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The Order of Love

Love? What in the name of Bill Bonner are you writing about, Seanie?

Well, I found JD Vance's smiting of Rory Stewart on X too delicious not to write about. And it explains much of the mess the Western world finds itself in.

But before I proceed, let me introduce you to some of the best philosophers I know and explain why Vance was right from a common-sense *and* Catholic perspective.

The great Catholic philosophers — Augustine, Aquinas, and later, Dietrich von Hildebrand — developed the concept of *ordo amoris*, the order of love. At its core, it's the hierarchy of affections that rightly structures human life, guiding individuals and societies toward the good. In Augustine's *City of God*, he tells us that disorder in love — loving lesser things above greater things — leads to ruin. In his *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas refines the idea, distinguishing between the obligations we owe to those closest to us versus distant strangers.

This is not some abstract exercise in metaphysics. The breakdown of *ordo amoris* explains much of the chaos today, from open-border ideologies to tax revolts by the wealthy. When love is disordered — when we prioritize the foreign over the familiar, the stranger over kin, or abstract humanitarianism over the concrete needs of one's community — the result is social unraveling.

Defining *Ordo Amoris*

According to Catholic philosophy, the *ordo amoris* (order of love) is the proper hierarchy of love that guides human relationships and moral obligations. Rooted in the teachings of Augustine, Aquinas, and later Catholic thinkers, *ordo amoris* posits that love should be rightly ordered according to truth, justice, and relationships.

Augustine and *Ordo Amoris*

In *The City of God*, St. Augustine argues that the disorder of human love is the root of societal and personal corruption. He teaches that love should be directed first toward God (*caritas*), followed by love for others in proportion to their relation to us. Disordered love (*cupiditas*), where lesser things are loved above greater things (e.g., wealth over virtue, strangers over kin), leads to personal and social decay.

Augustine's hierarchy of love can be summarized as:

1. **God above all** – The highest love is due to God, as He is the source of all good.
2. **Self properly ordered** – We must love ourselves rightly, seeking salvation and holiness rather than selfish pleasure.
3. **Family and kin** – Natural obligations to parents, spouses, and children take precedence over others.
4. **Community and nation** – A just love of one's people and homeland follows from natural bonds.
5. **Strangers and humanity at large** – Charity extends to all, but not at the expense of higher obligations.

Aquinas and the Prioritization of Love

St. Thomas Aquinas refines *ordo amoris* in his *Summa Theologica* by articulating that love should be given according to moral proximity. He applies this to justice and governance, explaining that natural law dictates a preference for those closest to us:

- We owe **special care** to our families because they are an extension of ourselves.
- The **common good of a nation** is more relevant than abstract global concerns.
- Charity is universal, but obligations are **graded**, meaning that duty to kin and community is stronger than to distant strangers.

Aquinas affirms that failing to love in the correct order — whether by neglecting kin for outsiders or prioritizing material wealth over virtue — leads to *disordered love*, which breeds injustice.

Von Hildebrand and the Modern Disorder of Love

Dietrich von Hildebrand, a 20th-century Catholic philosopher, expanded on *ordo amoris*, warning against sentimentality that distorts true love. He saw modernity's moral failures—such as prioritizing political correctness over truth or universalist ideologies over local obligations—as symptoms of a disordered *ordo amoris*.

Restoring *Ordo Amoris*

Not ordering love properly leads to the grossly apparent political disarray, cultural collapse, and moral confusion that mars our world today.

The Catholic perspective on love insists that to restore *ordo amoris*, we must:

1. **Put God first** – Moral order flows from divine truth.
2. **Prioritize family and community** – Nations and families are not arbitrary constructs but natural hierarchies of love.
3. **Exercise prudent charity** – Helping others should not come at the expense of justice or the destruction of one's people.
4. **Reject false universalism** – Love for all does not mean an equal obligation to all.

Ultimately, *ordo amoris* is the key to personal virtue and societal flourishing. A world that inverts this order will always be in decline.

And Now, JD Vance Destroys Rory Stewart

JD Vance, the newly minted U.S. Vice President, recently bashed Rory Stewart, the former Tory MP and liberal interventionist, on X. Vance, an unabashed supporter of America First, rightly questioned why nations should endlessly absorb migrants at the expense of their citizens.

Ever the patrician humanitarian, Stewart predictably recoiled, arguing for the moral imperative of compassion and asylum.



At its heart, this debate concerns competing visions of *ordo amoris*. Vance insists on a hierarchy that prioritizes Americans. Like much of the Western elite, Stewart flattens that hierarchy, stupidly believing in an undifferentiated moral obligation to the entire world.

The Western ruling class sees national identity as an anachronism, an obstacle to the grand cosmopolitan project of universal empathy and bureaucratic governance.

The UK's Pathological Altruism and the Boat People

Nowhere is this more evident than in the UK's approach to immigration, particularly the endless influx of boat migrants across the Channel. In an age where working-class Britons struggle with housing, energy costs, and stagnant wages, their government continues to prioritize the accommodation of economic migrants who game the asylum system. The entire debacle exposes a fatal dislocation of *ordo amoris*: a government that should love and serve its people first instead directs its resources toward those who have no organic claim upon it.

Pathological altruism is the defining disease of the modern West. The same British state that enforces punishing tax burdens on its native population bends over backward to subsidize foreign arrivals. Meanwhile, a parallel underclass developed that didn't — and doesn't — share Britain's historical, cultural, or religious heritage. If love were ordered correctly and loyalty properly arranged, the state would first ensure the well-being of its people before extending largesse to the world.

Why the Rich Don't Want to Pay for Strangers

How's this for irony? The super-wealthy plutocracy, who often preach the virtues of global compassion, refuse to foot the bill for it. The super-rich have perfected the art of tax avoidance, offshoring wealth, and exploiting legal loopholes to shield their fortunes from the very redistributionist policies they advocate. As I've written many times, I'm not against these actions *per se*. I'm merely pointing out the hypocrisy of grabbing kids out of Appalachia or the English North to die in wars the rich finance, to bring strangers to their countries they won't finance.

Why?

Despite their rhetoric, even the Plutocrats instinctively obey a certain *ordo amoris*. They take care of themselves and their own. They just won't admit it.

This is why Vance's argument rings true while Stewart's falls flat. Nations are not mere administrative zones. They are extended families bound by history, culture, and mutual obligation.

When The State overturns the natural order of love — when elites prioritize abstract global concerns over the tangible needs of their people — society fractures.

When taxation becomes a mechanism to transfer wealth from native working-class citizens to newly arrived foreigners, the rich and other location independent workers, who see no personal benefit, opt out entirely.

Wrap Up

The solution to much of the West's dysfunction is restoring *ordo amoris*. Western nations must once again embrace the legitimacy of prioritizing their own. This doesn't mean cruelty or an absence of charity. But charity, as Aquinas reminds us, begins at home.

Augustine knew societies rise and fall based on how they order their love. The West has disordered its own into a self-destructive mess, sacrificing the bonds of community on the altar of universalism. If we are to restore sanity, we must once again love our own first—and have the courage to say so.