an important role in attending to impulsional evi-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>79</sup> Cf. Contributions by Steup, Conee and Feldman in Tucker ed., Seemings and Justification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>81</sup> Though perhaps, as with animal instinct, without specifying the goodness at which faith aims.

<sup>82</sup> Brent, 'Epistemic Status', p. 228,

<sup>83</sup> DV 14.9 ad 4; STIIaIIae 5.2.

<sup>84</sup> STIIaIIae5.2 resp. But cf. Jenkins, Knowledge and Faith, pp. 170-2.

dence. Where this evidence is not overwhelming, it can be ignored and "put out of one's mind" as much as other forms of evidence. Secondly, although Aguinas claims that the assent of faith is effected by the will, he occasionally suggests that the *instinctus* gives rise to the perception that faith is truth-directed. When describing the obligation to believe in Christ through the interior *instinctus* in the absence of miracles, Aguinas writes that the *instinctus* can show (ostendere) that Christ possesses authority as a lawmaker just as this can be shown by miracles or Scriptural proofs.<sup>85</sup> Whilst Thomas doesn't explain this possibility, a natural interpretation is that just as miracles can make it appear that a prophet is divinely inspired, the instinctus can generate an appearance that Christ is exercising divine authority.

Another passage suggesting that one brought to faith by the instinctus is conscious that faith is truth-directed comes from Thomas' Commentary on John. Commenting on the Samaritans who eventually believe through Jesus' own testimony in John 4,86 Aquinas writes that after people have come to faith (say, through the "testimony of the law and the prophets", or missionary preaching), they believe "because of the truth itself", 87 which is the proper motive for faith. 88 From the context, Aquinas clearly means this to be the fitting and *conscious* motive for believers. Admittedly, Aguinas may merely be affirming a commonplace in his religious epistemology: that faith necessarily involves conscious assent to propositions because they are revealed.<sup>89</sup> However, it is noteworthy that Aquinas immediately moves on to discuss the commendable faith of the Samaritans who believed in Jesus' heavenly origin through His testimony without requiring the performance of miracles as evidence. If Aquinas views this latter group as experiencing a phenomenology at the inception of their faith comparable to that experienced by those who eventually believe solely on Christ's testimony, it would seem that those who come to believe on the basis of Christ's preaching alone (at the instigation of an inner call) have a similar grasp that they are responding to the "truth itself"

The clearest indication that the instinctus of faith might imbue an appearance that faith is truth-directed arises from a passage in Aguinas' commentary on Pseudo-Dionysius, which Brent charac-

<sup>85</sup> *Odl.* II.4.1 ad2.

<sup>86</sup> In Jn C4 L6, 662.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. translated in Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on the Gospel of John. Chapters 1-5, trans. Fabian Larcher et al. (Washington D.C.: CUA, 2010), p. 241.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>88</sup> I.e. because of the teaching of Christ himself, who is *Prima Veritas*. Aquinas cannot mean that it immediately appears to believers that the gospel is true, because their assent would lack the formal object of faith.

<sup>89</sup> STIIaIIae1.1.

terises as his clearest description of the phenomenology of the *lumen fidei*. 90 Aquinas writes:

"He who by faith is united to the truth knows well how good it is for him to be united to the truth in such manner (sic)- even though many reprehend him as having gone out of his senses (extasis passim) and of being a fool and a madman. For truly it is hidden from those reprehending him for his errors that he has suffered an ecstasy of truth - as if placed beyond all sense knowledge and conjoined to supernatural Truth. The believer knows himself to be no fool, as they say, but to be liberated by the pure and unchangeable truth, and to be withdrawn from the unstable and changing current of error."91

Here, Aguinas suggests that the believer not only perceives (through divine testimony) that the articles of faith are true, but experiences herself as being in proper cognitive contact with ("united" to) the truth, rather than suffering cognitive malfunction as a "madman". One might say that she experiences her beliefs as being reliably truth-directed. If this perception is non-inferential (which admittedly, Aguinas does not clarify), then given the parallels between the inner instinctus to believe and the "lumen fidei", it seems likely that the former too would include a non-inferential perception (i.e. an "appearance") that to believe those presenting themselves as God's messengers is to believe the truth.<sup>92</sup>

Even if the interior *instinctus* does not, on Aguinas' account, generate an appearance that propositions are revealed, there is another way in which the experience of being impelled to believe by the instinctus might generate an appearance which would give internalist justification to faith. Perhaps, it might non-inferentially seem to one moved by the *instinctus* that she is being moved to faith by God. Brent rejects this possibility, 93 worrying that such faith would be based on a "sign" of divine activity, and thus mere "acquired faith" like that based on miraculous evidence. He further notes that Aquinas claims that we only know faith to be a theological (i.e. infused) virtue from Scripture. Yet to the contrary, the possession of evidence for a belief does not mean that evidence causes that belief, and it is clear from Brent's account that one can know that faith is practically appropriate (and hence, a virtue?) from the inner *instinctus* alone.

Moreover, in other contexts, Aquinas seemingly holds that those moved to act through the interior instinctus can be aware that God is directing them. One example is the case of prophets. Thomas holds that in paradigm instances of prophecy, a prophet is both made

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>90</sup> Brent, 'Epistemic Status', p. 127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>91</sup> In Div. Nom. C7 L5., translated by Brent, 'Epistemic Status', p. 127.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>92</sup> Again, presumably the idea should not be that it immediately appears to the believer that what the preachers teach is true, for then they will not believe with faith.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>93</sup> Brent, 'Epistemic Status', pp. 242-3.

certain of the truth of the proposition which God reveals to her and made certain that God has revealed the proposition.<sup>94</sup> However, there is also an "imperfect" species of prophecy, in which prophets are driven by "divine instinct" to endorse propositions. Aquinas claims that in the case of prophecy driven by *instinctus*, the prophet does not always have the same degree of certainty so that "sometimes... he is unable to distinguish fully whether his thoughts are conceived of the Divine instinct or his own spirit". 95 This leaves open the possibility that by contrast, it is sometimes quite apparent to such prophets that they are being moved by divine instinctus. Thomas does not explain how those who prophesy properly speaking are aware that God is revealing something, but he cites Augustine's comment in Confessions VI.13 that his mother could discern her own prophecies from natural dreams by "a certain feeling, which in words she could not express". 96 In other words, God causes the prophet to immediately perceive (say, through a forceful appearance) that He is revealing a proposition to her. Perhaps, therefore, God sometimes similarly makes it apparent to prophets moved by divine *instinctus* that God is revealing a proposition for prophecy.

Another context in which Aquinas mentions the divine instinct further raises the possibility that those moved by the *instinctus* are immediately aware of its origin. In defending the propriety of immediately acting upon a perceived vocation to religious life without engaging in prolonged deliberation, 97 Thomas notes that one might be moved by an instinctus of the Holy Spirit. In this case, one is evidently obliged to obey the instinctus immediately, as if one had received a command from Christ in person. Since the interior instinctus is a powerful spur to action, hesitation to act upon it is either the result of attempted resistance, or a lack of awareness. 98 It is slightly unclear from the Latin whether, as I consider probable, Aguinas means to say that this lack of awareness (ignorare) is the result of plain ignorance (presumably, of the instinct's nature/origin) or a deliberate attempt to ignore the promptings of the instinctus. Particularly if the former interpretation is correct, this implies that the subject of interior inspiration can (by contrast) be aware of its origin, and therefore capable of conscious resistance. Thomas does not explain how such putative awareness might come about; but it

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>94</sup> *ST*IIaIIae171.5, *resp*.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>96</sup> Ibid., obj. 1.

<sup>97</sup> Contra Doctrinam Retrahentium a Religione, 9.

<sup>98 &</sup>quot;Virtutem igitur spiritus sancti vel ignorat vel ei resistere nititur qui a spiritu sancto motum diuturnitate consilii detinere contendit." "Therefore, one who moved by the Holy Spirit, attempts to delay [action] for a long period of counsel, is either unaware of [or, ignores] the power of the Holy Spirit, or tries to resist it". *Ibid.* (my translation).

might well be non-inferential, as the passage stresses that one ought not to hesitate over the Spirit's interior promptings.

These passages only tentatively suggest that Aguinas holds that one *can* be non-inferentially aware of the divine origin of the interior instinctus, and that those brought to faith by the instinctus might be thus aware. Notably, Aquinas does not expend time discussing one's entitlement to believe that instinctive desires to engage in religiously important actions are divinely inspired. Rather, he regards it as evident to even non-Christians that prompt obedience to the interior instinctus is obligatory. This may be because as suggested below. Thomas has reason for optimist concerning the reliability of our cognitive faculties.

### IV

I have suggested two ways in which being moved to faith by the interior instinctus might immediately provide reason to believe that faith is a reliably truth-directed doxastic practice. I now further argue that given Aquinas' broader metaphysical and epistemological commitments, one who experiences an inner calling to faith should on reflection consider that faith is epistemically appropriate. Since one brought to faith by the *instinctus* may not engage in such reflection, my argument will not show that converts receive internalist doxastic justification for their beliefs from the instinctus. However, it will show that they possess (prima facie) internalist propositional justification for their religious beliefs through their experience of it. Thus, it is wrong to claim that reflection on miraculous "signs" confirming revelation is *necessary* to provide internalist justification for faith.

As Martin Pickavé notes, Aquinas does not consider scepticism about the reliability of our cognitive faculties at length.<sup>99</sup> This accords with both his belief in Providence, and Aristotelian suggestions that humans naturally desire knowledge, and that natural desires are not typically unfulfillable. 100 Given Aquinas' rejection of scepticism, it is plausible that someone who experiences the interior instinctus should regard it as truth-directed. Thomas perhaps indicates this when, laconically, he describes the obligation to follow the *instinctus* to faith: "an inner impulse to act well is the work of God, and those who resist it sin". 101 Yet as seen above, some interpreters hold that the interior instinctus merely generates the judgement that faith is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>99</sup> Martin Pickavé, 'Human Knowledge' in Davies and Stump ed. *The Oxford Handbook* of Thomas Aquinas, p. 313.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>100</sup> Cf. Norman Kretzmann, 'Infallibility, Error, Ignorance', Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Supplementary Vol. 17 (1991) pp. 159-194. <sup>101</sup> In Jn C15 L5, 2055.

morally as opposed to epistemically fitting. Therefore, even if the instinctus is a reliably truth-directed faculty which justifies the true belief that faith is morally appropriate, this need not imply that the articles of faith are true.

However, Aquinas' developed teleological account of human goodness lacks space for faith to contribute to our well-being if Christian beliefs are false. 102 According to Thomas, natural reason shows that human goodness consists ultimately in the contemplation of God. 103 By our natural powers, we might obtain a natural contemplation of God as first cause. However, natural reason also suggests the possibility of a beatific knowledge of God, unmediated through propositions. 104 This latter possibility would be the greatest possible good for humans, <sup>105</sup> yet its ability to be realised depends on grace <sup>106</sup> and can only be known through revelation. 107

It seems implausible that faith could contribute positively to the realisation of either human end unless Christianity (or at least, its core portrayal of God) is true. Aguinas claims that faith helps to realise our ultimate good because belief in revelation is necessary as an intellectual preparation for and practical guide towards beatitude. 108 Indeed, in De Veritate, the desire for beatitude promised and attainable by faith provides the motivation to believe. 109 If humanity lacks a supernatural end, Christian faith will plausibly distract humans from the attainment of natural happiness and foster presumptuous false hope in God's generosity. Alternatively, if humanity possesses a supernatural end despite the falsity of wider Christian beliefs, it seems unlikely that faith in (e.g.) the Trinity and associated religious practices will prepare humans for knowledge of God, who might differ considerably from the God of Scripture.

Further, commenting on St. Paul's argument in 1 Corinthians 15:14 that faith is vain if Christ was not raised, Aguinas himself suggests that if this central article of faith is false, Christians are disadvantaged by faith. 110 Although Thomas is commenting on Scripture, it is clear from his commentary that he regards St. Paul's argument as an instance of natural reasoning which is suitable to convince those doubting a central article of faith. Aguinas follows St. Paul's

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<sup>102</sup> For goodness as teleological, cf. Stump, Aquinas, pp. 62-7.
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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>103</sup> STIa62.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>104</sup> DV 14.2, resp.; 27.2, resp.; STIaIIae 62.1 resp.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>105</sup> *ST*IaIIae3.8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>106</sup> *ST*IIaIIae 5.5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>107</sup> This traditional reading is heavily contested, but see Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural* Desire to See God According to Aquinas and His Interpreters (Naples, FL: Sapientia Press, 2010).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>108</sup> Boe. 3.1 resp.; SCG1.4; STIa1.1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>109</sup> DV 14.1 resp.

Super I ad Corinthianos (In 1 Cor.) C15 L2.

argument that the falsity of faith in Christ's Resurrection would have two unfortunate consequences. Firstly, St. Paul and other evangelists would have sinned gravely, by bearing false witness and by attributing something false to God. 111 Since for Aquinas faith involves outward confession of the gospel, 112 if faith were false not only missionaries but ordinary Christians would presumably sin by falsely attributing actions to God. Moreover, he subsequently defends St. Paul's claim that unless Christ is risen, Christians "are of all men most to be pitied". 113 Thomas lists and rejects potential benefits which might accrue to Christians if they believe in Christ's Resurrection falsely. 114 Having suggested that under such circumstances Christians will lack well-grounded hope for redemption and bodily resurrection, Aguinas further claims that faith will harm Christians by obliging them to suffer persecution (presumably, rather than to apostatise). If Christianity is false. Aguinas contends that such suffering cannot be of value by direction to a further good. 115 It cannot be directed to preserving the intellectual good of faith (since ex hypothesi faith is false) or to the natural practical goods of health and comfort. Whilst one might object that Christianity might contingently accrue worldly benefits to believers in societies where faith occasions privilege (as in 13<sup>th</sup> Century Europe), Thomas could respond that faith will at least disadvantage one by giving one a disposition to suffer persecution.

Since on Aguinas' account Christian faith does not seem beneficial unless its core doctrines true, the *prima facie* justified belief that faith is practically fitting which the interior instinctus bestows (at least, according to PC) should give propositional justification for belief that the central articles of faith are true.

V

To conclude, I have suggested various ways in which, on Aquinas' account, belief in the articles of faith can receive internalist justification through the experience of being moved by the "interior instinct". Contrary to recent suggestions, internalist justification for faith is not solely provided by miraculous evidence for the gospel's provenance. This does not mean that there is no role for miraculous evidence for revelation in Aguinas' religious epistemology. Plantinga, who believes that a sensus divinitatis provides both internal justification and warrant for theism, notes that arguments from natural theology can

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>111</sup> In 1 Cor. C15 L2, 920.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>112</sup> *ST*IIaIIae3.1-2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>113</sup> 1 Cor 15:19.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>114</sup> In 1 Cor. C15 L2, 922-5.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. 925.

nevertheless strengthen theistic belief and its warrant (and, one might add, encourage non-theists to belief in God). Analogously, Aquinas might hold that miraculous evidence for revelation can encourage Christians and non-Christians to accept the gospel, which they might otherwise justifiably believe at the prompting of a divinely-infused *instinctus*. It

Gregory R. P. Stacey
Leeds Trinity University
Horsforth
Leeds
LS18 5HD

G.stacey@leedstrinity.ac.uk

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>116</sup> Plantinga, 'The Prospects for Natural Theology', *Philosophical Perspectives* 5 (1991), pp. 287-315; pp. 311-2.