

MANUAL OF MORAL THEOLOGY

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VOLUME II

On the Most Holy Eucharist — with Treatise I, On the Sacraments in General

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Treatise I. On the Sacraments in General

(St. Thomas, part 3, qq. 60-65; St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, book VI, nn. 1-94; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 14, nn. 1-6.)¹

We shall deal first with the sacraments considered in themselves, then with the administration, and finally with the reception of the sacraments. Those things, however, which are treated by dogmatic theologians we shall touch upon very briefly, especially for this end, that there may be had a view of the whole doctrine, and that the connection between dogmatic and moral doctrine may appear.

¹ Cf. Billuart, *Summa S. Thom.*, part 3, treatise III; De Smet, *De sacramentis in genere*; Rath, *De Sacramentis in genere*; Pourrat, *La theologie sacramentaire*; Schanz, *Die Lehre von den Sakramenten der kath. Kirche*; Billot, *De Ecclesiae sacramentis*.

Dissertation I. On the Sacraments Considered in Themselves

Having handed down a summary notion of a sacrament, we shall speak first of the existence, essence, and division of the sacraments, then of their efficacy, and then of the effects of the sacraments.

Part I. On the Summary Notion, Existence, Essence, and Division of the Sacraments

1 **I. Summary notion.** By force of the word, a sacrament signifies every sacred thing. Here, however, it is taken more strictly and is defined: a sensible sign of a sacred thing sanctifying man, that is, of grace. Sacraments of the Old Law and sacraments of the New Law are distinguished. The former only signify; the latter signify and produce grace. Hence a sacrament of the Old Law is defined: a sensible sign, but not an efficacious sign, of grace; but a sacrament of the New Law is called: a sensible and efficacious sign of grace.

2 **II. Existence of the sacraments.** In order that the existence of the sacraments may be rightly set forth, the various states of men must be distinguished, namely: 1. the state of innocence in paradise; 2. the state of the law of nature, so named not to the exclusion of grace, but to the exclusion of the written Mosaic law. This state prevailed for the Israelites until the written law, and for others until Christ; 3. the state of the Mosaic Law, which for the Israelites lasted until Christ; 4. the state of the new or Christian Law. Now:

1. In the state of innocence, by the consent of all, no sacrament existed.
2. In the state of the law of nature, more probably at least one sacrament existed. Namely, considering the will of God to save all, there certainly existed a remedy by which little children would be freed from original sin. That this was a sensible sign of sanctifying grace, or a sacrament, is more probable, as the dogmatic theologians explain (cf. St. Thomas, part 3, q. 61, a. 3; q. 60, a. 5, ad 3; q. 61, a. 1).
3. In the state of the Mosaic Law, several sacraments existed, as is deduced from the Council of Trent¹ and from the decree of Eugene IV for the Armenians. Moreover, it is commonly admitted that circumcision was a sacrament. Other sacraments of this Law are enumerated: the consecration of priests, the eating of the paschal lamb and of the loaves of proposition, and purifications (cf. St. Thomas, I-II, q. 102, a. 5; part 3, q. 61, a. 3, ad 2).
4. In the state of the New Law there are seven sacraments, and these were instituted by Christ; this is of faith from the Council of Trent: "If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord; or that there are more or fewer than seven, namely Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony; or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be anathema."² That the said sacraments were instituted immediately by Christ, not by the Apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is certain doctrine, although it is disputed whether it was defined by the Council of Trent as a truth to be believed with Catholic faith.

It is disputed how Christ instituted the sacraments. Some teach that Christ determined the matter and form only in general, commanding only an apt gesture and suitable words, and leaving the more exact determination to the Church; this is the opinion of immediate institution in general. Others judge that Christ prescribed this gesture in species and these words in species, yet in such a way that there is room for some latitude, insofar as the Apostles or the rulers of the Church can, not indeed abrogate the matter and form established by Christ, but determine them more exactly or more strictly, or even increase them by new elements, so that the very sign-value is, within certain limits,

subject to the will of the Church; this is the opinion of immediate institution in a perfectible specific form. Others admit immediate institution in a fixed specific form, so that the Church can do nothing directly with respect to validity by changing or adding anything concerning the matter or form.

¹ Session 7, canon 2.

² Session 7, canon 1.

3 III. Essence of the sacraments. 1. The sacraments of the New Law consist of things and words; this doctrine is declared in the decree for the Armenians. It is clear: 1. from Sacred Scripture, which expressly affirms this about several sacraments, such as Baptism,¹ Confirmation,² and Extreme Unction;³ 2. from the doctrine and use of the Church. For the rest, words and things can be understood morally, so that it suffices for words and things to be had equivalently.

2. Things and words in the sacraments stand to one another as matter and form; this doctrine is proposed in the same decree for the Armenians. It is clear from the fact that the thing of a sacrament, which of itself can signify several things, for example washing in Baptism, and therefore of itself is indeterminate in the being of a sign, is determined by words to a special signification; so that the thing is like matter, the determinable part, while the words are like form, the determining part.

3. The matter of a sacrament is customarily distinguished as twofold, remote and proximate. The remote matter is the thing which is used in the sacred rite, as water in Baptism; or the thing about which the sacramental action is concerned, as sins in Penance. The former is called the remote matter from which, the latter the remote matter about which. The proximate matter is the application of the remote matter, as washing in Baptism; or the action which is concerned with the remote matter, as the acts of the penitent in Penance.

¹ Matt. 28:19.

² Acts 8:15, 17.

³ Jas. 5:14.

4 IV. Division of the sacraments. The sacraments of the New Law are distinguished into:

1. Sacraments of the dead and of the living, according as they were primarily instituted for giving grace, namely to the spiritually dead; or for increasing it, namely in the spiritually living. The grace which is conferred on a man deprived of every degree of grace, or spiritually dead, is called first grace; the grace which is conferred on a man constituted in the state of grace, or spiritually living, is called second grace. The sacraments of the dead are Baptism and Penance. The sacraments of the living are Confirmation, Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony.

2. Repeatable and non-repeatable, according as they can be conferred on the same person more than once or only once.

3. Necessary and non-necessary, according as they ought or ought not to be received by individuals. Of those which ought to be received, some are necessary by necessity of means and precept, others by necessity of precept alone. Baptism for all (can. 737), and Penance for all who have fallen into mortal sin after Baptism, are necessary by necessity of means and precept (can. 901 and 906). The Eucharist is certainly necessary by necessity of precept (can. 859, §§ 1 and 4; can. 864, § 1); concerning necessity of means, it is disputed. Confirmation and Extreme Unction are

not necessary by necessity of means; whether they are necessary by necessity of a grave precept is disputed. Finally, Matrimony and Order are necessary only to the community; each of these matters will be developed in its own place.

4. Formed and unformed, according as, as soon as they are received, they confer grace, or, on account of an obstacle, at least do not produce it immediately. Of the unformed sacraments, some, when the obstacle has been removed, revive, that is, confer grace; others do not revive (St. Alphonsus, VI, 6).
5. Finally, a sacrament is called valid or invalid according as nothing or something is lacking for constituting it.

Part II. On the Efficacy, or Productive Power, of the Sacraments

⁵ The question is whether the sacraments truly produce grace, etc.; concerning the effects themselves there will be discussion in the following part. Now:

I. The sacraments of the New Law confer grace *ex opere operato*, or are truly efficient causes of grace. This proposition is established against the Protestants and Modernists, and is of faith from these words of the Council of Trent: "If anyone shall say that grace is not conferred through the sacraments of the New Law themselves *ex opere operato* ... let him be anathema."¹

II. The sacraments concur in producing grace only as instrumental causes; the principal cause, which uses the sacraments as instruments, is God alone; for no creature can, as principal cause, produce an effect which exceeds the order of every creature.²

III. The mode by which the sacraments concur in producing grace is explained in different ways. Some teach that the sacraments, which morally are actions of Christ, move God by an infinite and infallible power to confer grace (the doctrine of moral causality). Others judge that the sacraments do not immediately produce grace, but effect in the subject a title which, so far as lies in itself, demands grace (the doctrine of intentional causality). Others teach that the sacraments physically and immediately produce grace (the doctrine of physical causality). This is the opinion of St. Thomas (I-II, q. 112, a. 1, ad 2; III, q. 62, a. 1, 3, 4, 6).

¹ Session 7, canon 8.

² Council of Trent, Session 6, chapter 7.

Part III. On the Effects of the Sacraments

The effects of the sacraments are grace and character. The former is common to all the sacraments; the latter is proper to three, namely Baptism, Confirmation, and Order.

Section I. On Grace

6 I. Grace conferred. The grace which the sacraments confer is sanctifying grace and sacramental grace.

1. **Sanctifying grace.** a) All the sacraments confer sanctifying grace on those rightly disposed. This follows from what has been said concerning the efficacy of the sacraments. Moreover, to sanctifying grace there is attached either the infusion of the supernatural virtues and of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, namely if first grace is conferred; or the increase of the aforesaid, namely if second grace is conferred.

b) Baptism and Penance of themselves confer first grace; accidentally, namely if someone in the state of grace receives them in the due manner, they confer second grace, that is, an increase of grace.

c) Extreme Unction of itself and primarily confers second grace; of itself, but secondarily, it confers first grace. The other sacraments of themselves confer second grace, and accidentally, at least much more probably, first grace. The case obtains if someone in the state of mortal sin receives a sacrament in good faith and with attrition, which extends itself to all the sins committed. The reason for this opinion is that, according to Trent, the sacraments confer grace on those who place no obstacle. Now one who is in good faith and attrite places no obstacle to grace, as is clear from the sacraments of the dead (St. Thomas, III, q. 72, a. 7; q. 79, a. 3; Supplement, q. 30, a. 1; St. Alphonsus, VI, 6, 269 and 731).

2. **Sacramental grace**, that is, a certain divine help for attaining the end proper to such a sacrament (St. Thomas, III, q. 62, a. 2). What end is proper to each sacrament will be stated where there is discussion of the individual sacraments. Further:

a) That sacramental grace is conferred through the sacraments is deduced first from the Council of Florence, which declares: "Each sacrament is ordered to a proper and distinct end." But a sacrament cannot attain its proper end unless it produces an effect or grace proper to itself, in other words, sacramental grace. Then, if all the sacraments conferred the same grace, they would differ only in the external rite; nor would there have been a reason for instituting diverse sacraments; nor would it be clear why one is more necessary than another.

b) There is not one opinion of theologians about that in which sacramental grace precisely consists. According to the defenders of intentional causality, sacramental grace consists in actual graces proper to some sacrament, which are demanded by the same title as sanctifying grace. According to others, sacramental grace is sanctifying grace itself, insofar as it is given through such a sacrament; but sanctifying grace, given through such a sacrament, is ordered to the ends of such a sacrament, and consequently gives a right to receive, namely in due time, the actual graces by which the end of such a sacrament may be obtained. Thus, for example, sanctifying grace conferred in Baptism is regenerative and preservative of spiritual life; in Confirmation, strengthening and perfective, etc. According to the Thomists, sacramental grace is sanctifying grace with an intrinsic modification, by

force of which sanctifying grace is ordered to the effects proper to the sacrament, together with a right to receive actual graces in order to those effects. Hence, according to them, for example, sanctifying grace conferred in Baptism, by force of the aforesaid modification, is regenerative and preservative of spiritual life, etc.

7 II. The measure according to which the sacraments confer grace. 1. Sacraments distinct in species more probably confer unequal grace on those equally disposed. For sacraments differ in dignity; and to a more worthy cause there corresponds a more worthy effect.

2. Sacraments distinct only in number confer equal grace on those equally disposed, and unequal grace on those unequally disposed. The Council of Trent¹ expressly teaches this concerning Baptism. Hence it must also be presumed concerning the others.

¹ Session 6, chapter 7.

Section II. On Character

8 I. Existence of sacramental character. Three sacraments, namely Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, imprint upon the soul a character, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible sign, whence they cannot be repeated. This is of faith from the Council of Trent: "If anyone shall say that in the three sacraments, namely Baptism, Confirmation, and Order, a character is not imprinted on the soul, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible sign, whence they cannot be repeated, let him be anathema."¹ Canon 732, § 1, also teaches this.

¹ Session 7, canon 9.

9 II. Nature of sacramental character. The nature of sacramental character is explained in different ways by different authors. Yet all agree in this: that character is a spiritual quality, distinct from sanctifying grace, and is a power by which man becomes capable either of receiving sacred things, as in Baptism, or of handing on sacred things, as in Confirmation and Order (St. Thomas, III, q. 63, aa. 1 and 2). But they dispute, according as they defend either physical or moral causality, whether it is a physical power or only a moral one; wherefore consult the dogmatic theologians.

Scholion. On the Informity and Reviviscence of the Sacraments

10 I. Informity. 1. The informity of a sacrament consists in this: that the sacrament is validly received, but, on account of an obstacle, does not produce fruit, that is, grace. It is said to be on account of an obstacle, whether material or formal, according as it is placed inculpably or culpably.

2. Six sacraments certainly can be unformed; concerning Penance alone it is disputed whether it can be received informly, that is, validly but without fruit.

11 II. Reviviscence; concerning which several things must be explained.

1. **Notion.** Reviviscence consists in this: that a sacrament validly but fruitlessly received afterwards produces grace, when the obstacle has been removed and the sacramental sign has ceased. I said "when the sacramental sign has ceased." Hence, supposing that the Holy Eucharist, received with an obstacle, produces Eucharistic grace when the obstacle has been removed before the consumption of the species,¹ there would not be reviviscence of the sacrament, because the fruit would be produced while the sacramental sign remains.

2. The sacraments which revive are these:

- a) Baptism certainly can revive; this is clear from the fact that otherwise those who received Baptism without fruit would be unable to obtain the remission of original sin and of the other sins committed before Baptism. For original sin and the other sins committed before Baptism are not remitted except through Baptism received in reality or in desire. But those who have once received Baptism can no longer receive it: neither in reality, because Baptism cannot be repeated; nor in desire, because if a new Baptism is impossible, the desire for a new Baptism is also excluded.
- b) Confirmation, Order, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction much more probably can revive. Otherwise those who had received the said sacraments fruitlessly, even inculpably, would remain deprived of sacramental grace, which is so necessary to man in the various states of life; since Confirmation and Order cannot be repeated at all, Matrimony cannot be repeated while the same bond remains, and finally Extreme Unction, while the same danger persists, is at least not licitly repeated.
- c) Whether Penance can revive is doubtful: both because it is doubtful whether it can be unformed, that is, valid and fruitless; and because it can be repeated.
- d) The Holy Eucharist, at least if it has been received sacrilegiously, is almost commonly said not to revive: both because it can be repeated so often, and because there would follow the absurdity that one who had communicated very often sacrilegiously, if he afterwards truly repented, would immediately be heaped with grace.

3. **The time of reviving.** Baptism, Confirmation, and Order can always revive, since they can never be repeated, and by force of the character in some way continue in being. Matrimony can revive so long as the same matrimonial bond persists. Once it has been broken, sacramental grace either is no longer necessary, or can be acquired through a new marriage. Extreme Unction can at least revive so long as the same danger continues. Finally, Penance, if it must be numbered among the sacraments that revive, must be said to be able always to revive.

4. **The requisites for reviviscence.** If someone has sacrilegiously received a sacrament, or has sinned gravely after receiving it, there is required of itself contrition or attrition with sacramental absolution; accidentally, given good faith, attrition with a sacrament of the living received in good faith suffices, as is taught much more probably. The reason is that such a man is in the state of mortal sin. But in order that mortal sin may be remitted, and thus that place may be given for the reviviscence of the sacrament, there is required of itself contrition or attrition with sacramental absolution; accidentally, attrition with a sacrament of the living suffices (St. Alphonsus, VI, 6, 87, 444). Outside these cases:

- a) Attrition certainly suffices in order that Baptism and Penance may revive. For the disposition required in the very reception itself suffices.
- b) Of itself contrition is required, but accidentally attrition most probably suffices, in order that Extreme Unction may revive, because this sacrament, received in good faith with attrition, most probably produces fruit.
- c) Of itself contrition is required, but accidentally attrition more probably suffices, in order that Confirmation, Order, and Matrimony may revive, because those sacraments, received in good faith with attrition, more probably produce fruit (n. 6).

5. **The mode by which reviviscence has place** is explained in different ways, according as the causality of the sacraments is explained in different ways. Supporters of moral causality teach that the value of the sacrament received perseveres morally in divine acceptance, and, when the obstacle has been removed, moves God to the infusion of grace. Defenders of intentional causality say that there remains a title demanding grace, and that, when the obstacle has been removed, it produces grace. Defenders of physical causality attribute the reviviscence of Baptism, Confirmation, and Order to character; as for the reviviscence of the other sacraments, some of them deny it, others derive it from a certain habitual determination in the will, and others have recourse to moral causality for these cases.

6. **The degree of reviviscence** seems to correspond to the actual disposition of the subject.²

¹ Whether this has a place, see in the treatise on the Eucharist.

² Cf. Council of Trent, Session 6, chapter 7.

Dissertation II. On the Ministration of the Sacraments

Part I. On the Person Ministering

12 The minister of a sacrament is he to whom the administration of the sacraments belongs by legitimate authority. A twofold minister is distinguished, namely principal and secondary, according as the administration of the sacraments belongs to someone by his own authority, or by authority communicated by the primary minister. The principal minister is Christ as man. The secondary minister is only the priest of the first or second order. Except Baptism and Matrimony. Concerning these there will be fuller discussion in the treatise on the individual sacraments.

Part II. On the Mode of Ministering

Concerning the mode of ministering the sacraments, canon 731, § 1, notes these things in general: Since all the sacraments of the New Law, instituted by Christ our Lord, are the chief means of sanctification and salvation, the greatest diligence and reverence must be employed in administering and receiving them opportunely and rightly.

With these things premised, we shall speak first of the requisites for valid ministration, then of the requisites for licit ministration.

Section I. On the Requisites for Valid Ministration

13 I. For the valid ministration of the sacraments, faith and sanctity are not required in the minister. With respect to faith, this is of faith as regards Baptism;¹ certain as regards the other sacraments. With respect to sanctity, it is of faith.²

The reason is that "the ministers of the Church operate instrumentally in the sacraments ... but, as was said above, an instrument does not act according to its own form or power, but according to the power of him by whom it is moved" (St. Thomas, III, q. 64, a. 5). Hence the efficacy of the sacraments does not depend on the disposition of the minister (St. Alphonsus, VI, 13).

II. For the valid ministration of the sacraments there are required intention, and certain other things, concerning which we shall treat individually.

¹ Council of Trent, Session 7, On Baptism, canon 4.

² Council of Trent, Session 7, On the Sacraments, canon 12.

Chapter I. On Intention

14 I. Notion. Intention is here understood as the deliberate will of confecting a sacrament.

15 II. Division. Intention is distinguished:

- 1. By reason of itself** into actual, virtual, habitual, and interpretative. Actual intention is had when the minister, at the time at which he confects the sacrament, actually wills to confect it. It is reflex, or rather *in actu signato*, if there is had an express and formal volition of confecting the sacrament; it is *in actu exercito* if someone actually wills indeed, but nevertheless less expressly and formally, to confect the sacrament, as if someone, recognizing a rite as a sacrament, administers it under this recognition. Virtual intention is had when someone has actually and explicitly willed to confect a sacrament, and that will, though not actually, nevertheless perseveres virtually, so that he operates by force of the will once had, as if someone, from the intention of celebrating Mass, puts on the vestments and performs the other things, even if perhaps at the time of the ministry he is wholly distracted. Habitual intention exists if someone has actually and explicitly willed to confect a sacrament and that will has not indeed been retracted, but nevertheless does not persevere virtually. Interpretative intention is had when someone neither actually and explicitly wills nor actually and explicitly has willed to confect a sacrament, but is presumed to be going to will it if thought about it should occur.¹ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 15.)

2. **By reason of the object** into merely external and internal. Merely external intention is had when someone wills and outwardly seriously performs only the external rite, but lacks the mind of confecting a sacrament, or even intends the contrary. It is called merely external because, although in itself it is internal, nevertheless its whole object is external, namely only the placing of the external rite. Internal intention is had when someone wills the external rite insofar as it is sacred, or at least insofar as it is held as such by the Church.

By reason of the object, intention is further distinguished into determinate and indeterminate, according as the thing intended is certain and defined; or is uncertain, as if someone intends to consecrate only ten hosts out of a multitude of hosts.

3. **By reason of mode** into explicit and implicit, according as someone expressly wills such a sacrament known and thought of, or by a more general will wills such a sacrament, whether not known, or known but not thought of.

By reason of mode it is also distinguished into absolute and conditioned, according as someone intends to confect a sacrament independently of, or dependently upon, some circumstance or event; as if someone absolves another under the condition: if you are attrite; or: if you make restitution.

¹ Some call interpretative the intention which others call implicit habitual intention.

16 **III. The intention required.** It is of faith that intention is required, and indeed intention "at least of doing what the Church does."¹ In order that these things may be unfolded and completed, observe the following:

1. **In itself, actual intention is not required, but virtual intention suffices; habitual intention does not suffice, much less interpretative intention; fear, however, does not hinder intention.** I said:

a) Actual intention is not required, but virtual intention suffices. For it must be judged that the intention suffices which truly flows into the act or sacramental rite, and therefore can be called its cause. Such is not only actual intention, but also virtual intention. There is added the fact that actual intention is not always within man's power, and its necessity would give occasion for anxieties about the validity of the sacraments (St. Thomas, III, q. 64, a. 8, ad 3;² St. Alphonsus, VI, 17, 18).

Corollary. A priest validly acts who, in the customary way, betakes himself to the baptistery, confessional, or altar and there baptizes, absolves, or consecrates; for there is had at least virtual intention; indeed practically everywhere actual intention is present, even if remiss. Likewise, a priest validly consecrates who has placed on the corporal the hosts to be consecrated, even if at the time of consecration he does not think of them. Indeed, in general it must be said that one imprudently doubts the value of the act who has placed the required rite, unless he has expressly excluded the due intention (St. Alphonsus, VI, 18).

b) Habitual intention does not suffice; since it cannot be admitted that an intention suffices which in no way flows into the action of the minister; such is habitual intention (St. Alphonsus, VI, 16). Much less, as is clear, does interpretative intention suffice (St. Alphonsus, VI, 16).

c) Fear does not hinder, because, as we posit, it does not take away the voluntary (St. Alphonsus, VI, 19). Except, however, Matrimony, as will be said in its place.

2. **As regards the object, there is required the intention or will of confecting a sacrament.** This is established against those who judge that external intention suffices; in other words, that it suffices for someone outwardly and seriously to place the external rite, even if inwardly he does not will to confect the sacrament. This doctrine, first defended by Roland Bandinelli, and afterwards revived by Ambrosius Catharinus (1553), is today almost commonly abandoned and rightly seems to be rejected. For: 1. as we have said, it is of faith that intention is required in the minister, "at least of doing what the Church does." But these words seem to have to be understood according to the sense which they had in the schools, in other words, of the intention of doing what the Church intends to effect through the rite. 2. Proposition 28 was condemned by Alexander VIII: "Baptism conferred by a minister who observes every external rite and the form of baptizing is valid, even though inwardly in his heart he resolves within himself: I do not intend what the Church does."³ Here it seems entirely that there is discussion of one who outwardly and seriously places the external rite. Therefore this does not suffice. 3. The Roman Missal has these words: "If someone has before him eleven hosts and intends to consecrate only ten, not determining which ten he intends, ... he does not consecrate, because intention is required,"⁴ namely, as the Missal, according to the obvious sense, supposes, the intention of consecrating, and that a determinate one (St. Alphonsus, VI, 23).

It suffices, however, that the minister implicitly will to confect the sacrament, for example, that he will the rite as sacred, that he will to do what Christ instituted, what the Church does, what is asked by a Christian, etc.

Corollary I. A sacrament is not valid: 1. if someone places the external rite without any intention; this, for example, will have place if someone does not place a human act, as if he baptizes someone in sleep or drunkenness; 2. if someone performs the external rite for the sake of jest, mockery, or mere exercise.

Corollary II. A sacrament can be valid, even if someone does not regard the rite placed by himself as sacramental, provided he truly wills, for example, what Christ instituted, what he who admits the sacrament asks, etc. Hence heresy or infidelity of itself is not a reason for doubting the required intention;⁵ otherwise if there is added hatred of the Christian name, which, for example, we can easily suspect in a Jew.

3. **As regards the term, intention must be borne toward a determinate person or matter;** yet it suffices that the intention be directed to the person or to the whole matter present, without being directed to the parts individually. But he consecrates invalidly who would will to consecrate ten hosts out of eleven and would not determine those ten.

4. **As regards the mode, especially as regards a sacrament to be confected under a condition, several things must be noted:**

a) A sacrament conferred under a condition concerning the present or the past generally is valid or not valid at once, according as the condition is verified or not verified. I said "generally," because it is disputed whether a sacrament conferred under a condition naturally unknowable is valid; as if someone were to absolve another if he were predestined. Further, it seems this must be denied, because "since God has committed the administration of the sacraments to the knowledge and will of

men, a condition cannot be placed which cannot fall under human knowledge" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 26).

b) A sacrament conferred under a condition concerning the future, for example: I absolve you, if you will make restitution, that is, as soon as you shall have made restitution, generally is not valid, neither before nor after the condition has been fulfilled. Not before the condition is fulfilled, because there is not had the intention of confecting the sacrament before the fulfilled condition; not after the condition is fulfilled, because then the matter and form no longer exist (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). I said generally, because Matrimony is excepted, which follows the nature of a contract. But a contract entered into under a condition is perfected when the condition has been fulfilled.

¹ Council of Trent, Session 7, On the Sacraments, canon 11.

² St. Thomas in the cited place indeed says: "Although he who is thinking of something else does not have actual intention, nevertheless he has ... habitual intention, which suffices for the perfection of the sacrament." But St. Alphonsus responds: "By habitual intention here the holy Doctor without doubt understands virtual intention; for immediately after he adds thus: Suppose that when a priest approaches to baptize, he intends to do with respect to the one to be baptized what the Church does; hence if afterwards in the very exercise of the act his thought is carried off to other things, the sacrament is perfected from the force, note well, of the first intention" (VI, 18).

³ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1318.

⁴ *De Defectibus*, title 7, n. 1.

⁵ Holy Office, 18 December 1872 (*Collectanea*, n. 1392).

Scholion. On the Simulated Administration of a Sacrament

Authors do not agree in explaining the nature and morality of simulated or fictitious administration of a sacrament. It seems to us that the following must be said:

17 I. Notion. 1. Simulated administration of a sacrament, taken in the full sense, consists in this: that someone uses the matter and form of a sacrament, and this in such a way that he signifies the will of confecting a sacrament, which nevertheless he does not actually have (St. Alphonsus, VI, 60 and 61, where he denies simulation because matter and form are lacking).

2. Simulated administration, accepted in a less full sense, is had when someone uses the matter or form of a sacrament, and this again in such a way that he signifies the will of confecting a sacrament, which in reality he does not have (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

Each simulated administration is called formal or material, according as deception of one's neighbor is intended as an end, or is chosen as a means.

3. Simulated administration of a sacrament, taken improperly, consists in this: that someone applies something which bears the appearance of the matter and form of a sacrament, or of either one, and this for the end that he may be judged to confect a sacrament.

From every simulated administration there differs the dissimulation of a denied sacrament, which has place when someone applies something which bears the appearance of the matter and form, or of either one, for the end that he may hide the denial of the sacrament; for example, if someone gives a blessing instead of absolution to one who is indisposed, lest the denial of absolution be disclosed to others (St. Alphonsus, VI, 59).

18 **II. Morality.** 1. Simulation of a sacrament, accepted in the full sense, is gravely evil, because it contains a sacrilegious lie, that is, a lie which, as having been committed through a sacramental rite, redounds upon the sacrament itself and inflicts grave injury upon it. Add that the said lie will often be gravely harmful. There is added proposition 29 condemned by Innocent XI: "Urgent grave fear is a cause for simulating the administration of the sacraments";¹ concerning which note: 1. by that proposition at least the simulation of a sacrament accepted in the full sense is condemned; 2. the authors of the said proposition understood it of material simulation (St. Alphonsus, VI, 59); hence formal simulation is to be rejected *a fortiori*.

2. Simulation of a sacrament accepted in the less full sense likewise seems gravely illicit, because the argument just brought forward also has force if the lie is committed through the partial rite of a sacrament.²
3. Simulation of a sacrament taken improperly of itself is quite probably not gravely illicit; for since the rite of the sacrament is applied neither wholly nor partially, the injury inflicted on the sacrament seems to be lacking, so that only a lie remains. I said of itself, because grave sin can be committed from another source, for example against charity or even against justice with respect to the subject to whom the sacrament, owed by charity or by justice, is thus denied.
4. The dissimulation of a denied sacrament, when there is a just cause, is of itself licit. For in the case neither is injury inflicted on the sacrament, nor is a lie committed, but only the truth is hidden (St. Alphonsus, VI, 59). I said of itself, because again grave sin can be had from another source, for example with respect to the subject, who can have a grave right that the truth not be hidden from him.

And these things which we have said concerning simulated administration of a sacrament, with the necessary adjustments, should also be applied to simulated reception.

Corollary I. It is neither simulation of a sacrament nor sin:

1. To place the matter and form for the sake of practice, because it is not signified that the sacrament is being confected, and therefore a lie is lacking; nor does the placing of the rite for the sake of practice inflict any injury upon the sacrament.
2. For the sake of avoiding infamy, to pronounce the customary words before one pretending to receive Communion, while not handing over the host but replacing it in the ciborium (St. Alphonsus, VI, 61). Nevertheless the case is little practical.
3. To enter the confessional and there speak to the confessor about some business. "For since matter and form are lacking there, I do not know how to understand where there is simulation of a sacrament" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 60). Nor is there a lie, unless someone "approached with the intention that bystanders believe that he is confessing" (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.); otherwise if he did it in order to hide from others the fact that he was not confessing.
4. In contracting Matrimony, to which someone is compelled, to simulate consent; since consent of this kind is invalid, so that the matter and form of the sacrament are lacking. Nor is there sin because consent is simulated, since, on account of the opposing impediment, the words of consent can be uttered with a restriction that is not purely mental, so that a lie also is lacking (St. Alphonsus, VI, 62).

Corollary II. It is simulation of a sacrament, or at least grave sin:

1. To pronounce without intention the words of absolution over one who is indisposed, or the words of consecration over bread, or in the celebration of Mass to omit the words of consecration; indeed, also from chapter *De homine*, 7, *de celebratione missarum*, the priest who in Mass did not consecrate would sin more gravely than one who consecrated and communicated sacrilegiously (St. Alphonsus, VI, 59, 61).
2. To hand over a non-consecrated host as consecrated; here indeed there is not simulation of a sacrament, but cooperation in idolatry, at least material idolatry (St. Thomas, III, q. 80, a. 6, ad 2; St. Alphonsus, VI, 61).

¹ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1179.

² Cf. Holy Office, 6 September 1625 (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1489).

Chapter II. On the Other Requisites

In order that a sacrament be validly confected, besides intention these things are required:

19 I. The minister must place the external rite in a human manner, or by a human act. For it cannot be admitted that Christ instituted a sacrament in such a way that it can be confected by an act which is not human; as if someone wholly drunk or sleeping were to baptize. For the rest, in the case, at least practically, the required intention will also be lacking (St. Alphonsus, VI, 16).

20 II. The same minister must apply the matter and pronounce the form. If there is discussion of Baptism, this seems certain, both because otherwise the words of the form are not verified, and because the Sacred Congregation of the Discipline of the Sacraments¹ declared Baptism conferred in another way invalid, adding these words: Catholic doctrine holds most certainly that the matter must be placed by one and the same minister and at the same time the form of Baptism must be uttered; otherwise the form *I baptize you, I wash you* would labor under falsity (St. Thomas, III, q. 67, a. 6, ad 3). The same seems almost certain with regard to Confirmation, Extreme Unction, and Order, considering namely both the analogy with Baptism and the doctrine of theologians and the practice of the Church. There is added that otherwise the moral union in the sacrament does not seem to be sufficiently preserved. Except the sacrament of Penance, whose nature requires the contrary. With regard to the sacrament of the Eucharist, the question cannot be posed. For the rest, note:

1. Different ministers can validly minister a sacrament which consists of parts, if you grant that this occurs; concerning which consult the treatise on Extreme Unction, provided that the individual parts are placed whole by one and the same minister, that is, with their own matter and form. This is clear from what will be said in the treatise on Extreme Unction. Nevertheless, since that is gravely contrary to the rite, it is forbidden under grave obligation outside a case of necessity.
2. Even if a sacrament does not consist of parts, nevertheless several ministers can validly confect one and the same sacrament, provided that each places everything which is required for the sacrament. This is urged first, with regard to other sacraments, from the analogy with the sacrament of the Eucharist, which can certainly be confected by several at the same time. The reason is that the individual ministers do not confect the sacrament except in the person of Christ, and therefore in and with Christ they are one. Then, since the individuals, as we suppose,

possess the power of confecting the sacrament and exhibit all the requisites, it does not appear that anything is lacking to the conferral of the individuals (cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 67, a. 6; q. 82, a. 2, ad 2; St. Alphonsus, VI, 120, 232; can. 803). But this also is gravely illicit, except the consecration in the ordination of priests and the consecration of Bishops.

Even if several confect a sacrament, nevertheless it will be one sacrament, because Christ, who is the one principal minister, effects one thing through several (St. Thomas, III, q. 67, a. 6).

3. Finally, one and the same person can confer a sacrament on several at the same time, for example baptize or absolve several. Yet this too is illicit outside a case of necessity (St. Alphonsus, VI, 29).

¹ 17 November 1916 (A.A.S. 1916, p. 479); cf. Roman Ritual, title 2, chapter 1, n. 10.

21 III. The minister must confer the sacrament on a subject distinct from himself. This is drawn both from the common doctrine of theologians and the constant practice of the Church, and from the form of several sacraments. There is added that Innocent III declared null the Baptism which a certain Jew had ministered to himself in danger of death, adding this reason: "Since there ought to be a distinction between the one baptizing and the one baptized, as is clearly gathered from the words of the Lord, saying to the Apostles: Go, baptize all nations in the name, etc." (St. Thomas, q. 66, a. 5, ad 4; q. 82, a. 4, ad 2).¹ Except the Most Holy Eucharist and Matrimony.

¹ Cf. Decretals, IV, III, 42.

22 IV. The minister must duly unite matter and form, because they must constitute one sign. A moral union suffices, or rather that union by which the words of the form, according to common estimation, affect the matter and so constitute one thing with it (St. Alphonsus, VI, 9). Now:

1. In Baptism, Confirmation, Order, and Extreme Unction it certainly suffices that matter and form coexist in some part of themselves, or that one be begun before the other is completed. Likewise, it seems to suffice that the form be pronounced immediately before or immediately after the application of the matter. The reason is that even on this supposition the words "I baptize you," etc., "I sign you," etc., still seem to signify the actual application of the matter. There is added that the Holy Office several times resolved that the sacrament of the priesthood was not to be repeated in the case in which the Bishop had had his extended hand over the ordinands immediately before the prayer *Oremus*;¹ likewise in the case in which the ordinand had touched the instruments after the form had been uttered.² These resolutions seem also to be applicable to Baptism, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction. Nevertheless, the reason for doubting with regard to these three sacraments, especially with regard to Baptism, is taken from the fact that the Holy Office on 2 May 1858 declared that Baptism is always to be repeated under condition whenever "after the washing has been wholly completed, the form is pronounced, or conversely, when the pronouncing of the form has been completed, one proceeds to the washing."³ For the rest, a very brief delay would render the sacrament doubtful, but the delay of one *Our Father* would render it null (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). For liceity it is required that matter and form perfectly coexist.⁴
2. In Penance, because it was instituted after the manner of a judgment, a greater interval can intervene.
3. In Matrimony there is always had union of matter and form when the consent of one is placed, the consent of the other not having been retracted; for it has and follows the nature of a contract

(St. Alphonsus, VI, 9).

4. In the Eucharist there is discussion rather of the presence of the matter than of its union with the form; here, however, it is required that the matter be physically present, because otherwise the words "this" and "here" are not verified (St. Alphonsus, VI, 9).

¹ 12 September 1877; 30 November 1898; 14 December 1898.

² 17 March 1897.

³ Note, however, that at the time the response was given, the value of Baptism conferred in this way was doubted more than today. Considering this together with the declarations afterwards issued concerning Order, it is permissible to doubt whether the Sacred Congregation, if again consulted, would give the same response.

⁴ Roman Ritual, title 2, chapter 1, n. 8; title 5, chapter 1, n. 18.

23 V. The minister must use neither matter nor form substantially vitiated. Now:

1. A substantial change of matter is had when a thing is used which, according to common estimation, differs from the thing which the Church uses, as if in Baptism you should use wine instead of water. If, however, the matter is the same thing in reality, either wholly or as to the greater quantity, but is called by a different name and is used for a different use, it is rather doubtfully valid than certainly invalid, as if someone were to baptize with moisture flowing from a vine (St. Alphonsus, VI, 11).
2. A substantial change of form is had when the words, according to common estimation, have a meaning different from that which must be expressed according to the mind of Christ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 11, 221). If the change is made into words which can be taken in a twofold sense, namely a sacramental one and a foreign one, the change is substantial or accidental according as the minister intends the foreign or the sacramental sense; since even in the common intercourse of men an ambiguous sense must be determined by the speaker himself. Besides, it can happen that a change which, considering only the grammatical sense, is substantial, is in fact accidental or substantial according as it proceeds from inadvertence or ignorance, or from a heretical mind. Thus if someone in consecration, from inadvertence, were to say, "Here" in place of "This is My Body," the consecration would be valid; otherwise if he intended the word "here" in the sense of Luther, or adverbially (St. Alphonsus, VI, 110). For the rest, a change of form can occur:
 - a) By substitution of words, as if in Baptism it were said: I wash you, etc. But it is accidental or substantial according as the substituted words are synonymous or not synonymous.
 - b) By transposition, as if someone says: I baptize you, etc. This will generally be accidental.
 - c) By omission, as if in consecration the word *for* is omitted. It must be seen whether or not an essential word is omitted, namely one by which the due sense is taken away.
 - d) By corruption, as can happen because of stammering, haste, or inexperience, as if someone says: This is my *boby*. In the case the change is generally accidental.
 - e) By addition, as if in Baptism it is said: I baptize you in the name of the Father, who created you, etc. Further, a change of this kind is more easily substantial if what is false is added than if what is true is added; likewise if the change is made with a heretical mind than otherwise.
 - f) By interruption. Further:

a) Interruption of the words of the form is substantial or accidental according as it is or is not so great that the words before those hearing no longer effect the complete sense intended by Christ.

b) Interruption of the syllables of the same word, if it occurs by the interposition of several words or of one word, as if it were said: I bap- (be silent) -tize you, etc., renders the value doubtful. Otherwise if it occurs by a cough or a similar way and is very brief (St. Alphonsus, VI, 11, 221).

3. A substantial change, as one which renders the sacrament invalid, is a grave sin; an accidental change is gravely or lightly forbidden according as it greatly or lightly opposes the use and precept of the Church.

24 VI. The minister must utter the sacramental form by voice, that is, by the organs ordered to speaking. Therefore vocal pronunciation is required. Besides, at least practically, the pronunciation ought to be audible of itself, because it is doubtful whether pronunciation which of itself is not audible can be called vocal (St. Alphonsus, VI, 414).

Section II. On the Requisites for Licit Ministration

In order that the minister of a sacrament proceed licitly, first indeed he must minister validly; concerning this there has already been discussion. Then it is required that he minister legitimately, holily, according to the rite, to the worthy, and absolutely or under condition according to the circumstances.

25 I. Legitimately; namely, it is required that the minister have received from the Church a mission or some jurisdiction, in other words authorization, and that he not have contracted a penalty which deprives him of the use of order. Concerning the jurisdiction required there will be fuller discussion in the treatise on the individual sacraments.

26 II. Holily, that is, in the state of grace. Now:

1. The obligation of ministering the sacraments in the state of grace is clear from the reverence due to an action so holy. Nevertheless, a necessity excuses which is so urgent that not even an act of contrition can be elicited, for example if absolution must be granted immediately to one dying. For since the sacraments are for men, the harm of one's neighbor to be averted prevails over the reverence due of itself to the sacrament, and thus, when the higher law of charity urges, the irreverence is taken away.

Here, however, it is asked by some whether the minister also is excused who cannot elicit an act of contrition in time without danger of infamy or scandal. Further, theoretically this must be affirmed, because, granted the good will of the minister and his moral inability to repent in time, even the right of preserving reputation and, *a fortiori*, the obligation of avoiding scandal prevail over the reverence due of itself to the sacrament. But since practically sufficient time for eliciting an act of contrition is available, it can be said that the said excusing cause in fact scarcely exists (St. Alphonsus, VI, 33).

2. As regards the gravity of the obligation, receive the following:

a) The obligation of the state of grace is certainly grave if these three things occur, namely if: 1. the minister is consecrated; 2. he confects the sacrament; and 3. he does this by office, or as consecrated, or solemnly.¹ This is clear from the Roman Ritual, which declares: "Those ministering these things impurely and unworthily incur the guilt of eternal death";² and these words must at least be applied

to those of whom we are speaking. So also the Roman Catechism.³ The reason is that grave irreverence is had in this, that someone exercises an act so holy in a state so foul, whether as consecrated and furnished with sacramental grace, or as acting as minister and instrument of Christ and in His name, or with the said titles considered together (cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 64, a. 5, ad 3 and a. 6; St. Alphonsus, VI, 31, 32, 884).

b) It is disputed whether the following sin gravely: 1. a non-consecrated minister who confects a sacrament in mortal sin, namely a layman baptizing and those contracting Matrimony;⁴ 2. a consecrated minister who confects a sacrament, but not by office or not as consecrated, namely a deacon or priest baptizing in a case of necessity. Some affirm, because there is grave irreverence in this, that someone, whether he is consecrated or is not consecrated, whether he acts as consecrated or does not act as such, performs such sublime things in the name of and as an instrument of Christ. Others deny it, and judge that for grave irreverence it is required that someone act by office, and therefore confect the sacrament as public minister of Christ and of the Church. Thus St. Thomas teaches (loc. cit.), nor does St. Alphonsus seem to reject this for practice (VI, 32; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 14, n. 6); all things considered, it can be held as practically safe. Likewise, a priest does not sin gravely who, while in mortal sin, only hears confession, yet in such a way that he resolves to elicit an act of contrition before absolution is to be given (St. Alphonsus, VI, 36).

c) It is further disputed whether a priest or deacon sins gravely who, while in mortal sin, does not confect, but only administers a sacrament. This question regards only the distribution of the Holy Eucharist. Further, St. Alphonsus, against many, affirms it, "because," he says, "a priest ministering the Eucharist in mortal sin inflicts grave injury on this sacrament, because, as a minister consecrated for dispensing it, he ministers it unworthily (cf. can. 845). And just as in the other sacraments the minister proximately concurs in the sanctification of those receiving through confection, so here he proximately concurs through dispensation, since the minister of the Eucharist cannot exhibit himself as minister otherwise than through dispensation" (VI, 35). There is added that Nicholas II compares a dispenser in the state of sin to a burning torch, which, while it illuminates others, consumes itself.⁵ Finally, the Roman Catechism favors this opinion.⁶

d) He does not sin gravely who, while in mortal sin, exercises other sacred functions, for example: 1. one who performs the functions of the Diaconate, Subdiaconate, or minor Orders; 2. one who performs consecrations, for example of Sacred Oil, and blessings; 3. one who touches or carries the Holy Eucharist or gives Benediction with the Most Holy Sacrament; 4. a priest who assists at Matrimony; 5. finally, one who preaches while in mortal sin does not sin gravely (St. Alphonsus, VI, 37-40).

Corollary. A minister who in mortal sin confects several sacraments in one continuous act commits as many sins as the sacraments he confects. The contrary must be said of him who by one moral action distributes the Holy Eucharist to several. Finally, he who celebrates while in mortal sin more probably commits four sins, namely he unworthily confects the sacrament, unworthily receives the sacrament, unworthily administers the sacrament to himself, and administers the sacrament to an unworthy person, again to himself (St. Alphonsus, VI, 35; vol. I, p. 201).

3. As regards the mode of recovering lost grace, one about to confect or administer a sacrament while constituted in mortal sin can recover grace either by an act of perfect contrition or by confession. If, however, there is question of confecting the Holy Eucharist, Confession is required

of itself; this is clear from canon 807, to be explained later. Besides, the confection of this sacrament has its reception annexed to it. Further, he who has sinned mortally cannot receive the Holy Eucharist unless he has first received the sacrament of Penance (n. 179). With regard to the confection of the other sacraments, it is indeed fitting to confess,⁷ but there is no obligation.

¹ The word *solemnly*, which in the case is commonly used, does not regard external rites, but signifies the same as *by office*.

² Title I, single chapter, n. 4.

³ Part 2, chapter 1, q. 17.

⁴ Nevertheless, they sin gravely insofar as they receive Matrimony in mortal sin.

⁵ Chapter 5, cause 15, question 8.

⁶ Part 2, chapter 1, question 17.

⁷ Roman Ritual, title I, n. 4.

27 III. According to the rite, that is, according to the rites prescribed by the Church. Rites, however, are customarily distinguished as essential and accidental, according as they belong to the essence of the sacraments or do not belong to it. Concerning the essential rite, that is, concerning the use of matter and form, there has already been discussion, so that it remains to speak only of the accidental rite. Concerning this, let these things be observed:

1. That there is an obligation of observing the rites is of faith from these words of the Council of Trent: "If anyone shall say that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, customarily used in the solemn administration of the sacraments, can either be contemned, or omitted by the ministers at their pleasure without sin, or changed into other new rites by any pastor of churches whatsoever, let him be anathema."¹ The obligation is likewise drawn from the Constitution *Apostolicae Sedi* of Paul V,² placed at the head of the Roman Ritual; likewise from canon 733, § 1, which establishes: "In confecting, administering, and receiving the sacraments, the rites and ceremonies which are prescribed in the ritual books approved by the Church are to be accurately observed." Yet this does not prevent certain rites from being called directive rather than preceptive; this is drawn both from the words of the Ritual and from the thing itself, as will be noted in its place.
2. The obligation of observing the rites is grave by its genus, so that he sins gravely who neglects the law in grave matter; this is drawn both from the importance of the matter being treated and from the penalties to be inflicted on incorrigible transgressors (cf. can. 2378).
3. Each person is bound to follow his own rite (can. 733, § 2). Now the rite to be observed in the Latin Church is contained in the Missal and Roman Ritual, the Roman Pontifical, the Ceremonial of Bishops, and the *Memoriale Rituum*.³

Note 1. The sacred oils which serve for administering certain sacraments must have been blessed by the Bishop on the most recent Thursday in the Lord's Supper; and old oils are not to be used unless necessity urges. When the blessed oil is nearly lacking, other unblessed olive oil is to be added, even repeatedly, but in a smaller quantity (can. 734). The pastor must request the sacred oils from his Ordinary and diligently preserve them in the church in safe and decent custody under key; nor is he

to retain them at home, unless because of necessity or another reasonable cause, with the permission of the Ordinary (can. 735).

Note 2. The reverence due to the sacraments also requires that they be conferred with the decency which the nature of the sacrament demands; to this also belongs due attention. Nevertheless, voluntary distraction is only venial, unless there is added danger of a substantial or at least notable defect. Yet voluntary distraction of a priest during consecration and communion is held by many as grave irreverence, namely because of the eminent dignity of the Sacrifice (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 14, 224, 410, dub. 5).

¹ Session 7, On the Sacraments in general, canon 13.

² 17 June 1614.

³ The *Memoriale Rituum* is a small book of rites given for the City by Benedict XIII (1723) and promulgated for the whole world by Pius VII (1827).

28 IV. To the worthy. The sacraments can be ministered only to the worthy, at least of themselves. But it suffices that worthiness be established as will be explained below. I said:

1. **They can be ministered only to the worthy.** He who ministers them to an unworthy person commits: 1. the sin of sacrilege, on account of the irreverent treatment of a sacred thing, that is, of a sacrament; 2. the sin of scandal, on account of cooperation in the sin of one's neighbor (St. Alphonsus, VI, 43).

2. **At least of themselves;** because, as if accidentally, the sacraments can be ministered to an unworthy person if there is present a cause by which both the irreverence which is contained of itself in ministration to the unworthy is removed, and cooperation in the sin of one's neighbor is made honorable. Causes of this kind are: violation of the sacramental seal, infamy, scandal, and other inconveniences to be avoided. From these things follow:

a) A sacrament must be ministered to an unworthy person if his unworthiness is known only by sacramental knowledge. For the rest, the following rules hold:

b) The sacraments are to be denied to a public sinner whether he asks secretly or publicly. The reason is that neither scandal nor infamy to be avoided makes the ministration honorable¹ (can. 855, § 1; St. Thomas, III, q. 80, a. 6; St. Alphonsus, VI, 44). A public sinner, however, is one whose crime is notorious either by fact, by law, or by reputation; he is occult as long as there is hope that the crime can be hidden.

c) The sacraments are to be denied to an occult sinner if he asks for them secretly, that is, before the priest alone, or before a few others who do not understand what is being done and will not spread the matter; they are not to be denied if he asks for them publicly. It is said:

a) They are to be denied if he asks for them secretly (can. 855, § 2; Roman Ritual):² the reason is that from denial there does not follow the inconvenience mentioned above (St. Thomas, loc. cit.; St. Alphonsus, VI, 44). Except if the priest knew the state of the sinner from confession alone; for he cannot use knowledge from confession with the burden of the penitent (St. Alphonsus, VI, 51, 658).

b) They are not to be denied if he asks for them publicly (can. 855, § 2; Roman Ritual).³ The reason is that from the fact that a minister could publicly deny the sacraments from private knowledge, the

greatest inconveniences would follow: namely, not only the loss of the reputation⁴ of the one asking, but especially disputes, disturbances, scandals, and the danger that many would abstain from the sacraments, namely from fear lest they be kept away by an imprudent or malicious minister (St. Thomas, loc. cit.; St. Alphonsus, VI, 49). Except, however, the sacrament of Order, from which even one occultly unworthy must be kept away (Council of Trent;⁵ can. 970). "The reason is certain, because he who thrusts himself into public offices for which he is not suitable must be repelled, even with infamy, on account of the public good to be preferred to the private good" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 52; cf. St. Thomas, Supplement, q. 36, a. 4). Besides, "it must be noted that in that case the Bishop is not bound to manifest the cause why he repels him from ordination; according to the declarations of the Sacred Congregation of the Council issued on 21 March 1643 and on 21 April 1668, which the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XIV brings forward at length"⁶ (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

If the crime is public in another place, but occult in the place where the sacrament is asked, the sacrament should not be denied unless knowledge of the crime will easily reach there (St. Alphonsus, VI, 46; cf. can. 855, § 2).

d) It is forbidden to minister the sacraments of the Church to heretics, even those erring in good faith and asking for them, unless first, having rejected their errors, they have been reconciled to the Church (can. 731, § 2). It is forbidden both because the sacraments generally cannot be ministered to heretics and schismatics without scandal,⁷ and because ministration of the sacraments to non-Catholics fosters indifferentism.

Insofar as these things are also to be applied to the dying, see in the treatise on Penance and on Extreme Unction.

3. It suffices that worthiness be established as follows:

a) With regard to Baptism of adults, Penance, Order, and Matrimony, the worthiness of the recipient must be established more or less positively, and therefore inquiry must be made into it, as will be explained more fully in the treatise on the said sacraments. Meanwhile consult, with regard to Baptism, canon 752, § 1; with regard to Penance, canons 886 and 888; with regard to Order, canon 973, § 3; with regard to Matrimony, canons 1020, 1021, § 1, and 1033.

b) With regard to the other sacraments, worthiness must be presumed, while unworthiness must be proven in some measure, so that in doubt the sacraments ought rather to be granted. The reason is that all the faithful have a right to these other sacraments, and ministers are not judges but dispensers; whence in these cases they do not have the right of inquiring, but only the duty of dispensing to all who ask, provided that they are not positively unworthy (St. Alphonsus, VI, 43). If, however, unworthiness has been established, amendment must be proven, and sometimes, besides, the satisfaction performed must be established. Concerning this the Roman Ritual has these words: "All the faithful are to be admitted to sacred Communion, except those who are prohibited for a just reason. But the publicly unworthy are to be kept away, such as the excommunicated, the interdicted, and the manifestly infamous: as prostitutes, concubinarians, usurers,⁸ magicians,⁹ sorcerers, blasphemers,¹⁰ and other public sinners of that kind, unless their penitence and amendment are established, and they have first satisfied for public scandal."¹¹ Canon 855, § 1, inculcates the same for the same reason. With these things considered, the following can be drawn:

¹ Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 2, n. 3.

² Title IV, chapter 1, n. 9.

³ Title IV, chapter 1, n. 9.

⁴ This reason is not adequate, because the reverence to be shown of itself to the sacrament prevails over the private good of the reputation of the sinner, who, as is supposed, is not of good will; but it does not prevail over the common good.

⁵ Session 14, on reform, chapter 1; Session 23, chapters 5 and 7.

⁶ *De Synodo*, book 12, chapter 8, n. 2.

⁷ Holy Office, 20 July 1898 (*Collectanea*, n. 2012).

⁸ That is, those judicially convicted as such.

⁹ That is, those who publicly practice true and certain magic.

¹⁰ That is, those who from a spirit of impiety are accustomed by mouth or writing to utter injurious things against God, against the Saints, or against the Church.

¹¹ Title IV, chapter 1, n. 8.

29 Corollary I. If unworthiness arises from sin alone, generally it suffices that the sinner has confessed publicly; indeed, the very approach to the Holy Eucharist seems generally to suffice that he be judged amended. If, however, a public sinner of this kind, notwithstanding confessions and communions, does not cease falling back into the same habit, and the relapse is notorious, then the ministration of the sacraments should be deferred for some time, so that amendment may be sufficiently proven, unless now particular signs of amendment appear, as can occur especially on the occasion of a Mission.

Corollary II. If someone has publicly lived in a proximate occasion; likewise, if some resignation of office, or retraction, or satisfaction must be imposed, for example if someone has performed a wicked office, or has publicly enrolled in a wicked society, or has spread pernicious errors, or has publicly and unjustly stripped another of reputation, generally the occasion must be abandoned or the other obligation fulfilled before the sinner is publicly¹ admitted to the sacraments.

Corollary III. If someone has been publicly excommunicated, or has notoriously adhered to a heretical sect, before he communicates he must be reconciled with the Church in the external forum and absolved from the censure.

Corollary IV. If the crime is doubtful, the sacrament should not be denied, unless nevertheless someone is so suspected that by charity he is bound to remove the suspicion. If the crime is certain, but penitence doubtful, the sacrament should be denied, because penitence is not established; which the Roman Ritual cited above and canon 855 require (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 48).

Corollary V. If a doubt remains whether the sacraments must be denied to someone, the Ordinary should be consulted; or, if there is not time, after the sacrament has been granted, recourse should be had to him for the future.

For the rest, if the sacraments are to be denied, one should proceed most prudently. As far as can be done, the sinner should be warned in time, so that the request itself may be forestalled. If the matter does not succeed, the denial should be made without disturbance. The ordinary circumstances are especially regarded by the things said above; concerning the things to be observed in urgent danger of death there will be discussion in its own place.

Finally, here it is customary to ask whether the minister can administer a sacrament to an unworthy person in order to avoid harm threatening himself, for example death. Some affirm, provided that the one asking can here and now validly receive the sacrament and does not ask for it in contempt of God or of religion. They affirm this because there is had only material cooperation, which is licit for a cause of this kind. But with St. Alphonsus (VI, 49) it seems it must be denied; since the conferral of a sacrament on an unworthy person, and this in the supposed circumstances, carries with it so great an injury to the sacrament that it does not seem it can be admitted for averting private harm from the minister, but only for preventing inconveniences that would follow for the community from the denial (St. Alphonsus, VI, 49). As we already noted above, the adequate reason why it is permitted to confer a sacrament on an occult sinner is not the avoidance of infamy for a contumacious sinner, but the inconveniences which would arise for the community from the denial (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

¹ Of themselves, the sacraments can be ministered at least secretly to all who are truly penitent, but according to the Sacred Penitentiary (1856) it is not fitting "to admit to secret participation in the sacraments those who have not made retraction, on account of the scandal of the weak, who can believe that the penitent has persevered in obstinate pertinacity."

30 V. Absolutely or conditionally, according to the circumstances. The sacraments are to be conferred absolutely if there is no serious doubt about validity; otherwise under condition. Yet he who, being certain of validity, places a condition, seems of himself to sin only lightly, because grave irreverence is not evident.

Scholion I. On the Ministration of a Doubtfully Valid Sacrament

31 I. The morality of doubtfully valid ministration. 1. Of itself it is illicit to minister a sacrament with doubt about its validity; in other words, moral certainty about the validity of the sacrament is required of itself. The reason is that of itself it is injurious to Christ, the Author of the sacraments, to place the external rite instituted by Him, wholly or at least partially, and indeed in order to constitute a sacrament, with grave danger of not truly constituting the sacrament. There is added proposition 1 condemned by Innocent XI: "It is not illicit in conferring the sacraments to follow a probable opinion about the validity of the sacrament, the safer one being left aside, unless law, agreement, or danger of incurring grave harm forbids it. Hence one must not use only a probable opinion in the conferral of Baptism, priestly Order, or episcopal Order."¹ Therefore of itself it is illicit: 1. to use doubtful matter or form; 2. to minister a sacrament in doubt whether another requisite for validity is present, for example the presence of the penitent due in the sacrament of Penance. Consequently, of itself it is also not licit to minister a sacrament under a condition which, according to what was said in n. 32, renders the validity of the sacrament doubtful (St. Alphonsus, VI, 28, 46).

Note. The moral certainty about validity which is required must be taken more strictly or more broadly according to the diversity of the sacraments; more broadly, for example, for the sacrament of Penance, as will be explained in its place.

2. Accidentally, a sacrament can sometimes, or even must, be conferred with doubt about its validity, namely if on the one hand it cannot certainly be conferred validly, and on the other hand there is a grave reason for conferring it. For since the sacraments are for men, the salvation of men to be procured prevails over the obligation of taking care lest the sacrament be exposed to

the danger of nullity. A sufficient reason is present the more easily in proportion as the sacrament is more necessary (St. Alphonsus, VI, 28, 29).

Corollary I. A doubtfully valid sacrament can be conferred if the validity is at least probable and, from the sacrament not being conferred, grave spiritual harm threatens someone. Hence, for example, one doubtfully disposed can be absolved if there is fear lest otherwise he be alienated from the sacraments. But scarcely ever is it licit to consecrate doubtful matter (St. Alphonsus, VI, 28, 29, 432).

Corollary II. In danger of death, even with slight probability about validity, the necessary sacraments must be conferred, namely Baptism and Penance; likewise Extreme Unction, at least if Penance certainly cannot be conferred validly (St. Alphonsus, VI, 103).

¹ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1151.

32 II. The mode of doubtfully valid ministration. If a sacrament is ministered with doubt about validity, it must be conferred under condition; namely, the reverence due to the sacrament requires that the minister, in a doubt of this kind, protest that he does not will to confer the sacrament if the necessary condition is lacking.¹ Besides, observe:

1. Let the condition be placed on which validity depends, not that on which only the fruit depends. The reason is that a sacrament conferred under a condition on which only the fruit depends, for example, if you are disposed to receive grace, cannot revive; for if the condition is verified, the sacrament is immediately received validly and fruitfully; if it is not verified, it is not even validly received, and therefore cannot revive (n. 11). On the contrary, a sacrament conferred under a condition on which validity depends, for example, if you are capable of receiving the sacrament, is validly conferred if the condition is verified; and if perhaps it is now received without fruit, afterwards, when the due disposition is added, it can revive.
2. It is not required that the condition be expressed by mouth, but it suffices that it be expressed mentally, except in the cases in which, according to the Roman Ritual,² it must be expressed by mouth, namely: 1. in doubt whether the one to be baptized has already been baptized, or whether that which has been born is a human being; 2. in doubt whether the one to be anointed is still living (St. Alphonsus, VI, 29). The reason is that a condition placed mentally suffices for the sacrament truly to be conferred conditionally, in other words, for the intention to be restricted to the case of valid confectio. This is confirmed by these words of the Roman Missal: "If he doubts very probably that he has omitted something essentially in the consecration, let him repeat the form at least under a tacit condition."³ Indeed, it is enough to place the condition, whether by mouth or only mentally, implicitly; for example by ministering the sacrament according to the institution of Christ or the intention of the Church.

¹ If doubt about validity is removed by the Church supplying the defect, if it exists, the sacrament must be conferred absolutely. If someone places the condition: if you are disposed, it can seem doubtful whether there is intended a disposition required for the fruit alone or, at least confusedly or predominately, for validity. Hence it is safer not to express the condition in this way.

² Title 2, chapter 1, nn. 9, 22; title 5, chapter 1, n. 14.

³ *De defectibus*, title 5, n. 2.

Scholion II. On the Repetition of a Sacrament Doubtfully or Doubtfully Validly Conferred

33 We speak of the repetition of a sacrament which is done under this condition, or an equivalent one: If the former sacrament was not conferred, or was not validly conferred; and which therefore effects nothing if the former sacrament was validly conferred. Now:

I. It is illicit to repeat a sacrament under condition if the doubt about the ministration or its valid ministration lacks reasonable foundation. In the case, repetition is gravely illicit, because it is grave irreverence to repeat the sacramental rite without reason. Nevertheless, the scrupulous are excused from sin, at least grave sin; yet they must be seriously admonished to abstain from repeating the form. Likewise, it is venial uselessly to repeat the same word, by which manner of acting Christ is introduced as speaking ridiculously. Stammerers, however, are excused, provided that, as far as can be done, they try to pronounce the words rightly the first time.

II. It is licit to repeat the sacraments under condition if both a prudent doubt about ministration, or about valid ministration, exists, and the usefulness of one's neighbor recommends reception of the sacrament.

III. A sacrament must be repeated under condition if there is prudent doubt about the ministration or its validity, and reception of the sacrament is necessary by necessity of means or of precept; even more if the common good requires that the sacrament be certainly conferred validly. Moreover, the more necessary the sacrament is, the more easily a sufficient doubt is present.

Corollary I. The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Order are to be repeated under condition if a prudent doubt exists whether they were really conferred or whether they were validly conferred (can. 732, § 1). If it is prudently doubted whether absolution was imparted or rightly pronounced, and the penitent is still sufficiently present, absolution must be repeated if there is question of a penitent constituted in mortal sin; otherwise it can at least be repeated.

Corollary II. Baptism, Order, absolution of one dying, and Extreme Unction conferred on one deprived of the senses must be repeated, even if the reason for doubting the validity of the former sacrament is slight.

Corollary III. It can happen that doubt about the ministration or the valid ministration of a sacrament, even a necessary one, is so slight that it can indeed be repeated, but need not be repeated. Thus, for example, to quiet anxiety Order could be repeated if the words of the form had been uttered immediately after the matter was placed.

Corollary IV. Finally, it can happen that a sacrament can and must be repeated several times under condition, for example that an infant must first be baptized while still existing in the womb; then, when some member has emerged, be rebaptized under condition; finally, once brought into the light, be rebaptized again under condition (n. 93; cf. can. 746, § 3).

Section III. On the Obligation of Ministering

34 **I. Bishops and pastors are bound in this way:**

1. They must, by justice, minister the sacraments to their subjects; and indeed not only in true necessity, but as often as they reasonably ask for this. They are bound by justice because, in accepting their office, they entered into a tacit contract. There is added the reason of salary or

honorable support accruing to them by reason of their office (St. Alphonsus, VI, 58; cf. vol. I, n. 572; canons 464, § 1; 467, § 1; 785; 892, § 1; 939).

2. The aforesaid obligation is grave by its genus, namely so that they would sin gravely: 1. if they did not aid a subject constituted in grave or extreme necessity; 2. if by custom they showed themselves difficult or slow, for example if they heard confessions only on a few days in the month, or assigned notably inconvenient times for the distribution of the Holy Eucharist.
3. If the necessity is grave or extreme, grave inconvenience does not excuse, indeed not even danger on the way (cf. vol. I, n. 572). Nevertheless, concerning the obligation of ministering the sacraments with danger to life, let these things be noted:

a) The obligation regards only the sacraments necessary for salvation according to the circumstances, namely Baptism, Penance, and, if the sick person were deprived of the senses before he could have been absolved, Extreme Unction.

b) In order that the said obligation exist, it is required: 1. that there be no other who will certainly minister the sacraments; 2. that there be hope of fruit; 3. that from the sacrament ministered with danger to life there not threaten a greater harm, for example a common harm or the harm of many for whom the minister is necessary.

Corollary I. Pastors can provide many things through others, unless nevertheless they are requested by name. Bishops, however, can, at least today, fulfill ordinary offices entirely through others.

Corollary II. Benedict XIV concludes from rescripts of the Sacred Congregation of the Council that a pastor cannot withdraw in time of plague, even if he leaves behind a suitable vicar; nevertheless he can reserve to himself the care of the healthy if the vicar is ready to provide for the sick, lest the healthy, from fear of infection, flee both of them.¹ The same Sacred Congregation declared that this prohibition has much more force for Bishops.² Moreover, the things said about time of plague are certainly to be applied generally to a time of common danger, such as war or any contagious disease. Finally, pastors and bishops in a time of common danger cannot resign unless someone else can be substituted into their office.

¹ *De Synodo dioecessana*, book 13, chapter 19, n. 2.

² 18 December 1576.

35 II. Assistants who by reason of office supply the place of the pastor are held by almost the same obligation as pastors (cf. can. 476, § 6).

36 III. Other priests are obliged by charity alone (cf. can. 892, § 2; 939). They are bound under grave obligation if their neighbor is in extreme or grave necessity. If there is question of grave necessity, grave inconvenience excuses. If there is discussion of extreme necessity, or of grave common necessity, not even danger of life excuses. But concerning the obligation of ministering the sacraments with danger to life, let the things noted above concerning it be noted (St. Alphonsus, VI, 624; II, 27; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 4, n. 14; tract 16, n. 125).

Corollary. If the people, because of a scarcity of ministers, are in grave necessity, a simple priest cannot abstain from hearing confessions and administering the Holy Eucharist; and if he is not suitable for hearing confessions, he is bound, if he can, to render himself suitable (St. Alphonsus, VI, 625).

³⁷ **IV. Superiors of religious, toward their subjects, are held by an equally grave obligation as pastors** (cf. can. 514, § 1); nevertheless practically they are not held by justice, because there is no established tacit contract, nor is a salary assigned. There is added an obligation of religion, because superiors seem to be obliged from this motive.

Dissertation III. On the Reception of the Sacraments

We must speak first of the person receiving, then of the mode of receiving a sacrament.

Part I. On the Person Receiving

38 I. Only man as a wayfarer is capable of receiving the sacraments. Therefore angels and the dead are excluded. Nevertheless not every wayfaring man is capable of receiving all the sacraments; namely:

1. Every man not yet baptized is capable of Baptism (can. 745, § 1).
2. Every baptized person is capable of Confirmation and the Eucharist (canons 786, 853).
3. Every baptized male is capable of Order (can. 968).
4. Every baptized person who has fallen after Baptism is capable of Penance (can. 902).
5. Every baptized person able to enter into a contract is capable of Matrimony (cf. can. 1035).
6. Every baptized person who, after having attained the use of reason, is in danger of death because of illness or old age is capable of Extreme Unction (can. 940, § 1).

Part II. On the Mode of Receiving a Sacrament

In order that the sacraments produce the twofold effect concerning which there was discussion (n. 5), namely character and grace, they must be received validly and licitly. I said "in order that they produce the twofold effect," since valid reception suffices for producing character alone. In order, moreover, that grace be received, valid and licit reception is required.

Section I. On the Requisites for Valid Reception

39 For validly receiving a sacrament neither faith nor uprightness is required, as is clear from the sense and practice of the Church, which has always held as valid a sacrament received according to the rite of the Church in heresy. Penance is excepted, for which the good acts of the penitent are required, as will be explained in its own place.

Baptism, however, is required for the other sacraments. This is established, namely, from tradition, that the other sacraments were instituted only for those who through Baptism have been made members of the Church (St. Alphonsus, VI, 79).

Finally, for the valid reception of all the sacraments there is required, at least in adults, intention, that is, the will of receiving the sacrament; concerning which intention we must speak more fully (St. Alphonsus, VI, 80, 139).

40 **I. Necessity of intention.** 1. In little children and in the perpetually insane, that is, in those who have never enjoyed the use of reason, no intention is required, but the will of the Church supplies. This is of faith with regard to Baptism,¹ certain with regard to Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist, namely from the most ancient practice of the Church; likewise with regard to Order from the Constitution *Eo quamvis tempore* of Benedict XIV² (St. Thomas, III, q. 68, a. 9; a. 12, ad 1; St. Alphonsus, VI, 80, 139). Further, little children and the perpetually insane are capable of the sacraments which we have indicated, but incapable of the others (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

2. In adults intention is required, as follows:

a) He who both internally resists the reception of the sacrament and is forced to the external rite, by the consent of all, does not receive the sacrament.

b) He who internally resists the reception of the sacrament, but voluntarily admits the external rite, does not receive the sacraments which do not imprint character. Thus authors commonly teach, relying on this reason: that it is not fitting that the gifts of God be conferred on one who positively does not will to receive them. There is some dispute about those sacraments which confer character, that is, Baptism, Confirmation, and Order. Those few who judge that the latter sacraments are received in the case rely especially on the fact that Innocent III³ declares that it is not absurd to teach that he who fictitiously approaches Baptism, that is, externally consenting but dissenting in heart, receives the impressed character of Christianity. Nevertheless, the more common opinion teaches that even the sacraments which imprint character are not received by one who internally dissents, although he externally consents. The reason alleged is that it seems especially unfitting that sacraments which carry special burdens with them should be received by a subject who does not will to receive them. For the rest, the words of Innocent III, considering their tenor, are of a kind to move anyone little.

c) He who neither consents nor dissents, but holds himself merely passively, much more probably does not receive the sacraments any more than one who positively resists reception; because it is not fitting that the gifts of God be conferred on one who does not positively will to receive them (St. Thomas, III, q. 68, a. 7; St. Alphonsus, VI, 81).

St. Thomas says thus in the cited place: "I answer that through Baptism someone dies to the old life of sin and begins a certain newness of life ... And therefore, just as in order that a man die to the old life there is required, according to Augustine, in one having the use of free will, the will by which he repents of the old life; so there is required the will by which he intends newness of life, whose beginning is the very reception of the sacrament; and therefore on the part of the one baptized there is required the will or intention of receiving the sacrament." And again: "If in an adult the intention of receiving the sacrament were lacking, he would have to be rebaptized; if however this were not established, it would have to be said: If you are not baptized, I baptize you."

With this doctrine of St. Thomas there cannot be reconciled the opinion of those who teach that the will which is required in the recipient is rather that of one not placing an obstacle than of one positively consenting.⁴

Corollary I. He validly receives a sacrament who, from fear, consents to reception; for fear does not take away freedom. Except Matrimony, which is invalid if consent has been extorted by grave fear, as will be explained in its own place.

Corollary II. The question treated concerning the intention of one receiving a sacrament does not regard the Holy Eucharist; concerning this, namely, it is not asked whether it is valid without the intention of the recipient, but whether without the said intention it is received sacramentally, or only materially, so that it does not produce fruit.⁵

¹ Council of Trent, Session 7, canon 13 on Baptism.

² 4 May 1745, article 1.

³ Chapter 3, *De Baptismo* (III, 42).

⁴ Cf. also, with regard to Baptism, canons 745, § 2, and 752; Roman Ritual, title 2, chapter 3, n. 1; with regard to Penance, Roman Ritual, title 3, chapter 1, n. 24; with regard to Extreme Unction, canon 943; Roman Ritual, title 5, chapter 1, n. 6.

⁵ Cf. the treatise on the Holy Eucharist.

41 II. Nature of the required intention. 1. In itself actual intention is not required, nor virtual intention, but even habitual intention suffices; interpretative intention does not suffice. I said:

a) Habitual intention suffices, in other words, it suffices that someone positively had it and has not retracted it.¹ The reason is that intention is required in the recipient only so that he may not be said to be sanctified against his will. But this cannot be said of one who enjoys habitual intention. Others except Penance and Matrimony. But as regards Penance, habitual intention suffices insofar as there is question of receiving absolution. It is another question, however, whether the acts of the penitent must be placed from an at least virtual intention, that is, by force of the intention of receiving the sacrament, in other words, whether they must be referred by the penitent, actually or virtually, to absolution.² With regard to Matrimony, which the recipients themselves minister, actual or virtual

intention is necessary to this extent: that it is required that consent begin to exist from an actual or virtual intention of contracting Matrimony (St. Alphonsus, VI, 81, 82, 139).

b) Interpretative intention does not suffice, because intention of this kind, at least as it is understood by us (n. 15), in reality has not existed.³

Objection. The Roman Ritual⁴ and canon 943 establish that Extreme Unction is to be conferred absolutely on the sick who, when they were in possession of their mind, at least implicitly asked for it or probably would have asked for it. Therefore with regard to Extreme Unction interpretative intention suffices, or rather a mind inclined toward the said sacrament, which interpretative intention indicates.

Response. I deny the consequence. And indeed the Roman Ritual and canon 943 do not speak of sick persons, faithful, who would probably have willed Extreme Unction, but who would probably have asked for it. But a faithful person who, while master of himself, would probably ask for Extreme Unction also, with sufficient certainty, willed the said sacrament more or less explicitly, just as the request which probably would have place indicates with sufficient certainty a mind inclined toward the sacrament.

2. With regard to the object, the intention of receiving such a sacrament is required, or of receiving what the Church intends through such a rite. But an intention more or less explicit of receiving such a sacrament suffices. A merely implicit intention, as for example the will of using the means of salvation, does not suffice if there is an explicit contrary intention; if no such contrary intention is had, the matter seems doubtful. With these things noted in general, receive the following in particular:

a) With regard to Baptism, the will of embracing the Christian religion suffices for receiving it, at least in danger of death. It is disputed whether the same can be said of the will of using the means of salvation, likewise of attrition or contrition. Many hold this as probable, because there is an implicit intention. But we judge that one must speak thus:

a) It seems it must be denied if there is question of those who reject Baptism at least more or less explicitly; of this kind are Jews, Mohammedans, and many Protestants today. But it seems it must be denied because, besides the fact that it is not proven that implicit intention suffices, explicit rejection seems to prevail over implicit admission.⁵ There is added that the Holy Office on 30 March 1898 declared: "Concerning dying Mohammedans deprived of the senses, one must respond as in the decree of the Holy Office of 18 September 1850 to the Bishop of Perth, that is: If previously they had given signs of wishing to be baptized, or in their present state either by nod or in another way have shown the same disposition, they can be baptized under condition, insofar nevertheless as the Missionary, having inspected all the circumstances of things, has so prudently judged"; which at least proves that it is illicit to confer Baptism on those who reject it, and suggests that such conferral is invalid, because, if validity were posited, at least in extremis it does not seem it should be excluded. There are added canons 752, § 3, and 754, § 3, compared with the Holy Office of 30 March 1898, which seem to require a more or less explicit will. There is added finally that a practice conforming to the contrary doctrine never seems to have existed in the Church (St. Alphonsus, VI, 82; cf. VI, 483). Practically, the contrary opinion can be called licit, but not obligatory.

b) If there is discussion of those who do not explicitly reject Baptism, the probability of the opinion which teaches that the general will of admitting the means of salvation suffices, likewise attrition and contrition, the probability of that opinion, I say, seems rather slight: both because, as we said, canons 752, § 3, and 754, § 3, compared with the Holy Office of 30 March 1898, seem to require that the one to be baptized have signified an intention more or less explicit of receiving Baptism; and because the practice of baptizing those who enjoy only an implicit intention seems truly new in the Church. Practically, however, the contrary opinion seems licit, and, according to circumstances, obligatory.

b) With regard to Extreme Unction, likewise for receiving Viaticum sacramentally, the will of dying Christianly suffices; the same will in danger of death suffices for Confirmation; likewise for receiving sacramental absolution, at least considered by itself alone.

The will of dying Christianly, likewise the will of using the means of salvation, or contrition or attrition, according to the things explained above, do not seem to suffice in those who reject the mentioned sacraments more or less explicitly. With regard to non-Catholics who do not explicitly reject the said sacraments, it is not so proven that the will of dying Christianly, etc., does not suffice for valid reception.

c) With regard to Matrimony and Order, explicit intention is required; since, at least practically, there will not be had an implicit intention which includes the will of entering Matrimony or of receiving Order. There is added that the said sacraments carry special burdens with them, so that for that reason also a general will does not sufficiently contain the will of receiving them (St. Alphonsus, VI, 82).

Question. Whether the conceived intention of receiving a sacrament effects that it is validly received, even if it is ministered to one not master of himself, for example sleeping, drunk, or fallen into insanity.

Response. A few deny it;⁶ but it seems it must entirely be affirmed, both because Innocent III teaches thus with regard to Baptism,⁷ likewise Benedict XIV;⁸ and because intention is not judged restricted unless a restriction is expressly placed, or is drawn from a contrary will once had (St. Thomas, In IV, dist. 6, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3, ad 2; St. Alphonsus, VI, 81).

¹ Innocent III, chapter *Maiores*, § *Item quaeritur, de baptismo*; Instruction of Benedict XIV, *Postremo mense*, n. 46.

² Cf. the treatise on Penance.

³ St. Alphonsus (VI, 82) and others teach that interpretative intention suffices; but they understand that intention which others call implicit habitual intention. The holy Doctor indeed calls it interpretative intention which was never had; but he intends the one which was never had explicitly, as follows from the context, namely both from the fact that he also calls interpretative intention general, that is, such by which someone implicitly wills the sacrament, and from the fact that he opposes interpretative intention to explicit intention.

⁴ Title V, chapter 1, n. 6.

⁵ It seems to others that in the will of using the means of salvation there is not included the implicit will of receiving the sacrament, but rather a merely conditioned will; in other words, he would will to receive it if he recognized it as a means of salvation; but this condition not being fulfilled, he in no way wills it (cf. Ter Haar, *De occasionariis et recidivis*, n. 503).

⁶ Roncaglia, *De Sacramentis in genere*, chapter 5, question 2, response 2; Billuart, *De Sacramentis in communi*, dissertation VI, article I; Lehmkühl (II, 65 note) doubts.

⁷ Book 3 of the Decretals, title 42, chapter 3, *Maiores*.

⁸ Instruction *Postremo mense*, n. 46.

Section II. On the Requisites for Licit Reception

42 In little children and the perpetually insane no disposition is required. In adults these things are required:

43 **I. They must have the disposition by which they become proximately capable of the effect to which the sacrament is of itself ordered.** Hence:

1. For the sacraments of the dead, that is, for Baptism and Penance, besides acts, at least implicit, of faith and hope, at least attrition is required.¹ That attrition suffices is clear from the fact that those sacraments are of themselves ordered to remitting mortal sins, and therefore cannot demand a disposition which already of itself remits mortal sins (St. Alphonsus, VI, 440). He who receives the sacrament of Penance without attrition sins gravely, because the sacrament is rendered invalid. Likewise, he sins gravely who, guilty of personal mortal sin, receives Baptism without attrition; for he inflicts grave injury on the sacrament who receives it in such a way that it is frustrated of its grave end, that is, the remission of mortal sins. If one guilty only of personal venial sin receives Baptism without attrition, he indeed effects that Baptism does not remit the venial sin; but only venial sin is committed.

2. For the sacraments of the living, the state of grace is required.

a) The existence of the obligation is clear from the fact that those sacraments are ordered to increasing grace; hence grace must already be present. Nevertheless, as was said concerning the minister, a necessity excuses which is so urgent that not even an act of contrition can be elicited; for example, "if a consecrated host were about to be profaned by heretics and someone, because of that sudden incursion, could not be contrite so quickly"; or if "a layman were reclining at the communion rail who remembered a mortal sin and could not elicit contrition because of the narrowness of time" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 86).

b) Gravity of the obligation. He who receives a sacrament of the living in mortal sin sins gravely, because he is guilty of grave injury who receives a sacrament of this kind without the disposition which its nature demands, or without the disposition required for the end or fruit to which it is of itself ordered, which is the increase of grace. There is added that a sacrament of the living received in mortal sin, even with attrition, according to some produces no fruit at all except character (n. 6; St. Alphonsus, VI, 86).

c) The certainty required concerning the state of grace. In order that someone licitly receive a sacrament of the living, at least broad moral certainty concerning the state of grace is required; but this also suffices. It is required because otherwise the one receiving exposes the sacrament to grave danger that it be received without the disposition which its nature demands, or without the disposition required for the fruit to which it is of itself ordered, to pass over the danger that it be received without any fruit at all; and this contains grave irreverence (St. Alphonsus, *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 15, n. 34). There is added that most authors, especially the more distinguished, adhere to this opinion. It suffices because these things must be taken in a human manner.

Objection. In order that someone who has sinned gravely be morally, although broadly, certain of the state of grace, he must either confess or elicit contrition with exquisite diligence. But the reverence due to the sacrament cannot oblige to so great a burden.

Response. I deny the assertion. Namely, in order that someone acquire broad moral certainty concerning the state of grace, it suffices that he either confess or elicit an act of contrition with moral diligence. God Almighty will not deny His help to one applying serious effort. For the rest, granted, though not conceded, the assertion of the adversaries, the burden set forth does not seem so great that, in order to avoid it, it would be licit to expose the sacrament to grave danger that it be received without the disposition required for the fruit to which it is of itself ordered, to say nothing of the danger that it be received without any fruit at all.

d) The mode of recovering lost grace. He who, constituted in mortal sin, wishes to receive a sacrament, can recover grace through an act of perfect contrition or through confession. If, however, there is question of receiving the Holy Eucharist, confession is required of itself; this obligation will be explained more fully in the treatise on the Eucharist. With regard to receiving the other sacraments, it is indeed fitting to confess, but there is no obligation.

Note. Besides the state of grace, the reverence due to the sacraments requires that the sacraments be received according to the rite perhaps prescribed in reception, and with that decency which the nature of the sacrament demands. To this especially belongs due attention, neglect of which nevertheless is only venial.

¹ Council of Trent, On Justification, Session 6, chapter 6; On Penance, Session 14, chapter 4.

44 **II. They must ask for the sacrament from a minister:** 1. enjoying legitimate faculty; 2. not censured, that is, not excommunicated, interdicted, or suspended, not irregular, or not canonically simply impeded; and 3. worthy, that is, living in the state of grace. Observe, however, that every minister is presumed suitable unless the contrary is established. But in order that the contrary be established, rumors do not suffice; indeed, one who has been a sinner is generally presumed amended, unless the contrary is evident, for example from a manifest voluntary proximate occasion not left behind. For the rest, receive these things:

1. It is a grave sin to ask for a sacrament from a minister here and now lacking legitimate faculty.
2. Of itself it is a grave sin to ask for a sacrament from a minister who is censured, irregular, canonically simply impeded, or unworthy because of grave sin, because it is proximate cooperation in the grave sin of the minister. Accidentally it is licit when a cause proportionate to the case and circumstances is present. This is clear from the things said concerning cooperation (n. 556) and from the canons soon to be cited. Hence:

a) From excommunicates to be avoided, and also from other censured persons after a condemnatory or declaratory sentence has intervened, the faithful can ask, in danger of death alone, both sacramental absolution according to the norm of canons 882 and 2252,¹ and also, if other ministers are lacking, the other sacraments and sacramentals (can. 2261, § 3; 2275, 2; 2284).

b) From tolerated excommunicates, and also from other censured persons before a condemnatory or declaratory sentence has intervened, the faithful can ask for the sacraments and sacramentals for any just cause, especially if other ministers are lacking; and then the censured person who is requested

can minister the same and is held by no obligation to inquire of the requester about the cause (can. 2261, § 2; 2275, 2; 2284).

c) Concerning irregular persons and those canonically simply impeded, almost the same seems to have to be said as concerning excommunicates to be avoided (cf. can. 968, § 2).

d) Sacraments can be asked from a minister unworthy because of sin: 1. if the precept of confession or communion urges; 2. "if from delaying reception there threatens danger of a fall; 3. if you must fulfill the precept of hearing Mass; 4. if one is in mortal sin and does not wish to wait even an hour, because it is not a small usefulness to be freed from sin as soon as possible; 5. if you would have to lack, at least for a long time, communion or the fruit of confession, even if you do not have mortal sin; 6. if otherwise you cannot gain a jubilee; 7. if you need a skilled director and do not have another; 8. if you wish to apply Mass for a deceased friend" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 89). Indeed, for any just cause a sacrament can be asked from one whose office it is to administer such a sacrament, for example from one's own pastor (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

¹ The cited canons will be explained in their own place.

45 Note. It is pleasing to explain briefly how far the sacraments can be ministered to little children, the insane, and the partially insane, and received by the aforesaid.

I. Little children and the perpetually insane, as was already said (n. 38), are capable of receiving Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, and Order. Yet not all are conferred on them.

II. To the insane who previously possessed the use of reason, those things must be applied which we said generally concerning adults. Hence, for example, for valid reception it is required that before insanity they had the intention and did not retract it. For the rest, consult what is to be said concerning the individual sacraments.

III. The partially insane are not of themselves to be kept away from the sacraments. Namely:

1. Baptism must be conferred on them even outside danger of death; nor is so much instruction prerequired in them as in others.
2. Confirmation can be conferred, even if they have been instructed less than others.
3. Absolution should be granted, in doubt about sufficient use of reason or disposition under condition: 1. in danger of death; 2. at Easter; 3. as often as they have confessed a doubtfully grave sin; indeed, 4. several times, even if they have declared only light sins (St. Alphonsus, VI, 432; IV, 3).
4. The Holy Eucharist should be conferred: 1. in danger of death; 2. at Easter; 3. several times, if they show devotion (St. Alphonsus, VI, 303).
5. Extreme Unction should be furnished to those lying dangerously ill; under condition if there is doubt about the use of reason had both now and previously.
6. Order is not to be administered to them.
7. They can indeed enter Matrimony if they understand the substance of the contract; nevertheless they are generally to be turned away from it.

Appendix. On Sacramentals

46 **I. Notion.** Sacramentals are things or actions which the Church, in some imitation of the sacraments, is accustomed to use for obtaining from her own impetration effects, especially spiritual effects (can. 1144). This notion handed down by the Code will become clearer from what is to be said. Sacramentals are, for example, consecrations and blessings to be performed in the name of the Church, exorcisms, prayers prescribed by the Church and to be recited in her name, such as the breviary, and blessed things, such as water, Agnus Dei, ashes, palms, etc.

47 **II. Institution.** With regard to the institution of sacramentals, it seems more probable that one must speak thus: most derive their origin from ecclesiastical institution; but certain ones of them, such as exorcisms and blessings, were instituted by Christ at least in a general way and entrusted to the Church, yet in such a way that afterwards they were more determinately circumscribed by the Church both as to mode and as to effect.¹ To add new things to the sacramentals, or to change anything in them, belongs to the Apostolic See alone, as is clear from canon 1145. The reason is that sacramentals draw their force from the impetration of the Church alone. Therefore it belongs to the Head of the Church alone to constitute or change them.

¹ Cf. Schmid, *Die Sacramentalien der Katholischen Kirche*, p. 149.

48 **III. Effects.** 1. The effects of sacramentals are either the special deputation of some person or thing to divine worship, as, for example, the blessing of an abbot or the administration of minor orders, supposing that these do not enjoy the character of a sacrament, and the consecration of a church or chalice; or the attainment of some good, whether spiritual, such as actual grace, the removal of venial guilt and temporal punishment, or bodily, such as health of body or immunity from calamity by which the person himself or his goods can be affected. Special deputation to divine worship is the effect of those sacramentals which consist in consecrations and constitutive blessings; the attainment of a good, whether spiritual or bodily, is obtained by the sacramentals of exorcism, prayer, and blessed objects.

2. As regards the mode by which diverse sacramentals produce their diverse effects, it can generally be established that they produce them by way of impetration, as if *ex opere operato*, that is, from the work of the working or praying Church, and this independently of the disposition either of the minister or of the subject, and indeed with that infallibility by which God promised to hear the prayer of His most beloved spouse, namely the Church. Some effects, however, are received immediately, others mediately through the sacramentals; wherefore concerning the individual effects in species one can speak thus:

- a) The special deputation of some person or thing to divine worship is obtained by way of impetration *ex opere operato*, infallibly and immediately.
- b) Actual graces are obtained in the same way, and through acts placed by means of these graces, the remission of sins and other goods which the just man can acquire for himself supernaturally.
- c) The expulsion and restraint of demons is obtained both by way of impetration and by way of adjuration or command.
- d) Finally, temporal goods, such as health, fertility of the earth, and the removal of threatening evil, are obtained both by way of impetration and by way of adjuration directed against demons.

49 **IV. Ministration or use.** 1. In general, the legitimate minister of sacramentals is a cleric to whom power has been granted for this and who has not been prohibited by competent ecclesiastical authority from exercising the same power (can. 1146). In species, with regard to legitimate ministers, the following are established:

a) No one who lacks the episcopal character can validly perform consecrations unless this is permitted to him either by law or by apostolic indult (can. 1147, § 1).¹

b) Any priest can impart blessings, except those which are reserved to the Roman Pontiff or to Bishops or others.² A reserved blessing which is given by a priest without the necessary permission is illicit but valid, unless in the reservation the Apostolic See has expressed otherwise (can. 1147, §§ 2 and 3). Deacons and lectors can validly and licitly give only those blessings which are expressly permitted to them by law (can. 1147, § 4).

c) With regard to exorcisms, see vol. I, n. 700.

2. In confecting or administering sacramentals, the rites approved by the Church are to be accurately observed (can. 1148, § 1). Consecrations,³ and blessings whether constitutive or invocative,⁴ are invalid if the formula prescribed by the Church has not been used (can. 1148, § 2).

3. Blessings, which are chiefly to be imparted to Catholics, can also be given to catechumens, indeed, unless a prohibition of the Church stands in the way, even to non-Catholics, for obtaining the light of faith or, together with it, health of body (can. 1149).

4. Things consecrated or blessed with a constitutive blessing are to be treated reverently and not applied to profane or improper use, even if they are in the ownership of private persons (can. 1150).

Note. Let the ministers of the Church explain to the faithful the nature and efficacy of sacramentals. Moreover, let the ministers of the Church show themselves ready in ministering sacramentals, and prudently accustom the faithful who neglect sacramentals to the use of them. Yet let them beware lest they apply ecclesiastical blessings, under whatever pretext, to ends other than those for which they were instituted by the Church, and lest by an imprudent use of them they expose this most holy institution to contempt, or stain it with the reputation of superstition or of dishonest gain.

¹ That law permits this to Cardinals (can. 239, § 1, n. 20); Vicars and Prefects Apostolic (can. 294, § 2); Pro-vicars and Pro-prefects (can. 310, § 2); Abbots and Prelates nullius (can. 383, § 2), according to the norm of the cited canons.

² Cf. with regard to blessings reserved to the pastor, can. 462, 6 and 7; with regard to sacred furnishings to be blessed, can. 1304; with regard to exorcisms to be pronounced, vol. I, n. 700.

³ Consecrations are made by anointing with chrism or sacred oil.

⁴ A constitutive blessing is one which orders a person or thing to divine worship, and so constitutes it sacred; an invocative blessing regards things, for example a ship, destined for profane use.

Treatise IV. On the Most Holy Eucharist

(St. Thomas, III, qq. 73-83; St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, book VI, nn. 189-424; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 15).¹

The Most Holy Eucharist is not only a sacrament, but also a sacrifice. Now the foundation of the whole doctrine on this matter is the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Hence we shall speak first about the real presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, then about the Most Holy Eucharist as it is a sacrament, finally about the Most Holy Eucharist as it is a sacrifice. These three things are set forth in these words of canon 801: In the Most Holy Eucharist, under the species of bread and wine, Christ the Lord is contained, offered, and received.

¹ Cf. Billuart, *Tractatus de almo Eucharistiae sacramento* (VI, vol. VI); Rath, *De Eucharistia*.

Dissertation I. On the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

126 (St. Thomas, III, qq. 75-77; *Contra Gentiles*, book 4, chapters 62-67.)

I. The truth of the real presence of Christ. In the Most Holy Eucharist Christ is truly, really, and substantially present. This is of faith from the Council of Trent solemnly declaring: "If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist there are contained truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the whole Christ, but says that He is in it only as in a sign, or figure, or power, let him be anathema."¹ "The Council," says St. Alphonsus, "says truly, so that it may exclude a figurative presence; for figure is opposed to truth; really, to repel an imaginary presence, apprehended by faith, which the Sacramentarians admitted; substantially, so that it may remove the opinion of Calvin, who asserted that the Eucharist does not contain the body, but only the power of Jesus Christ, who communicates Himself to us" (*Opera dogmatica*, vol. I, p. 555, ed. Walter).

¹ Session 13, canon 1.

127 **II. The manner in which Christ is made present.** Christ is made present in the Most Holy Eucharist through transubstantiation; concerning this I note:

1. The proposition stated is of faith from the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist there remains the substance of bread and wine together with the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and denies that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of bread into the body and of the whole substance of wine into the blood, the species of bread and wine alone remaining, which conversion indeed the Catholic Church most fittingly calls transubstantiation, let him be anathema."¹
2. Transubstantiation, according to the cited words of Trent, is: "The conversion of the whole substance of bread into the body and of the whole substance of wine into the blood of Christ, the species of bread and wine alone remaining." It is said:
 - a) **Conversion;** therefore consubstantiation is excluded, which admits a simple conjunction, and impanation, which admits the hypostatic union of the body and blood of Christ with bread and wine.
 - b) **Conversion... of the substance of bread and wine.** Therefore it is distinguished from accidental transformation, in which the same substance remains and only receives, for example, a new figure, as if a stone is transformed into a statue.
 - c) **Conversion of the whole substance.** Hence it is distinguished from substantial transformation, in which there is not a conversion of the whole substance, namely while the matter of the prior substance remains, as if daily foods pass into the substance of our body.

Transubstantiation regards a double term, namely the term from which and the term into which; or the term which passes away, namely bread and wine, and the term which succeeds, namely the body and blood of Christ. Now:

It is disputed first how the term from which, or the substance of bread and wine, passes away. Some judge that it is annihilated. Others, such as St. Thomas (III, q. 75, a. 3) and St. Alphonsus (*Opera dogmatica*, vol. I, p. 562, ed. Walter), teach that it ceases through a true and simple conversion,

because in annihilation, which is reduction to nothing, the concept of conversion into another thing is not verified.

It is disputed besides how the term into which, or the body and blood of Christ, succeeds. Some, such as the Scotists, think that this is done by way of adduction, insofar, namely, as God in the consecration effects with respect to the body of Christ, without local motion, what local motion effects in the natural order; that is, God gives to the body of Christ non-distance from this space and from these accidents of bread and wine. Others, among whom are several Thomists, teach that this is done through production, or reproduction, of the body and blood of Christ, and this not simply, but by way of conversion from the substance of bread and wine; this opinion better corresponds to the concept of the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Others² say that transubstantiation is a simple action by which God immediately changes whatever entity is in the substance of bread into that which is entity in the substance of the body of Christ; yet in such a way that the body of Christ is in no way changed, but the whole change takes place in the bread, whose substance passes away while the dimensions remain. According to this explanation, Christ suffers nothing in the consecration, receives nothing, but becomes present where He was not before, not locally but sacramentally, from this alone, that by force of the conversion He is now really contained under the dimensions of bread, under which the substance of bread was previously contained.³

d) **The species of bread and wine alone remaining.** Concerning the species, note:

1. The species of bread and wine have objective reality; this is "the perpetual and constant doctrine of the Catholic Church,"⁴ and therefore at least theologically certain.
2. The species inhere in no substance as a subject, but are sustained divinely.

I said, in no substance: neither in the substance of bread and wine, since it has passed away; nor in the body of Christ, which in the sacrament is entirely glorious and exists supernaturally.

I said, are sustained divinely: understand this so that God immediately sustains only the quantity, but accidents distinct from quantity inhere in the quantity as in a subject (St. Thomas, III, q. 77, a. 2).

Corollary. From the Eucharistic species a new substance is generated. This is explained in different ways by different authors. According to some, to set forth the principal opinion, in the last instant of corruption matter is produced by God, from which a new form is educed (St. Thomas, III, q. 77, a. 5). But it is disputed whether the said production is done by way of creation or by way of conversion of quantity into matter. And thus it is also explained how the species can nourish (St. Thomas, III, q. 77, a. 6).

¹ Session 13, canon 2.

² Thus Billot.

³ Tanquerey, n. 406.

⁴ Roman Catechism, part 2, On the Eucharist, n. 44.

128 III. The manner in which Christ is present is circumscribed in these terms:

1. The whole Christ is present under each Eucharistic species. This is of faith from the Council of Trent.¹

By force of the words, under the species of bread only the body becomes present, and under the species of wine only the blood. By force of natural connection and concomitance, under the species of bread the blood and soul exist, and under the species of wine the body and soul exist.

2. The whole Christ is contained under each part of the species both before and after division. That the whole Christ is contained under each part after division is of faith from the Council of Trent.² With respect to presence under each part before division, it is theologically certain.

¹ Session 13, canon 3.

² Session 13, canon 3.

129 IV. The time during which Christ is present. Christ is present in the manner which we have stated from the moment of consecration until the essential alteration of the species; and this is had when the species are so altered that, if the substance of bread and wine had persisted, this substance according to common estimation would have ceased to persist. Moreover:

1. Authors do not agree when the species are corrupted. Von Olfers judges that the species of bread is changed already in the mouth itself; yet Capellmann-Bergmann¹ rejects this entirely. Nevertheless even for the sake of security the species should not be kept long in the mouth, namely so that Christ is certainly eaten and the grace of the sacrament is certainly conferred (St. Alphonsus, VI, 226; n. 171). With respect to corruption in the stomach, some assign half an hour, others a much longer time, especially for the infirm; and it is certain that the matter depends on the condition of the stomach. With attention to all these things, I say:

a) Because of doubt about the presence of the species, it is illicit to provoke vomiting or to wash the stomach within two to three hours after the reception of the Eucharist, especially since these things are ordinarily not done except because of illness.

b) Whatever may be true about the duration of the presence, it is permitted to anyone to eat after he has spent a reasonable time in thanksgiving, because the sacraments must be ministered and received in a human manner (cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 80, a. 8, ad 6; St. Alphonsus, VI, 283).

2. If unconsecrated wine is mixed in a small quantity with consecrated wine, Christ remains present. If another liquid is mixed with consecrated wine, the matter depends both on the quantity and on the quality of the other liquid. If unconsecrated wine is mixed in a greater quantity with consecrated wine, it is disputed whether the presence of Christ endures. Some affirm this, because, as modern chemists teach, the molecules of the consecrated species retain their individuation. Others with St. Thomas (III, q. 77, a. 8) deny it, because the consecrated species, at least according to common estimation, do not remain the same numerically, but receive a new individuation from the greater quantity.

Note. When flesh or blood appears in the Most Holy Eucharist, it is not the flesh or blood of Christ. Apparitions of this kind are explained either from this, that species are formed by God in the eyes of those seeing, and thus it happens as if flesh or blood were truly seen; or from this, that a miraculous figure is formed which represents the flesh or blood of Christ. Hence to such figures, which are called relics of the Most Holy Blood, only relative worship is rendered (St. Thomas, III, q. 76, a. 8).

¹ Cf. Von Olfers, *Pastoral-Medizin*, p. 44 and following; Capellmann-Bergmann, op. cit., p. 270 and following; *ibid.*, p. 271.

Scholion I. On the Custody of the Holy Eucharist

130 I. Liceity of reserving the Holy Eucharist. That the Holy Eucharist can licitly be preserved in the sacrarium after the sacrifice has been completed is of faith from Trent: "If anyone says that it is not permitted for the Sacred Eucharist to be reserved in the sacrarium, but that immediately after the consecration it must necessarily be distributed to those present, or that it is not permitted for it to be carried honorifically to the sick, let him be anathema."¹

¹ Session 13, canon 7.

131 II. Places for reserving the Holy Eucharist. In order that the Holy Eucharist must or can be reserved in the places soon to be assigned, two things are required: 1. that there be someone who has care of it; 2. that regularly a priest celebrate Mass at least once a week in the sacred place (canon 1265, § 1). These things being posited:

1. It must be kept in a cathedral church, in the principal church of an abbey or prelate nullius, of a vicariate and prefecture apostolic, in any parochial or quasi-parochial church, and in a church attached to a house of exempt religious, whether men or women (canon 1265, § 1, 1).
2. It can be kept, with the permission of the local Ordinary, in a collegiate church and in the principal oratory, whether public or semi-public, both of a pious or religious house and of an ecclesiastical college which is governed by secular clerics or by religious (canon 1265, § 1, 2). The same seems to be applied a fortiori to succursal churches, over which a priest presides who is bound to exercise the care of souls for a determined part of the parish. The Pontifical Commission declared¹ that the Ordinary can permit this if immemorial custom is added.
3. In order that it can be kept in other churches or oratories, an apostolic indult is necessary; the local Ordinary can grant this permission only to a church or public oratory for a just cause and by way of act (canon 1265, § 2).

Note 1. It is permitted to no one to retain the Most Holy Eucharist with himself or to carry it with him on a journey (canon 1265, § 3). Exceptions: 1. if, insofar and for as long as otherwise the security of the Holy Eucharist would not be sufficiently provided for; 2. if, which is to be prevented so far as can be done, the Holy Eucharist cannot be kept decently in the church.

Note 2. Churches in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved, especially parochial churches, should be open to the faithful daily for at least some hours (canon 1266).

4. Any contrary privilege having been revoked, in the religious or pious house itself the Most Holy Eucharist cannot be kept except either in the church or in the principal oratory; nor among nuns within the choir or enclosure of the monastery (canon 1267). The cited canon sets forth to what extent the Holy Eucharist can be reserved in two places, that is, both in the church and in the principal oratory. Now, considering the response of the Pontifical Commission,² it must be established thus:

a) If a religious or pious house has a public church attached and uses it for carrying out ordinary and daily exercises of piety, the Most Holy Sacrament can be reserved only in that church.

b) If a religious or pious house does not use the attached church for ordinary and daily exercises of piety, by privilege or permission of the local Ordinary (cf. canon 1265, § 2), the Holy Eucharist can be kept in the principal oratory of the same religious or pious house, and indeed without prejudice to

the right of the church, if it has any, for example because it is attached to a house of exempt religious; in this case it can be reserved both in the church and in the oratory. But it can be kept in only one oratory, unless in the same material building there are distinct and separate families, so that they are formally distinct religious or pious houses; this obtains, for example, in the case in which in a college there is a community of sisters who devote themselves to the service of the college; likewise in the case in which in a religious house there are, besides the students living in common, religious partly devoted to education and partly to other works. It is doubtful whether the novitiate constitutes a religious house formally distinct from the other community of the house.

¹ 20 May 1923 (A.A.S. 1924, p. 155).

² 2 June 1918 (A.A.S. 1918, p. 346).

132 III. The manner of reserving the Holy Eucharist. 1. The Most Holy Eucharist cannot be kept continuously or habitually except on one altar only of the same church (canon 1268, § 1). It is said, habitually; hence nothing prevents the Holy Eucharist from sometimes being kept also on another altar for some time, for example so that Communion may be distributed more conveniently. It is to be kept in the most excellent and noble place of the church, and therefore regularly on the high altar, unless another place seems more convenient and becoming for the veneration and worship of so great a sacrament, with the prescription of liturgical laws being observed as regards the last days of Holy Week (canon 1268, § 2). But in cathedral, collegiate, or conventual churches in which choral functions must be performed at the high altar, lest an impediment be brought to ecclesiastical offices, it is fitting that the Most Holy Eucharist regularly not be kept on the high altar, but in another chapel or altar (canon 1268, § 3). Let rectors of churches take care that the altar on which the Most Holy Sacrament is reserved be adorned before all the others, so that by its very arrangement it may move the piety and devotion of the faithful more (canon 1268, § 4).

2. The Most Holy Eucharist must be kept in an immovable tabernacle placed in the middle part of the altar (canon 1269, § 1). Nevertheless, if some grave cause approved by the local Ordinary persuades it, it is not forbidden that the Most Holy Eucharist be reserved at night outside the altar, yet on a corporal, in a safer and decent place, with the prescription of canon 1271 being observed (canon 1269, § 3); the cited canon prescribes that a lamp be lit before the tabernacle (cf. p. 94). For the rest, note:

a) The tabernacle should be skillfully constructed, solidly closed on every side, decently adorned according to the norm of liturgical laws, empty of every other thing, and so carefully guarded that danger of any sacrilegious profanation is kept away (canon 1269, § 2). It is said: adorned according to the norm of liturgical laws. Now the said laws prescribe that the tabernacle be covered within with white silk, unless it is gilded;¹ that it be blessed and outwardly covered with a conopaeum or veil of a color either white or adapted to the office; for black, violet is used.² But if the form of the tabernacle does not allow the use of a conopaeum, at least a broad cloth hanging from above, a baldachin, is to be used, which covers the altar. Nor is it permitted to place images or relics of Saints before or above the tabernacle, even of the Holy Cross. Nevertheless a cross with an image of the Crucified can be placed above the tabernacle. It is said: empty of every other thing; hence not even the sacred oils can be kept in the tabernacle.³

b) The key of the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Sacrament is reserved must be guarded most diligently, the conscience of the priest who has care of the church or oratory being gravely burdened (canon 1269, § 4). It no longer seems, as formerly, to be prescribed that the priest himself guard the key.

3. The Holy Eucharist must be kept in a pyx of solid and decent material, clean and well closed with its own lid, covered with a white silk veil and, as far as the matter allows, adorned. The consecrated particles should be of such a number as can suffice for the Communion of the sick and of other faithful (canon 1270). Now the pyx or ciborium, likewise the monstrance and lunette, can be of gilded copper, although it is more fitting that the pyx and lunette be silver. It is not prescribed that the pyx and lunette, if they are silver, be gilded. But the pyx and monstrance, or at least the lunette, are to be blessed, not consecrated, and this more probably under sin, though only venial (St. Alphonsus, VI, *Quaestiones reformatae*, 74).
4. Before the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Sacrament is reserved, at least one lamp should shine continually day and night, to be nourished with olive oil or beeswax; but where olive oil cannot be had, it is permitted to the prudence of the local Ordinary that it be changed for other oils, as far as possible vegetable oils (canon 1271). The obligation of the lamp is grave from its genus, so that neglect through an entire day or through several nights would constitute mortal sin (St. Alphonsus, VI, n. 248).
5. Consecrated Hosts, whether for the Communion of the faithful or for exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament, should both be fresh and be frequently renewed, the old ones being duly consumed, so that there be no danger of corruption, with the instructions which the local Ordinary has given concerning this matter being carefully observed (canon 1272). The Ceremonial of Bishops wills that hosts be renewed every week;⁴ nevertheless it seems to suffice that this be done within two weeks. Moreover, new consecrated Hosts should not be mixed with old, but the old should first be distributed or consumed.⁵

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 20 June 1899, reply to IV, n. 4035.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 20 June 1899, reply to IV, n. 4035.

³ Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 1, n. 6; Sacred Congregation of Rites, 12 March, reply to IV, n. 2740.

⁴ Book II, chapter 6, n. 51.

⁵ Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 1, n. 7.

Scholion II. On the Worship of the Holy Eucharist

133 I. Necessity of worship of the Holy Eucharist. Christ in the Eucharist must be adored with the worship of latria, even external. This is of faith from the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship of latria, even external, and therefore is not to be venerated with a special festive celebration, nor solemnly carried around in processions according to the praiseworthy and universal rite and custom of holy Church, or is not to be publicly proposed to the people that He may be adored, and that His adorers are idolaters, let him be anathema."¹ Now the sacramental species, since they pertain to the sacramental Christ, are to be adored together with the body and blood of Christ.

But they constitute not the motive but the term of this adoration, and therefore the adoration, insofar as it regards the species themselves, must be called relative.

¹ Session 13, canon 6.

134 II. Zeal for the worship of the Holy Eucharist. Those who labor in the religious instruction of the faithful should omit nothing to excite piety toward the Most Holy Eucharist in their souls, and especially exhort them that, not only on Sundays and feasts of precept, but also on weekdays within the week, they frequently, so far as can be done, assist at the sacrifice of the Mass and visit the Most Holy Sacrament (canon 1273). Specifically, the following are noted in the Code:

1. **Exposition of the Holy Eucharist.** A twofold exposition is distinguished: private, which is made with the pyx, and public, which is made with the monstrance. Now private exposition can be made for any just cause without the permission of the Ordinary in churches or oratories to which it has been given to reserve the Most Holy Eucharist. But public exposition on the feast day of Corpus Christi and within the octave can be made in all churches during the solemnities of the Masses and at Vespers; but at other times only for a just and grave cause, especially a public one, and with the permission of the local Ordinary, even if the church belongs to an exempt religious institute (canon 1274, § 1), with the prescription of canon 1171 remaining firm, as the Sacred Congregation of the Council says,¹ that is, with parochial rights, privileges, and legitimate customs being saved, and with the right of the Ordinary of predefining, for a just cause, the hours of sacred rites in churches which do not belong to an exempt religious institute being saved.

Note 1. According to the rubrics, the pyx to be exposed cannot be taken out from the tabernacle, but can only be brought forward to its entrance.² But where a contrary custom is legitimately sustained, this kind of exposition of the pyx on a throne is, with respect to liceity, to be equated with public exposition. Finally, the custom of exposing the Holy Eucharist without the permission of the Bishop, where this is required by law, cannot be preserved.³

Note 2. The minister of exposition and reposition of the Most Holy Sacrament is a priest or deacon; but the minister of Eucharistic Benediction is the priest alone, nor can a deacon impart it except in the case in which, according to the norm of canon 845, § 2, he has carried Viaticum to the sick (canon 1274, § 2).

2. **The supplication of the Forty Hours** should be held every year in all parish churches and other churches in which the Most Holy Sacrament is habitually reserved, on days established with the consent of the local Ordinary, with the greatest solemnity possible; and if somewhere, because of particular circumstances of things, it cannot be done without grave inconvenience and with the reverence due to so great a sacrament, let the local Ordinary see to it that at least for some continuous hours, on fixed days, the Most Holy Sacrament be exposed in a more solemn rite (canon 1275).

¹ 14 July 1922 (A.A.S. 1922, p. 529).

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 23 May 1835, n. 2725, reply to IV; 16 March 1876, n. 3394, reply to I; 28 April 1902, n. 4096, reply to VII; 16 February 1906, n. 4180, reply to II.

³ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 14 March 1861, n. 3104, reply to XIV.

Dissertation II. On the Most Holy Eucharist as It Is a Sacrament

(St. Thomas, III, qq. 73-74; qq. 78-80; St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, book VI, nn. 189-303; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 15, nn. 1-58.)

We shall treat first of the Most Holy Sacrament considered in itself, then of its ministration, finally of the reception of the Most Holy Sacrament.

Part I. On the Most Holy Sacrament Considered in Itself

135 The Most Holy Eucharist is usually defined: **The sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord for the spiritual refreshment of the soul.**

This definition having been handed down, we shall speak first, briefly, about the existence, then about the essence, then about the effects, finally about the necessity of the Eucharist.

Section I. On the Existence of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

136 **I. The Most Holy Eucharist is a true sacrament;** this proposition is of faith from the Council of Trent: "If anyone says... that the Eucharist... is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be anathema."¹

Note. The sacrament of the Eucharist was instituted at the Last Supper. "For thus," says the Council of Trent, "all our forefathers, as many as were in the true Church of Christ who have discussed the Most Holy Sacrament, most openly professed that our Redeemer instituted this so admirable sacrament at the Last Supper."²

¹ Session 7, canon 1, On the Sacraments in general.

² Council of Trent, Session 13, chapter 1.

137 **II. The sacrament of the Eucharist is one sacrament in species, and indeed in the lowest species,** even though it exists under the double species, namely of bread and wine. For otherwise the dogma concerning the sevenfold number of the sacraments would not stand. Now the reason is that "although each species is materially different, nevertheless morally each constitutes one sacrament, since each signifies one banquet consisting of food and drink" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 191).

"A thing is called one," says St. Thomas, "not only because it is indivisible, or because it is continuous, but also because it is perfect, as one house and one man are said to be one. Now that is one by perfection to whose integrity all things concur which are required for its end; as man is integrated from all the members necessary for the operation of the soul, and a house is integrated from all the parts which are necessary for dwelling. And thus this sacrament is called one: for it is ordered to spiritual refreshment, which is conformed to bodily refreshment. But for bodily refreshment two things are required, namely food, which is dry nourishment, and drink, which is liquid nourishment; and therefore for the integrity of this sacrament two things also concur, namely spiritual food and spiritual drink, according to that passage of John 6: My flesh is truly food, and my blood is truly drink" (III, q. 73, a. 2).

138 **III. The sacrament of the Eucharist is numerically multiple.** Thus the much more common and much more probable opinion. The reason is that the species, which constitute the sacrament in the direct order (n. 139), are numerically multiple.

But authors differ in assigning the principle of numerical distinction; in this matter three principal opinions are defended. Some seek the number from the physical unity or plurality of the species, because, they say, number follows the unity or plurality of quantity.¹ Others derive the number from the unity or plurality of refreshment, or of the proposition of the sacrament for the sake of adoration.² The third opinion, recognizing part of the truth in each preceding opinion, teaches that a distinction must be made between numerical unity taken physically and taken morally. For numerical

unity is derived from unity of quantity. But this quantity is either physical, or of continuous parts, or moral, or of contiguous parts joined because of some end or in some order. Therefore there is likewise a twofold numerical unity, physical and moral. Hence the physical unity of this sacrament is taken from the physical continuity of the species; moral unity from moral continuation, insofar as they are proposed or received by way of one thing. St. Alphonsus follows this opinion as the more probable. "Several consecrated species," he says, "although discontinuous, even if physically they are several sacraments, nevertheless morally they are one sacrament from the moral conjunction which they have while they are proposed or received by way of one thing" (VI, 191). "Whence," the same holy Doctor says:

1. If one species or one host is distributed to several persons or to the same person at morally distinct times, they are different sacraments numerically.
2. Conversely, if both species or several parts of the same species, or even of species consecrated at different times, are ministered to someone at the same time, there is one sacrament.
3. Thus likewise, if different consecrated species are proposed at the same time and on the same altar, there will be one sacrament; but if they are divided and proposed on different altars, they are different sacraments (VI, 191, question 2).

¹ Thus, for example, the Salmanticenses, disputation 2, doubt 4, n. 58 and following.

² Thus, for example, John of St. Thomas, disputation 26, article 3.

Section II. On the Essence of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

139 The Most Holy Eucharist, like the other sacraments, consists of proximate matter and form. But for the sake of completeness, a discussion must also be made about remote matter. Now the remote matter, that is, that from which the sacrament is confected, is bread and wine; the proximate matter is the species together with the body and blood of Christ; but the form is the words of consecration, insofar as they virtually persevere. Namely, the aforesaid words, insofar as they were sensibly uttered, effected or confected the sacrament; but insofar as they virtually persevere, they constitute the sacrament as confected and remaining. Hence the words of consecration, insofar as they are sensibly uttered, are called the form of the sacrament *in fieri*; insofar as they virtually endure, they are the form of the sacrament *in facto esse*. Thus commonly the Thomists and others, while others teach that the form is not the words of consecration, since these have passed away, but the sacramental signification, that is, the refreshment of the soul through the increase of grace.

With respect to the proximate matter it is disputed in what way each element concurs in constituting the proximate matter, that is, whether the proximate matter is the body and blood connoting the species, or the species connoting the body and blood, or whether each element equally must be called the proximate matter. According to St. Thomas (III, q. 77, a. 7), the proximate matter is the species alone in the direct order, connoting the body and blood in the oblique order. The principal reason for this doctrine is taken from the fact that the sacraments are in the direct order sensible signs. But in the Most Holy Sacrament the sensible sign is had only in the species, connoting the body and blood of the Lord. Thus also teaches the Catechism of Trent.¹

With these things noted about the essence of the sacrament in general, we shall speak specifically about the remote matter and form.

¹ Part 2, chapter 4, question 8.

Chapter I. On the Remote Matter

140 The matter from which the sacrament of the Eucharist is confected, or the matter around which, as others say, is bread and wine. This doctrine, after the Third Council of Carthage, the Fourth Lateran Council, and Florence, is expressed by the Council of Trent in these words: "It was always firmly believed in the Church, and now this Synod again declares it, that through the consecration of bread and wine a conversion takes place."¹ We shall speak about each matter separately.

¹ Session 13, chapter 4; cf. canon 2.

Article I. On the Matter of Bread

141 **I. The matter required for validity** is bread, composed of wheaten flour and water, and uncorrupted with respect to substance. It does not matter for validity whether it is unleavened or leavened. I said:

1. **Bread.** Therefore invalid matter is: a) a raw or uncooked mass of flour; b) a mass which was not baked by fire but boiled after the manner of porridge or cake; c) a fried mass. The reason is that all these things do not come under the name of bread. Nevertheless it does not matter whether the bread has been baked by electric fire or by another fire.
2. **Composed of wheaten flour and water.** That wheaten bread is required is clear: 1. from the Council of Florence¹ and from various liturgies;² 2. from the fact that Christ used wheaten bread, and this bread alone is and was usual in Palestine.³ Therefore invalid matter is:

- a) Food confected from matter which is not grain, for example from flour of beans, potatoes, etc.
- b) Bread confected from grain which is not wheat, for example from millet, barley, oats, maize, rice, or rye; the grain which in Dutch is called *emer* is doubtful matter.

By the name spelt there is sometimes designated a kind of wheat, sometimes grain which in no way or doubtfully belongs to the genus of wheat. Therefore in practice attention should be paid to the quality and to the judgment of experts. For the rest, it does not matter whether the wheat is summer or winter wheat.

3. **Composed of wheaten flour and water.** This is clear from the fact that bread thus composed was used by Christ, and was usual in Palestine.⁴ Therefore invalid matter would be flour kneaded only with oil, honey, wine, butter, or milk; flour kneaded with artificial or at least non-usual water, such as rose water, is doubtful matter⁵ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 199).

Admixture made with wheat certainly does not obstruct validity if the quantity of wheat notably prevails; it certainly obstructs if the quantity of wheat is notably smaller; otherwise, that is, if the suitable and unsuitable quantity is equal or differs little, the species has at least probably been changed, and therefore the matter is at least doubtfully valid (cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 74, a. 3, ad 3; St. Alphonsus, VI, 201).⁶ Thus, with regard to the quantity of the admixed matter; with regard to its quality, a smaller quantity can sometimes suffice to change the wheat to which it is admixed.

4. **Uncorrupted with respect to substance.** Bread notably corrupted is in practice doubtful matter; but moldy bread, or bread only tending toward corruption, is valid matter.
5. **For validity it does not matter whether the bread is unleavened or leavened.** This is clear from the Council of Florence⁷ (cf. canon 816).

¹ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 692.

² Cf. Roman Missal, On Defects, title 3, n. 4.

³ Vigouroux, *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, word *pain*, p. 1951.

⁴ Vigouroux, loc. cit.

⁵ Roman Missal, On Defects, title 3, n. 2.

⁶ Cf. Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, 16 March 1929 (A.A.S. 1929, p. 632).

⁷ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 692.

142 II. The matter required for liceity is bread:

1. Merely wheaten (canon 815, § 1), indeed altogether pure, to which, namely, matter diverse from wheat or water has not been admixed; indeed it is better that the flour have been purified by a sieve.
2. Entirely uncorrupted; hence not at all moldy. But for how much time after their baking hosts remain entirely uncorrupted depends on the circumstances of weather, place, manner of preserving them, etc.
3. Recently confected, so that there is no danger of corruption. Thus canon 815, § 1. And the Roman Ritual:¹ "But the hosts or particles to be consecrated should be fresh." Now the Sacred Congregation of Rites, in the case of Ghent,² reprobated the custom of consecrating hosts confected three months previously in wintertime or six months previously in summer; and the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments³ rejected the practice of procuring for oneself so many hosts as would suffice for two or three months. Now, although in the judgment of chemists the danger of corruption is commonly exaggerated, nevertheless, considering the mind of the Church, it should be urged that hosts to be consecrated not have been baked more than two weeks or a month previously.⁴
4. Of circular and thin shape in the Latin Church; square in the Greek Church. Thus from ancient practice. Besides, the host should be:
5. Whole, clean, and, according to use, larger for the priest. If the fracture or spot is enormous, or if the host begins to grow moldy, its use is prohibited under grave obligation. Hence it is not permitted to use this kind of host except for a grave cause, for example if the defect is detected after the oblation has been made, provided, however, that scandal does not arise from its use, and that the host is not so broken that the grave rites cannot be carried out⁵ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 204). The use of a host simply broken or spotted, or smaller, is prohibited only under light obligation. Therefore a just cause excuses, for example if otherwise a sick person would lack Viaticum or the people would lack Mass; indeed, quite probably the devotion of the priest alone suffices (St. Alphonsus, VI, 205).

6. Unleavened in the Latin Church, leavened in the Greek;⁶ for canon 816 establishes: In the celebration of Mass, a priest, according to his own rite, must use unleavened or leavened bread wherever he offers the sacred sacrifice.

Considering the cited canon, the opinion no longer seems to hold which conceded that a priest, as a traveler living in a region of another rite, might consecrate the bread of that rite if bread of his own rite was not available. For the rest, the obligation of using bread of one's own rite is considered so great that not even for ministering Viaticum to a sick person is it permitted to consecrate bread of another rite. The reason is that the common good, because of which the law was passed, that is, the necessity of preserving for each Church its own rite, in the mind of the Church prevails over the divine precept of receiving Viaticum; this necessity of the common good, of course, was once more evident than today. Nevertheless the use of bread of another rite is licit for completing the sacrifice; as if after the wine has been consecrated the bread used should be detected as corrupted, and only bread of another rite should be available (St. Alphonsus, VI, 203).

The distribution and reception of the Holy Eucharist confected in another rite will be discussed later.

¹ Title IV, chapter 1, n. 7.

² 16 December 1826 (*Collectanea*, n. 2650).

³ 7 December 1918.

⁴ Concerning consecrated Hosts, see n. 132.

⁵ Roman Missal, On Defects, title X, n. 9.

⁶ Certain Orientals, however, such as Armenians and Maronites, use unleavened bread; cf. Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, 20 May 1838.

Article II. On the Matter of Wine

143 I. The matter required for validity is wine from the vine, whether white or red, whether mixed from each, whether strong or weak. There is required:

1. **Wine**, as is clear from what was said in n. 140 and from the things to be said under 2.
2. **Wine from the vine**, as is deduced: 1. from the fact that Christ used that matter;¹ 2. from the Decree of Eugene IV; 3. from universal Tradition; 4. from the fact that only the assigned liquid, according to common estimation, is called true wine.
3. **Whether white, etc.** The reason is that all the wines assigned are true wine.

Corollary I. Valid matter is:

- a) Must, that is, recently fermented wine not yet cleared from sediment; indeed, as they deduce from chapter *Cum omne, De consecratione*, distinction 2, and from the Roman Missal,² even wine recently expressed from grapes and not yet fermented. Vermeersch,³ however, requires that it have begun to ferment.
- b) Wine from dried grapes, provided it is duly prepared, so that "from color, odor, and taste it is recognized to be true wine";⁴ in which case it is also licit to use it.

c) Wine to which a small amount of another liquid has been admixed. If a notable quantity is admixed, the matter easily becomes doubtful.

Corollary II. Invalid matter is:

a) Liquid expressed from fruits other than grapes, for example from apples, cherries, currants, or from grains, even if perhaps it is called wine; likewise spirit of wine. The same seems to have to be said of wine made by chemical art, even if it consists of the same elements as ordinary wine. The reason is that it is not wine from the vine.

b) Juice not yet expressed from grapes. Likewise verjuice or *omphacium*, that is, juice from unripe grapes.⁵ Likewise *lora*, that is, liquid from grapes previously pressed and, a great quantity of water having been poured over them, pressed again. But if water is poured in a smaller quantity, the matter will be valid or doubtful.⁶

c) *Sapa* or *defrutum*, because although it contains the substance of wine, nevertheless it has obtained the nature and use of food.

d) Vinegar, because it differs substantially from wine. If wine becomes sour from initial corruption, the matter will easily be doubtful; otherwise if it is from the fact that the grapes were not perfectly ripe.

e) It is disputed whether frozen wine is valid matter. Now it seems to have to be affirmed, both because by its nature it is drinkable, and because the Blood of Christ remains under the species of frozen wine;⁷ this proves that wine is not corrupted by freezing.

Nor should you object: just as the water of Baptism must be liquid, so also the wine of the Most Holy Eucharist. Response: I deny the parity; for the water of Baptism must be liquid by reason of washing, that is, of the proximate matter of Baptism; but drinking, by reason of which wine would have to be liquid, is not the proximate matter of the Most Holy Eucharist.

¹ Matthew 26:29.

² On Defects, title IV, n. 2.

³ *Theologia Moralis*, III, 371.

⁴ Holy Office, 22 July 1706 (*Collectanea*, n. 270); 7 May 1879 (*Collectanea*, n. 1518).

⁵ "Today, however, often from unripe grapes wine is made which has the appearance of true wine, sugar being added, which is lacking to the grapes. But when the quantity of sugar thus added would exceed that which is found in must, the matter would be at least illicit" (Geniot-Salsmans, *Theologia Moralis*, II, n. 121).

⁶ Today, after grapes have been pressed once, a solution of sugar is commonly poured over them several times, and a quantity of wine five times greater than that which would have been obtained from the berries once pressed is obtained.

⁷ Roman Missal, On Defects, title X, n. 11.

144 II. The matter required for liceity is wine:

1. Fermented and cleared from sediment. It would be a grave sin without grave necessity to consecrate wine not yet cleansed from sediment. Nevertheless it is permitted to use wine cleansed from sediment through evaporation and condensation, provided fermentation is not

excluded.¹ Likewise it is a grave sin without grave cause to use wine notably infected with sediment. Nevertheless it is permitted to consecrate wine that is merely turbid.

2. Pure, that is, not mixed with foreign matter, for example with aromatics. Nevertheless the Holy Office² permitted that spirit of wine be admixed to weak wine, "provided the spirit has been extracted from the produce of the vine and the alcoholic quantity, together with that which the wine in question naturally contains, does not exceed the proportion of 12%, and the admixture is made when it is very fresh." Indeed the same Congregation permitted³ that the spirit of wine be increased up to 17-18 percent, if this is required for preserving very strong and extraordinarily sweet wines. The use of port wine seems illicit, because it contains too much spirit of wine, namely 18-21 percent.

3. Not becoming sour. "If the wine has begun to become sour or corrupted, or has been somewhat sharp... the sacrament is confected, but the one confecting sins gravely."⁴ These words, with several authors, are to be taken thus:

a) If the wine becomes sour from initial corruption, in which case the matter becomes doubtful, that is, it becomes doubtful whether it is wine or vinegar, proceed according to what was said in n. 147.

b) If the wine becomes sour from natural sharpness, arising from the fact that the grapes were not perfectly ripe, the matter is valid but illicit; in this case these things hold:

1. If it becomes notably sour, it is permitted to use it when grave necessity urges, provided it is certainly wine (St. Alphonsus, VI, 207).

2. If it becomes only slightly sour, per se indeed, as the Roman Missal expressly declares, it is mortal to use it; but these things are not to be urged so far that it would not be permitted to use it if other wine is lacking (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). Finally, one who celebrates in another's church, or as a religious subject does not have care of the wine, should proceed without scruple even if the wine is a little sour, the danger being thrown back upon the rector of the church or upon the superior.

4. A very small amount of natural water should be admixed to the wine (canon 814). The admixture, however, must be made by way of ceremony, that is, at the altar and in the chalice; hence an admixture before the sacred rite, even by the priest himself, for example made in the cruet, does not suffice. If the admixture has been omitted and this is noticed before the consecration, it must be made immediately; if it is noticed after the consecration, it must be omitted.⁵ For the rest, observe:

a) The admixture of water is not required for validity, as the Roman Missal has it.⁶ Nevertheless it is prescribed, as is clear from the Council of Trent,⁷ from canon 814, and from the rituals. Yet more probably it is not of divine law but only of ecclesiastical law; this is deduced from the fact that neither in Sacred Scripture nor in Tradition is a divine origin indicated, and ecclesiastical documents, notably the Council of Trent,⁸ rather insinuate that it is an ecclesiastical precept (St. Alphonsus, VI, 208).

b) The precept obliges under grave obligation, as the Roman Missal says.⁹ The reason is that its ends are grave, namely so that there may be signified: 1. the water and blood which flowed together from the side of Christ; 2. the union between Christ, who is represented by the wine, and the faithful, who are represented by the water;¹⁰ 3. the union of the twofold nature in Christ (St. Thomas, III, q. 74, a.

6; St. Alphonsus, VI, 208). Indeed the obligation is considered so grave that scarcely ever is it permitted to consecrate without water admixed. Natural water is required, so that one would sin gravely who used, even in necessity, water which was not natural (St. Alphonsus, VI, 208, 2).

c) Only a very little or little water must be admixed.¹¹ One or another small drop suffices, although a somewhat greater quantity is urged. Yet it must especially be guarded against that the admixture be made up to a third part of the quantity, since that would render the matter doubtful (St. Alphonsus, VI, 210).

d) The admixed water, according to the opinion of all, is converted into the Blood. But it is disputed whether it is converted into the Blood without first having been converted into wine, or whether it is converted first, at least according to common estimation, into wine, then into the Blood. Those who admit the first argue from the fact that the molecules of the admixed water remain numerically the same, or retain their individuation. Those who hold the second reason from the fact that the molecules of water do not remain numerically the same, but receive a new individuation from the greater quantity.

¹ Holy Office, 5 August 1896 (*Collectanea*, n. 1950); 22 May 1901 (*Collectanea*, n. 2113).

² 30 July 1890 (*Collectanea*, n. 1735).

³ 5 August 1896 (*Collectanea*, n. 1950); 22 May 1901 (*Collectanea*, n. 2113).

⁴ Roman Missal, On Defects, title IV, n. 2.

⁵ Cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 74, a. 5, ad 2; Benedict XIV, *Institutiones*, 77, n. 2.

⁶ Roman Missal, On Defects, title IV, n. 7.

⁷ Session 22, chapter 7.

⁸ Loc. cit.

⁹ On Defects, title IV, n. 2.

¹⁰ Council of Trent, session 22, chapter 7.

¹¹ Council of Florence; Roman Missal, *Ritus servandus*, title VII, n. 4.

Scholion. On a Defect of Valid or Certainly Valid Matter Detected in Mass

145 I. If a priest in Mass notices that the host is corrupted or is not wheaten, let him proceed thus:

1. If he notices this before the consecration, then, that host having been removed, let him place another and, the oblation having been made, at least conceived mentally, continue from the place where he left off.

2. If he notices this after the consecration, even after the consumption of that host:

a) If before the consumption of the Blood, after another host has been placed and the oblation made, at least conceived mentally, let him consecrate it, beginning from the words: **Who the day before He suffered**; then let him consume it, even if he has already consumed the former host. If he has not consumed the former host, let him consume it after the consumption of the Blood, hand it to another to be consumed, or preserve it reverently somewhere.

b) If after the consumption of the Blood, new bread and wine with water must again be placed; and the oblation first having been made as above, he consecrates each, beginning from those words: **Who the day before**; and immediately consumes each, and continues the Mass.¹

¹ Cf. Aertnys-Damen, who set these things forth in order (vol. II, n. 114); Roman Missal, On Defects, title III, nn. 4-6.

146 II. If a priest in Mass notices that there is not wine in the chalice, but another matter or corrupted wine, let him proceed thus:

1. If he notices this before the consumption of the Body, then, the invalid matter having been placed in another vessel, let him again place wine with water in the chalice and, the oblation having been made, at least conceived mentally, consecrate beginning from the words: **In like manner**, etc., and continue where he left off.

2. If he notices this after the consumption of the Body or of that invalid matter,¹ it must be done thus:

a) If Mass is celebrated privately, that is, in a non-public place, let him place another host to be consecrated again, and wine with water in the chalice, let him offer each, and consecrate each, beginning from the words: **Who the day before**, and consume, although he is not fasting.

b) If Mass is celebrated in a public place, where several are present, to avoid scandal it suffices to place only wine with water and, the oblation having been made as above, to consecrate, immediately consume, and continue the rest.²

¹ If the priest detects the defect in the consumption of the chalice, he can swallow the draft which he has in his mouth (St. Alphonsus, VI, 288). If nevertheless he has done this, he cannot, for example on the feast of the Nativity of the Lord, celebrate other Masses.

² Roman Missal, On Defects, title IV, nn. 4 and 5. According to others, even in the case in which he celebrates privately, it is permitted to consecrate only wine, because there remains one sacrifice and the order of consecration is not inverted.

147 III. If the priest after the consecration notices that the matter is doubtfully valid, let him proceed in the same manner as was explained above. It is disputed, however, whether the other consecration must be done absolutely or under this condition: **if the prior matter was not consecrated**. Most favor conditional consecration, because otherwise, if perhaps the prior matter was consecrated, another consecration would not correspond to the new consecration (St. Alphonsus, VI, 206).

Matter doubtfully consecrated is to be consumed after the consumption of the Blood; if this cannot be done, it is to be treated as is explained in the Roman Missal.¹

IV. If the whole Blood is spilled, so that nothing remains, let the priest again place wine and water, offer, and consecrate from that place: **In like manner**, etc.²

¹ On Defects, title X, nn. 6 and 7.

² On Defects, title X, n. 13.

Chapter II. On the Form

148 I. The legitimate and usual form is:

1. For the Latin Church: **For this is my body. For this is the chalice of my blood, of the New and Eternal Testament, the mystery of faith, which for you and for many shall be poured out unto the remission of sins.** "The words of consecration," says the Roman Missal,¹ "which are the form of this sacrament, are these: **For this is my body**, and: **For this is**, etc."
2. For the Greek Church: **Take and eat: this is my body, which is broken for you unto the remission of sins. Drink ye all of this: for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is poured out for you and for many unto the remission of sins.**

Now the form is to be uttered not merely recitatively or historically, that is, as uttered by Christ Himself, but also assertively or significantly, that is, with the mind of asserting that this is the body and blood of Christ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 220).

Note. The epiclesis, as it is called, does not pertain to the form. Now the epiclesis is an invocation of the Holy Spirit by which the Church prays that the bread and wine may become for us the body and blood of Christ. It occurs in the Roman Liturgy before the consecration, in the Eastern liturgies after the consecration. Now that this epiclesis is either the sole or at least the principal form of the Most Holy Sacrament, as having the sole or principal force of effecting transubstantiation, several Greek schismatics have admitted from the fourteenth century, and a few Catholics agreed with them. But this opinion is to be rejected, as is clear from the Decree for the Armenians to be cited under II; likewise from the letter of Pius VII, *Adorabile Eucharistiae*, 8 May 1822, to the Antiochian Patriarch and the bishops of the Greek Melchites. The epiclesis, as the Greeks confessed with Bessarion² in the Council of Florence,³ on the one hand is a ceremony by which that which the words of consecration effect is explained, and on the other hand is a prayer by which the Church asks that the body and blood of Christ may not only simply be such, but may also become fruitfully for the faithful, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the body and blood of Christ (cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 83, a. 4, ad 7).

¹ Roman Missal, On Defects, title V, n. 1.

² *De Sacr. Euch.* (Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, 161, col. 514 and following).

³ Session 25 (Hardouin, vol. 18, col. 512 D-536 inclusive).

149 II. The essentials of the form are determined in these things:

1. These are certainly essential: **This is my body**; and: **This is my blood**, or: **This is the chalice of my blood**. This is a certain opinion. "The form of this sacrament," says Eugene IV in the Decree for the Armenians, "is the words of the Savior, by which He confected this sacrament. For the priest, speaking in the person of Christ, confects this sacrament."
2. These are certainly not essential:
 - a) The word **for**, both in the consecration of the bread and in the consecration of the wine.
 - b) The words preceding the form, namely **Who the day before**, etc., and **In like manner**, etc., almost certainly do not pertain to the essence, since in the instruction of Eugene they are not reckoned among those things which pertain to the form (St. Alphonsus, VI, 222).
3. There is dispute about the words **New** through **of sins**. Some judge that they pertain to the essence, because it must be expressed that the consecration is sacrificial, or that the presence of Christ is an immolative presence. Nevertheless the contrary opinion is more common and more

probable, both because St. Paul has only these words: **This chalice is the new Testament in my blood**; and because in different liturgies different words from the cited words are omitted; and because the analogy of the consecration of bread is added. Nevertheless in practice the first opinion must be followed, as is clear (St. Alphonsus, VI, 223).

Corollary I. The forms are invalid: 1. **This body is mine; this blood is mine**; for then before the consecration the body and blood are asserted to be present, though they are constituted present through the consecration. It is otherwise if someone only transposed the words, so that the sense would be: "This, it is my body." 2. If someone deliberately used the word **this** adverbially; otherwise if by error. 3. If someone omitted **is**, because the circumstances do not sufficiently indicate that that word is understood, or at least do not sufficiently signify that it is understood in the sense which imports production.

Corollary II. The forms are doubtful: 1. **That is my body; that is the chalice**, etc., because although the pronoun *that* is rather often used for *this*, nevertheless it does not certainly signify a thing present to the speaker. The forms are still more doubtful: **That over there is my body; that over there is the chalice**, etc. 2. **This is my flesh**, because flesh, strictly speaking, does not signify the whole body.

Corollary III. The form is valid: **This thing, this substance, is my body**. It is otherwise: **This bread is my body** (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 221-223).

150 **III. With respect to liceity, observe** that an omission, addition, or change knowingly made, even if it does not obstruct validity, easily constitutes grave sin. Nevertheless there can be only venial sin, for example if someone omitted only the word **for**. For the rest, the words should be uttered distinctly, reverently, and, as the Missal admonishes, secretly, not in a loud voice or with vehement expulsion of words from the mouth. In order that every danger of erring may be avoided, it is better to read the form from the altar card.

IV. With respect to errors to be corrected, note that if the form must be repeated, one must always begin from the words **Who the day before**, or **In like manner**.¹ For the rest, receive these things from the Missal: "If the celebrant does not remember that he said those things which are commonly said in the consecration, he ought not for that reason be troubled. If, however, it is certain to him that he omitted something of those things which are of the necessity of the sacrament, that is, the form of consecration, or part of it, let him resume the form itself and continue the rest in order. But if he very probably doubts that he omitted something essential, let him repeat the form at least under a tacit condition. But if the things are not of the necessity of the sacrament, let him not resume them, but proceed further."²

¹ Roman Missal, On Defects, title III, nn. 5, 6, 7; title IV, nn. 3, 4; title X, nn. 3, 13.

² Roman Missal, On Defects, title V, n. 2.

Section III. On the Effects of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

The primary effect of the Most Holy Eucharist, to which the others are reduced, is perfect union with Christ in charity and with neighbor in Christ. Specifically, the following are enumerated:

151 **I. With respect to the soul.** 1. Sanctifying grace, per se second grace, per accidens more probably first grace (St. Thomas, III, q. 79, a. 7, ad 2; St. Alphonsus, VI, 269; n. 6).

2. Sacramental grace; this consists in the fact that the sanctifying grace which the Holy Eucharist confers is both ordered to perfecting charity, or union with God and the faithful, and confers a right to actual graces to be received in order to that effect.
3. Fervor of charity, to which spiritual sweetness is attached. "But the love of God is not idle; for it does great things if it exists; and therefore through this sacrament, so far as concerns its power, not only is the habit of grace and virtue conferred, but it is also excited into act, according to that passage of 2 Corinthians 5: The charity of Christ urges us. And thence it is that by the power of this sacrament the soul is spiritually refreshed, by the fact that the soul is spiritually delighted and in a certain way intoxicated with the sweetness of the divine goodness, according to that passage of Canticles 5: Eat, friends, and drink, and be inebriated, dearly beloved" (St. Thomas, III, q. 79, a. 1, ad 2).
4. Remission of venial sins¹ (St. Thomas, III, q. 79, a. 4; St. Alphonsus, VI, 269). But it is disputed whether the Most Holy Eucharist remits venial sins both immediately, or *ex opere operato*, and mediately, or *ex opere operantis*, or only mediately, namely by exciting acts of charity by which venial sins are directly remitted; concerning this, compare what is to be said in the treatise on Penance.
5. Remission of temporal punishment (St. Thomas, III, q. 79, a. 5; St. Alphonsus, VI, 269). Again it is disputed whether both immediately, or *ex opere operato*, and mediately, *ex opere operantis*, or only mediately, by moving to acts of charity by which not only guilt but also punishment is remitted; concerning this, again compare what is to be said in the treatise on Penance.

¹ Council of Trent, Session 13, chapter 2.

152 **II. With respect to the body**, the Most Holy Eucharist especially diminishes concupiscence of the flesh (St. Alphonsus, VI, 269). But whether it effects this immediately and mediately, or only mediately, is doubtful (St. Alphonsus, VI, 269).

153 **III. With respect to body and soul.** 1. Spiritual sweetness, of itself overflowing into the body (St. Thomas, III, q. 79, a. 1, ad 2; St. Alphonsus, VI, 269).

2. The glorious resurrection of the body.¹

¹ John 6:55.

154 **IV. With respect to others**, it is useful to note specifically a certain social effect, namely mutual union among the faithful, to which effect attention is already given more today. "For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all who partake of one bread."¹

Question. At what time does the Eucharist confer grace?

Response 1. It certainly confers it at the time at which the species are eaten and drunk, that is, are carried into the stomach. Hence: 1. "The species are not to be retained in the mouth so long that they wholly perish, because then Christ would not be eaten, nor would the grace of the sacrament be conferred" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 227). 2. If someone had received the host indisposed, and then, disposed, received the blood, he would receive grace (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

Response 2. It is disputed whether the Eucharist, with disposition increased, continues to confer grace for as long as the species remain uncorrupted. It seems it must be affirmed, because the

Eucharist is rightly judged to operate after the manner of nourishing food.

¹ 1 Cor. 10:17.

Section IV. On the Necessity of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

The necessity both of means and of precept must be examined, yet only of divine precept, because the ecclesiastical precept was discussed in vol. I, n. 1108.

Chapter I. On Necessity of Means

155 I first note these words of the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that Eucharistic Communion is necessary for little children before they have arrived at the years of discretion, let him be anathema."¹ Wherefore note that here the matter concerns real reception of the Most Holy Eucharist; hence it is of faith that such reception is not necessary for little children. These things being noted, with respect to necessity of means I say:

I. It is disputed whether or not the Most Holy Eucharist is necessary by necessity of means for justification, this necessity being taken in the proper sense, namely so that it is necessary by way of efficient cause. Some affirm this because of these words of St. John: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His Blood, you will not have life in you."² Hence in their opinion the Most Holy Eucharist, if it can conveniently be done, must be received in reality; if this cannot conveniently be done, it must be received in desire; but little children receive it in this way through the Church. In this opinion it must also be admitted that Baptism and Penance do not justify except with desire for the Most Holy Eucharist.

Others deny that the Most Holy Eucharist is necessary by necessity of means for obtaining justification, both because Sacred Scripture³ assigns Baptism as a sufficient means for acquiring first grace, and because the Most Holy Eucharist is the sacrament of the living and therefore per se supposes grace, and because it is very difficult to admit that a sacrament which by a great part of human beings, that is, by little children per se, or by force of natural condition, cannot conveniently be received in reality, and therefore must be received in desire, that such a sacrament, I say, has been constituted necessary by necessity of means. I said: cannot conveniently be received in reality, and this indeed in such a way that it is forbidden by the Church to give the Most Holy Eucharist to little children.

Nevertheless a peculiar necessity of means is rightly admitted, namely by way of final cause, insofar, namely, as the Most Holy Eucharist is the end of all the sacraments, so that they, even Baptism and Penance, do not confer grace except by looking toward the Most Holy Eucharist (St. Alphonsus, III, 192).

II. It is disputed besides whether or not the Most Holy Eucharist is necessary by necessity of means for preserving grace. Some deny this, because there are other means also for preserving grace. Others affirm it, "because just as the life of the body cannot long be preserved without material food, so the life of the soul cannot be preserved without this spiritual food, at least in desire, and indeed explicit desire in one who notices the necessity of this sacrament" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 193). At least moral necessity seems commonly to be admitted.

With respect to the opinion of St. Thomas on the necessity of the Most Holy Eucharist, cf. III, q. 73, a. 3; III, q. 79, aa. 1 and 3; III, q. 80, aa. 2 and 11.

¹ Session 21, canon 4; cf. chapter 4.

² John 6:54.

³ Mark 16:16; Gal. 3:27; Titus 3:5.

Chapter II. On Necessity of Divine Precept

156 I. The existence of a divine precept is clear first from Sacred Scripture. "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you will not have life in you";¹ these words, if they do not exhibit necessity of means, at least exhibit a precept. Then, according to the Council of Trent, the Lord "commanded us in its reception to cherish His memory and to announce His death."² Finally, it is insinuated from the fact that Christ, by instituting the sacrament by way of food and drink, sufficiently hinted that its reception is commanded, just as the use of bodily food is commanded. Now that the precept is grave follows both from the gravity of the matter and from the most grave punishment by which it was sanctioned by Christ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 295).

¹ John 6:54.

² Session 13, chapter 2.

157 II. The subject of the divine precept is adults who enjoy the use of reason, and indeed all of them. It is said:

1. **Adults who enjoy the use of reason.** Therefore little children are not bound, nor those who are equated with them, that is, the perpetually insane (cf. canon 88, § 3); this is clear already from the fact that the Church prohibits the Eucharist from being conceded to them (canon 854; Roman Ritual).¹
2. **And indeed all of them,** even: 1. unbelievers, insofar, namely, as they are bound to receive Baptism and, Baptism having been received, to communicate; 2. children. With respect to children this is first proved from the words of Christ cited above, which are pronounced without restriction and therefore must be judged to regard all who are capable of the precept. Then the ecclesiastical precept also binds children. But the Church only determines divine law. Then the decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments *Quam singulari*² insinuates this, both by alleging reasons which militate equally for the divine precept and for the ecclesiastical, and by citing testimonies of authors who defend the divine precept. Pius X sufficiently signifies the same in his Letter to the Archbishop of Cologne.³ Finally no reason can be assigned why the divine-positive law would not comprehend children, since they are capable of law equally as other adults are.

¹ Title IV, chapter 1, nn. 10 and 11. In the Eastern Church the Eucharist has customarily been given to infants.

² 8 August 1910.

³ 31 December 1910 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, vol. 3, p. 18).

158 III. The time at which it obliges. 1. The divine precept obliges per se: 1. several times during the course of life; 2. in danger of death. It is said:

a) **Several times during the course of life.** This is deduced from the fact that Christ, by instituting the Holy Eucharist by way of nourishment, sufficiently signifies that it must be received at least several times. Now the one who fulfills the ecclesiastical precept certainly satisfies the divine precept of communicating several times during the course of life (St. Alphonsus, VI, 295).

b) **In danger of death.** For if the Eucharist is to be received several times in life, it certainly must be received at that moment at which it is of the greatest interest, and is more difficult, to preserve and nourish the spiritual life. There are added the most ancient law and practice¹ of ministering the Eucharist to those constituted in danger of death, even with harm to the minister;² these introduce the suspicion that the Holy Eucharist must be received in danger of death by precept of Christ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 291).

Now grave danger of death is understood; this is present either physically, as if someone is gravely ill; or, morally speaking, as if there is imminent execution of a capital sentence, a dangerous operation, battle, shipwreck, difficult childbirth, or a journey full of danger.

Moreover, the precept of communicating in grave danger which is physically present is to be understood so that as soon as someone is gravely ill, he can fulfill the precept, but when death is more imminent, he must fulfill it.

2. The divine precept obliges per accidens when the Eucharist is held as a morally necessary means of avoiding sins, namely insofar as other means are lacking or at least are not applied; concerning this, note that for the most part those who do not approach the Holy Eucharist attend neither to prayer nor to mortification. "But in that case... a man by omitting it would not sin against its precept, but against the virtue against which he suffers temptation" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 295).

Question 1. Whether one is bound to communicate when danger of death is imminent, if he communicated a few days before when he was not yet constituted in danger.

Response. Several deny it, but with St. Alphonsus (VI, 285) it seems it must be affirmed, because according to what was said above the obligation seems attached to the danger of death itself, so that it cannot be satisfied before.

Question 2. Whether one is bound to communicate when danger of death is imminent, if he communicated the same day when he was not yet constituted in danger.

Response. Such a person certainly can communicate again on the same day; indeed this is urged for him by canon 864, § 2. For the rest, some judge that he is not bound, because the divine precept has already been satisfied, and there is no ecclesiastical precept. There is added the fact that canon 804, § 2 declares: Even if they have been refreshed by Holy Communion on the same day, nevertheless it is strongly to be urged that those brought into danger of life communicate again. But with St. Alphonsus (VI, 285, doubt 3) we judge that he is bound, because according to the things said in the response to the first question he has not yet satisfied the divine precept. As regards canon 864, § 2, I respond that the Code abstracts from the interpretation of divine law, concerning which there is dispute among doctors; and therefore by the cited canon our question is not settled, but, while the dispute stands, the legislating Church, so far as depends on her part, proceeds only by urging. Therefore one who communicated in the morning is bound to communicate again if, for example, in the course of the day he was dangerously wounded or suddenly seized by illness.

It must be said otherwise if at the time of the prior Communion, even one received from devotion alone, grave danger was already present, although afterward it grows worse. In such a case one is neither bound nor able to communicate. He is not bound because he has already satisfied the divine precept. Nor can he, because in this hypothesis there is no reason why the prohibition of communicating twice should be judged not to urge. St. Alphonsus (*loc. cit.*) also applies this doctrine to the case of apoplexy or something similar, because the illness is presumed already to have pre-existed. Here, however, note that in doubt whether grave danger was present at the time of Communion, its reception can be repeated.

Note. From ecclesiastical law I add these things: Holy Viaticum is not to be deferred too much for the sick; and those who have care of souls should carefully watch that the sick be refreshed by it while fully in possession of themselves (canon 865). Likewise, "while danger of death endures, Holy Viaticum, according to the prudent counsel of the confessor, may and fittingly should be administered several times on distinct days" (canon 864, § 3).

¹ Already the First Council of Nicaea, canon 13, calls that law ancient (Hefele, *Histoire des Conciles*, Paris ed. 1907, vol. 1, p. 7, p. 593 and following).

² Nor does it stand in the way that Viaticum was once sometimes denied to some dying persons, for example those condemned to death; since this practice was not universal, was rather often disapproved by ecclesiastical authority, and rested on the opinion that the divine precept could not conveniently be fulfilled in such circumstances (Rath, *De Eucharistia*, n. 219). Indeed I would not even deny that such things, although pertaining to divine law, can be moderated by the Church because of the common good.

159 IV. The manner of fulfilling the divine precept; concerning this it suffices to note these things: there is no obligation of receiving the Eucharist under both species. This is of faith from the Council of Trent defining: "If anyone says that by the precept of God or by necessity of salvation all and each of Christ's faithful must receive each species of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, let him be anathema." Indeed in the Latin rite it is not even permitted to minister the Eucharist under the species of wine (canon 852). But it is clear that the precept is not satisfied by sacrilegious Communion. Let the confessor see, however, whether it is expedient to warn the dying penitent about the obligation of communicating again. If Viaticum is ministered again, let this be done on another day under the pretext of Communion from devotion; indeed if otherwise the dying person would be exposed to danger of infamy, there is sufficient reason for ministering Viaticum secretly and even without the pastor's knowledge. If there is danger in delay, let it be ministered on the same day on which Communion was sacrilegiously received.

Part II. On the Ministration of the Most Holy Sacrament

By the word **ministration** we comprehend both the confection and the dispensation of the Eucharist. Hence:

Section I. On the Confection of the Most Holy Sacrament

160 **I. The minister of confection.** Only and every priest can confect the sacrament of the Eucharist; this proposition is of faith. The Fourth Lateran Council defines: "Certainly no one can confect this sacrament except a priest who has been duly ordained."¹ And the Council of Trent says: "If anyone says that by those words, **Do this in commemoration of me**, Christ did not institute the Apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His body and blood, let him be anathema."² For the rest, note:

1. It is not permitted for several priests to concelebrate, except in the Mass of ordination of priests and in the Mass of consecration of bishops according to the Roman Pontifical (canon 803).
2. Even if several concelebrate, there is only one sacrament in number (n. 20).
3. In the case in which several concelebrate, according to some, each one confects the sacrament only when they pronounce the words at the same time. Hence if someone intended to consecrate independently of the others, and pronounced the words before the others, he alone would confect the sacrament. To guard against this, the concelebrating priests should intend to consecrate only then when they pronounce the words at the same time with the principal celebrant. According to others, the concelebrants form a college *in solidum*, which as such confects the sacrament, and therefore through the utterance of the words by each one constitutes, as it were, one form, which is completed only when all have pronounced the words. Hence all should intend a collegial consecration.³

In practice it suffices, and is better, to consecrate according to the mind of the Church.

¹ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 430.

² Session 22, canon 2.

³ Cf. de la Taille, *Myst. fidei*, Elucidation 28, Appendix D.

161 **II. The mode of confection.** 1. As regards valid confection, it suffices to add to, or emphasize in, those things which we have said about valid confection of the sacraments in general (n. 13), the following points: For the valid consecration of some matter it is required: 1. that the matter be present to the one consecrating; 2. that the intention of the one consecrating not be directed toward indeterminate matter; 3. that it truly be directed toward the present matter. But as regards validity it does not matter whether the quantity is great or small, provided it is perceptible by sense. It is said:

a) **That the matter be present**, namely in such a way that, according to the prudent judgment of men, it can be demonstrated by the pronouns **this** and **here**. But in order that it may be demonstrated in that way, "it is not required that the matter be seen, or touched, or struck by the sound of the words; whence the practice of those who bring their mouth very near so as to breathe their breath into the chalice and onto the bread is commonly not approved" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 212). It is required, however, that the matter: 1. not be too distant; 2. not be morally separated from the

one consecrating by an intervening body. It is said **not be too distant**, "for example a hundred paces, even if it can be seen... But how much nearness suffices is doubtful, and depends on the judgment of prudent men" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 213). A distance of thirty or even twenty paces would render the consecration doubtfully valid (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). It is said **not be morally separated from the one consecrating by an intervening body**. Now an intervening body does not morally separate the matter from the one consecrating if it is interposed only by way of containing, or only by way of covering; otherwise, if it is interposed by way of dividing (St. Alphonsus, VI, 213, 1).

Corollary I. Wine can be validly consecrated in a covered chalice, hosts in a closed ciborium, or in an open tabernacle.

Corollary II. "Matter placed behind a wall or behind the back, or enclosed in a tabernacle, is invalidly consecrated" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 213); yet it seems otherwise if the matter is held by the hand behind the back or is seen with the face turned.

Corollary III. A host hidden immediately under the corporal can doubtfully be consecrated; but it seems this must be denied of a host hidden under the altar cloth, in the missal, or under a cushion (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 212).

b) **That the intention of the one consecrating not be directed toward indeterminate matter;** "both because the pronouns **This** and **Here** require this, and because actions concern singular things, which must be certain and determinate" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 214).

Corollary. "If someone has eleven hosts before him, and intends to consecrate only ten, not determining which ten he intends, in this case he does not consecrate."¹

c) **That the intention be truly directed toward the present matter;** this condition is clear, but it is often not so clear whether it has been fulfilled, as will become evident from what is to be said.

Corollary I. If someone "thinks that one or two or six hosts to be consecrated are present, when there are more, whether placed by himself or by another, all are consecrated; because a speculative and private error does not obstruct the practical and absolute intention of consecrating all that are present; and each one is judged to have this intention as conforming to the custom of the Church" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 216). Likewise, "if after the consecration the priest notices that there are two joined together, he will take both as consecrated" (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.), because he is judged to have had the intention which he ought to have, namely of consecrating whatever he holds in his hands.² But if before the consecration, after he has offered, he notices the other, he will set it aside, and after Mass he himself or another will consume it as blessed bread.³

Corollary II. If someone has brought several hosts to the altar, or in a reasonable way has noticed that they were brought by another for him to consecrate, or before the sacrifice has been warned about hosts to be consecrated, all are consecrated, even if while he consecrates he does not remember them so expressly, or even if he does not uncover them at the oblation, at least if they are on the corporal; for this "opinion is safe in practice, because the preceding intention virtually perseveres with respect to them" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 216, compared with 217).

But what if a pyx has been placed outside the corporal, either by the celebrant himself, namely through error, or by another who nevertheless warned the celebrant that these hosts were to be consecrated?

Response 1. If the celebrant thought of it at the time of consecration or within the Mass, most affirm. Nevertheless, even in this hypothesis there remains a reason for doubting whether the mentioned thought involves, or at least practically carries with it, the intention of consecrating the hosts thought of absolutely, that is, even though they are placed outside the corporal. This will become clearer from what will be said presently.

Response 2. If the celebrant did not think of it at the time of consecration or within the Mass, the matter is more doubtful. Several authors, especially more recent ones, judge that the pyx is morally certainly consecrated. But with St. Alphonsus (VI, 217) we hold the matter as doubtful. That is, the whole matter depends on the intention of the celebrant, or on whether his intention regarding the said pyx is to be interpreted in this way: "I will to consecrate those hosts absolutely or in any case, that is, whether they are placed on the corporal or outside it"; or in this way: "I will to consecrate them, provided they are placed on the corporal." Now if we attend to the fact that a priest habitually knows that the consecration of matter placed outside the corporal is prohibited under grave sin, it is neither clear, nor, as we shall see, proved by any argument of the adversaries, that the intention of the celebrant must be interpreted in the former way. Add that very many authors, and very grave ones, hold the consecration of the said hosts as doubtful. Thus, for example, besides St. Alphonsus (*loc. cit.*), Benedict XIV,⁴ Suarez,⁵ the Salmanticenses,⁶ Billuart,⁷ Roncaglia,⁸ Patuzzi,⁹ Concina,¹⁰ Ferraris,¹¹ Tamburini,¹² Sporer,¹³ Dens,¹⁴ Voit,¹⁵ Marc,¹⁶ Lehmkuhl,¹⁷ Aertnys-Damen,¹⁸ Tanquerey,¹⁹ Rath,²⁰ etc.

Objection 1. In the case as it is posed, all things required for consecration are present, namely matter, form, and intention.

Response. As is clear from what has been said, the question is precisely whether the required intention is present, in other words, whether the intention of the celebrant must be interpreted in the sense of the adversaries.

Objection 2. If hosts placed outside the corporal are not consecrated, because it is in itself prohibited under grave sin to consecrate them, likewise wine to which a small amount of water has not been mixed is not consecrated; for such a consecration is in itself prohibited under grave sin.

Response. I deny the parity. Namely, the priest principally intends to consecrate; from this it follows that in the case opposed to us he wills the consecration of the wine, notwithstanding the defect unknown to him. But it does not follow that he wills the consecration of hosts placed outside the corporal, because a consecration can occur without their consecration.

Hosts consecrated in this doubtful way, if they are few, should be consumed after the consuming of the Blood, or at least after the ablution, that is, before the purification; if they are many, they should be consecrated again conditionally in another Mass.

Response 3. If someone once and for all elicited the intention of not consecrating hosts which remained outside the corporal, he seems never to consecrate the aforesaid hosts, because the subsequent intention, and the specifically contrary one, seems to be interpreted in conformity with, or to respond to, the prior intention.

Corollary III. Hosts placed on the corporal but outside the altar stone are consecrated; this is not prohibited even under venial sin if the altar is fixed. The same must be said of hosts in a pyx which

has been left closed, since the light rubric which prohibits that does not prevent the priest from being able, I will not say obliged, and therefore presumed, to have the intention of consecrating the pyx in any case, that is, even if through forgetfulness it was not uncovered.

Corollary IV. Hosts placed on the altar wholly without the priest's knowledge, and separated from the heap to be consecrated, are not judged consecrated, because the priest is presumed not to have the intention of consecrating them (St. Alphonsus, VI, 215).

Corollary V. Little drops of wine adhering externally to the chalice are not consecrated, because the priest is not presumed to comprehend them. But little drops adhering to the inside of the chalice, yet separated, about which the minister expressly intends nothing, are, according to some, consecrated; according to others, they are not consecrated. Others distinguish between drops near the bottom and remote ones. Others doubt. It is better to have the intention only of consecrating the wine which exists as one thing in the chalice. Similarly it is expedient to consecrate crumbs adhering to hosts, but not separated crumbs on the paten or corporal; nor is it an obstacle that, by consuming them, the fast is violated, for irreverence toward the sacrament is to be guarded against more than violation of the fast. But if the crumbs are in the ciborium, he should intend to consecrate them, since the danger of losing them is absent (St. Alphonsus, VI, 215).

Corollary VI. If it happens that consecrated and unconsecrated hosts are mixed together and cannot be distinguished, the heap, insofar as it is not consecrated, should be consecrated. Others say that it should be consecrated with the limited intention of consecrating the hosts not yet consecrated; but because some doubt whether the latter mode is sufficiently safe,²¹ the former should be chosen.

d) As regards validity, it does not matter whether the quantity is great or small, provided it is perceptible by sense. Matter seems invalid if it is "so small that it cannot be perceived by sense; both because it cannot be demonstrated, and because a sacrament must be a sensible sign... Understand this if it is not within the whole, but outside it; because within the whole even its smallest particles are consecrated, as is clear from Trent" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 213, 3).²²

¹ Roman Missal, *On Defects*, title VII, n. 1.

² Roman Missal, *On Defects*, title VII, n. 2.

³ Roman Missal, loc. cit.

⁴ *De Sacrificio Missae*, book 3, chapter 18, n. 6; in the same place he speaks of a pyx which is outside the sacred stone, but the reason is equal.

⁵ *De Eucharistia*, disputation 43, section 6; in the same place he likewise speaks of hosts which are not placed upon the altar, but, as we have said, the reason is equal.

⁶ *Cursus Theologiae Moralis*, tract 4, chapter 4, n. 125.

⁷ *De Eucharistia*, dissertation 3, article 6.

⁸ *Universa Theologia Moralis*, tract 18, chapter 2, question 8.

⁹ *Theologia Moralis*, tract 10, dissertation 1, chapter 4, n. 9.

¹⁰ Book 3, *De Eucharistia*, dissertation 1, chapter 2, n. 8.

¹¹ Word "Missa," article 8, n. 34.

¹² *De Sacrificio Missae*, book 2, chapter 1, section 3, case 4, nn. 11-20.

¹³ *Theologia Sacramentalis*, part 2, section 2, n. 169.

¹⁴ *De Eucharistia*, n. 11, question 4, ad 3.

¹⁵ *De Eucharistia*, nn. 286 and 287.

¹⁶ *Institutiones Alphonsianae*, n. 1527.

¹⁷ *Theologia moralis*, vol. II, n. 168. Lehmkuhl (loc. cit.) doubts about the consecration, because it is doubtful whether in the proposed hypothesis the priest had the intention of consecrating the aforesaid hosts, or only the purpose of afterward taking them for the sacrifice, that is, of afterward eliciting the intention of consecrating them. But I think that there is ordinarily no place for this doubt; in other words, generally in the proposed hypothesis the intention of consecrating the hosts is already elicited beforehand. The doubt is, as we have said, in what sense the said intention is to be interpreted.

¹⁸ *Theologia moralis*, vol. II, n. 117.

¹⁹ *Synopsis Theologiae Dogmaticae*, 4th ed., vol. II, n. 94.

²⁰ *De Eucharistia*, n. 183.

²¹ They doubt because in this case the matter to be consecrated seems not sufficiently determined to them.

²² Session 13, canons 2 and 3.

162 2. For licit consecration it is required:

a) That the consecration of one matter not be made without the consecration of the other (canon 817). The consecration of only one matter is indeed valid, but is prohibited under grave sin. I said:

First, the consecration of only one matter is valid; this is clear: 1. from the fact that the Church adores the sacred Host before the wine has been consecrated; 2. from the fact that the form by which one matter is consecrated has a complete signification, so that it must be judged to effect what it signifies. Some, though few, except the case in which the minister would consecrate one matter with the intention of not consecrating the other, in other words, of not confecting the sacrifice. They judge, namely, that the power of consecrating in this way is lacking, because the said power has been granted in order to the sacrifice, for whose essence the consecration of both matters is more probably required (St. Alphonsus, VI, 196, doubt 3).

Second, the consecration of only one matter is prohibited under grave sin; namely, it is certainly prohibited under grave sin by ecclesiastical law (canon 817), and more probably also by divine law. This is deduced from the fact that, according to the will of Christ, consecration must at the same time be the oblation of the sacrifice, for which the consecration of both matters is more probably required. There is added the fact that Christ, after both consecrations, imposed the command of doing what He Himself had done. Hence it is commonly admitted that the consecration of only one matter is not licit even for the sake of Viaticum (St. Alphonsus, VI, 195).

b) That the consecration be made within the celebration of Mass, not outside it (canon 817).

c) That the consecration of bread precede the consecration of wine; this Christ both did, and it is commanded at least by ecclesiastical law under grave sin, except in the case in which the minister after the consecration of wine notices that he has not consecrated the bread.¹

d) That it be consecrated: 1. on a fixed or portable altar; 2. upon a corporal. Therefore if the altar is fixed, it suffices that the matter be on the altar and upon the corporal. If the altar is portable, it is required that the matter be upon the corporal and on the consecrated stone. Moreover, it suffices that

the foot of the ciborium exist for the greater part in the assigned place; for the rest, the aforesaid things are prescribed under grave sin (St. Alphonsus, VI, 217, 219).

e) That the pyx be opened at the time of the offertory and of the consecration.² This rubric obliges only under venial sin.

f) That the hosts to be consecrated together with the host of the Mass be present at least by the offertory. If after the offertory, but before the Preface has begun, they are offered, they are licitly consecrated, the oblation being supplied mentally. If they are offered after the Preface has begun, but before the Canon has begun, a moderate cause is required, because the rite of consecration, which is already begun by the Preface, must be observed. A reason would be present if otherwise one or another person would have to wait a long time for Communion; nevertheless in such a case it is also permitted to give him a particle of the large host. If they are offered after the Canon has begun, a grave cause is required, for example lest a multitude have to wait a long time, or lest a sick person die without Viaticum. Nevertheless the oblation of the hosts should always be supplied mentally (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 217).

¹ Roman Missal, *On Defects*, title III, nn. 4, 5, 6.

² Roman Missal, *Order and Rite of Mass*, title VII, n. 3; title VIII, n. 5.

Section II. On the Dispensation of the Most Holy Sacrament

Chapter I. On the Person Dispensing

In order that someone legitimately dispense the Eucharist, the power of order and the power of jurisdiction are required.

163 I. The power of order. Considered with respect to the power of order:

1. Only a priest is the ordinary minister of the dispensation of the Holy Eucharist (canon 845, § 1), that is, by virtue of his ordination he is deputed to dispense it principally, not secondarily, as a deacon is. For: 1. to the one alone to whom it belongs to confect the Holy Eucharist, to him alone it belongs to dispense it principally; 2. Tradition is added, which the Council of Trent attests in these words: "It was always the custom in the Church of God that the laity receive Communion from priests; ... this custom, as descending from Apostolic Tradition, must with right and merit be retained"¹ (cf. St. Thomas, III, q. 82, a. 3).

2. A deacon is the extraordinary minister of the dispensation of the Holy Eucharist (canon 845, § 2), that is, by virtue of his ordination he is deputed to dispense it only secondarily, that is, dependently upon the permission of the local Ordinary or the pastor, which cannot be granted except for a grave cause (cited canon). Hence a deacon is rightly called only an extraordinary minister. That a deacon is truly an extraordinary minister is clear from Tradition² (cf. St. Thomas, loc. cit., ad 1). It is said:

a) **Dependently upon the permission of the local Ordinary or the pastor.** To these is equivalent a quasi-pastor, but not the rector of a church or a religious superior as such.

b) **Permission cannot be granted except for a grave cause,** for example if the priest were impeded in his ministry and, unless the deacon dispensed the Holy Eucharist, its dispensation would be

delayed longer than is fitting (St. Alphonsus, VI, 237, question 1).³ If a grave cause is present and the pastor cannot conveniently be approached, permission is legitimately presumed (canon 845, § 2). But a deacon who illicitly dispenses the Holy Eucharist sins gravely; likewise the local Ordinary and the pastor who grant permission without a just cause, since in a grave matter they violate the hierarchical order (St. Alphonsus, VI, 234). Nevertheless the deacon does not become irregular, since, being a minister, even if only an extraordinary one, he does not entirely usurp an order not his own (cf. canon 985, 1).

¹ Session 13, chapter 8.

² St. Justin Martyr, *Apology* I, chapters 65, 67, Migne 6, 427-430; Fourth Council of Carthage, canon 38; it occurs among the ancient statutes of the Church, in Hefele, loc. cit., vol. 2, part 1, p. 166; *Apostolic Constitutions*, book 8, chapter 13, Funk ed. 1906, p. 519.

³ Cf. S.R.C., 25 February 1777, n. 2504.

164 **II. The power of jurisdiction** is likewise required, and this either ordinary or delegated; delegated, I say, either by law or by him who has ordinary power. Ordinary power belongs to all who exercise a pastoral office, such as the Ordinary, the pastor, all who in law come under the name of pastor, etc. These things having been noted in general, something must be said specifically about the dispensation of the Eucharist on the occasion of Mass or outside it, about carrying Communion to the sick, and about the dispensation of Viaticum.

1. Dispensation on the occasion of Mass or outside it. a) Any priest can minister Holy Communion within Mass and, if he celebrates privately, also immediately before and immediately after it (canon 846, § 1).

b) Even outside Mass any priest has the same faculty. Nevertheless, if the priest is a stranger, that is, not assigned to the church, the at least presumed permission of the rector of the church is required (canon 846, § 2).

2. Carrying Communion to the sick. First note that a twofold carrying is distinguished, public and private. It is public if it is done manifestly, with solemnity; otherwise it is called private.¹

a) **Public carrying.** First, public carrying is prescribed unless a just and reasonable cause suggests otherwise (canon 847).

Second, the right and office of carrying Holy Communion publicly to the sick, even non-parishioners, outside the church, belongs to the pastor within his own territory (canon 848, § 1). Other priests can do this only in a case of necessity or with the at least presumed permission of the same pastor or of the Ordinary (canon 848, § 2). It is said **only in a case of necessity**, for example if the pastor and another to whom permission perhaps has been granted are impeded for too long.

b) **Private carrying.** First, private carrying is licit only when a just and reasonable cause suggests it (canon 847). But the judge of a just and reasonable cause is only the local Ordinary.² If, however, he has judged that such a cause is present, and has signified this either explicitly or tacitly, for example by not contradicting custom or common opinion,³ he cannot prevent it from being carried secretly. Now, when a just and reasonable cause has been posited and admitted by the Ordinary:

Second, any priest can carry Communion privately to the sick, with the at least presumed permission of the priest to whom custody of the Most Holy Sacrament has been committed (canon 849, § 1).

3. **Dispensation of Viaticum.** a) By the name **Viaticum** here is understood Communion which is considered, or, so to speak, is held in the external forum as fulfilling the precept of receiving the Holy Eucharist in danger of death, about which canon 864, § 1 speaks; but not that Communion which the sick person receives afterward, nor that which one constituted in danger of death previously received, although this Communion, speaking accurately, should be called fulfilling the precept.⁴

b) One who illegitimately administers Viaticum is judged to sin gravely, since he violates a grave right of the competent person.

c) As regards the persons who legitimately administer Viaticum, receive these points:

a) To carry Holy Communion by way of Viaticum, whether publicly or privately, to the sick, even non-parishioners, outside the church, belongs to the pastor within his own territory. Other priests can do this only in a case of necessity or with the at least presumed permission of the same pastor or Ordinary (canon 850 compared with 848).

b) Canons, according to the order of precedence, must minister the sacraments to a bedridden bishop (canon 397, 3).

c) Superiors in every clerical religious institute can and must, personally or through another, minister Eucharistic Viaticum and Extreme Unction to sick professed members, novices, and others dwelling day and night in the religious house for the sake of service, education, hospitality, or ill health (canon 514, § 1). These things also hold for conferring these sacraments outside the religious house, if it concerns professed religious or novices, yet with the right of the pastor preserved as regards the public carrying of the Holy Eucharist.⁵

d) In a house of nuns, the ordinary confessor, or the one who acts in his place, has the same right and office (canon 514, § 2). Under the name of nuns also come religious women whose vows by institute are solemn, but for some places by prescription of the Apostolic See are simple (canon 488, 7).

e) In another lay religious institute this right and office belongs to the local pastor or to the chaplain whom the Ordinary has substituted for the pastor (canon 514, § 3).

f) The rector of a seminary, not the pastor, or his delegate can minister Viaticum and Extreme Unction to all who are in the seminary and are gravely bedridden (canon 1368).

g) Particular law commonly permits those who have domicile or quasi-domicile in ecclesiastical colleges specially entrusted by the bishop to a director or rector, or approved by him, to be able to receive Viaticum and Extreme Unction from the rector himself or from his delegate. This right does not belong to the pastor if the particular law intends the said colleges to be withdrawn from the care of the pastor (cf. canon 464, § 2).

h) Finally, if priest and deacon are lacking, even a subdeacon, cleric, and layperson can with sufficient probability minister Viaticum, provided that scandal is absent or prevented. For the ecclesiastical prohibition is not judged to comprehend this case; all the more because in antiquity even laypeople brought the Eucharist home for the sake of communicating (St. Alphonsus, VI, 237, question 3). If the case concerns a dying priest or deacon, the layperson should only bring the ciborium, and the dying person himself, if he can, should give Viaticum to himself. Note besides that a priest is equivalently lacking if singular dexterity is required in communicating the dying person; hence at

times it can be entrusted, for example to a sister, to give Viaticum, for instance, with a spoon. I add with St. Alphonsus (loc. cit.) that in a case of supreme necessity, which can occur for example in time of plague, the bishop can commit the ministration of Viaticum to a layperson.

Corollary. Although in itself no one except the celebrating priest can minister Communion to himself, nevertheless this is permitted:

1. If the case concerns Viaticum, to a priest and deacon, if another priest and deacon are lacking; to an inferior cleric, if priest, deacon, and another inferior cleric are lacking; to a layperson, if priest, deacon, and inferior cleric are lacking. This doctrine is rightly admitted both because the divine precept of receiving Viaticum seems to prevail, and because "formerly lay faithful carried the Eucharist into their homes and communicated themselves with their own hands; and this indeed was permitted because of necessity" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 237, question 2). It is confirmed by a response of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide,⁶ which declared that in time of persecution it is permitted that confessors of the faith condemned to death, and to whom the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist is brought in prison, may secretly receive it in their hands and secretly communicate themselves, lest the priest communicating them in the ordinary manner be known and seized, provided nevertheless that so great a sacrament is not exposed to any irreverence or other danger.⁷
2. If the case concerns Communion to be received only for the sake of devotion, a priest can with sufficient probability minister Communion to himself if another priest is lacking (St. Alphonsus, VI, 238).
3. Where the necessity of preventing profanation of the Most Holy Sacrament is urgent, even laypeople can consume the species and distribute them to one another.

¹ Cf. Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments, 23 December 1912 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1912, p. 725, ad III).

² Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, 5 January 1928.

³ The Ordinary should be easy in admitting a just and reasonable cause. Hence the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, in the decree of 5 January 1928, adds "with this mind, which is the following: If from common experience and opinion there is no inconvenience in the diocese or in some particular place for the private carrying of Holy Communion to the sick, Ordinaries must beware lest, by rules too strictly defined or general rules prescribing public carrying, or by a reservation made to themselves of giving permission in individual cases of carrying the sacrament of the Eucharist privately, the consolation of Communion, even daily Communion, be impeded for the sick." And in the annotations to the Decree, the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* warns: Most Reverend local Ordinaries must carefully watch lest in a matter of such great importance the end intended by the Church be frustrated in any way. For no one is unaware that in our times Holy Communion, even daily Communion, is commended most highly to the Christian faithful. Now who, more than a sick person, is to be said to need the help and consolation of so great a sacrament for bearing the distresses of illness?

⁴ This Communion is also called Viaticum by the Code (canon 864, § 3).

⁵ Pontifical Commission, 16 June 1931, under I (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1931, p. 353).

⁶ 10 August 1841.

⁷ Gaude in the cited place of St. Alphonsus.

Chapter II. On the Things to Be Observed in the Dispensation of the Holy Eucharist

Something must be said about the time, place, and mode of distributing the Holy Eucharist, and about the mode of carrying it to the sick.

Article I. On the Time of Dispensing the Holy Eucharist

165 I. Ordinary Communion; under this name also comes Communion of devotion to be received by a sick person.

1. Ordinary Communion can be distributed on all days (canon 867, § 1), except Friday of Holy Week, on which it is permitted only to carry Sacred Viaticum to the sick (canon 867, § 2). Viaticum is understood as it was explained above (n. 164); therefore Communion cannot be ministered on Friday of Holy Week to a sick person to whom Viaticum so understood has already previously been conferred. Nevertheless, Easter Communion could be given to one who can receive it conveniently enough only on Friday of Holy Week, for the law of communicating at Easter prevails over the liturgical law of not distributing Holy Communion on the aforesaid Friday.
2. Ordinary Communion can be distributed only at those hours at which the sacrifice of Mass can be offered, and likewise at other hours if a reasonable cause suggests it (canon 867, § 4). A reasonable cause for ministering Communion earlier or later than is permitted in itself is present, for example, if a sick person cannot observe the fast until one hour before dawn, or if someone, prevented from receiving Communion earlier, has remained fasting beyond one hour after noon. For the rest, note:
 - a) The faculty of distributing Communion at the hours at which Mass can be celebrated is to be taken in a broad sense, so that at whatever time, whether by common law or by privilege, it is permitted to celebrate, Communion also can be distributed. Hence it can be distributed in the oratory of a religious or pious house, where according to canon 821, § 3 Mass can already be begun at midnight; this is clear from the cited canon itself. Likewise it can be distributed in a conventual or parochial Mass (canons 821, § 1; 867, § 4; 863).
 - b) An indult of anticipating Mass can, with sufficient probability, also be extended to the distribution of Communion, even if in fact Mass is not anticipated.
 - c) On Holy Thursday the Holy Eucharist seems able to be distributed only before and during the solemn Mass; both because after the solemn Mass another Mass can no longer be celebrated, and because according to the rubric of the Missal only some species are to be reserved for the sick.
 - d) On Holy Saturday Holy Communion cannot be ministered to the faithful except during the solemnities of Masses or continuously and immediately after they have been completed (canon 867, § 3). Hence it is prohibited in churches where Mass is not celebrated. Moreover, considering the obvious sense of the canon, it seems to be required that the distribution of Communion be made jointly with Mass, so that it forms one thing with it. Yet this does not prevent there from being a reason excusing from the law, as if men, after having completed spiritual exercises, could not wait for the solemnities of Masses. Indeed, considering also the custom persisting in Rome, it can seem to

someone that canon 867, § 3 speaks only of the place where the solemnities of Masses take place, but not, for example, of a separate chapel.¹

e) A celebrating priest is not permitted to distribute the Eucharist within Mass to faithful so distant that he himself loses the altar from view (canon 868). Therefore the interpretation of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, 7 February 1874 (n. 3322), according to which it would suffice that the voice of the celebrant be heard, even if the altar were lost from view, seems to fall away. But the decrees of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (n. 2672), 7 December 1844 (n. 2885), 24 March 1860 (n. 3099, ad I), and 11 May 1878 (n. 3448, ad VIII), which agree with the Code, remain. Nevertheless others judge that the canon is not to be urged in this way.

3. It is not necessary that Communion be united with Mass, but it can also be distributed outside it. But if it is united with Mass, it must be done within Mass immediately after the Communion of the celebrant; and if Mass is celebrated privately, for a reasonable cause it can also be done immediately before and immediately after Mass (canon 846). These things also hold in a Mass for the dead.²

¹ Cf. Response of the President of the Commission for the Code, 10 July 1909 (*Il Monitore Ecclesiastico* 1922, p. 371; 1924, p. 21).

² Cf. Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 2, n. 11. Cf. S.R.C., 19 December 1829, n. 2672, ad 1; 23 July 1868, n. 3177; 24 March 1860, n. 3099.

166 **II. Viaticum** can be ministered on any day, even Friday of Holy Week (canon 867, §§ 1 and 2), and at any hour of the day or night (canon 867, § 5).

Article II. On the Place of Dispensing the Holy Eucharist

167 **I. Ordinary Communion**, under which name also comes Communion of devotion to be carried to the sick. Now: Holy Communion can be distributed wherever it is permitted to celebrate Mass, even in a private oratory, unless the local Ordinary, for just causes, has prohibited this in particular cases (canon 869). These things are also to be applied to Easter Communion. It is said **wherever it is permitted to celebrate Mass**. Hence permission granted either by the local Ordinary or by a major superior according to canon 822, § 4 - that is, of celebrating outside a church and oratory, but in a decent place, never however in a bedroom; which permission can be granted by the said persons, only for a just and reasonable cause, in some extraordinary case, and by way of an act - carries with it permission to distribute Communion in the same place. This is deduced from canon 869 joined with canon 822, § 4.

Hence the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, to question I: "Whether the faithful living in mountain villages, whenever the Holy Eucharist is carried to the sick, can be refreshed by the Holy Synaxis in a sacred place, or even, since it concerns so sacred a thing, in a decent and honorable place which exists on the route, since they cannot go to church on that day"; to that question, I say, it responded: "Affirmatively according to canon 869 joined with canon 822, § 4, that is, provided the local Ordinary grants this according to the norm of the cited prescription, namely for individual cases and by way of an act."¹ And to question II: "Whether Holy Communion and the sacrament of Confession can be administered to those who are in the house of the sick

person"; it responded: "As regards Communion, provision has been made in the first response." Moreover, note:

1. In the proposed hypothesis it is not required that Mass in fact be celebrated, but the faculty of celebrating in some place suffices.
2. The power of granting the permission of celebrating of which we have spoken is ordinary, and therefore can be delegated by the local Ordinary and by a major superior.

Corollary. Missionaries who enjoy the faculty of celebrating outside sacred places can minister the Eucharist in a place where in fact they do not celebrate, but where they can celebrate. Likewise pastors who enjoy a faculty received from the Ordinary of permitting Mass to be celebrated outside sacred places can permit Holy Communion to be ministered, even though Mass is not celebrated. But a just cause, some extraordinary case, and that it be done by way of an act are always required.

¹ 5 January 1928 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1928, p. 79).

168 **II. Viaticum** can be ministered in almost any place. In itself, indeed, it is unbecoming for Viaticum to be carried to a brothel; but if a penitent prostitute cannot in time be removed from such a house, it seems Viaticum can be ministered to her, provided scandal and the danger of positive irreverence are absent. Moreover, let the priest take care not to be deceived and not to suffer harm to his reputation; hence let him have as companion a safe man and indeed, if it can be done, a public minister.

Article III. On the Mode of Dispensing the Holy Eucharist

169 The mode or rite of distributing the Holy Eucharist is set forth in the Roman Missal¹ and in the Roman Ritual.² Specifically, note:

1. The Most Holy Eucharist is to be given under the species of bread alone (canon 852); from this, as is taught sufficiently commonly, one cannot depart even for giving Viaticum (St. Alphonsus, VI, 245).
2. A priest of the Latin rite should distribute Communion with unleavened bread; a priest of an Eastern rite, with leavened bread, even to faithful of another rite. But where necessity urges and no priest of a different rite is present, it is permitted for an Eastern priest who uses leavened bread to minister the Eucharist in unleavened bread, and conversely for a Latin or an Eastern priest who uses unleavened bread to minister in leavened bread; but each must preserve his own rite of ministering (canon 851, §§ 1 and 2). Necessity urges sufficiently if on that day the faithful person could not receive Communion without grave inconvenience unless the priest gave him the species of another rite (cf. canon 866, § 1). Therefore it is required that a priest of the other rite be lacking and unable to be approached, and that the present priest be unable to consecrate bread of his own rite.
3. Sacred vestments and a light must be used, and the prayers assigned in the Ritual must be recited.³ Now it would be a grave sin to omit every sacred vestment. It is venial to use only a stole or only a surplice, or to minister without a light, or to omit the preceding and following prayers. Nevertheless it would be permitted to minister Communion without a sacred vestment and without a light both in a case of necessity and for another truly grave cause, for example if

someone sacrilegiously received Viaticum and it must again be carried secretly and clandestinely; likewise in houses where something prevents the inhabitants from suspecting that Communion is being brought (St. Alphonsus, VI, 241).⁴

Not only one who distributes Communion within Mass, but also one who distributes it immediately before or immediately after, can do this in the vestments of Mass; this also holds of a Mass for the dead.⁵

4. The Holy Eucharist must be distributed with the thumb and index finger of the right hand. Nevertheless, it would be permitted to offer it with other fingers if otherwise the people or the dying person would be deprived of Communion. Any just cause does not seem to suffice, since the index finger and thumb are deputed by the rite of the Church for this ministry. But if danger of contagion is feared, the sacred species can be placed in a vessel or in a spoon with a little water, and thus brought to the mouth of the sick person. If the sick person, because of dryness of the mouth, cannot swallow the host, either let the species be given in the mode explained, or after Communion has been taken let a draught of wine or a very small drink of cold, fresh, and, if possible, icy water be given to the sick person (St. Alphonsus, VI, 244, 288).
5. It is not permitted to give "several Eucharistic forms or particles, nor larger ones, but the customary ones."⁶ Nevertheless, if a sufficient number of consecrated hosts is lacking, it is permitted to divide small hosts,⁷ but at most into two or three parts, unless there is a special reason for dividing even into more parts, for example if the priest rarely comes somewhere. Likewise, if someone otherwise would have to wait too long, it is permitted to remove a particle from the host of the Mass (St. Alphonsus, VI, 245).

¹ *Order for Celebrating Mass*, title X, n. 6.

² Title IV, chapter 2.

³ The Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, 16 March 1929 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1929, p. 638), prescribed that besides the linen cloth extended before those communicating, a paten made of silver or gilded metal is to be used.

⁴ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 9 December 1822 (*Collectanea*, n. 778).

⁵ S.R.C., 19 December 1829, n. 2672, ad 2; 23 July 1868, n. 3177.

⁶ Decree of Innocent XI, 12 February 1679.

⁷ S.R.C., 16 March 1833, n. 2704, ad 1.

Article IV. On the Mode of Carrying the Holy Eucharist to the Sick

170 As we said above (n. 164), public and private carrying are distinguished. Public carrying is set forth in the Roman Ritual.¹ In private carrying, according to canon 849, § 2, "reverence and decorum owed to so great a sacrament should be carefully provided for, with the norms prescribed by the Apostolic See being observed."

The norm is presented by the Roman Ritual in these words: "When, for a just and reasonable cause, Holy Communion is privately carried to the sick, the priest should at least always have a stole covered by his own clothes; he should place the pyx in a little bag or burse, which, suspended from his neck by cords, he should put in his bosom; and he should never proceed alone, but should be

accompanied by at least one faithful person, in the absence of a cleric. But when he has arrived at the room of the sick person, the priest should also put on a surplice with the stole, if he has not already put it on."² For the rest, observe:

1. When the Holy Eucharist is carried openly, it is in itself forbidden to walk with covered head. But the prohibition seems to regard only public carrying. Moreover Ordinaries can - as it seems, now all - permit ministers, on account of cold or inclement weather, to use a small cap outside a city or town, even one so large that it covers the ears³ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 241). Indeed, if otherwise harm to the priest's health is to be feared, there is an excusing cause. Nothing also prevents an artificial covering from being used against rain or snow.
2. It is also permitted, scandal nevertheless being excluded, for a sufficiently grave cause, for example because of weather or distance, to carry the Eucharist on horseback,⁴ in a carriage (St. Alphonsus, VI, 243), likewise in an automobile, in a tram, or by railway. Likewise it is permitted in a case of necessity, namely lest someone be deprived of Viaticum, to run (St. Alphonsus, VI, 242), and likewise to use what is called a bicycle or motorcycle.⁵ Particular statutes, which here are milder and there stricter, should moreover be attended to. For the rest, local Ordinaries should take care "lest abuses creep into ecclesiastical discipline, especially concerning the administration of the sacraments" (canon 336, § 2). Moreover, note:
 - a) If Viaticum is ministered, it is to be said: "Receive, brother (sister), the Viaticum of the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, who may guard you from the malignant enemy and bring you to eternal life. Amen."⁶
 - b) If for a just cause the priest has taken with him only one host, then, after it has been given to the sick person, the pyx or little case can be washed in the house of the sick person and the ablution given to the sick person; then the pyx should be wiped with a purificator (St. Alphonsus, VI, 251).

¹ Title IV, chapter 4.

² Title IV, chapter 4, n. 29. By force of a special indult of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 8 February 1875, which was abrogated neither by the general decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments, 23 December 1912, ad III, nor by canon 847 (cf. canon 4), private carrying is licit in the ecclesiastical province of Utrecht (*Supplementum ad Rituale Romanum pro usu cleri provinciae ecclesiasticae Ultraiectensis*, n. 22).

³ Cf. *In Coloniensi*, S.R.C., 13 November 1862; *In Oriolensi*, 22 April 1871, n. 3246, ad I; *Supplementum ad Rituale Romanum pro usu cleri Provinciae ecclesiasticae Ultraiectensis*, n. 21.

⁴ Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 4, n. 13.

⁵ Cf. Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments, 13 June 1919.

⁶ Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 4, n. 19.

Part III. On the Reception of the Most Holy Sacrament

We shall speak first about the notion and division of the reception of the Eucharist, then about the person receiving, and then about the mode of receiving it.

Section I. On the Notion and Division of Reception of the Holy Eucharist

171 The reception of the Eucharist can be distinguished as threefold, namely material, sacramental, and spiritual.¹

I. Material reception is that by which it is so received that the sacrament is not applied to the one receiving, in other words, so that the sacrament does not become a title of grace applied to him. It is received materially: 1. by one not baptized; 2. by a baptized adult who lacks intention.

II. Sacramental reception is had when the sacrament is applied to the one receiving, or when it becomes a title of grace applied to the one receiving. Sacramental reception is twofold, namely sacramental only, and sacramental and spiritual, according as it is received with or without an obstacle to the effect, that is, to the grace to be received.

As regards the requisites for sacramental reception, receive these points:

1. For sacramental reception, eating is certainly required, whether true or equivalent. This is drawn from these words of Christ: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you will not have life in you";² "Take and eat; this is my body";³ "... drink ye all of this, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins."⁴
2. For sacramental reception, the passage of food into the stomach is certainly required. For if this is lacking, according to common estimation no one is said to eat.
3. It is disputed whether or not a vital passage into the stomach through the esophagus, whether natural or artificial, is required, or whether passage into the stomach by means of a tube inserted into the esophagus or into another part of the body suffices. Some judge that passage by means of a tube suffices, because there is at least equivalent eating. Others admit the contrary, because, considering the obvious sense of the words of Christ, there seems to be required an act which truly is, or at least according to common estimation is called, eating. Now one who is fed by means of a tube is not said to eat, but to be nourished artificially.

III. Spiritual reception is the desire or vow, conceived from faith and charity, of receiving the Eucharist really.⁵ Now spiritual Communion produces *ex opere operantis* fruits very similar to those which real Communion effects *ex opere operato*. Hence the Council of Trent declares that those communicate spiritually "who, eating in desire that heavenly bread set before them, by living faith which works through love, perceive its fruit and usefulness."⁶ But in order that someone may acquire the aforesaid fruits, let him elicit an act of faith, charity or perfect contrition, and desire toward Christ in the Eucharist. One who is only attrite concerning a mortal sin perhaps committed, by desiring Communion indeed performs a good work, but does not communicate spiritually, and therefore does not receive the special fruits annexed to spiritual Communion.

In the following, the discussion will be only about sacramental Communion.

¹ "As regards use, the Council of Trent speaks thus: 'Our fathers rightly and wisely distinguished three ways of receiving this holy sacrament. For they taught that some receive it sacramentally only, as sinners; others only spiritually, namely those who, eating in desire that heavenly bread set before them, by living faith which works through love, perceive its fruit and usefulness; and thirdly, others both sacramentally and spiritually; and these are those who first so prove and prepare themselves that, clothed in the wedding garment, they approach this divine table'" (Session 13, chapter 8).

² John 6:54.

³ Matthew 26:26.

⁴ Matthew 26:27-28.

⁵ Council of Trent, session 13, chapter 8.

⁶ Loc. cit.

Section II. On the Person Receiving

172 I. In order that the Holy Eucharist can be validly ministered to someone, it suffices that he be baptized and, if he has arrived at the years of discretion, that he have the intention of receiving the sacrament (nn. 38, 40).

173 II. In order that the Holy Eucharist be licitly ministered to someone, indeed, if he asks for it, that it ought to be ministered, it suffices that he be baptized and not prohibited by law. It will be clear from what is to be said about children, about the insane, about the unworthy, etc., to what extent someone is prohibited by law.

1. **Children.** As regards the Communion of children, the Code, though with certain additions, briefly repeats what is contained more fully in the decree of the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments *Quam singulari*.¹ Now:

a) The Eucharist is not to be ministered to children who, because of the weakness of age, do not yet have knowledge and taste of this sacrament (canon 854).²

b) As regards the required knowledge, these things now hold:

First, in danger of death, in order that the Most Holy Eucharist can and ought to be ministered to children, it is enough that they know how to distinguish the Body of Christ from common food and to adore it reverently (canon 854, § 2). Although these requisites, if the family is religious, can be presumed, it is nevertheless better to make oneself more certain about them. Moreover, a child who has attained the use of reason, if his condition permits it, should commonly, at least as a precaution, be expressly taught, and indeed before Communion is ministered, the things which must be known by necessity of means.

Second, outside danger of death, a fuller knowledge of Christian doctrine and a more accurate preparation is rightly required, namely that by which they themselves, according to their capacity, perceive at least the mysteries of faith necessary by necessity of means for salvation, and approach the Most Holy Eucharist devoutly according to the measure of their age (canon 854, § 3). "Therefore, to use the words of the decree cited above, not a perfect knowledge of matters of faith is required, since certain elements only are enough, that is, some knowledge." It is enough, therefore, that the child: 1. know the things to be known by necessity of means; 2. distinguish Eucharistic bread from common bread, and therefore know that under the host Christ, or the Infant Jesus, is present and

that He is united with us through Communion. But in order that he sufficiently discern Eucharistic bread from common bread, he should moreover: 3. know that natural fasting and the state of grace are required for licit Communion. Finally, in order that he may understand what the state of grace involves and requires, 4. he should have some notion of mortal sin and of the means by which lost grace must be recovered, namely the sacrament of Penance. Observe, however, that that knowledge of the aforesaid things suffices which a child can have who enjoys some use of reason, or who begins to reason.³ Nor is it required that he hold in memory the formulas by which the aforesaid truths are presented in the Catechism. But if the required knowledge is present, the child can also approach the Most Holy Eucharist devoutly according to the measure of his age.

c) The obligation of the precept of Confession and Communion, which burdens the child, and generally the prepubescent, falls also and especially upon those who ought to have care of him, that is, upon parents, guardians, the confessor, teachers, and the pastor (canon 860). Therefore the obligation rests upon the aforesaid persons of taking care that the child, after he has begun to reason, learn the necessary things to be known and, once knowledge has been acquired, fulfill the precepts in due time.

d) Judgment about the sufficient disposition of children for first Communion belongs to the priest hearing their confessions and to their parents or those who are in the place of parents (canon 854, § 4), for example teachers in a college.

e) But it is the office of the pastor to watch carefully, even through an examination if he has prudently judged it opportune, lest children approach the Sacred Synaxis before having attained the use of reason or without sufficient disposition; and likewise to take care that those who have attained the use of reason and are sufficiently disposed be refreshed by this divine food as soon as possible (canon 854, § 5). From these things do not deduce that the pastor can of himself subject children to an examination. He can do this if he has prudently judged it opportune; and that happens only when he has a positive reason for doubting about the requisites for Communion.

¹ 8 August 1910.

² Concerning the contrary custom formerly in force and even now persisting among the Greeks and Orientals, the cited decree *Quam singulari* speaks thus: The Church "from its very beginnings took care to bring little children near to Christ through Eucharistic Communion, which it was accustomed to administer to them even as infants. This, as was prescribed in almost all Rituals up to the thirteenth century, was done in Baptism, and this custom obtained longer in some places; among the Greeks and Orientals it still perseveres. But to remove the danger that especially nursing infants might spit out the consecrated bread, the custom prevailed from the beginning of ministering the Eucharist to them under the species of wine alone. Nor were infants refreshed with the divine banquet only at Baptism, but afterward more often. For it was also the custom of certain churches to give the Eucharist to little children immediately after the clergy, and elsewhere, after the Communion of adults, to give them the remaining fragments. This custom then became obsolete in the Latin Church, and infants did not begin to become sharers of the sacred table unless they had some use of dawning reason and some knowledge of the august sacrament. This new discipline, already received by several particular synods, was confirmed by the solemn sanction of the Fourth Ecumenical Lateran Council, in the year 1215, by the promulgation of the famous canon XXI, by which sacramental Confession and Holy Communion are prescribed for the faithful after they have reached the age of reason."

³ Cf. the decree *Quam singulari*, 8 August 1910.

174 **2. The insane** are some perpetually insane, others not perpetually insane, others insane only about one or another point, and others semi-insane.

a) **The perpetually insane.** To these, since they are equated with little children, the Holy Eucharist cannot be ministered,¹ not even in danger of death. The reason for the prohibition is that they neither have, nor ever had, knowledge and taste of the Holy Eucharist.

b) **The insane, but not perpetually so, the delirious, epileptics, the possessed, and those obsessed.**

First, outside danger of death, the Eucharist cannot be ministered to the aforesaid while they are not in possession of themselves. "Nevertheless it will be permitted, if at some time they have lucid intervals and show devotion while they remain in that state, if there is no danger of unworthiness"² (St. Alphonsus, VI, 302).

Second, in danger of death it should not be given: 1. if it is sufficiently certain that they are constituted in sin and impenitent, for example if in the act of sin, or after a scandalous life, they have fallen into insanity, delirium, or deprivation of the senses; 2. if a danger of positive irreverence is present. In doubt whether such danger is present, that is, the danger that the sick person may expel the Sacred Host or move indecently during the ministration, it is useful to give him an unconsecrated particle before the Holy Eucharist; 3. if it is clear that they lack and have always lacked sufficient knowledge and devotion toward the Eucharist (St. Thomas, III, q. 80, a. 9; St. Alphonsus, VI, 302). Nevertheless imperfect knowledge suffices; likewise devotion broadly taken, or such that someone can be presumed to will to receive the Eucharist in danger of death. Outside the enumerated cases, according to the opinion of almost all authors, it is permitted to minister the Eucharist to them.³

For the rest, nothing can obstruct liceity except the defect of actual devotion in the one receiving or the prohibition of the Church. But since the sacraments are for human beings, the greatest good of the one receiving prevails over the reverence owed in itself (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). The Roman Ritual⁴ can be understood of ordinary circumstances, that is, abstracting from danger of death. But it is disputed whether there is an obligation of giving Viaticum to the aforesaid. Now with St. Thomas (III, q. 80, a. 9), St. Alphonsus (loc. cit.), and most theologians, against some, it must be affirmed. For if it is permitted to give that greatest good to the dying person, there is also an obligation of giving it; all the more because the dying person must be said at least implicitly to ask for the sacrament, namely because his intention or profession of the Christian religion involves at least an implicit petition for Viaticum (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). From these things it follows that the practice of not ministering Viaticum to the persons of whom we have spoken is truly an abuse.

c) **Those insane only about one or another point** can communicate at least sometimes, provided the insanity does not regard the substance of the Holy Eucharist. The reason is that at least it is doubtful whether human beings of this kind lack the faculty of placing human acts; and in doubt, favor must be shown to them.

d) **The semi-insane and the elderly becoming childish again.** Communion is to be given to these: 1. in danger of death; 2. at Easter (St. Alphonsus, VI, 303); 3. if they enjoy greater discretion, they can also communicate more often. These things also hold of those deaf and mute from birth, unless they have been specially instructed in some institute (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

¹ Cf. Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 1, n. 10.

² Roman Ritual, loc. cit.

³ Cf. Fourth Council of Carthage (cause 26, question 6, chapter *Is qui poenitentiam*); First Council of Orange (cause 26, question 6, chapter *Qui recedunt*); Decretals of Gregory IX (*De poenitentiis et remissionibus*, chapter *Quod in te*), and the Roman Catechism (*De Eucharistia*, n. 64).

⁴ Title IV, chapter 1, n. 10.

175 **3. The unworthy** are either publicly or occultly unworthy. Now:

a) The publicly unworthy are to be kept away from the Eucharist, such as the excommunicated, the interdicted, and the manifestly infamous, unless their repentance and amendment are clear and they have first made satisfaction for public scandal (canon 855, § 1). Besides those enumerated, all public sinners are to be counted among the publicly unworthy. Moreover, those who are indecently dressed seem able to be repelled, even if they cannot be said to be gravely guilty; but great prudence is needed in such a case. The publicly unworthy must be repelled whether they ask publicly or secretly, unless nevertheless the minister has positively known that they are repentant, and they have first satisfied for public scandal. See these things explained in the treatise on the sacraments in general, n. 28.

b) Occult sinners are to be repelled only when they ask secretly and the minister has positively known outside confession that they have not been amended; but not if they ask publicly and he cannot pass them over without scandal (canon 855, § 2).

176 **4. Those suffering from a cough.** To these, unless the cough is constant, Communion can be given. For the phlegm which is expelled by coughing comes not from the stomach and esophagus, but from the lungs or bronchi. Only then, if the sick person is suddenly afflicted by a very violent cough, is there danger that the sacred species may be ejected by the force of the cough.

177 **5. Those suffering from frequent vomiting** cannot communicate unless it is clear, for example from the declaration of those standing by, or more advisedly of a physician, that noteworthy danger is absent. Note, however, that often a particle of the host can be given to them without danger of vomiting.

178 **6. As regards those who cannot take the species except in an artificial way**, for example through a tube inserted into the esophagus or another part of the body, receive these points:

There is no obligation of communicating or of ministering in this way, not even in danger of death; both because it is doubtful whether such taking is sacramental (n. 171), and because the Holy Office, on 27 January 1886, concerning a similar case,¹ responded: "As it is explained, it is not expedient," which, considering the style of the Curia, seems to involve a prohibition; and on 27 November 1919, to a petition in which the faculty of taking the Holy Eucharist through a tube inserted into the stomach was asked, it responded: "Negative."² Nevertheless, considering the probability of sacramental taking together with the lack of a general prohibition, I would not condemn one who in danger of death communicated in this way.

The fact that someone uses an artificial esophagus does not prevent him from truly absorbing food, or passing it into the stomach through a vital act. Therefore such a person without doubt receives the Holy Eucharist sacramentally, and therefore can communicate just as others can.

Note. In doubt whether a dying person can swallow the species, those standing by should be asked whether he still takes food; or an experiment should be made by giving him some food or an

unconsecrated host. In what way the Eucharist can be ministered if the dying or sick person cannot swallow the species because of dryness of the mouth, see n. 169.

¹ The case concerned a sick person for whom an opening for receiving food had been made below the chest; this case does not formally differ from the case of a tube inserted into the esophagus.

² In *Nederlandsche Katholieke Stemmen*, 1921, p. 16.

Section III. On the Mode of Receiving

Chapter I. On the Disposition of the Soul

179 **I. The state of grace.** That the state of grace is required is clear from Sacred Scripture,¹ and from what was said about the sacraments in general, n. 43. In the same place it was likewise proved that broad moral certitude about the state of grace is required.

1. One who is conscious to himself of mortal sin is bound per se to recover lost grace through Confession. Per accidens he sometimes satisfies by an act of contrition, as will be explained under 4. That Confession is required per se is clear from the Council of Trent: "One who wishes to communicate must recall to memory that precept of his, that is, of the Apostle: **Let a man prove himself**. But ecclesiastical custom declares that this proof is necessary, so that no one conscious to himself of mortal sin, however much he may seem to himself contrite, ought to approach the Holy Eucharist without previous sacramental Confession. This holy Synod has decreed that this must perpetually be observed by all Christians, even by those priests upon whom, by office, it is incumbent to celebrate, provided that a supply of a confessor is not lacking to them."² Canons 807 and 856 are added.

It is disputed, however, whether the precept of premising Confession is divine or ecclesiastical; likewise, if it is ecclesiastical, whether it was imposed by Paul or introduced by custom. Concerning this, note: 1. nothing can be deduced from the cited place of Trent, since from the history³ and acts⁴ of the Council it is clear that the Fathers adhered to different opinions and did not intend to reject any one. 2. It is difficult to admit that an obligation of this kind was imposed by Paul upon the whole Church, unless it is positively proved; but a solid argument is lacking. Hence the said precept seems either to be divine or to have been introduced by ecclesiastical custom; which is to be preferred, I do not know.

Nor should you object: According to Trent, ecclesiastical custom declares that the proof of which Paul speaks is placed in Confession; therefore custom did not introduce the obligation of confessing. Response: According to Trent, ecclesiastical custom does not declare that the proof of which Paul speaks is placed in Confession, but that proof through Confession is necessary; by this it is left undecided whether such proof was introduced by Christ, by Paul, or by ancient custom.

2. One who, all things considered, doubts whether after his last Confession he sinned gravely, is not bound to confess, but satisfies by an act of contrition. For the Council of Trent speaks only of one who is conscious of mortal sin; this cannot be said of one who doubts (St. Alphonsus, VI, 473). Nevertheless, if he does not confess, that he is bound to an act of contrition was proved in the treatise on the sacraments in general (n. 43). I said **all things considered**, because Confession is

prescribed if from the circumstances it must be presumed that a grave sin was committed (*De Sacramentis in genere*, loc. cit.).

It is disputed whether before Communion one must confess again who, all things considered, doubts whether he has worthily confessed the sin committed. But according to the principles of St. Alphonsus it must be affirmed, because he doubtfully satisfied the law of worthy Confession. Nevertheless I again said **all things considered**; for if the doubt arises from doubt about the mode in which the Confession was made, for example whether it was instituted with true attrition or not, it can be presumed that it was rightly made (vol. I, n. 229).

3. One who confessed worthily, but forgot a mortal sin, with sufficient probability is not bound to confess again before he communicates. Most older theologians reject this doctrine, because the Council of Trent, which binds one who is conscious to himself of mortal sin to previous Confession, in the obvious sense speaks of the Confession of all mortal sins of which he is conscious to himself before Communion. But St. Alphonsus (VI, 257), and after him almost all more recent authors, hold as sufficiently probable that only a worthy previous Confession is prescribed, in other words, that it suffices that someone has been justified through Confession, or that sins have been remitted through Confession, whether directly, or, as in the case of a sin omitted through forgetfulness, indirectly. Considering the not-to-be-despised explanation of the Council of Trent and the authority of the authors, we hold this opinion as safe in practice.
4. One who per se is bound to Confession, per accidens is not bound to it, but satisfies by an act of perfect contrition, if both there is a necessity of communicating or celebrating, and the supply of a confessor is lacking (canons 807, 856).

a) The necessity of celebrating or communicating is understood as grave or urgent, as the Council of Trent, loc. cit., and the Code (cited canons) have it. Necessity is present:

First, if Communion or Mass cannot be omitted without infamy or scandal, as if a layperson has already approached the Communion rail; if a priest has already begun Mass, or has arrived at the altar, or is eagerly awaited by the faithful (St. Alphonsus, VI, 260). Necessity also seems to be present if someone, for example, goes to church with his family intending to communicate and is not absolved. As regards those who in colleges, etc., communicate daily, infamy does not seem to be a sufficient reason, nor one to be admitted by the confessor, because either they rarely sin, and then they can more easily allege another motive, for example a broken fast; or they sin more often, and then they are bound to arrange their Communions so that they are no longer known to communicate daily. Therefore the obligation of Confession is also to be urged more, especially in younger persons, lest the reverence due to the Eucharist be diminished, the horror of sin be lost, and the efforts to root out a depraved habit be lessened.⁵

Second, if Mass must be continued; namely: 1. if the consecration has already begun, the priest should not interrupt Mass in order to confess, but, having elicited an act of contrition, should continue it. 2. If the consecration has not yet begun, the same seems to be said of a priest who remembers a grave sin or becomes guilty of one, since the Missal states without distinction: "If in the very celebration of Mass the priest remembers that he is in mortal sin, let him be contrite with the purpose of confessing and satisfying."⁶ But the priest who "remembers that he is excommunicated or suspended, or that the place is interdicted... if scandal is not feared, ought to leave the Mass already

begun."⁷ The reason of scandal, or infamy, will commonly excuse from leaving Mass, so that Mass should rather be continued, after an act of contrition has been elicited.

Third, if Viaticum must be consecrated for a dying person and another who may celebrate is lacking. Likewise if there is danger that the sacrament may be profaned and that danger cannot be averted in another equally safe way (St. Alphonsus, VI, 260).

Fourth, if there is, whether for a pastor or for an assistant, an obligation of celebrating by office, for example on a feast day so that the people may hear Mass, for funerals, or for blessing nuptials, and another who may celebrate in his place is lacking (St. Alphonsus, VI, 261). But there is not a necessity of celebrating or communicating which of itself is sufficiently grave if the priest suffers from the omission of Mass only the privation of the stipend; likewise if he must celebrate only from a vow, or from the precept of a superior, or so that he himself may hear Mass of precept, or so that another may satisfy the precept of Easter Communion. But with sufficient probability a necessity of celebrating per se sufficiently grave is present if otherwise the priest himself cannot satisfy the precept of Easter Communion; likewise, for a layperson, a necessity of communicating per se sufficiently grave is had if otherwise he cannot fulfill the precept of Easter Communion. The reason is that annual Communion obliges in some way from divine law (St. Alphonsus, VI, 261).

b) The supply of a confessor is lacking:

First, if no one is present who can, and licitly can, and wills to hear Confession, and another cannot be approached without grave difficulty. But the difficulty which arises from the journey to be made can be increased on the one hand by infirmity, by the imminent time of celebrating, etc., and on the other hand lessened by the fact that the journey can be made by carriage, railway, etc. Abstracting from the aforesaid special circumstances, according to St. Alphonsus a journey of one and a half leagues excuses (VI, 264). Therefore the supply of a confessor is not lacking because the ordinary confessor cannot be had.

It is disputed whether or not the supply of a confessor is lacking if only a confessor is present, or can be approached, to whom someone cannot confess without extraordinary shame arising from an extraordinary circumstance; for example, if an uncle would have to confess a very shameful sin to his nephew. Some affirm, but it seems it must be entirely denied. For: 1. an intrinsic inconvenience does not excuse from law (*De Legibus*, vol. I, n. 169). But that extraordinary circumstance only causes the intrinsic inconvenience, namely shame, to become greater, not to become extrinsic. There is added that the more benign opinion gives occasion to laxity and weakens the law, since limits cannot be assigned. Finally, the aforesaid opinion was formerly commonly rejected, either explicitly or implicitly.

Objection. The law of premising Confession to Communion is probably only ecclesiastical. Hence it is permitted, at least by epikeia, to regard extraordinary shame as an excusing cause.

Response. Passing over the antecedent, I observe that the two latter arguments adduced by us also exclude epikeia.

Second, if no one is present except one ignorant of the language, or lacking jurisdiction, or an excommunicated person to be avoided. Concerning the case in which someone has fallen into a reserved sin and the priest present per se lacks jurisdiction over it, see the treatise on Penance.

Third, if someone cannot confess to a confessor who is present or can be approached without grave harm extrinsic to Confession; harm, I say, whether to himself, to the confessor, or to a third party, as is more fully explained in the treatise on Penance (St. Alphonsus, VI, 264).

¹ 1 Cor. 11:29.

² Session 13, chapter 7.

³ Pallavicini, cited work, book 12, chapter 2.

⁴ Theiner, cited work, vol. I, p. 488 and following.

⁵ Cf. Vermeersch, *Epitome*, 3rd ed., vol. II, n. 120.

⁶ *On Defects*, VIII, n. 4.

⁷ Roman Missal, loc. cit., n. 5.

180 II. Actual devotion. Although a voluntary defect of this devotion does not simply prevent the fruit of Communion, it nevertheless causes one to receive much slighter fruits. Moreover, one who at the time of Communion is voluntarily distracted commits a venial sin of irreverence. Likewise he also seems to commit a venial sin of irreverence who communicates either from a venially evil motive, for example from vainglory, or with an actual or virtual affection for venial sin. In such a case there seems to be a certain positive irreverence. It must be said otherwise of one who communicates with habitual venial sin, because there is rather a defect of perfect reverence than positive irreverence (St. Alphonsus, VI, 270).

Corollary I. Nocturnal pollution, in relation to Communion to be received on the following day, is to be judged thus: It never prohibits it under grave sin, provided the grave sin perhaps committed has been removed by Confession. For the rest:

1. If it occurred with grave sin, although remitted by Confession, "one should abstain from Communion and celebration unless something else seems good to the confessor."¹
2. If it occurred with venial sin or without sin, Communion is prohibited under venial sin by reason of the effects, namely if because of dishonorable fantasies it obstructs the required devotion. Yet it is prohibited only insofar as either one must abstain from Communion, or effort must be applied to removing the impediment² (St. Alphonsus, VI, 272).

Corollary II. Conjugal intercourse practically does not impede Communion; nor, for the most part, should spouses be positively advised to abstain from intercourse on the night before the day of Communion. To those asking, let it be said that it is licit, and at most let it be added that abstinence is a thing of greater perfection.

¹ Missal, *On Defects*, title IX, n. 5.

² Cf. Missal, loc. cit.

181 III. Preparation and thanksgiving. In order that one may receive richer fruits, he should not omit remote and proximate preparation, and thanksgiving.

1. Preparation can be distinguished as twofold: remote and proximate. Remote preparation consists especially in purity of heart; proximate preparation, in acts of faith, hope, charity, etc., and "let it be made according to the powers, conditions, and offices of each one."¹

2. Thanksgiving should likewise be carried out carefully, and not be finished in a few minutes. For the rest, it too, as the cited Decree has it, "should be made according to the powers, conditions, and offices of each one" (cf. St. Alphonsus, *Praxis Confessarii*, n. 155).

Corollary. To eat or drink immediately after Communion is venial, unless a reasonable cause excuses (St. Alphonsus, VI, 283). To spit immediately after it has been cast into the stomach is unbecoming; if it were done with danger of ejecting a particle, it would be a sin.

¹ Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*, 20 December 1905.

Scholion. On Frequent and Daily Communion

Canon 863 admonishes that the faithful are to be stirred up to be refreshed frequently, even daily, with the Eucharistic bread, according to the norms handed down in decrees of the Apostolic See. But the norms of which the cited canon speaks are contained in the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council *Sacra Tridentina Synodus*,¹ and in other documents to be cited insofar as needed.

¹ 20 December 1905.

182 I. Requisites for daily Communion. "Frequent and daily Communion, as being most desired by Christ the Lord and by the Catholic Church, should be open to all Christ's faithful of whatever order or condition; so that no one who is in the state of grace and approaches the sacred table with a right and pious mind can be prohibited from it" (cited Decree, n. 1). "But a right mind consists in this, that one who approaches the sacred table does not indulge custom, vanity, or human reasons, but wills to satisfy God's good pleasure, to be united to Him more closely by charity, and by that divine medicine to meet his infirmities and defects" (n. 2). Now:

1. An intention which is predominantly supernatural suffices to this extent, that one who approaches with such an intention cannot be kept away from Communion.
2. It suffices that the good ends assigned be intended implicitly.
3. Custom, whether one's own or that of others, will in practice rather often be more the occasion than the principal reason. Vanity will be the principal reason if someone becomes conceited because of frequency of Communion and willingly speaks about it to others in the manner of little devotees.¹

¹ Instruction to the Bishops of Prussia, 8 December 1906.

183 II. The office of the confessor. 1. "In order that frequent and daily Communion may be done with greater prudence and be increased by richer merit, it is fitting that the counsel of the confessor intervene" (n. 5). Therefore the confessor, especially if he is asked, enjoys the right of judging about the state and disposition of the penitent; indeed it is entirely fitting that his counsel be sought. I said **it is fitting**, because it is disputed whether the word **it is fitting** in this case involves a true obligation. With sufficient probability it is denied, and the counsel of the confessor is declared necessary only insofar as, by seeking it, one proceeds with greater prudence and greater merit can be hoped for. In a word: the word **it is fitting** probably signifies only the necessity of greater prudence and greater merit. Moreover, the confessor does not grant permission to communicate daily, but only declares that the requisites for permission are present; the permission itself, or the right, is conferred by the Church or by Christ. Finally, a penitent who is certain about the required disposition is not

bound to acquiesce in a confessor turning him away from daily Communion, but can use the right granted to him. But these things are merely theoretical.

2. "Let confessors nevertheless beware lest they turn anyone away from frequent or daily Communion who is found in the state of grace and approaches with a right mind" (n. 5).

Question. Whether the practice of daily Communion can finally be forbidden to one who permanently, without any amendment, falls back into venial sins.

Response. Some deny, because according to number 3 of the decree, it suffices "that those using frequent and daily Communion be free from mortal sins, with the purpose of never sinning in the future," certainly gravely. Others affirm, because the decree itself in n. 3 declares that it cannot happen "that those communicating daily should not little by little free themselves from even venial sins and from their effect." Therefore a permanent defect of amendment is a sign of a defect of right intention in the past, and it introduces a vehement prejudice for the future,¹ unless special circumstances or signs remove the said prejudice. Hence the practice of daily Communion is finally to be forbidden unless there is now hope that the penitent will approach with a right intention. To the argument of the adversaries they respond that the words opposed from number 3 of the decree regard only the required state of grace, but by no means exclude the obligation of bringing a right intention in approaching Holy Communion. Yet one who adheres to this opinion should take care not to bring it into practice too hastily; moreover, let him stir the penitent to greater fervor, and as soon as a founded hope of bringing a right intention is present, let him cease from turning him away from daily Communion.

¹ This argument, however, is weakened somewhat by responding that the quoted words, which are not judged to pertain to the doctrinal part, are not to be urged too much.

184 **III. The office of others.** 1. The faithful are to be stirred up to be refreshed frequently, even daily, with the Eucharistic bread, according to the norms handed down in the decrees of the Apostolic See; and those assisting at Mass, being duly disposed, should communicate not only by spiritual affection, but also by sacramental reception of the Most Holy Eucharist (canon 863). The cited Decree, n. 6, inculcates the same upon pastors, confessors, and preachers. Add the response of the Sacred Congregation of the Council,¹ by which it is declared that "the frequency of Holy Communion is commended according to the first article of the Decree even to children, who, once admitted to the sacred table... must not be prohibited from frequent participation in it, but rather are to be exhorted to it; with the contrary practice in force in some places being reproved."

2. Frequent and daily Communion is also to be promoted as much as possible in seminaries of clerics, whose students long for service of the altar; likewise in other Christian schools of every kind² (cited Decree, n. 7). Religious superiors should promote among their subjects the frequent, even daily, reception of the Most Holy Body of Christ; and frequent, indeed even daily, access to the Most Holy Eucharist should be freely open to religious who are rightly disposed (canon 595, § 2). As regards religious, observe besides:

a) If there are religious institutes of either solemn or simple vows in whose rules or constitutions, or even calendars, Communions are found to be assigned or ordered on certain days, these norms have only directive force (canon 595, § 4).

b) But if after the last sacramental Confession a religious has been a grave scandal to the community, or has committed a grave and external fault, the superior can prohibit him from approaching Holy Communion until he has again approached the sacrament of Penance (canon 595, § 3). The words **scandal**, and **grave and external fault**, are now to be taken at least in the theological sense. The prohibition falls away as soon as the subject has confessed.

Note. The law of reading the Decree *Sacra Tridentina Synodus* annually in religious houses is no longer in force (cf. canon 6, 6).

¹ 15 September 1906 (*Monitore Ecclesiastico*, vol. 18, p. 346).

² Under the name of schools are comprehended "all pious institutes in which boys or girls are instructed and educated" (*Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. XXI, p. 506).

185 IV. Daily Communion is commended to all by: 1. the desire of Christ and the Church, as is more fully explained in the prior part of the cited Decree; 2. the end and fruit of Communion. Concerning this observe that its end consists especially in this, "that Christ's faithful, united to God through the sacrament, may thence take strength to restrain lust, to wash away the slight faults which occur daily, and to prevent the graver sins to which human frailty is liable; but not principally that the honor and veneration of the Lord be consulted, nor that it be, as it were, wages or a reward of their virtues for those receiving" (cited Decree).

Corollary. The practice of persuading either the faithful or the members of some community to abstain from Communion on one or another day each week must be disapproved. For this practice cannot be reconciled with the cited decree and other ecclesiastical documents, which exhort daily Communion to be brought into practice and promoted, and prohibit the confessor "from turning anyone away from frequent or daily Communion who is found in the state of grace and approaches with a right mind" (n. 5). Nor should members of a community be persuaded to abstain from daily Communion on the occasion of spiritual exercises.

Chapter II. On the Disposition of the Body

186 The disposition of the body comprehends cleanliness of body, decency of dress, and the natural fast.

As regards cleanliness of body, it suffices to note these things:

1. Dirt adhering to the body and appearing should be washed away before the reception of the Eucharist.
2. Stains inherent in the body are commonly not attended to, unless they are apparent, notable, and removable. If there is hope that they will soon be removed, and Communion can conveniently be deferred, it is fitting to defer it. Nevertheless, a priest infected with a disease that brings horror should not celebrate publicly; he can celebrate secretly (St. Alphonsus, VI, 275).

As regards decency of dress, observe that it depends much on the custom of places and the condition of persons. For the rest:

1. So far as can be done, one should not approach in torn and dirty clothes.

2. Women should avoid superfluous ornament and especially immodest or indecent dress. One who approached too immodestly would have to be kept away from Communion; but one must proceed with the greatest prudence.
3. It is fitting that soldiers approach with arms laid aside.
4. "If Communion is to be given to priests or others from the clergy, let it be given to them kneeling at the steps of the altar, or, if it can conveniently be done, let them be distinguished from the laity within the altar rail. But let priests communicate with a stole."¹ Deacons, if they approach Holy Communion privately, do so with a stole worn transversely over the cotta.² Those who acted otherwise would sin venially (St. Alphonsus, VI, 275-276).

As regards the natural fast, several things must be noted:

¹ Roman Ritual, title IV, chapter 2, n. 4.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 4 July 1879, n. 3499, ad II.

187 I. The existence of the precept. The precept of the natural fast, introduced formerly by custom and confirmed by several councils,¹ was established by canon 858, § 1, in these words: "One who has not observed the natural fast from midnight cannot be admitted to the Most Holy Eucharist, unless danger of death urges, or there is necessity of preventing irreverence toward the sacrament." It is a precept only of ecclesiastical law (St. Alphonsus, VI, 278).

¹ Council of Hippo, year 393, canon 28; Council in Trullo, canon 29; Council of Constance, year 1415, session 13.

188 II. The object of the precept consists in this, that from midnight the communicant has transmitted nothing digestible and coming from outside into the stomach or another organ serving the digestion of foods, and retained it there. Therefore, in order that the natural fast be violated, it is required:

1. That something be taken after midnight. Now:

- a) Midnight, according to canon 33, § 1, can be computed according to: 1. usual time; 2. local time, both true and mean; 3. legal time, both regional and other extraordinary time (vol. I, n. 167).
- b) Midnight must be taken physically, not morally; but the completed hour is commonly indicated by the first stroke of the clock (St. Alphonsus, VI, 282), and sometimes by the last stroke.

Here it is customary to ask what one can do who, while eating or drinking, hears the first stroke of the clock; namely, whether someone can communicate even if he does not spit out what he has in his mouth. Several more recent authors affirm, because, they say, the Church is not judged to oblige one to such rusticity. But the Church does not oblige one to that, even if it commands: "If you swallow, it is not permitted for you to communicate." Hence if, considering the circumstances, you cannot spit out without rusticity, swallow it and abstain from Communion. Thus theoretically; for in practice it will scarcely be clear that the fast has been violated, because approved clocks will scarcely be lacking which indicate midnight somewhat later and which it is permitted to follow (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

What if someone passes from one place to another, in which a different time prevails; for example, someone eats at Maastricht at 11:30, then departs for Aachen and communicates there, although 11:30 at Maastricht is 12:30 at Aachen? I think he acts illicitly, because the time of the fast seems to

be computed in order to the time at which Communion is received; but the time of Communion must be computed according to the time of the place in which someone communicates.

2. That something be taken which comes from outside. Hence the swallowing of saliva, or blood from the gums, or fluid flowing from a pustule which exists in the mouth, does not obstruct the fast; nor the skin of the lips, for these pertain to the interior parts of the mouth, whose extremities and curvature they are. It is otherwise if someone, for example, sucks blood from a wound on the finger, or tears flowing from the eyes. Nevertheless, it is not required that something be put into the mouth from outside after midnight, but it suffices that after midnight it be swallowed. Hence the fast is violated if someone at night puts sugar into his mouth to be dissolved and swallowed after midnight, even partly (St. Alphonsus, VI, 279).
3. That something be taken which has the character of food or drink. Certainly that which is not digestible does not pertain here (St. Alphonsus, VI, 281). Nor does that seem to pertain here which can only in some way be altered in the stomach and, according to common estimation, does not have the character of food, such as fingernails. For the rest, "it does not matter," says St. Thomas (III, q. 80, a. 8, ad 4), "whether something nourishes or does not nourish"; nor does it matter at all that the thing is taken by way of medicine.¹ Considering all these things, the following do not violate the fast, although some of the things to be enumerated, according to chemists, are not excluded from every alteration in the stomach: glass, hair, silk, wool, linen, a pebble of metal, little fruit-stones wholly cleansed, wood, straw, fingernails. The following violate it: bones, wax, chalk, metal dust, artificial silk.
4. That what is taken not be retained in the mouth, but transmitted into the stomach. If the thing taken is not passed into the stomach, there is neither eating nor drinking nor, as we suppose, nutrition. It is the same, however, whether food or drink is introduced into the stomach in a natural or artificial manner (n. 171). Considering this condition, one is not bound, unless perhaps by reason of danger, to abstain from Communion who vomits whole the food taken,² or washes the stomach by means of a tube and ejects the water. Nevertheless one should abstain from using a tube anointed with oil, because some oil will almost certainly remain. Moreover, he who is nourished by a clyster seems to violate the fast, because although foods are not received in the stomach, nevertheless nutrition takes place, so that Christ is no longer the first food of those communicating. The Holy Office,³ indeed, responded, when a priest sought the faculty of proceeding in this way: "The Most Holy Father is to be petitioned for the grace, according to the prayers"; and this grace was afterward granted by the Supreme Pontiff. But it seems to be a dispensation rather than a declaration.

¹ Roman Missal, *On Defects*, title IX, n. 1.

² But these things are merely theoretical, because it will not be sufficiently clear that everything has been vomited.

³ 23 April 1890.

189 III. Further determination of the object. Lest the ecclesiastical law smell of pharisaical superstition, certain, so to speak, exceptions are admitted. Namely, the following do not violate the fast:

1. One who by chance swallows remains of foods adhering to the teeth; this is clear from the Roman Missal.¹ The same is said with sufficient probability of one who does this voluntarily (St.

Alphonsus, VI, 279).²

2. One who by chance or voluntarily inhales the smoke of foods, tobacco, incense, etc. (St. Alphonsus, VI, 280, doubt 2); likewise one who uses a medicine which sends the medicine into the bronchi under the form of vapor.
3. One who by chance or voluntarily swallows a very small quantity wholly joined with saliva, for example of water after someone has washed his mouth and spat out the water, or of the juice or very small particle of tobacco which remains inseparably mixed with the saliva when someone crushes tobacco with his teeth and spits out the phlegm. Nevertheless chewing of this kind is prohibited under venial sin because of irreverence, unless a just cause is present (St. Alphonsus, VI, 280, doubt 3).
4. One who by chance swallows a sufficiently small quantity, for example a fly, dust, snow, rain, or a little drop of blood flowing from the nose (St. Alphonsus, VI, 280, doubt 1). The fact that passage into the stomach is merely noticed does not impede Communion.
5. One who uses nasal tobacco and by chance passes something into the stomach (St. Alphonsus, VI, 280, doubt 1). For the rest, it should be advised that the use of tobacco, both nasal and smoking, be omitted before Communion, although it is not prohibited.

The reason for all these things is that the law is to be taken in a human way, lest, as we have hinted, it smell of pharisaical superstition. There is added that otherwise it would give occasion to continual anxieties.

6. Finally, sometimes an exception is had from the disposition of the liturgy, namely if an adult is baptized, "with the salt," says the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide,³ "tasted beforehand by catechumens in the conferral of Baptism, even if it seems to break the fast, nevertheless there is still no doubt that after Baptism has been received they, the adults, can be admitted to Holy Communion, indeed ought to be." Finally, the law does not regard the case in which the ablution is given to one licitly communicating, or together with the host a little water or wine, although something is swallowed before the sacred species (St. Alphonsus, VI, 288).

Corollary I. One who doubts whether he has violated the fast, in other words whether he has taken something, whether he took it after midnight, whether that which he took obstructs the fast, can communicate, because in a doubt of fact founding the law the condition of liberty is better. But in all the cases mentioned, the fact founding the law is doubtful (St. Alphonsus, VI, 282; I, 38, 39).

Corollary II. One who at night does not know what hour it is, and, without asking the hour, eats with the intention of afterward communicating, sins, because he rashly admits the danger of violating the law. Nevertheless after the fact, if the truth can no longer be investigated, it is permitted to him, the things to be posited being posited, to communicate.

¹ *On Defects*, title IX, n. 3.

² The Roman Missal, loc. cit., says thus: "If the remains of food remaining in the mouth are swallowed, they do not impede Communion, since they are swallowed not by way of food, but by way of saliva."

³ 13 February 1906.

190 **IV. The gravity of the precept.** The precept is grave from its whole genus, both as regards the time and as regards the thing to be taken. This is clear both from the consensus of all authors and from the ends of the precept.

"One end is mystical, namely that it may be signified that Christ is the first food of man. Other ends are that those communicating may be more disposed to devotion, and that every danger of the sacrament being vomited may be avoided; which danger indeed sometimes arises from the disordered use of food or drink. But the said ends are not obtained with sufficient certainty unless every use of food or drink before Communion is absolutely prohibited" (St. Thomas, III, q. 80, a. 8; St. Alphonsus, VI, 278).

191 **V. The causes because of which it is permitted to communicate not fasting are:**

1. Urgent danger of death (canon 858, § 1), namely such that Communion can be given by way of Viaticum; this was explained in n. 158. But danger of death exempts from the law of fasting, even if someone could observe it without inconvenience, since the cited canon speaks absolutely. And this holds as regards all, both as regards those for whom danger of death threatens from outside, for example from imminent battle or from the sentence of a judge, and as regards the gravely sick; for the canon does not distinguish.

Corollary I. A sick person constituted in danger, as long as the danger endures, can communicate as often as desired, or daily, not fasting, and this even if when healthy he had been accustomed to communicate rarely. The reason is that one constituted in danger of death is absolutely exempted from the law (St. Alphonsus, VI, 285; cf. canon 864, § 3).

Corollary II. Just as it is permitted for one constituted in danger to communicate not fasting, so also a priest can celebrate not fasting in order to give Viaticum to himself, because to celebrate is not more than to communicate. The same is permitted with sufficient probability in order to give Viaticum to another, because by divine precept, to which ecclesiastical law yields, he is bound to receive Viaticum; but the case is of little practical importance, because the Eucharist is usually reserved (St. Alphonsus, VI, 286).

2. Long infirmity. The sick, however, who have already been bedridden for a month without certain hope that they will recover soon, can, by the prudent counsel of the confessor, receive the Most Holy Eucharist once or twice a week, even if they have previously taken some medicine or something by way of drink (canon 858, § 2).¹ As regards the interpretation of this canon, observe that it seems one must incline toward the more benign side, because it concerns a favor, and one universal and granted by way of derogation from the law, not by way of dispensation. These things having been noted, I explain briefly the faculty granted. Therefore, in order that someone may enjoy the privilege, it is required:

a) That he be sick, or affected by some illness. Nevertheless it suffices that someone be worn out by old age, because old age itself is judged to be a certain infirmity.

b) That he be bedridden. Yet this must be understood so that the privilege also belongs to the sick who, as the Sacred Congregation of the Council² responded, "cannot lie in bed, or can rise from it for some hours of the day." The same seems to be said of those who, suffering from a chronic disease, according to the different condition of the disease, now lie in bed, now perform some domestic tasks,

yet cannot go out without notable inconvenience. But those are excluded who can attend to domestic cares and go out conveniently enough. For the word **bedridden** cannot sufficiently be applied to the aforesaid. Then the more benign interpretation can give occasion to scandal and to a looser application; namely, there is fear lest gradually several persons, with necessity as a pretext, will wish to communicate not fasting.

c) That he has been bedridden for a month. Therefore the sick person cannot use the privilege before he has lain ill for a month.

d) That, after he has lain ill for a month, there is absent certain hope, that is, moral certitude, of recovery to be attained soon, for example after three or four days.

e) That one proceed by the prudent counsel of the confessor. Nevertheless, the request for counsel and the approval of the confessor are not judged to be a condition which, if neglected, would cause the sick person to sin gravely by communicating not fasting. Indeed, I think that per se there is not even an obligation of seeking counsel, although it is especially fitting, and per accidens can even be necessary, namely so that there may be sufficient certainty about the required conditions. The confessor can give counsel both within and outside Confession; for no restriction occurs in the concession of the privilege. Yet let him proceed prudently, namely by seriously inquiring whether the required conditions are present. For the rest, observe:

First, when the explained conditions have been fulfilled, the sick can use the indult even if they would be able to observe the fast, since the canon requires nothing besides the explained conditions. There is added that the stricter opinion would give occasion to anxieties. They can communicate both at home and in church; yet the latter commonly cannot be done by the bedridden.

Second, by force of the concession "they can receive the Most Holy Eucharist once or twice a week, even if they have previously taken some medicine or something by way of drink" (canon 858, § 2). Medicine can be taken even if it is solid, such as, for example, a pill. But it is required that the matter to be taken directly serve the curing of the illness, so that solid foods used to recover strength are excluded. Besides medicine it is permitted to take something by way of drink. Yet it is not required that what is taken have the character of drink, but it suffices that it be taken by way of drink, like liquid food. Therefore the response of the Holy Office³ can be applied, by which it is permitted "to take broth, coffee, milk, or another liquid food, even if some substance has been mixed into it, for example light little pills of flour (*semolino*), grated bread reduced to crumbs (*pangratto*), a diluted egg, etc., provided the mixture does not lose the nature of liquid food." Chocolate can be added, but not sugar or solid chocolate, not even when they are not swallowed except after they have been dissolved in the mouth; for it is clear that the taking which occurs by mouth must be considered. Moreover, the sick person can also take some medicine or something by way of drink several times before Communion.

Third, nothing prevents one who can use the explained privilege and therefore communicates not fasting twice in a week from receiving Communion also on other days, after accepting the burden of the fast.

Question. Whether Easter Communion to be received excuses from the law of fasting in the case in which someone otherwise would be deprived of it, because on the one hand he cannot observe the

fast without very grave inconvenience even if Communion were given very early, and on the other hand he cannot use the indult of which we have spoken.

Now several think this must be denied, because canon 858, § 1 declares that the fast must be observed unless danger of death urges, or the necessity of preventing irreverence toward the sacrament. But the cited canon cannot be so urged that other cases, for example infamy and scandal to be avoided, are excluded.⁴ Whether our case truly ought to be excluded is theoretically doubtful to me; but, with the doubt posited, in practice one can stand for the spiritual good of the person about to communicate and for the somewhat divine law of annual Communion, while the ecclesiastical law of the natural fast is set aside. Nevertheless scandal and abuses must be guarded against. Moreover, if the difficulty would vanish by deferring Communion, let the delay be made. Finally, in the proposed case it would also be permitted to minister the Holy Eucharist at night (canon 867, § 4).

3. Scandal, that is, the sin of one's neighbor, to be avoided; for example if Mass cannot be omitted without the danger of rash judgments or backbiting; likewise without the danger that several persons will omit, with grave sin, to assist at another Mass. Observe, however, that the sole reason that the people on a feast day would lack Mass does not suffice. Nevertheless it suffices with sufficient probability that otherwise a dying person could not receive Viaticum (St. Alphonsus, VI, 286, 287). To avoiding scandal there is often added:
4. Infamy to be avoided. This reason is present if the priest is already at the altar, unless he is of known probity (St. Alphonsus, VI, 287); likewise if a layperson is already sitting at the Communion rail.
5. Irreverence toward the Most Holy Sacrament to be guarded against (canon 858, § 1), as if there is danger that the species may perish or be profaned.
6. The sacrifice to be completed. This reason can be present in three cases, namely: 1. if after the consecration the priest remembers that he is not fasting, he must continue Mass. 2. If after the consuming of the host or chalice he notices that the matter is invalid, he must consecrate and communicate again.⁵ 3. If after the consecration, even of bread alone, the priest dies or faints, and no fasting priest is present, a priest who is not fasting must complete the Mass from the place where the prior one stopped.⁶

Finally, partly because of moral union with the completed sacrifice, partly because of irreverence toward the sacrament to be avoided, it is permitted for one not fasting to consume particles of the consecrated species, as is explained in n. 274.

¹ Cf. Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, 7 December 1906.

² 6 March 1907.

³ 7 September 1897.

⁴ The same once had to be said about ecclesiastical documents brought forward by adversaries, namely the Council of Constance, session 13, and the Constitution of Benedict XIV *Quadam de more*, 24 March 1756.

⁵ Roman Missal, *On Defects*, title III, n. 5 and title IV, n. 5.

⁶ Roman Missal, *On Defects*, title X, n. 3.

192 **VI. Dispensation**, which can be obtained from the Holy See, and is granted through the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments if it concerns seculars, and through the Sacred Congregation of Religious if it concerns religious.¹ Moreover, Nuncios, Internuncios, and Apostolic Delegates can concede to the bedridden of whom canon 858, § 2 speaks that even before the end of the month they may communicate once a week, without observing the fast according to the norm of the cited canon. They can grant the same to sick persons not bedridden who labor under such a disease that, in the judgment of a physician, they cannot observe the fast without danger. Finally, the faculties of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide grant to bishops, vicars, and prefects apostolic the power "of granting to bedridden sick persons about whom there is no certain hope that they will recover soon, even before the end of the month from which they have been bedridden, that they may receive Holy Communion two or three times a week, and, if it concerns priests or religious, even daily, without observing the fast, that is, even if they have previously taken some medicine or something by way of drink."²

¹ Thus the meeting of Cardinals, 7 December 1922 (cf. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1929, p. 39).

² Vermeersch, *Commentarius de Formulis faciendis*, n. 57.

193 **VII. Epikeia** is also admitted in this matter, but with the greatest difficulty, so that scarcely a case occurs in which Communion can be received by one not fasting from epikeia alone. It is disputed whether the case would be present if a newly ordained priest about to celebrate his first Mass had broken the fast, and very grave inconveniences would follow, considering the circumstances, if the Mass were not celebrated. In such a case, the reason of avoiding infamy will not easily be present, because such a man will rather be ridiculous than infamous. Sometimes the reason of scandal will not be entirely lacking. Observe, however, "that scandal is then said to exist when an occasion is given for detracting or judging rashly, but not when an occasion of mere wonder is given" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 257).

Dissertation III. On the Most Holy Eucharist as Sacrifice

(St. Thomas, II-II, q. 85; q. 86, a. 1; q. 100, a. 2, ad 2; III, q. 22; q. 79, a. 7, ad 2; q. 82; q. 83; q. 85; q. 86, a. 1; q. 100, a. 2, ad 2; St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, book VI, nn. 304-424; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 15, nn. 59-88.)

194 **I. The notion of sacrifice.** Sacrifice is the offering of a sensible thing, through some change of it, made to God, and that legitimately, to testify to His supreme dominion and our subjection (St. Alphonsus, VI, 304).

1. The sensible thing itself is the remote matter; the offering of the sensible thing through some change of it is the proximate matter of sacrifice. The end of professing the supreme dominion of God and our subjection is the form of the sacrifice, which, namely, informs the whole act.
2. All admit that some change is required. But it is disputed whether a change for the worse, or destructive change, is required, or a change for the better, insofar, namely, as the thing offered through its sacrifice becomes morally more perfect and more pleasing to God.
3. Of those who require a destructive change, some demand a real change, whether physical, as in the killing of an animal, or moral, by which, namely, the thing becomes unfit for common use, as in the pouring out of oil. Others judge that a mystical change suffices.

195 **II. The division of sacrifice.** Sacrifices are distinguished:

1. By reason of matter, into victims or hosts, oblations, and libations, according as an animal, or an inanimate solid thing, or an inanimate liquid thing is offered.
2. By reason of mode, into bloody and unbloody.
3. By reason of end, into laetitic, eucharistic, propitiatory or expiatory, and impetratory, according as they are principally offered in homage to God, or in thanksgiving, or for remission of guilt or punishment, or for obtaining goods (St. Alphonsus, VI, 304).

196 **III. The principal sacrifices of the Old Testament were:**

1. Holocausts, which were principally offered in homage to God. In these the whole thing was consumed by fire.
2. Peace offerings, which were chiefly offered in thanksgiving or for obtaining benefits. In these one part was consumed by fire, another fell to the use of the priests, who ate it in the court of the temple.
3. Offerings for sin, which were principally offered for the remission of guilt or punishment. In these one part was consumed by fire, another fell to the use of the priests, and a third to the use of those offering, who consumed it as a sign of union with God.

Now all the sacrifices of the Old Testament prefigured:

197 **IV. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross**, by which Christ offered Himself on the cross, and by which He perfected the redemption of the human race, that is, so consummated satisfaction for sins and merit for obtaining all graces that satisfaction and merit cannot be further increased, according to that saying of the Apostle: "For by one oblation He has perfected forever those who are sanctified."¹

Nevertheless the sacrifice of the cross does not exclude the sacrifice by which the satisfaction and merit completed on the cross are continually applied, that is:

¹ Heb. 10:14.

198 **V. The Eucharistic sacrifice, or the Mass**, about which something must be said specifically. We shall treat first of the sacrifice of the Mass considered in itself, then of the celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass.

Part I. On the Sacrifice of the Mass Considered in Itself

199 The sacrifice of the Mass is aptly defined: **the unbloody sacrifice of the New Testament, in which Christ, through the priest, offers Himself under the species of bread and wine to His Father.**¹

This definition having been given, something must be said briefly first about the existence and essence, then about the efficacy and effects of the sacrifice of the Mass.

¹ Cf. Council of Trent, session 22, chapter 1.

Section I. On the Existence and Essence of the Sacrifice of the Mass

200 **I. The existence of the sacrifice of the Mass.** In the Mass a true and properly so-called sacrifice is offered; this proposition is of faith from these words of the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God, or that to be offered is nothing other than Christ being given to us to be eaten, let him be anathema."¹

¹ Session 22, canon 1.

201 **II. The essence of the sacrifice of the Mass.** It suffices to note briefly the principal things which pertain here:

1. The victim to be sacrificed is Christ as existing under the species. It is said:

a) **Christ;** this the Council of Trent teaches in these words: "In this divine sacrifice which is performed in the Mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated unbloodily who once offered Himself bloodily on the altar of the cross."¹

b) **As existing under the species.** For the Mass is a true and properly so-called sacrifice, and therefore the offering of a visible victim, namely a visible sacrifice. But Christ is not visible to us, nor can He be visibly sacrificed by us, except insofar as He exists under the species. Hence the Council of Trent says: "Our Lord... at the Last Supper, on the night on which He was betrayed, in order that He might leave to His beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice, as the nature of human beings requires,... offered His body and blood under the species of bread and wine to God the Father, and under the symbols of those same things commanded the Apostles... and their successors in the priesthood to offer them."²

Note. Bread and wine are only the matter from which the victim is confected. But the species of bread and wine are not constitutive or essential parts of the victim, but are the condition without which the victim is not given.

2. The principal offerer is Christ Himself; the secondary offerer is the priest.³ Co-offerers are added, that is, the Church or the whole faithful people, the minister, and those assisting (St. Alphonsus, VI, 307).

3. What the sacrificial action is, or the constitutive act, or the properly so-called essence of the sacrifice of the Mass, is not one opinion among authors. Now:

a) According to the opinion of all today, consecration pertains to the sacrificial action; and according to the more common opinion, the consecration of both species. It is disputed whether Communion

also pertains to the essence. Those who deny this admit that it is an integral part of the sacrifice.

b) Of those who judge that the essence of the sacrifice of the Mass is constituted by consecration alone, some formally place the sacrificial action in consecration insofar as it places Christ in the more abased state of food and drink; others place it in consecration insofar as in it there is a mystical destruction, either because the words of themselves tend toward the real separation of body and blood, or because the sacramental species exhibit a sacramental representation of that separation.

¹ Session 22, chapter 2.

² Session 22, chapter 1.

³ Session 22, chapter 2.

202 III. The character of the sacrifice of the Mass. The sacrifice of the Mass is both an absolute and a relative sacrifice: absolute, insofar as considered in itself it has all the elements of a true sacrifice; relative, insofar as it essentially says relation to the sacrifice of the cross, or insofar as it is essentially representative and commemorative of the sacrifice of the cross¹ (St. Thomas, III, q. 79, a. 7; q. 83, a. 1).

¹ Council of Trent, session 22, chapter 1.

203 IV. The agreement of the Mass with the sacrifice of the cross, and its difference from it.

1. Both sacrifices agree as regards substance, namely as regards the victim and the principal offerer. Therefore the Mass, by reason of substance, is identified with the sacrifice of the cross, so that this sacrifice is truly repeated as often as Mass is celebrated.

2. They differ:

a) In the fact that the sacrifice of the cross was absolute, as it is called, while the Mass is essentially also relative, or is referred to the sacrifice of the cross.

b) By reason of the secondary offerer, namely, on the cross there was only the principal offerer, namely Christ; in the Mass there are the principal offerer, namely Christ, and the secondary offerer, namely the priest.

c) By reason of the mode of offering, which was bloody on the cross, but is unbloody in the Mass.

d) By reason of the end and effects, insofar as the sacrifice of the cross perfected satisfaction and merits, whereas the Mass applies them to us.

Section II. On the Efficacy and Effects of the Sacrifice of the Mass

204 By the efficacy of the sacrifice of the Mass is understood the very power of effecting which it has by reason of the thing offered and of the principal offerer. Now it is clear that this efficacy is infinite. But if it is asked whether the effects produced are themselves also infinite, one must distinguish. The effects which directly regard God, namely the laetific and eucharistic effects, are infinite; in other words, the sacrifice of the Mass exhibits to God infinite or condign adoration, praise, and thanksgiving. But the effects which directly regard man, namely the propitiatory and impetratory, are limited.

As regards the effects of the Mass, we shall investigate further what the effects of this sacrifice are, in what way they are produced, in what measure different effects come to different persons, and what is

required so that a special fruit may come to someone.

205 I. The effects of the Mass correspond to its ends. Hence, just as the end is fourfold, so also the effect is fourfold, namely latreutic, eucharistic, propitiatory, and impetratory; in other words: 1. it renders adoration and praise to God; 2. it gives thanks to God for benefits received; 3. it placates offended divine justice and obtains remission of guilt and punishment; and 4. it obtains other spiritual and temporal goods.

Of the said effects, those which directly tend to our utility, namely the propitiatory and impetratory, are customarily indicated by the name **fruits**.

206 II. The mode by which the effects are produced. The effects of the Mass can be understood to be produced in three ways:

1. *Ex opere operato* and *ex opere operantis*, according as the effect proceeds by reason of the sacrifice itself, that is, by reason of the victim offered and the principal offerer, or by reason of the work of the co-offerers, that is, of the Church, the minister, and the faithful.

2. Immediately and mediately, according as the effect proceeds not through an intermediate effect, or through an effect of this kind.

3. Infallibly and fallibly. Now:

1. The latreutic and eucharistic effects are produced:

a) *Ex opere operato*, and indeed immediately and infallibly.

b) *Ex opere operantis*, and indeed immediately, and: 1. certainly and infallibly from the work of the Church co-offering; 2. whether or not, and how much, from the work of the other co-offerers depends on their disposition.

2. The propitiatory and impetratory effects are produced:

a) *Ex opere operato*; moreover *ex opere operantis*, namely of the Church co-offering, which moves God in a special way; likewise of the other co-offerers, the priest and the faithful, who can contribute to the aforesaid effects according to greater or lesser disposition.

b) Immediately are produced the placation of divine justice, relaxation of temporal punishment after guilt has been remitted, actual graces, and other spiritual and temporal goods. Mediately are produced remission of guilt, namely through the grace of repentance, and increase of habitual grace, namely through actual graces.

c) Some remission of temporal punishment after guilt has been remitted is produced infallibly, if the Mass is offered for the just. Other fruits are produced fallibly, because something can stand in the way either on the part of Christ, or on the part of the subject placing an obstacle. Nevertheless, it can be said that all fruits are produced infallibly in first act, insofar as the impetration of Christ is of itself always heard.

207 III. The measure according to which the effects come to those for whom Mass is offered.

Preliminary note I. Here the discussion concerns the effects which directly regard our utility, in other words, the propitiatory and impetratory effects, which effects, as we have already noted, are called fruits.

Preliminary note II. By reason of those to whom the fruits of the Mass come, a threefold fruit is distinguished, namely general, special or middle or ministerial, and most special or personal. The general fruit is that which comes to the whole Church; namely, since the priest always offers in the name of Christ and of the Church for the whole Church, it cannot happen that every sacrifice does not produce a fruit coming to the whole Church. The special fruit is that which comes to the one or ones to whom the priest specially applies the Mass. The most special fruit is that which comes to the celebrant. Namely, it cannot happen that a peculiar fruit does not come *ex opere operato* to the one offering worthily. But more commonly they judge that the priest cannot yield this fruit. To this fruit is referred that which comes to those contributing to the sacrifice (St. Alphonsus, VI, 312, 318). These things having been noted beforehand, I say:

1. The measure according to which the general fruit is distributed seems to be judged from the greater or lesser dignity and holiness of the members of the Church, and from the special commemoration made by the priest.
2. The measure of the most special fruit, insofar as it comes to the celebrant, is greater to the degree that the disposition and devotion of the priest are more perfect. Insofar as this fruit comes to the co-offerers, it will be greater or lesser according to the measure of cooperation in the sacrifice, disposition, and devotion. Nor is this fruit diminished by the greater number of co-offerers.
3. The measure of the special fruit is determined by these things:
 - a) It will be more abundant to the degree that the disposition of the one for whom Mass is offered is more perfect. Since this disposition can be increased indefinitely, the special fruit, equally with the general and most special fruit, is therefore called intensively indefinite.
 - b) It is disputed whether the special fruit is extensively infinite; in other words, whether the same measure comes to each one, whether Mass is offered for one or for several. Now some simply affirm. Others affirm with respect to the impetratory fruit, and deny with respect to the propitiatory. Others simply deny;¹ and we agree with them. For the Church approves and commends the practice of celebrating for a determined person. But if the opinion of the adversaries were true, a determination of this kind would be useless, because in it, with respect to the determined person, it would not matter whether the celebration were made for one or for all. Indeed it would be altogether better always to celebrate for all, because by the application of a determined person the rest would lack the fruit, without utility for that determined person.

¹ As regards St. Alphonsus, in the moral work, n. 312, he says both opinions are probable, but the first seems to him more probable. But in two later works, namely in the work *In Tridentinum*, session 22, n. 22, and in the little work on Mass stipends, whose title is *De abusibus in acceptandis Missis*, nn. 26-28, he teaches the second opinion absolutely and calls it common. Whence he seems to have changed his opinion (Aertnys-Damen, *Theologia Moralis*, vol. II, n. 185).

208 IV. The application of the special fruit. I said **of the special fruit**; for the general and most special fruits do not need application. The former, by the very fact that the sacrifice is offered, comes to the whole Church; the latter, by the very fact that he offers worthily, comes to the priest offering. But the special fruit needs the application of the priest; hence something must be said about it.

1. **The notion and division of application.** Application is the intention of the priest of specially offering Mass for some cause or causes, or for some person or persons. Application can be distinguished as twofold, public and private. Public application is had when the faithful are

publicly advised of the Mass to be offered for such a one, or when someone's name is inserted into the prayers. Private application is had when neither are the faithful publicly advised nor is a name inserted into the prayers.

2. **The power of applying.** The priest can apply the special fruit; this is clear both from universal practice and from the condemned doctrine of the Synod of Pistoia.¹ If the application is positively excluded, the special fruit remains in the treasury of the Church. If it is applied expressly to no one, or to one incapable, according to some the fruit remains in the treasury of the Church; according to others, it comes to the priest himself or to those for whom he is specially bound to offer, because they judge that the priest implicitly intended this (St. Alphonsus, VI, 336).

3. **The persons for whom application can be made.** It is permitted to apply Mass for any of the living, and also for the dead expiating their sins in the fire of purgatory, with the prescription of canon 2262, § 2, n. 2 saved (canon 809). Therefore:

a) As regards the living, Mass can be applied for all. Nevertheless: 1. it is permitted only privately, and scandal being removed, to apply it for the excommunicated; heretics and schismatics are regarded as such by the external judgment of the Church, but not unbelievers. Hence, if scandal is absent, it can also be applied publicly for these;² a fortiori catechumens are not excluded from it. 2. For an excommunicated person to be avoided, it is permitted to apply it only privately and for his conversion alone (canon 2262, § 2, 2).

b) As regards the dead, the damned being excluded, Mass can likewise be applied for all. Nevertheless for those excluded from ecclesiastical burial (canon 1240), it is permitted to apply it only privately; for any funeral Mass, even anniversary, and other public funeral offices must be denied to these (canon 1241).

Note 1. Let the priest take care that there is not something of evil, error, or superstition in unbelievers offering alms.³

Note 2. Even if someone were excluded by the Church from application, nevertheless the priest could pray for him by private intention in the Memento of the living; likewise he could apply to him the fruits coming to the priest *ex opere operantis*, insofar as this is of the priest, but not the fruits *ex opere operato*, or *ex opere operantis* insofar as this is done in the name of the Church.

Note 3. Masses can also be offered or applied in honor of the Saints; this is clear from these words of the Council of Trent: "If anyone says that it is an imposture to celebrate Masses in honor of the Saints and for obtaining their intercession before God, as the Church intends, let him be anathema."⁴ In what sense, or for what end, this is done, the same Council teaches in these words: "And although the Church has sometimes been accustomed to celebrate certain Masses in honor and memory of the Saints, nevertheless she does not teach that sacrifice is offered to them, but to God alone, who crowned them. Hence neither is the priest accustomed to say: I offer sacrifice to you, Peter or Paul; but giving thanks to God for their victories, he implores their patronage, so that they may deign to intercede for us in heaven, whose memory we make on earth."⁵

4. **The requisites for valid application are:**

a) That it be made by the celebrant himself, who cannot leave it to be made by anyone, not even Christ. Namely, Christ, who conferred upon the priest the power of applying, is judged to have

committed its exercise to the priest alone. Hence the application would be invalid: "I apply the Mass to him to whom Christ applies it." It must be said otherwise of this application: "I apply the Mass to him to whom Christ is more pleased that it be applied" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 334).

b) That it be made before the sacrifice is perfected as regards its essence; hence according to some, before the consecration of the blood; according to others, before every consecration. In practice, so that every danger of frustration may be guarded against, let it be made before the consecration. Indeed, it is better to make it before the Offertory, or rather before Mass, so that both the Offertory and the other liturgical prayers and actions may benefit the one giving the stipend.

c) That it be made through at least a habitual intention, that is, one made and not retracted. A habitual intention suffices, because application is made by way of donation, which obtains its effect even if time or acts intervene between the conceived intention and the execution given to it (St. Alphonsus, VI, 335). Nevertheless, it is advised that application not be extended for too long a time, and that at least sometimes, for example at the beginning of the month for the whole month, it be determined. An interpretative intention, since it does not truly exist, does not suffice.

d) That it be determined as regards the person or cause. Hence if someone has received a stipend from five persons, or five stipends for different deceased persons, the intention of applying for one of the five does not suffice if no one has been determined explicitly or implicitly. Nevertheless an implicit determination suffices, for example the intention: 1. of applying for him who offered the stipend, or who has been assigned by the celebrant in the booklet for this day; 2. of applying according to the mind of him who transmitted the stipend, provided that he formed the intention; 3. of applying according to the order established by another, for example by a superior or by the rector of the church. It is no obstacle that the celebrant perhaps does not know the intention or errs about it. Likewise a disjunctive determination suffices, as if someone says: "I say Mass for the intention of the pastor, if he has established one for me; otherwise for that intention" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 335).

If a priest has collected a heap of stipends and does not know in what order they were given, the intention of celebrating according to the order in which they were in fact given or accepted suffices; or, with respect to several stipends given at the same time for different persons, according to the order in which they were destined by the one giving, if the designation occurred; otherwise, in proportion to the right of each one comprehended in the number. All these things are at least known to God. Likewise the intention of applying all and each Masses, in proportion to the right, to all for whom they were given suffices. Namely, since the fruit of the Mass is divisible, after all the Masses have been celebrated each one has obtained his own.

If the priest himself did not collect the Masses but received a heap from another, for example from a bishop or from the administrator of a pious place, it is per se the part of the distributor to set the order beforehand, and of the celebrant to apply according to the order set beforehand. But if the distributor did not set the order beforehand, the priest can celebrate according to either order explained above (St. Alphonsus, VI, 335).

e) That it not be made under a suspensive condition, for example for the intention of him who will first offer the stipend. For an application made in this way regards a future intention, and therefore would involve suspension of the effect. Hence canon 825, 1: "It is never permitted to apply Mass to the intention of one who, after an alms has been offered, is going to ask for the application, but has

not yet asked, and to retain the alms given afterward for a Mass previously applied." Nevertheless this does not prevent a Mass from being celebrated, for example, for a deceased person for whom it is foreseen that a Mass will be requested; and afterward, if a Mass is requested, from signifying that some Mass has been said, and from accepting the stipend if it pleases the one asking. Such an application does not depend on a future intention, and therefore does not suspend the effect (St. Alphonsus, VI, 337), nor does it depend on the intention of the one who will ask for the application. For the rest, an intention under a condition about the past or present is always valid, except in the case about which we are now going to speak.

f) That it not be made under a condition not naturally knowable; since God, who has disposed things conformably to a human mode of acting, is not judged to have conferred upon the priest the faculty of applying dependently upon such a condition. Hence the application seems invalid: "I apply the Mass for you, if you are predestined."

What if someone has elicited two contrary intentions?

Response 1. The later prevails, if he conceived it while mindful of the prior intention.

Response 2. If he conceived the later while forgetful of the prior intention, the later likewise prevails, unless, as it seems must be said, he made the prior intention in such a way that he willed it to prevail even if through forgetfulness he were going to elicit another. For the rest, in doubt which intention prevails, afterward let Mass be celebrated for the intention which did not prevail, and thus all things are safe.

¹ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1530.

² Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 11 March 1848 (*Collectanea*, n. 1028); Holy Office, 12 July 1848 (*Collectanea*, n. 1274).

³ Holy Office, 12 July 1865 (*Collectanea*, n. 1274).

⁴ Session 22, canon 5.

⁵ Session 22, chapter 3.

Part II. On the Oblation of the Sacrifice of the Mass

(St. Thomas, II-II, q. 100, a. 2, ad 2; III, q. 82; St. Alphonsus, *Theologia Moralis*, book VI, nn. 307, 313-333; *Homo Apostolicus*, tract 15, nn. 59-88.)

Section I. On the Person Offering

209 I. The principal minister is Christ the Lord. "It is the same one," says the Council of Trent, "now offering through the ministry of priests, who then offered Himself on the cross."¹

II. The secondary minister is every and only priest. "If anyone says," the same Council of Trent says, "that by those words: **Do this in commemoration of me**, Christ did not institute the Apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His body and blood, let him be anathema."²

III. In some sense all the faithful can be called ministers of the sacrifice of the Mass, namely insofar as they contribute something to the sacrifice. They do this insofar as they are members of the Church, in whose name the priest celebrates; insofar as they assist at the sacrifice and conform themselves to the intention of the principal and secondary minister; and insofar as they causally concur in the sacrifice, for example by giving a stipend or by serving the priest celebrating (St. Alphonsus, VI, 307).

Corollary I. Several priests can indeed offer the sacrifice of the Mass together, but this is illicit except in the Mass of the ordination of priests, and in the Mass of the consecration of bishops according to the Roman Pontifical (canon 803; n. 20).

Corollary II. A priest who is a stranger to a church, that is, not assigned to the church in which he asks to celebrate, can be admitted as follows:

1. If he shows authentic and still valid commendatory letters from his Ordinary if he is secular, or from his superior if he is religious, or from the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church if he is of an Oriental rite, he is to be admitted to the celebration of Mass, unless meanwhile it is clear that he has committed something on account of which he ought to be repelled from the celebration of Mass (canon 804, § 1).
2. If he lacks those letters, but his probity is very well known to the rector of the church, he can be admitted. But if he is unknown to the rector, he can still be admitted once or twice, provided that, clothed in ecclesiastical dress, he receives nothing, under any title, from the celebration from the church in which he sacrifices, and signs his name, office, and diocese in a special book (canon 804, § 2). It is said **provided that he is clothed in ecclesiastical dress**, that is, provided that the stranger, by the form of his dress, manifests that he is a priest.
3. Special norms concerning this matter, given by the local Ordinary, with the prescriptions of this canon saved, must be observed by all, even exempt religious, unless it concerns admitting religious to celebrate in a church of their own religious institute (canon 804, § 3).

¹ Session 22, chapter 2.

² Session 22, canon 2.

Section II. On the Obligation of Offering

The obligation of offering can arise from order received, from office, from the precept of a superior, from promise, and from stipend. Hence:

Chapter I. On the Obligation by Reason of Order Received

210 I. Christ imposed upon the college of the Apostles and of priests the precept of celebrating repeatedly. This is of faith from the Council of Trent,¹ which declared: "If anyone says that by those words: **Do this in commemoration of me**, Christ did not institute the Apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His body and blood, let him be anathema."

II. Individual priests also are bound to celebrate repeatedly, according to canon 805: All priests are bound by the obligation of sacrificing several times a year; but let the bishop or religious superior take care that they do this sacred work at least on each Sunday and on other feasts of precept. It is said **several times a year**, that is, three or four times per year.

It is disputed whether the obligation of individuals to celebrate repeatedly is of divine law or only ecclesiastical law. Now most authors with St. Thomas (III, q. 82, a. 10) maintain divine law, because a true disorder seems to exist in the fact that one ordained for rendering so great honor to God and for providing so great utility to human beings frustrates such an end (St. Alphonsus, VI, 313; *Examen Ordinandorum*, n. 111).

III. One who can conveniently celebrate and does not celebrate because of sloth, according to several authors sins lightly, because a venial disorder is had in the fact that one ordained for celebrating neglects so great a good of God and human beings, which he can provide with such ease (St. Alphonsus, VI, 359). For the rest, the same things which commend daily Communion to the faithful persuade priests to daily celebration.

¹ Session 22, canon 2.

Chapter II. On the Obligation by Reason of Office

Those who have care of souls are bound by office either to celebrate or to take care that Mass be celebrated on those days on which the people committed to them are bound to hear Mass. Hence the Council of Trent says: "Let the bishop take care that those... who have had care of souls celebrate Mass as frequently as is sufficient to satisfy their office."¹

¹ Session 23, chapter 14, on reform.

211 I. The source of the obligation is divine right or law, as the Council of Trent expressly teaches.¹ Now bishops are bound by absolute or immediate divine law; namely, the Holy Spirit Himself placed them to rule the Church of God, so that they cannot be lacking in the organism of the Church. But to the office of ruling and feeding is annexed the obligation of applying. Pastors are bound by hypothetical or mediate divine law; namely, on the hypothesis that by the Supreme Pontiff or by the bishops they are called into a share of pastoral solicitude, or for ruling a part of the flock. Thus from the Constitution of Leo XIII *In suprema*.² From these things it is also explained why pastors

obtain some moderation of the obligation more easily than bishops (St. Alphonsus, VI, 324, question 2).

¹ Session 23, chapter 1, on reform.

² 10 June 1882.

212 II. The subject and object of the obligation. 1. Bishops, after having taken possession of the see, with every excuse from scantiness of revenues or any other exception removed, must apply Mass for the people committed to them on all Sundays and other feast days of precept, even suppressed ones (canon 339, § 1).

a) The feast days on which application is prescribed, according to the declaration of the Pontifical Commission,¹ are to be taken according to the catalogue established by Urban VIII in the Constitution *Universa*,² and again promulgated by the Sacred Congregation of the Council,³ with the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary added from the Constitution of Clement XI *Commissi nobis*,⁴ and by force of the cited canon. They are therefore: the Nativity of the Lord, Circumcision, Epiphany, Easter with the two following days, Ascension, Pentecost with the two following days, Trinity, Corpus Christi, Invention of the Holy Cross, Purification, Annunciation, Assumption, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Immaculate Conception, Dedication of St. Michael, Nativity of St. John the Baptist, all the Holy Apostles, St. Stephen, Holy Innocents, St. Lawrence, St. Sylvester, St. Joseph, St. Anne, All Saints, and the feast of one of the principal patrons in any kingdom or province, and likewise of another principal patron in any city, town, or village where it happens that these patrons are had and venerated. Moreover, if somewhere by concession of the Holy See a particular feast of precept is celebrated, on this feast too there is the obligation of applying for the people (canon 339, § 1).

There is dispute about the obligation on feast days which previously were of precept from particular law, but now have been suppressed by force of the Code. Now the obligation seems to be maintained, both because of a particular response issued,⁵ and because canon 466, § 1 generally declares that on feast days of precept, even suppressed ones, the obligation persists.

b) Although a bishop governs two or more dioceses equally principally united, or besides his own diocese has another or others in administration, nevertheless he satisfies the obligation by the celebration and application of one Mass for the whole people committed to him (canon 339, § 5).

As regards titular bishops, canon 348, § 2 states: It is fitting from charity, yet without obligation, that they sometimes apply the sacrifice of the Mass for their diocese.

2. A capitular vicar is bound in the same way as a bishop to apply Mass for the people (canon 440).

3. Vicars and prefects apostolic must apply the sacrifice of the Mass for the peoples committed to them at least on the solemnities of the Nativity of the Lord, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, the Most Holy Body of Christ, the Immaculate Conception and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph her spouse, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and All Saints (canon 306).

4. An apostolic administrator, if he has been constituted permanently, is bound to apply as a bishop; if he has been given for a time, he is not bound by the obligation, which burdens a bishop, of applying Mass for the people (canon 315).

5. Pastors,⁶ after having taken possession of the parish, are bound on the same days and by the same obligation as bishops to apply Mass for the people committed to them (canon 466, § 1). Nevertheless:

a) A pastor who perhaps governs several parishes equally principally united, or besides his own parish has another or others in administration, must apply only one Mass for the peoples committed to him on the prescribed days (canon 466, § 2). The same holds of a vicar-economus who governs several parishes during a vacancy.⁷ If, however, the matter concerns the feast of the patron of the place, the pastor who, besides his own parish, has another or several others in administration, is bound to apply Mass for the people not only on the feast day of the patron of his own parish, but also on the feasts of the patrons of the other parish or parishes, unless the patrons occur as to be honored on the same day, either because the same one is the patron, or because the feast of the patrons is celebrated on the same day from liturgical laws.⁸

b) The local Ordinary can for a just cause permit the pastor to apply Mass for the people on another day than the one on which he is bound by law (canon 466, § 3); this permission can also be granted habitually.

c) The pastor should celebrate the Mass to be applied for the people in the parish church, unless circumstances of things require or suggest that Mass be celebrated elsewhere (canon 466, § 4); for example if because of a special feast there is a concourse of the people in some chapel or succursal church within the limits of the parish. Likewise one who applies through another must per se take care that the other celebrate in the parish church.⁹

d) A solemn or sung Mass is not prescribed, but a private Mass suffices.¹⁰

6. Quasi-pastors are bound on the same days as vicars and prefects apostolic, under 3, to apply Mass for the people committed to them (canon 466, § 1).

7. A vicar-economus, constituted while the parish is vacant, is bound as a pastor (canon 473, § 1).

¹ 17 February 1918, ad II (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1918, p. 170).

² 13 September 1642.

³ 28 December 1919 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1920, p. 42).

⁴ 6 December 1708.

⁵ In *Il Monitore Ecclesiastico* 1920, p. 72.

⁶ Who come under the name of pastor and quasi-pastor, see in the treatise on Matrimony.

⁷ Pontifical Commission, 14 July 1922, ad VI (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, p. 528).

⁸ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 12 November 1927 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1928, p. 84).

⁹ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 23 December 1872.

¹⁰ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 27 February 1847, n. 2939, ad IV; 22 July 1848, n. 2967.

213 III. A fuller explanation of the object of the obligation. 1. On the feast of the Nativity of the Lord, and if some feast of precept falls on a Sunday, it suffices that they apply one Mass for the people (canon 339, § 2). If a feast is transferred in such a way that on the day to which it is transferred not only is the office with the Mass of the transferred feast performed, but also the obligations of hearing

Mass and abstaining from servile works are observed, the Mass for the people must be applied on the day to which it is transferred; otherwise on the day from which it is transferred (canon 339, § 3).

2. One who is bound by the obligation of applying must himself apply Mass personally (canon 339, § 4, compared with canons 306 and 466, § 1). Nevertheless, a legitimately absent pastor can apply Mass for the people either personally in the place where he is staying, or through the priest who takes his place in the parish (canon 466, § 5). If someone on the same day is urged by the burden of both Masses, namely for the people and conventual, let him celebrate and apply the latter personally, and the former through another or personally on the following day (canon 419, § 2).
3. A pastor legitimately absent, if he does not apply personally, and likewise one legitimately impeded from personally applying Mass for the people, should apply through another on the appointed days.

Legitimately impeding causes are: 1. physical or moral inability; 2. the obligation of celebrating conventual Mass, if the pastor is also a canon (canon 419, § 2). But the following do not legitimately impede: 1. the mere custom of applying through another;¹ 2. the custom of applying now personally, now through another, for example through a chaplain, if the latter celebrates solemn Mass;² 3. the liturgical precept which wills that the Mass for the people be conformed to the office. Hence if the external solemnity of some feast is transferred, and in the transfer a votive Mass is sung, the pastor cannot, so that he himself may celebrate that votive Mass, leave the application for the people to the chaplain or another; 4. the celebration of a funeral Mass, even with the corpse present.³

4. One who can apply neither personally nor through another on the appointed days should apply as soon as possible, either personally or through another, on another day (cited canon).
5. The real obligation, that is, either of applying for the people or of taking care that it be applied for them, is grave. The obligation of applying personally, at the fixed time, and, if the matter concerns a pastor, in the parish church, is grave from its genus, so that he would sin gravely who frequently neglected these things.
6. One who has not satisfied the obligation should as soon as possible apply for the people as many Masses as he omitted (canon 339, § 6, compared with canons 306 and 466, § 1).
7. One who applies Mass for the people in place of the pastor can receive a stipend for that Mass; but an impeded pastor is bound at his own expense to take care that it be applied for the people.

¹ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 22 September 1847.

² Sacred Congregation of the Council, 9 April 1881.

³ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 26 January 1771.

Chapter III. On the Obligation by Reason of Precept or Promise

214 I. The celebration of Mass can be commanded by a competent superior. This is clear from what was said about the object of law and precept (vol. I, n. 117).

II. The application of Mass can be commanded as follows:

1. The Supreme Pontiff can certainly do this, insofar as he determines divine law, as if he prescribes that those having care of souls should sometimes celebrate for the people.

2. Religious superiors can do the same, at least by force of dominative power, with respect to their subjects, provided that the vow emitted in religion is so understood;¹ they can transfer to subjects the obligation of justice annexed to a stipend received (St. Alphonsus, VI, 317, question 4).
3. It is disputed whether ecclesiastical superiors who enjoy only the power of jurisdiction can do the same; likewise whether the superior of a religious institute can do the same by force of the same power. The Sacred Congregation of the Council, in the Vigevano case,² admits the affirmative opinion (cf. vol. I, n. 117).

III. One who has promised a Mass gratuitously is bound under venial sin, namely from fidelity, to stand by what was promised, unless he intended to bind himself under grave sin, or from justice (St. Alphonsus, VI, 317, question 4; vol. I, n. 864).

¹ Sacred Congregation of Religious, 3 May 1914.

² 8 May 1920 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1920, p. 536).

Chapter IV. On the Obligation by Reason of Stipend

Article I. On the Stipend Considered in Itself

215 I. Notion and origin. A stipend is an offering, that is, money or a thing estimable by price, which someone offers to a priest under this burden: that the priest apply the special fruit of the Mass to his, that is, the offerer's, intention. Hence the contract constituted once the stipend has been accepted takes on the nature of the contract: I give that you may do (cf. canon 1544, § 2).

The most remote origin is found in the offerings which the faithful in antiquity, when they came together for performing sacred rites, brought to the altar within the Mass itself (at the Offertory), both as a sign of communion with the Church and of participation in the Sacrifice itself, and also to provide for the necessary expenses of divine worship and for the support of the clergy (who were leading a common life) and of the poor.

In the first centuries of the Church, indeed, offerings of this kind were made only in bread and wine, then also in produce, oil, and incense. But already long before the eighth century the custom prevailed that, in place of the aforesaid offerings, or at least together with them, money was contributed as an offering for the sacrifice, destined for the common chest or treasury of the church. Then, as the common life of clerics gradually ceased, and especially as the private Masses of individual priests multiplied, the faithful began also to bestow an offering in money specifically upon individual priests for a sacrifice to be specifically applied for them. Traces of this practice are already found in documents of the eighth century; its universal use already came down in the twelfth century.¹

¹ Vlaming, *Institutiones Iuris Ecclesiastici*, n. 349.

216 II. Division. Stipends are divided into manual stipends, stipends after the manner of manual stipends, and founded stipends. Manual stipends are those which are offered by the faithful for Masses, either from their own devotion, as it were into the hand, or from an obligation, even perpetual, imposed by a testator upon his own heirs (canon 826, § 1). The latter burden the patrimony of some family. Stipends for founded Masses are called "after the manner of manual

stipends" when they cannot be applied in their own place, or by those who ought to apply them according to the tables of the foundation, and therefore by law or by indult of the Holy See must be handed over to other priests so that satisfaction may be made for them (canon 826, § 2). Thus stipends of founded Masses become after the manner of manual stipends when they are transmitted to others who satisfy them. Founded stipends are those which are received from the revenues of foundations (canon 826, § 3; n. 233).

217 III. Lawfulness. According to the received and approved custom and institution of the Church, it is lawful for any priest celebrating and applying Mass to receive an alms or stipend (canon 824, § 1). The reason is that the stipend is not given and accepted after the manner of a price, that is, as a thing with which the Mass is exchanged - which would be simoniacal - but as a thing which is owed to the priest insofar as it is just that one who must serve the utility of others be supported by those others, according to these words of Sacred Scripture: "The laborer is worthy of his food";¹ "Who ever serves as a soldier at his own expense?"² (St. Thomas, II-II, q. 100, a. 2; St. Alphonsus, VI, 316, 320, doubt 4).

Thus it is lawful, even for a wealthy priest, to accept a stipend for a Mass. Nevertheless it would be little praiseworthy to celebrate principally on account of the stipend. Indeed, St. Alphonsus judges that one who acts thus is not easily excused from venial sin, "since it is a certain disorder to direct spiritual things to temporal things" (VI, 317; III, 55, question 6).

Note 1. It is also lawful, as Benedict XIV teaches,³ for priests celebrating with the bishop, for example in the Mass of ordination, to accept a stipend. Likewise it is permitted for newly ordained priests to receive an alms for the three Masses imposed upon them by the bishop (St. Alphonsus, VI, 829).

Note 2. One who celebrates several times in a day, if on one occasion he applies from a title of justice, cannot, except on the day of the Nativity of the Lord, receive an alms for another Mass, apart from some remuneration from an extrinsic title (canon 824, § 2). It is said:

1. **From a title of justice**, for example because of a stipend received, or if a pastor from office applies for the people; in this case, therefore, the pastor cannot receive a stipend for either Mass. For the rest, it is the same whether the Mass which has a stipend annexed is said in the first place or in the second place.
2. **He cannot receive an alms for another Mass.** Nevertheless nothing prevents him - provided that he does not receive an alms - from saying another Mass from a title of fidelity or charity; or even of justice, provided that the title of justice is not founded in stipend or in office.⁴
3. **From an extrinsic title**, for example of chant, hour, or place.⁵

Note 3. From canon 825 it is never lawful:

1. To apply a Mass to the intention of one who is going to request the application with an alms offered, but has not yet requested it, and to retain the alms afterward given for the Mass previously applied (n. 1; cf. n. 208).
2. To receive an alms for a Mass which is owed and applied by another title (n. 2). By another title, whether of justice, fidelity, obedience, etc. The reasons are: both because in the case the one who gave the stipend is more probably deprived of some fruit to which he has a right (n. 207); and

because the one giving the stipend, according to received usage, judges that the Mass is applied for himself alone, while the priest accepting the stipend tacitly binds himself to that.

3. To accept a double alms for the application of the same Mass (n. 3; cf. n. 207).
4. To receive one alms for the celebration alone and another for the application, unless it is certain that one offering was made for celebration without application.

¹ Matthew 10:10.

² 1 Corinthians 9:7.

³ *De sacrificio Missae*, book III, chapter 11.

⁴ Cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council, 14 September 1878 (*Collectio*, n. 1500).

⁵ By these words the prohibition of the Sacred Congregation of the Council (15 October 1915), which existed on 2 November, was removed (Pontifical Commission, 13 December 1923, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1924, p. 116). Moreover, Pius IX, by decree of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 15 October 1863, granted to Ordinaries of missions the faculty of allowing, when a just and grave cause intervenes, that priests subject to them may receive a stipend even for a second Mass to be celebrated on the same day. Even outside mission territory such indulgences are sometimes granted, but only conditionally, namely under the condition that the Masses be applied according to the mind of the bishop, who will receive the alms so that he may expend them for pious causes. If these pious causes are not further indicated, it is also lawful, indeed preferable, that the bishop expend them "in favor of poor priests, not excluding those who repeat the Sacred rite, insofar as they need assistance" (Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, 7 August 1909, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* I, pp. 767-771; cf. especially the report of the consultor prefixed to this decision). In the case, however, the whole alms is to be sent to the bishop (Sacred Congregation of the Council, 27 February 1905; *N. K. St.*, p. 134). Thus Aertnys-Damen, vol. II, n. 202.

218 **IV. The just stipend.** It belongs to the local Ordinary to define the manual stipend for Masses in his diocese by decree, issued as far as possible in diocesan synod; nor is it lawful for a priest to demand more than this (canon 831, § 1). Where a decree of the Ordinary is lacking, the custom of the diocese is to be observed (canon 831, § 2). Even religious, although exempt, must stand, concerning the manual stipend, by the decree of the local Ordinary or by the custom of the diocese (canon 831, § 3). Moreover:

1. A larger stipend than the local Ordinary or the custom of the diocese has established cannot be demanded. Nevertheless, when more ample stipends are generally provided, it does not seem illicit to say: "I cannot personally discharge your stipends unless you give as much as others have given."¹ Besides, it is not per se prohibited to require compensation for extraordinary labor or inconvenience, for example if a sung Mass is requested, or one to be said at a certain time or place, or if a journey must be made (St. Alphonsus, III, 55).

Corollary. One who demands a stipend larger than the statute permits sins against religion, for the law obliges from this virtue; likewise he sins against justice if he demands more than is fitting. He is not, however, guilty of simony unless he sells something spiritual, for example by demanding a larger stipend because of an indulgence annexed to an altar.

2. A larger stipend freely offered can be accepted (canon 832); nor can the bishop prohibit a larger one from being offered.²
3. Likewise a smaller stipend can be accepted, unless the local Ordinary has prohibited it (canon 832). If a prohibition has been made, it is not judged prohibited to accept a smaller stipend if a

reason of mercy requires it.

4. If someone has offered a sum of money for the application of Masses, without indicating their number, this number is to be computed according to the alms of the place in which the offerer was staying, unless it ought legitimately to be presumed that his intention was otherwise (canon 830). These things are also to be applied to a testator.

¹ Aertnys-Damen, II, n. 207.

² Sacred Congregation of the Council, 16 January 1649.

Article II. On the Acceptance of Stipends and on the Obligation Arising from It

219 I. Acceptance of stipends. 1. It is lawful for no one to receive so many burdens of Masses to be celebrated by himself that he cannot satisfy them within a year - understand: from the day the obligation was undertaken - (canon 835), whether because the number offered exceeds the days of the year, or because the priest has already undertaken so many burdens that he cannot fulfill new ones within a year. The decree *Ut debita* contained the same disposition, with this addition: "yet always preserving the contrary will of those offering"; since this addition has been omitted in the Code, the liberty seems more restricted. Nor, however, should the new law be taken in such a way that, for example, it would be considered illicit to receive a stipend for twelve anniversary Masses.

2. In churches in which, on account of the peculiar devotion of the faithful, alms for Masses flow in such abundance that all the Masses cannot be celebrated there in due time, the faithful are to be warned, by a notice placed in a conspicuous and obvious place, that the Masses offered will be celebrated either there, when this can conveniently be done, or elsewhere (canon 836).

220 II. The obligation arising from a stipend regards both the celebration and application according to the intention of the one giving the stipend, and the circumstances intended by him, and the time determined either by him or by the Church. It is, moreover, an obligation of justice; nor does it stand in the way of this obligation that the one giving the stipend is ignorant of the norms established by the Church concerning time. It suffices that he intends the Mass as it is to be said according to the Church; but the priest, by accepting the stipend, tacitly binds himself to the norms established by the Church.

221 1. Celebration and application according to the intention of the one giving the stipend is imposed principally, and indeed for each individual stipend. Hence canon 828: "There are to be celebrated and applied as many Masses as there have been stipends, even small ones, given and accepted." Moreover, the omission of even only one Mass is certainly grave if the matter of the stipend with respect to the giver is grave, and there is not question of a large number of Masses to be celebrated for the same intention.

It is disputed, first, whether the omission of one Mass to be celebrated because of a stipend whose matter is light is grave. Several deny it; but with St. Alphonsus (VI, 317, q. 3) and others we affirm it. For an obligation owed from justice is grave if there is question of a grave thing, such as a Mass is. But that he who is deprived of the good of the Mass can obtain another Mass with a small stipend in no way prevents the one who is bound from justice to furnish a grave good from being bound under grave sin to do this.

It is disputed, second, whether the omission of one Mass is grave if there is question of a large number of Masses to be celebrated for the same intention. But the argument alleged above seems also to support the opinion which teaches that the omission is grave in this case too.

It is disputed, third, whether one who has received a small stipend is bound under grave sin to restore it in the case in which he can neither say the Mass himself nor take care that it be said by another, for he is bound to these things. Now this seems altogether to be denied, since it does not appear that the obligation of restoring a light thing is grave.

222 2. Due circumstances. On this point, first let canon 833 be noted: The offerer is presumed to have asked only for the application of the Mass; if, however, the offerer expressly determined that certain circumstances were to be observed in the celebration of the Mass, the priest, accepting the alms, must stand by his will. These points are especially to be noted:

a) **The circumstance of place.** Founded Masses must be celebrated in the place designated by the founder. It would be a grave sin often and without just cause to depart from this rule (St. Alphonsus, VI, 329). Nevertheless the beneficiary is not bound personally to celebrate the Masses, unless the founder expressly established this (St. Alphonsus, VI, 330). Moreover, the bishop can, by interpreting the will of the founder, permit by way of dispensation that for a just cause the Mass be celebrated in another place (St. Alphonsus, VI, 329).

As regards manual Masses, the circumstance of place must be observed under grave sin if, considering the circumstances, the place must be judged to pertain to the substance of the obligation, as easily happens if there is question of a nuptial Mass, a funeral Mass, or a Mass to be celebrated before a miraculous image. If the assigned place does not pertain to the substance of the obligation, neglect of it is light, and for a just cause not foreseen it becomes lawful.

b) **The circumstance of a privileged altar.** Concerning this, note:

alpha) One who is bound to celebrate at a privileged altar does not satisfy by applying another plenary indulgence to the deceased.¹

beta) A priest having the personal privilege of a privileged altar satisfies, even though he celebrates at an altar that is not privileged.²

gamma) The quality of a Requiem Mass, feria, or vigil, and likewise the addition of the prayer for the deceased, is no longer required for the value of the indulgence.³

delta) One who has not satisfied the circumstance of a privileged altar is bound to compensation, for example to applying another plenary indulgence to the soul of the deceased; he can accomplish this, for example, by saying the prayer *En ego*, etc. (St. Alphonsus, VI, 329).

c) **The circumstance of the quality of the Mass** - for example, of a Requiem or votive Mass - if it is expressly determined,⁴ must be observed under venial sin, but not under grave sin, because there is no question of the substance, but only of an accessory of the contract. But if the rubrics prohibit the quality of the Mass from being observed, generally, from the presumed consent of the one giving the stipend, the obligation is satisfied by another Mass. It is more advisable, however, that if it can conveniently be done, the requested Mass be said on another day.⁵ If the priest foresees that the requested quality of the Mass cannot be observed on the assigned day, the offerer should be forewarned.

d) **The circumstance of Gregorian Masses** entails that thirty Masses be celebrated for the same deceased person (by one priest or by several priests), and this through thirty uninterrupted days. Moreover, one who voluntarily interrupted the series is bound to begin it anew; if someone did this involuntarily, it suffices that he complete the number and in some way compensate the detriment, for example by applying a plenary indulgence.

¹ Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, 2 May 1852; 24 July 1885 (*Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 18, p. 94).

² Sacred Congregation of Indulgences, 15 March 1852.

³ Holy Office, 19 February 1913 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1913, p. 122).

⁴ The quality of the Mass is expressly determined if a Mass of **Requiem** or a votive Mass, for example of St. Gerard, is requested; but not if it is requested for a certain intention. It is disputed whether or not it is sufficiently determined if a Mass is requested for a deceased person, or in honor of St. Gerard, or for a living person. Most deny it; indeed they rightly judge that generally only the application is intended, and in no way the quality of the Mass. Others say otherwise, but the response of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (3 March 1761, n. 2461, ad VII), on which they rely, does not settle our question when rightly posed. For the Sacred Congregation responded: "On days on which private votive Masses or Masses of the dead can be said, a priest bound to them by reason of a foundation or an accepted manual stipend does not satisfy his own obligation by saying the Mass of the occurring day; for the expressed will of testators or petitioners, provided it is reasonable, must be fulfilled." But we ask when he is bound to the quality of the Mass.

⁵ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, 30 June 1896, n. 3922, General Decree, § IV, n. 3; 13 June 1899, n. 4031, ad IV.

223 3. Due time. Founded Masses and Masses after the manner of manual Masses must be celebrated on the day and at the hour designated by the founder. It would be a grave sin often and without just cause to depart from this rule (St. Alphonsus, VI, 329). Nevertheless the bishop can, by interpreting the will of the founder, permit by way of dispensation that for a just cause the Mass be celebrated on another day or at another hour (St. Alphonsus, VI, 329).

As regards manual Masses, receive these points:

a) If the offerer has expressly assigned a time, the Masses must absolutely be celebrated at that time (canon 834, § 1). A lengthy delay is a grave sin; likewise a slight delay is grave if it is such that a Mass requested for an instant necessity is not said in good time, according to what is to be said under c.

b) If the offerer has expressly left the time to the judgment of the priest, the priest will be able to celebrate them at the time which is more pleasing to himself, with the prescription of canon 835 remaining firm (canon 834, § 3); compare that canon with n. 219.

c) If the offerer has expressly assigned no time for the celebration of manual Masses:

alpha) Masses offered for an urgent cause must be celebrated as soon as possible within the useful time (canon 834, § 2, 1). Neglect of the useful time is gravely illicit and carries with it the obligation of restoring the stipend.

beta) In other cases the Masses must be celebrated within a moderate time, according to the greater or smaller number of Masses (canon 834, § 2, 2). In this matter, the decree *Ut debita* can be taken as a norm; it established that "the useful time for fulfilling obligations of manual Masses is one month for one Mass, six months for one hundred Masses, and another longer or shorter space of time more or less, according to the greater or smaller number of Masses" (n. 2).¹ Besides, the Sacred Congregation

of the Council responded that the prescribed terms are to be understood separately with regard to each one who offers a stipend, not cumulatively with regard to all who offer. For the rest, a delay greater than is just, such as by force of natural law seems to be one which exceeds the time assigned above, is gravely or lightly illicit, according as it is notable or light. Moreover, a delay longer than a month beyond the legitimate time, and indeed even a shorter delay if there is question of the recently deceased, seems notable. Finally, it is equitable that some number from the Masses for the recently deceased be celebrated as quickly as possible (St. Alphonsus, VI, 317, question 2).

¹ As regards intermediate numbers, the Sacred Congregation of the Council responded on 27 February 1905: "the matter is left to the discreet judgment and conscience of priests according to the decree and the rules handed down by approved doctors." Hence these can be established:

Time	Number of Masses
2 months	20
3 months	40
4 months	60
5 months	80
6 months	100
12 months	200

Moreover, a further delay can be granted by the Holy See. 27 February 1905, ad XI.

224 III. Cessation of the obligation. Although the alms for Masses already received have perished without the fault of the one who is burdened with celebrating, the obligation does not cease (canon 829). The reason is clear: for the fact that the priest is deprived of his own thing, that is, of the stipend received, does not deprive another of the right, received and perfected through the handing over of the stipend, that Mass be applied to his intention. Nevertheless, one who has lost the alms, for example, can take care that another celebrate the Mass for a smaller stipend.

Article III. On the Distribution and Transmission of Masses

225 I. To what extent someone must or can distribute or transmit Masses you may gather from these points:

1. One who has Masses to be celebrated by others should distribute them as soon as possible, with the prescription of canon 841 remaining firm; but the legitimate time for their celebration begins from the day on which the priest who is going to celebrate them received them, unless something else is clear (canon 837). There is question, for example, of the administrator of a pious cause, of an executor of a testament, of an heir. Let them distribute the Masses as soon as possible, lest the celebration be delayed too much.
2. Those who have a number of Masses of which they may freely dispose can give them to priests acceptable to themselves, provided they know well that these priests are above every exception or are recommended by the testimony of their own Ordinary (canon 838).¹ It is said **to priests**; hence it is not lawful to hand them over, for example, to booksellers, etc. Nevertheless nothing

prevents their being handed over to a priest who distributes them among other priests. They can also be handed over to priests who live or are staying in another diocese,² since the Code does not distinguish and requires only that the priest be above every exception, that is, truly trustworthy, or recommended by his own Ordinary, that is, the Ordinary of the one accepting, although perhaps he is living in another diocese. Moreover, the disposition of some provincial councils, by which it is forbidden for stipends to be sent to another diocese without the permission of the Ordinary, is sustained only - unless a privilege is added³ - with respect to founded Masses, Masses after the manner of manual Masses, or manual Masses given with regard to a pious cause.⁴ From these things you may deduce what the local Ordinary can do in this matter.

3. All and individual administrators of pious causes, or persons bound in any way to fulfill Mass burdens, whether clerics or laypersons, at the end of each year should hand over to their Ordinaries, according to the manner to be defined by these Ordinaries, the Mass burdens for which satisfaction has not yet been made. This time, however, is to be taken in such a way that in Masses after the manner of manual Masses the obligation of depositing them runs from the end of that year within which the burdens ought to have been fulfilled; but in manual Masses, after a year from the day the burden was undertaken, with the different will of those offering preserved (canon 841, §§ 1 and 2). Namely, those offering manual stipends can grant that the Masses be delayed more than a year.

¹ Cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council, 17 July 1655.

² By these provisions the decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council (22 May 1897, *Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 40, p. 344), by which stipends could not be transmitted to priests residing outside the diocese except through their Ordinary, or at least after he had been heard and had consented, was removed. Likewise the decrees which prohibited the direct transmission of Masses to Oriental priests seem to have been removed.

³ A privilege of this kind was granted for a time to the bishops of Holland.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 19 February 1921.

226 II. Those who hand over to others for celebration Masses received from the faithful or in any way committed to their trust are held by the obligation until they have obtained testimony from them of the obligation accepted and of the stipend received (canon 839). Thus positive law does not extend itself more broadly; but with natural law considered, one would not be immune from obligation if he transmitted a Mass whose obligation of celebration he himself had undertaken, and afterward learned that the celebration of the Mass was being neglected (cf. n. 224).

227 III. One who transmits Masses is bound to transmit the stipend, as follows:

1. One who transmits manual Mass stipends to others must transmit what has been accepted in full, unless either the offerer expressly permits something to be retained, or it is certainly clear that the excess above the diocesan tax was given in consideration of the person (canon 840, § 1). Thus, per se, the celebrant has the right to receive the whole stipend, and indeed either in its own species, or, if the priest who is going to celebrate consents, in an equivalent,¹ for example in books. Likewise, even without the consent of the celebrant, if there is question of vicars living in the pastor's house, the excess of the common stipend can be given to them in board and service.² Finally, as regards the same vicars, the custom can be sustained that they always celebrate

according to the intention of the pastor, who grants them board and service, while they receive a determined pension from the treasury of the church or from the pastor.³

One who transmits a manual offering can retain something: 1. when the offerer expressly permits it; 2. when it is certain that the excess above the diocesan tax was given in consideration of the person, for example because the one to whom the Mass was offered is poor, or a relative, friend, or even pastor of the offerer;⁴ 3. if the excess of the customary tax pertains to stole fees, as if there is question of a nuptial or funeral Mass.⁵ In other cases the one who is going to celebrate has the right to the whole stipend. Nothing, however, prevents him, by yielding his right altogether spontaneously, from leaving the offering or part of it to the one transmitting. But now, just as before, it seems illicit to ask the one who is going to celebrate to yield the stipend or part of it. For, considering the Constitution of Benedict XIV *Quanta cura*,⁶ where a request of this kind is called an execrable abuse, and canon 827, it must be doubted whether the old law has been changed. In doubt, however, one must not depart from the old law (canon 6, 4).

2. In Masses after the manner of manual Masses, unless the mind of the founder stands in the way, the excess is legitimately retained, and it suffices to remit only the manual alms of the diocese in which the Mass is celebrated, if the ample alms takes the place in part of the endowment of the benefice or pious cause (canon 840, § 2). Whether or not the added condition has place is to be gathered: 1. from the tables of the foundation themselves, when they expressly testify that the whole annual fruit of the foundation was designated as stipend; 2. from the nature of the benefice to which the foundation is annexed, namely if all or the greatest part of the revenues of the benefice consist in these stipends; 3. from custom, when more ample stipends have always been held as a part of the revenues; and 4. from an authentic declaration of the Ordinary.⁷

¹ The decree *Ut debita* prescribed that stipends were to be handed over in full and in their own species (article 9).

² Sacred Congregation of the Council, 25 February 1905, in the Breda case, ad I (*Acta Sanctae Sedis*, vol. 38, p. 15); 25 February 1910, in the Luxembourg case (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1910, p. 203).

³ Sacred Congregation of the Council, in the Breda case, ad III (*Acta Sanctae Sedis*, loc. cit.); 10 January, in the Montesson case (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1920, p. 70).

⁴ Cf. Sacred Penitentiary, 6 April 1742 (*Collectio*, n. 336); Sacred Congregation of the Council, 31 January 1880.

⁵ Cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council, 25 July 1874 (*Collectio*, n. 1422); 11 May 1888.

⁶ 30 June 1741.

⁷ N. K. *Stemmen*, 1918, p. 9; Aertnys-Damen, II, n. 212.

228 Corollary I. At the request of either party it is lawful to exchange intentions, while the unequal stipend is retained, if this is done so that offices are exchanged;¹ otherwise, if it is done principally for the sake of taking profit.² The reason for the former is that every base gain is absent. The reason for the latter is that illicit gain does not seem to be absent; cf. canon 827 (St. Alphonsus, VI, 322, doubt 4).

Corollary II. One who by office has care of distributing stipends can demand a moderate payment from those to whom the Masses are distributed (St. Alphonsus, VI, 322, doubt 8). And generally, one who transmits Masses can deduct expenses of administration and transfer.³ Administrators of churches, however, cannot retain part of the stipend for the expenses of altars, servers, light, wine, hosts, etc., unless the church is pressed by poverty⁴ (St. Alphonsus, 322, doubt 5). Nor is it lawful to

subtract anything from the manual alms which the faithful are accustomed to hand over to more celebrated shrines, in order to provide for their dignity and ornament.⁵

Corollary III. One who unduly retains part of a stipend sins against strict justice, and therefore is bound to restitution from the same virtue, as follows:

1. An executor of a testament who retains part of the sum to be expended in Mass stipends certainly violates strict justice. The same, according to the Constitution of Benedict XIV *Quanta cura*, § 1 sq., must be said of those who collect stipends for this end: that Masses be celebrated elsewhere, where stipends are smaller.
2. There is dispute about others; but with St. Alphonsus (VI, 322, doubt 1) it seems altogether to be affirmed. For ownership of the stipend is not acquired except according to the intention of the giver. But the intention of the giver seems to be that the one who fulfills the burden also receive the stipend. **Objection.** Nothing prevents the recipient of the stipend from fulfilling the burden through another. **Response.** Granted; but from the intention of the one giving the stipend, in other words, by force of this contract, that other person who fulfills the burden seems to receive a right in the stipend given. From what has been said, against some authors it is also deduced that the stipend must be restored to the celebrant, not to the one giving the alms (St. Alphonsus, VI, loc. cit.).

¹ For example, a missionary occupied with spiritual exercises takes upon himself the Mass and intention announced for the sixth hour, so that a chaplain, a sufficiently sick old man, may be able to celebrate; and he hands over to this chaplain his own intention to be discharged, without any discussion about exchanging stipends.

² For example, someone has a Mass with an ample stipend to be celebrated today. But, hindered unexpectedly from celebrating, he summons another priest and proposes to him, who has a smaller stipend, that the Masses be exchanged, namely so that he himself takes upon himself the other priest's intention to be discharged on the following day.

³ Sacred Congregation of the Council, in the Breda case, 25 February 1905, *Mens est*.

⁴ Constitution of Innocent XII, *Nuper*, ad VII.

⁵ Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council *Ut debita* (article 11).

Article IV. On Abuses to Be Avoided in Accepting Stipends

229 From Mass stipends, thus canon 827, every kind even of negotiation or commerce is altogether to be kept away. This canon is neglected: 1. by those who of their own accord retain part of the stipend (n. 227); 2. by those who ask others that, when Masses have been transferred, they may retain part of the stipend (n. 227); 3. by booksellers or merchants who collect stipends and, in place of them, give books, periodicals, or other merchandise to priests who are going to celebrate the Masses,¹ whether with profit (commerce) or without profit (a species of commerce). The author of the stipend, however, can offer other things to the one who is going to celebrate, in place of money.

¹ Decree *Ut debita* of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, 11 May 1904 (article 8); cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council, 9 September 1874; decree *Vigilanti studio*, 23 May 1893.

Article V. On the Safeguards of the Law

230 **I. Supervision.** The right and duty of watching so that Mass burdens are fulfilled belongs, in churches of seculars, to the local Ordinary; in churches of religious, to their superiors (canon 842).

231 **II. Notation of Masses.** 1. Rectors of churches and of other pious places, whether secular or religious, in which alms for Masses are customarily received, should have a special book in which they accurately note the number, intention, alms, and celebration of the Masses received (canon 843, § 1). Ordinaries are held by the obligation of examining books of this kind, either personally or through others, at least once each year (canon 843, § 2). Ordinaries, that is, local Ordinaries or major superiors in exempt clerical religious institutes (canon 198, § 1).

2. Likewise local Ordinaries and religious superiors who entrust Masses to be celebrated to their own subjects or to others should quickly enter in order into a book the Masses which they have received with their alms, and should take care according to their powers that they be celebrated as soon as possible. Indeed, all priests, whether secular or religious, must accurately note which Mass intentions each one has received and which he has satisfied (canon 844). It suffices, however, that one note the Masses through another.

232 **III. Penalties.** Those who have offended against the prescription of canon 827, 828, or 840, § 1 are to be punished by the Ordinary according to the gravity of the fault, not excluding, if the matter bears it, suspension or privation of an ecclesiastical benefice or office, or, if there is question of laypersons, excommunication (canon 2324). The penalties of *latae sententiae* previously established have been abrogated.

Scholion I. On Pious Foundations

233 **I. Notion and nature.** By the name of pious foundations are signified temporal goods given in any way to some moral person in the Church, with the burden, in perpetuity or for a long time, of celebrating some Masses from the annual revenues, or of fulfilling other predefined ecclesiastical functions, or of performing some works of piety and charity (canon 1544, § 1). A foundation, once legitimately accepted, takes on the nature of a synallagmatic contract: I give that you may do (canon 1544, § 2).

Note. It belongs to the local Ordinary (or, if there is question of pious foundations in churches, even parochial ones, of exempt religious, to the major superior) to prescribe norms concerning the amount of endowment below which a pious foundation cannot be admitted, and concerning the proper distribution of its fruits (canon 1545, compared with canon 1550).

234 **II. Acceptance of a foundation.** 1. In order that foundations of this kind can be accepted by a moral person, the consent of the local Ordinary is required, given in writing (or, if there is question of exempt religious, the consent of the major superior), who should not furnish it before he has legitimately ascertained that the moral person is able to satisfy both the new burden to be undertaken and the old burdens already undertaken. Above all, he should take care that the revenues correspond altogether to the burdens annexed, according to the custom of each diocese. In the acceptance, constitution, and administration of a foundation, the patron of the church has no right (canon 1546).

2. Foundations, even those made orally, are to be committed to writing. One copy of the records is to be kept safely in the archive of the Curia (or of the major superior), and the other in the archive of the moral person to which the foundation pertains (canon 1548).

Note 1. Money and movable goods assigned under the name of donation are immediately to be deposited in a safe place, designated by the same Ordinary (or major superior), for this end: that the same money or the value of the movable goods be preserved and, as soon as possible, be invested cautiously and usefully according to the prudent judgment of the same Ordinary, after those whose interest is involved and the diocesan council of administration (or the council of the major superior) have been heard, for the benefit of the same foundation, with express and individual mention of the burden (canon 1547).

Note 2. With the prescriptions of canons 1514-1517 and canon 1525 observed, in any church there is to be drawn up a table of the burdens incumbent from pious foundations, which is to be kept by the rector in a safe place (canon 1549, § 1). Likewise, besides the book of which canon 843, § 1 speaks, another book is to be kept and preserved by the rector, in which the individual perpetual and temporary burdens, their fulfillment, and the alms are noted, so that an exact account of all these things may be rendered to the local Ordinary (or major superior) (canon 1549, § 2).

Note 3. If there is question of churches, even parochial ones, of exempt religious, all the things set forth above must be observed, but in such a way that the assigned rights and duties belong exclusively to the major superior (canon 1550). But if there is question of churches of non-exempt religious, the rights set forth are reserved to the local Ordinary, even if the parish has been united to the religious house with full right (cited canon, compared with the response of the Pontifical Commission).¹

¹ 25 July 1926, ad IV (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1926, p. 393).

235 III. The obligation of a foundation, as regards Masses, is both to celebrate as many Masses as have been established, and to fulfill the other things imposed by the founder, for example as to the quality of the Mass, place, altar, hour, etc. (n. 220). The obligation of celebrating as many times as is expressed in the foundation is grave. How great the obligation of the other adjuncts is must be gathered from what has been said generally about the obligation arising from a stipend (n. 222). Neglect of the adjuncts does not induce the obligation of celebrating another Mass, or of restoring the stipend or part of it, unless the priest accepted an excess of stipend in consideration of a greater inconvenience; for example, if he accepted a larger stipend for a sung Mass and did not sing it. For the rest, note:

1. Unless it is otherwise expressed, someone can fulfill the burden either personally or through another (St. Alphonsus, VI, 330).
2. If it is not determined for whom the Masses are to be applied, the obligation of applying them to the founder himself is presumed;¹ and all things are safeguarded if the application is made according to the intention of the founder.
3. If the founder did not order all the Masses to be celebrated for himself, but ordered a certain number from them to be celebrated for himself or according to his intention, he is presumed to have left free the application of the remaining Masses (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

4. To a benefice there is sometimes annexed the burden either of celebrating daily or of celebrating and applying daily. Moreover:

a) One who is bound personally to celebrate can sometimes omit Mass for a just cause. Nevertheless he is bound to supply through another if the burden immediately falls upon the church or community; otherwise, if it immediately falls upon the beneficiary. Just causes for sometimes omitting Mass are:

alpha) Religion; namely, the beneficiary can, for the sake of reverence, according to some authors abstain from celebrating once a week, according to others once a month.

beta) A reasonable impediment, such as a journey to be made, spiritual exercises to be performed, etc. To this also belongs:

gamma) Illness. If this is brief, the beneficiary is not bound to supply through another; if it is more lasting, he is bound to supply through another. Illness is judged brief, according to some, if it is of fifteen days; according to others, of one month; according to others, of two months. This last opinion is held by St. Alphonsus as sufficiently probable² (VI, 333).

b) One who is bound personally to celebrate and apply can, just as one who is bound only to celebrate, sometimes omit the sacred rite for a just cause. He can also sometimes - for example six times a year - offer for himself or for others, but he cannot accept a stipend.³ If he does not personally apply, he is bound, as was said of one who must personally celebrate daily, to supply through another if the burden was imposed immediately upon the church, etc.; otherwise, if it was imposed directly upon the beneficiary.

¹ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 18 March 1668; 26 March 1718.

² The declarations of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, 4 June 1689 and 17 November 1695, do not seem to settle the question.

³ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 18 September 1683 (*Collectio*, n. 228); Pontifical Commission, 14 July 1922 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1922, p. 529).

236 IV. Cessation or change of the obligation. The causes of cessation are assigned as reduction, total defect of revenues, and condonation. Reduction is the concession of diminishing the works, for example the number of Masses, established by a pious foundation. Condonation is the concession of omitting works, for example Masses, which ought to have been celebrated in past time. That the Holy See enjoys the faculty of condoning and reducing Masses is clear from c. 2, Clem., *de religiosis domibus* (III, 11), and from the practice of the Church. For the rest, the Holy See can compensate the loss arising to founders, both by supplying from the treasury of the Church and by enjoining other works. Moreover:

1. The reduction of burdens which weigh upon pious foundations is reserved to the Apostolic See alone, unless something else is expressly provided in the tables of the foundation (canon 1551, § 1). Nevertheless, with the reduction of Masses excepted, these words of canon 1517, § 2 hold: "If, however, the execution of the imposed burdens, because of diminished revenues or another cause, without any fault of the administrators, has become impossible, then the Ordinary too, after those whose interest is involved have been heard, and with the will of the founder preserved in the better way possible, will be able equitably to diminish the same burdens." Moreover, an

accidental change made for a time and for a just cause, for example the transfer of a Mass from one hour to another, does not seem to exceed the faculty of the bishop, unless there was a special reason for assigning a certain hour.

"The causes, moreover, on account of which the Apostolic See is accustomed to reduce Masses are: scarcity of priests, slenderness of the stipend or increase of the current stipend, diminution of the revenues of a monastery, or greater necessary expenses for sustenance, etc.; finally, if the necessity of the brethren, or of the fabric of the church or monastery, should press" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 331). For reduction recourse should be had to the Sacred Congregation of the Council.

Note 1. An indult of reducing founded Masses is not extended either to other Masses owed from contract or to other burdens of the pious foundation. But a general indult of reducing the burdens of pious foundations is to be understood, unless something else is clear, in such a way that the holder of the indult should reduce other burdens rather than Masses (canon 1551, §§ 2 and 3).

Note 2. It is advised that the founder insert into the document of foundation the faculty of diminishing the number of Masses if the revenues do not furnish an equitable stipend for the individual Masses.

2. Total defect of revenues; for when these fail, the title on which the burdens rest falls.¹ That the revenues are diminished, or for another reason no longer constitute an equitable stipend, does not per se suffice for the burdens to be diminished; this follows from what was said above. But if the founder assigned a stipend for individual Masses, or did not determine the number of Masses, the number can indeed be diminished proportionately according to the stipend determined for the individual Masses or according to the diocesan tax.
3. Condonation of burdens² is altogether reserved to the Apostolic See. Recourse is to be had for the external forum to the Sacred Congregation of the Council; for the internal forum to the Sacred Penitentiary.

¹ Cf. Sacred Congregation of the Council, 7 July 1686; 18 August 1705.

² Note from canon 1509, 5, that burdens of Masses are not extinguished by prescription.

Scholion II. On Several Masses to Be Offered on the Same Day

237 I. Except on the day of the Nativity of the Lord and on the day of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, on which there is the faculty of offering the Eucharistic Sacrifice three times, it is not lawful for a priest to celebrate several Masses in a day, unless by apostolic indult or by power granted by the local Ordinary (canon 806, § 1). Note, however:

1. **As regards the day of the Nativity of the Lord:** a) One who says only one Mass should take that Mass which corresponds to the hour of celebration, that is, at night the first, at dawn the second, during the day the third.¹ One who - as is lawful² - celebrates only two Masses, if he separates them and does not say both during the day, should proceed in such a way that the Masses correspond to the hour of celebration; if he does not separate them and reads both at night, he should take the first and the other; if at dawn or during the day, he should celebrate the other and the third.

b) One who by apostolic indult can celebrate daily a votive Mass or a Mass of the dead can, even on the day of the Nativity of the Lord, say the same Mass three times,³ that is, either the votive Mass, or, as it seems, one of the three Masses of the Nativity.⁴

2. As regards the day of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed:

a) One who says three Masses must apply one gratuitously for all the faithful departed, another gratuitously according to the intention of the Supreme Pontiff; he can celebrate the third for a stipend. It is also illicit, with the Masses for the departed and according to the intention of the Supreme Pontiff transferred to another day, to say three Masses for a stipend on the day of the Commemoration. But it does not matter which of the three Masses is celebrated for the departed, according to the intention of the Supreme Pontiff, or for a stipend.⁵

b) One who reads only one Mass should take the first Mass of the day, and he can apply it for a stipend. "Let him use the same Mass, that is, the first Mass, who is going to celebrate Mass with chant, with the power granted him of anticipating the second and third."⁶ One who celebrates only two Masses should take the first two Masses of the day; he can apply one for a stipend, and is bound to say one of the two for the departed.⁷

c) One who by apostolic indult can daily celebrate a votive Mass or a Mass of the dead can, even on the day of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, say the same Mass three times.⁸

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 19 June 1875, n. 3354; 13 February 1892, n. 3767, ad 21.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 19 June 1875, n. 3355.

³ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 26 January 1920, n. 4356.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of the Council, 15 October 1915, ad 1, 2, and 3.

⁵ Sacred Congregation of Rites, n. 4331.

⁶ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 28 February 1917, n. 4342.

⁷ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 29 January 1920, n. 4356.

⁸ Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 28 September 1837.

238 II. The Ordinary cannot impart the faculty of celebrating several times in a day unless, in his prudent judgment, because of a scarcity of priests, a notable part of the faithful cannot assist at Mass on a feast day of precept; nor is it in his power to permit more than two Masses to the same priest (canon 806, § 2). Thus:

1. The power of the Ordinary regards only feast days of precept, that is, days on which the faithful are in fact bound to hear Mass; therefore suppressed feast days are excluded.¹
2. The power of the Ordinary regards circumstances in which, if bination is excluded, a notable part of the faithful could not hear the sacred rite. The case is present: 1. if a pastor has two parishes so distant from one another that the people of both cannot conveniently come together in the same church, and there is no priest who may celebrate in the other parish; 2. if a pastor has two groups of people in the same parish distant in the aforesaid way, and there is no priest who may celebrate the other Mass; 3. if a notable part of the parishioners - for example twenty persons² - cannot come together to hear one and the same Mass, whether because of domestic circumstances or because of the narrowness of the church, and no other priest is present who may say the other

Mass. But the Ordinary cannot grant bination in favor of those who wish to satisfy the precept in their own private oratories;³ nor does mere custom suffice,⁴ unless it is centenary and the Ordinary judges that it cannot prudently be removed (canon 5). Moreover, since the faculty of binating has been granted in order that necessity may be met, it cannot be exercised if by chance another priest arrives who can and wishes to say the other Mass. For the rest, note:

a) A faculty granted that in a determinate church Mass may be celebrated twice by the same priest is local, so that it is communicated to another who takes his place. Otherwise one must speak of a faculty granted to someone that he may use it, because of an occurring case, now here, now there; this faculty is personal and cannot be communicated to another, unless the faculty of subdelegating has been added.

b) In a case of sudden necessity, for example if another priest suddenly falls ill and no other can be summoned, the license of the bishop can be presumed,⁵ unless the statutes require that the judgment of the vicar forane intervene.

¹ Cf. Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, where it is said that the concession is to be interpreted rather benignly.

² Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 24 May 1870, n. 6 (*Collectio*, n. 792).

³ Benedict XIV, Constitution *Declarasti nobis*.

⁴ Cf. Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 24 May 1870, nn. 13-17 (*Collectio*, n. 792).

⁵ Cf. Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 24 May 1870, nn. 13-17 (*Collectio*, n. 792).

239 III. Finally, it is sufficiently probable that it is lawful to binate if otherwise a dying person would be deprived of Viaticum.

240 IV. Whenever someone celebrates several times in a day, if he applies one Mass from a title of justice, the priest, except on the day of the Nativity of the Lord, cannot receive an alms for another Mass, apart from some remuneration from an extrinsic title (canon 824, § 2); see these things explained in n. 217.

Chapter II. On the Place of Offering

244 I. Notion of sacred places. The sacred places which come to be considered here are churches and oratories.

1. By the name of church is understood a sacred building dedicated to divine worship, chiefly for this end: that it may serve all the Christian faithful for publicly exercising divine worship (canon 1161).

2. An oratory is a place destined for divine worship, yet not chiefly for this end: that it may serve the whole faithful people for publicly cultivating religion (canon 1188, § 1). An oratory is distinguished as threefold: public, semi-public, and private.

a) It is public if it has been erected principally for the benefit of some college or even of private persons, yet in such a way that all the faithful have a legitimately established right of approaching it, at least during the time of divine offices (canon 1188, § 2, 1).

- b) It is semi-public if it has been erected for the benefit of some community or group of the faithful assembling there, and it is not free for everyone to approach it (canon 1188, § 2, 2).
- c) It is private or domestic if it has been erected in private homes for the benefit only of some family or private person (canon 1188, § 2, 3).

245 II. Consecration and blessing of sacred places. 1. The consecration of a church, although it belongs to regulars, belongs to the Ordinary of the territory in which the place itself is found, provided the Ordinary is marked with the episcopal character, but not to the vicar general without a special mandate, with the right of Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church to consecrate the church and altars of their title remaining firm (canon 1155, § 1). Cardinals, even non-bishops, can consecrate churches everywhere with the consent of the Ordinary (canon 239, § 1, 20); abbots and prelates nullius can do the same (canon 323, § 2).

- b) The right of blessing a sacred place, if it belongs to the secular clergy or to a non-exempt religious institute, or to a lay institute, belongs to the Ordinary of the territory in which the place is found; if it belongs to an exempt clerical religious institute, to the major superior. Each, however, can delegate another priest for this (canon 1156).

Note. Notwithstanding any privilege whatever, no one can consecrate or bless a sacred place without the consent of the Ordinary, whether territorial or religious, according as the circumstances bear (canon 1157); and this also holds for Cardinals, if there is question of a church other than the church of their own title.

246 III. Places in which Mass can be celebrated. Mass can be celebrated:

1. In consecrated or solemnly blessed churches and public oratories (canons 822, § 1; 1165, § 1; 1191).
2. In legitimately erected semi-public oratories, all divine offices or ecclesiastical functions can be celebrated, unless the rubrics stand in the way or the Ordinary has excepted something (canon 1193). The oratories of Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church and of bishops, whether residential or titular, although private, nevertheless enjoy all the rights and privileges by which semi-public oratories rejoice (canon 1189).
3. In legitimately erected private oratories,¹ as follows:
 - a) If they have been erected from an indult of the Apostolic See, unless something else is expressly provided in the same indult, after the Ordinary has visited the oratory personally or through another and found it decently furnished, one Mass can be celebrated, and that a read Mass, on individual days, except the more solemn feasts; but other ecclesiastical functions are not to be performed there (canon 1195, § 1). The Ordinary, however, provided just and reasonable causes are present, different from those on account of which the indult was granted, can permit the celebration of Mass by way of an act even on the more solemn feasts (canon 1195, § 2).
 - b) Even if they have not been erected from an indult of the Holy See but by the authority of the Ordinary, the Ordinary can, in some extraordinary case, for a just and reasonable cause, permit one Mass by way of an act, even repeatedly, but not habitually (canon 1194).

c) In private cemetery chapels, of which canon 1190 speaks, the local Ordinary can permit habitually even the celebration of several Masses (canon 1194).

d) Nuncios, internuncios, and apostolic delegates, from the faculties granted to them, can grant to sick priests, during infirm health, and likewise to priests advanced in age, an indult of a private oratory in which they may celebrate Mass, with the canonical rules observed. Several bishops can do the same.

e) Regulars, by force of the communication of privileges, enjoy the privilege which Gregory XIII granted to the Society of Jesus, that Provincials can, personally and without the permission of the bishop, erect oratories in houses and colleges and in other places where some of the Society will reside; in these oratories several Masses can be celebrated on the same day even by outsiders, and those assisting can fulfill the precept.² Finally, Regulars, by force of the communication of privileges, have the faculty granted to several institutes of erecting private oratories in granges or rural houses; everyone who assists at Mass there can satisfy the precept.

4. Outside a church and oratories, it is lawful to celebrate as follows:

a) The privilege of a portable altar imports the faculty of celebrating everywhere upon a sacred stone, yet in an honorable and decent place, but not at sea (canon 822, § 3).

This privilege is conceded either by law or by indult of the Apostolic See alone (canon 822, § 2). By law it has been conceded to Cardinals and bishops, who can also permit another Mass to be celebrated while they are present (canon 239, § 1, 7; 349, § 1, 1).

b) The local Ordinary, or, if there is question of a house of an exempt religious institute, the major superior, can grant permission of celebrating outside a church and oratory upon a sacred stone and in a decent place, but never in a bedroom, only for a just and reasonable cause, in some extraordinary case and by way of an act (canon 822, § 4). It is said, however, **never in a bedroom**, that is, in a bedroom in which someone is actually lying sick.³ For the rest, the said faculty must be interpreted restrictively.⁴

c) In order that Mass can be said at sea or on a river, a special indult of the Holy See is required, so that the privilege of an altar does not suffice (canon 822, § 3). The special indult belongs to Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church and to bishops (canon 239, § 1, 8; canon 349, § 1, 1).

The indult is customarily granted under this law: that the sea be so calm that no danger is present of spilling the sacred species from the chalice; that another priest, if present, assist; and that, if on the ship there is not a proper chapel or fixed altar, nevertheless the chosen place bear nothing indecent or unbecoming. Nor is celebration in cabins prohibited when all the circumstances remove dangers of irreverence.⁵

d) If necessity urges, and recourse cannot be had to the Ordinary, it is lawful by epikeia to celebrate anywhere, even in the open air, provided the place has nothing unbecoming. Necessity urges, for example, if a church has collapsed and a Sunday or feast still in force as a day of precept is at hand; if an army is in camp and Mass must be heard from precept; if otherwise Viaticum cannot be administered, etc. (St. Alphonsus, VI, 356, 359).

¹ Oratories, both semi-public and private, must be reserved for divine worship alone and free from all domestic uses (canon 1196, § 2).

² Constitution *Decet Romanum Pontificem*, 3 May 1575.

³ Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, 23 December 1912.

⁴ Pontifical Commission, 16 October 1919, ad 12 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1919, p. 478). Then the Sacred Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments, in its letters to the Ordinaries of Italy, 26 July 1924, declared that this just and reasonable cause must be taken from the good of divine worship and the spiritual good of souls (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1924, p. 370). From the response of the same Sacred Congregation, 3 May 1926, the Ordinary also cannot permit celebration at home, with the corpse present in a place commonly called *camera ardente*, except in some extraordinary case, when a just and reasonable cause exists. Such an extraordinary case together with a just and reasonable cause, according to the response of the same Sacred Congregation, is had on the occasion of the death of the local Ordinary or of a person from a princely family, or otherwise distinguished because of merits and good deeds toward the Church or the state, or because of most munificent largesses to the poor and needy. In this case, provided that the due obsequies are always fulfilled in the church, the Ordinary can permit the celebration of one or another Mass, but not more than three Masses, the indult of the Sacred Congregation of Rites of 29 April 1894 having been abrogated (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1926, p. 388). Thus Aertnys-Damen, II, n. 232.

⁵ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, 1 March 1902, compared with 13 March 1902.

247 IV. Places in which Mass cannot be celebrated. Mass cannot be celebrated in the temple of heretics or schismatics, even if it was formerly rightly consecrated or blessed (canon 823, § 1); nor in an execrated, violated, or interdicted church or public oratory, until it has again been consecrated or blessed or reconciled, or the interdict has ceased (canons 822; 1170; 1173, § 1; and 2270, § 1, compared with canon 1191, § 1).

1. **Execration** is had when the holiness of a church or public oratory, inhering in it from dedication, is lost. This, with canon 1170 considered and explained, happens: 1. when the whole building is simultaneously destroyed or collapses; 2. when the greater part of the walls is simultaneously destroyed or collapses; 3. when the building is reduced by the local Ordinary to profane uses. But it does not happen: 1. when the plaster partly or entirely falls from the walls or is removed;¹ 2. when a part which is not the greater part collapses, for example only the roof or only the facade of the church; 3. when walls fall or are destroyed and restored at intervals, even if the whole church becomes new, provided, however, that the greater part does not fall or be destroyed at once (St. Alphonsus, VI, 367, 368).

Note. Once a church has been execrated, the title perishes, as does the recitation of the office and commemoration of the titular patron. An execrated church must again be consecrated or blessed as new.

2. **Violation** consists in this: that the holiness inhering in a church or public oratory is not indeed lost, but nevertheless is contaminated. This happens through certain criminal or at least very indecent acts. Moreover, "a church is violated only by the acts listed below, provided that they are certain, notorious, and placed in the church itself: 1. the crime of homicide; 2. injurious and grave shedding of blood; 3. impious or sordid uses to which the church has been assigned; 4. the burial of an infidel or of an excommunicated person after a declaratory or condemnatory sentence" (canon 1172, § 1). See these things set forth in vol. I, n. 616. Now:

- a) In a violated church, before it is reconciled, it is forbidden to celebrate divine offices (canon 1173, § 1); moreover, a violated church must be reconciled as quickly as possible (canon 1174, § 1).

b) The rector of the same church or any priest with at least the presumed consent of the rector can reconcile a blessed church (canon 1176, § 1). The valid reconciliation of a consecrated church belongs to the bishop or, if it belongs to an exempt clerical religious institute, to the major superior; each can delegate another priest for this (canon 1176, § 2, compared with canon 1156). In a case of grave and urgent necessity, if the Ordinary cannot be approached, it is permitted to the rector of a consecrated church to reconcile the same church, after the Ordinary has afterward been informed (canon 1176, § 3).

c) The reconciliation of a blessed church can be done with common holy water; but the reconciliation of a consecrated church should be done with water blessed for this according to liturgical laws, which nevertheless not only bishops but also the priests who reconcile the church can bless (canon 1177).

3. An interdict of a church, insofar as it prevents the celebration of Mass, is explained in the treatise on ecclesiastical penalties.

¹ Once the plaster has been renewed, the crosses made in testimony of consecration should again be painted or applied (Sacred Congregation of Rites, 4 May 1882, n. 3545).

Chapter III. On the Time of Offering

248 **I. Days of oblation.** The sacrifice of the Mass can be celebrated on all days, except those which are excluded by the priest's own rite (canon 820). Now, with the Latin rite considered:

1. On Thursday in the Supper of the Lord and on Holy Saturday, one Mass is permitted, and indeed only a solemn one. But:

a) If some feast of precept falls on Thursday in the Supper of the Lord, "it must be accurately provided by the local Ordinaries that on that day some private Masses, to be celebrated before the celebration of the customary conventual Mass, are not lacking for the fulfillment of the precept; but nevertheless for this reason the ancient custom of the Communion of the clergy in the solemn Mass of that day, on which the Church recalls the institution and memorial of the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist, retained until now with the greatest religious care, is in no way omitted."¹ If the feast is no longer of precept, it is not lawful to celebrate several Masses.²

b) Cardinals and, provided they are not bound to celebrate in the cathedral, bishops enjoy the privilege of celebrating, or of permitting another to celebrate before them, one Mass on Thursday of the greater week (canons 239, § 1, 4; 349, § 1, 1).

c) Among Regulars, if the solemn functions of the Greater Week are not performed, the superior can personally or through another celebrate a solemn or private Mass to administer Communion to the subjects, but in a domestic chapel or in a church with closed doors.³ "Indeed," says Vermeersch, "although the solemn functions are held, writers concede that on the same day one Mass may be read in the oratory or in the church with closed doors, for the convenience of the sick. And it is clear from the privilege which Gregory XVI granted to the Province of the Society of Jesus which was then called Upper Germany, 4 December 1841."⁴

d) It is fitting that on Thursday of the greater week all clerics, even priests who abstain from offering the sacred rite on that day, be refreshed with the Most Holy Body of Christ in the solemn or conventual Mass (canon 862).

2. On the day of Parasceve, Mass cannot be celebrated unless it would be necessary for confecting Viaticum; in that case the Mass of the Passion of the Lord should be taken. But the Mass which is called the Mass of the Presanctified is not a sacrifice.

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 13 September 1692, n. 1883; 10 January 1693, ad VI, n. 1890.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 26 September 1868, n. 3179.

³ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 31 August 1839, n. 2799.

⁴ *De religiosis institutis et personis*, vol. I, n. 467.

249 II. Hour of oblation. 1. Object of the precept. The beginning of a Mass to be celebrated should not take place earlier than one hour before dawn or later than one hour after noon (canon 821, § 1). Dawn, or morning twilight, begins generally when the sun enters the eighteenth degree below the horizon. It differs according to different regions, insofar as they approach the pole more or less; generally it begins two hours before sunrise, but more than two hours before sunrise in northern regions, for there dawn is prolonged for a longer time. For the rest, tables inserted into calendars are accustomed to indicate the hour of dawn. Where dawn does not appear through some time of the year, it is lawful during that time to begin Mass from the beginning of civil, moral, and usual life, that is, at the time when people are accustomed to rise in the morning for work.¹ The same seems to be applicable to the time when dawn is very late in some regions. Finally, where dawn endures through the whole night during some part of the year, it seems lawful to begin at midnight. Nevertheless, it is not becoming to begin before the second morning hour, because the Church scarcely ever grants the faculty of beginning earlier. Exceptions from the ordinary rule are:

a) On the night of the Nativity of the Lord, only the conventual or parochial Mass can be begun at midnight, but not another without apostolic indult (canon 821, § 2).

b) Nevertheless, in all religious or pious houses having an oratory with the faculty of habitually reserving the Most Holy Eucharist, on the night of the Nativity of the Lord, one priest can celebrate the three ritual Masses, or, with the things to be observed being observed, only one Mass which may also avail for satisfaction of the precept for all those present, and can administer Holy Communion to those requesting it (canon 821, § 3). Moreover, the Holy Office, 26 November 1908, declared that the said Masses cannot be celebrated with the doors of the oratories open, nor in churches which serve the public use of the faithful people.

c) Cardinals and, provided they are not bound to celebrate in the cathedral, bishops enjoy the privilege of celebrating, or of permitting another to celebrate before them, three Masses on the night of the Nativity of the Lord (canons 239, § 1, n. 4; 349, § 1, n. 1).

d) It is disputed whether privileges granted to Regulars before the Council of Trent have been revoked. But the dispute is merely theoretical, since "today, from a privilege granted to the Congregation of the Purity erected at Naples, Regulars can always and everywhere celebrate two hours before dawn and after noon."² Likewise Gregory XVI, by his rescript of 13 May 1838, granted that the Superior General of the Society of Jesus could give the faculty to missionaries that, whether for the sake of a journey or for the sake of devotion, "for themselves or for the people, or for the sake of giving Communion to the faithful waiting, they may celebrate at the second hour after midnight."³

2. **Gravity of the precept.** The obligation of the precept is grave from its genus, as is gathered both from the Council of Trent⁴ and from the Constitution of St. Pius V *In Christo Pater*.⁵ Moreover, it would be a grave sin, without proportionate reason, to begin Mass one hour earlier or later than is lawful by law or privilege.

3. **Causes for anticipating or deferring Mass are:**

- a) That Viaticum may be given to a dying person; in this case no hour is excepted.
- b) An existing reasonable custom, for example that workers and servants may be able to hear the sacred rite very early in the morning; likewise, if on a feast day a solemn Mass is extended an hour and more beyond noon, it is lawful, if there is a custom, to celebrate a private Mass after the solemn sacred rite, lest a part of the people be without Mass.
- c) A reasonable cause, for example a journey to be made, excuses if there is question of anticipating or deferring Mass briefly, for example by half an hour.
- d) Finally, a bishop and the major superior of exempt clerical religious can dispense themselves and their subjects in an urgent case (canon 81; St. Alphonsus, VI, 343 and 344), indeed, as it seems, also from a just cause.⁶

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 2 November 1634, n. 614.

² *Compendium Privilegiorum Piorum Operariorum*, part 2, chapter 5, § 7.

³ Thus Gaude, *Opera Moralia S. Alphonsi*, book VI, n. 342, note.

⁴ Session 22, Decree concerning the things to be observed and avoided.

⁵ 29 March 1566.

⁶ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 7 July 1899, n. 4044, ad IV.

Chapter IV. On the Rite of Offering

Article I. On the Altar and its Ornament

In order that Mass be celebrated according to the prescribed rite, the following are required:

250 **I. An altar, and that consecrated** (canon 822, § 1). Now either the whole altar must be consecrated, if there is question of an immovable altar, or only the portable altar-stone, if there is question of a movable altar (canon 1199, § 1). Moreover, per se Mass must be celebrated on an altar of the proper rite; but when such an altar is lacking, it is lawful for a priest to celebrate according to his own rite on an altar consecrated for another Catholic rite, but not upon the antimensions of the Greeks (canon 823, § 2).¹ Finally, on papal altars no one may celebrate without apostolic indult (canon 823, § 3). With these things summarily noted, several things about the altar must be noted.

1. **Notion of an altar.** In the liturgical sense it is understood: 1. by the name of an immovable or fixed altar, the upper table together with the supports consecrated with it as one thing; 2. by the name of a movable or portable altar, a stone, usually small, which alone is consecrated and which is also called a portable altar-stone or sacred stone; or the same stone together with a support which nevertheless was not consecrated together with it (canon 1197, § 1).

In a consecrated church at least one altar, especially the major altar, must be immovable; but in a blessed church all altars can be movable (canon 1197, § 2).

2. Construction of an altar. a) Both the immovable table and the sacred stone should consist of one natural stone, whole and not friable (canon 1198, § 1).

b) In an immovable altar the stone slab or table must extend to the whole altar and suitably cohere with the support; the support should be of stone, or at least the sides or little columns by which the table is supported should be of stone (canon 1198, § 2).

c) The sacred stone should be so large that it holds at least the host and the greater part of the chalice (canon 1198, § 3).

d) Both in an immovable altar and in a sacred stone there should be, according to the norm of liturgical laws, a sepulcher containing relics of Saints, closed with stone (canon 1198, § 4). Concerning this, observe that for due consecration it is required that relics from the bodies of at least two martyrs be deposited in the sepulcher, and that these be enclosed with a stone cover. Nevertheless, for the validity of consecration the relics of only one martyr suffice.² For the rest, relics of other Saints can be added.

3. Consecration of an altar. Portable altar-stones can be consecrated validly and licitly by Cardinals (canon 239, § 1, 20), all bishops (canon 1199, § 2), vicars and prefects apostolic within the limits of their territory and while their office endures (canon 294, § 2), and abbots and prelates nullius (canon 323, § 2). Immovable altars can be validly consecrated by the same persons who validly consecrate portable altar-stones, excepting, however, vicars and prefects apostolic who lack the episcopal character. In order that they act licitly, the Ordinary of the territory must grant permission, with the right of Cardinals to consecrate altars of their own title remaining firm (canons 1155; 1199, § 2). The consecration of an immovable altar, which is done without the dedication of a church, although it can be done on any day, is nevertheless more fittingly done on a Sunday or another feast of precept (canon 1199, § 3).

4. Execration of an altar. a) An immovable altar loses consecration if the slab or table is separated from the support even for a moment of time; in this case the Ordinary can permit a presbyter to perform the consecration of the altar again with the shorter rite and formula (canon 1200, § 1). It is not execrated if the table, not separated from the support, is transferred to another church or to another place of the same church.³

b) Both an immovable altar and a sacred stone lose consecration: 1. if they are broken enormously, whether by reason of the quantity of the fracture or by reason of the place of anointing (canon 1200, § 2, 1), but not if they are merely scraped; 2. if the relics are removed or the cover of the sepulcher is broken or removed, except in the case in which the bishop himself or his delegate removes the cover in order to secure, repair, or replace it, or to inspect the relics. But a slight fracture of the cover does not induce execration, and any priest can secure a little crack with cement (canon 1200, § 2, 2 and 3).

c) The execration of a church does not carry with it the execration of altars, whether immovable or movable; and conversely (canon 1200, § 4).

5. The title of an altar. a) Just as a church, so any altar of a church, at least an immovable one, should have its own title. The primary title of the major altar must be the same as the title of the

church (canon 1201, §§ 1 and 2).

b) Altars cannot be dedicated to Blessed persons, even in churches and oratories to which their office and Mass have been granted, without an indult of the Apostolic See (canon 1201, § 4).

c) With the permission of the Ordinary, the title of a movable altar can indeed be changed, but not the title of an immovable altar (canon 1201, § 3).

6. **Necessity of an altar.** The precept of consecrating on a consecrated and not execrated altar is grave.⁴ Moreover, according to some it is never lawful to celebrate outside an altar; according to others this is lawful in a most grave necessity, for example for confecting Viaticum, because, they say, the precept of receiving Viaticum is divine, while the prohibition of celebrating outside an altar is ecclesiastical.

7. **Things to be noted.** a) The altar-stone, that is, the portable altar-stone or sacred stone, must be inserted in an altar made of wood or of another material.⁵

b) Both an immovable and a movable altar must be reserved only for divine offices and especially for the celebration of Mass, any profane use being altogether excluded (canon 1202, § 1).

c) No corpse should be hidden under the altar; but corpses which perhaps are buried near the altar should be distant from it by a space of at least one meter. Otherwise it is not lawful to celebrate Mass on the altar until the corpse is removed (canon 1202, § 2).

¹ An antimention is a consecrated cloth in which there are relics, and which, spread upon any table, can be used for saying Mass.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 16 February 1906, n. 4180, ad III.

³ The decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, 3 September 1879, n. 3504, ad I, which is opposed, seems to speak of the transfer of the table alone, separated from the support.

⁴ Roman Missal, General Rubrics, title XX; *De defectibus*, title X, n. 1.

⁵ Roman Missal, loc. cit.

251 **II. Three altar cloths** - or two, one of which is doubled - blessed by the bishop or by another having the faculty; this faculty belongs to the same persons who enjoy the faculty of blessing sacred vestments (n. 266). The altar cloths must be made of linen or hemp.¹ The upper cloth should be long, descending to the floor on both sides; the custom of using a shorter cloth cannot be observed.²

It is a grave sin to celebrate without any altar cloth; nevertheless this is lawful in grave necessity. The other things oblige under venial sin, for example the precept of using several cloths, of using blessed cloths, etc. Hence a respectively just cause excuses from every sin (St. Alphonsus, VI, 375).

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 18 May 1819, n. 2600.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 9 June 1899, n. 4029, ad I.

252 **III. A cross with the image of the Crucified**, placed between the candlesticks and projecting in such a way "that the celebrating priest and the people assisting at the Sacrifice can easily and conveniently look upon the same Crucifix; which cannot happen if only a small cross is displayed."¹ Another cross is not required if there is a large statue of the Crucified on the altar, or if the image of the Crucified is painted on the altar panel as holding the first place;² nor is a blessed cross prescribed.³ If the Most Holy Sacrament is exposed, a cross can be used or not used, according as

custom bears.⁴ Finally, the use of placing the cross on the throne which serves for the public exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament cannot be tolerated.⁵

The obligation of using a cross is light.

¹ Constitution of Benedict XIV *Accepimus*, 16 July 1746; Sacred Congregation of Rites, 16 June 1663, n. 1270, and 17 September 1822, n. 2621.

² Constitution of Benedict XIV, cited.

³ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 12 July 1704, n. 2143.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 2 September 1741, n. 2365.

⁵ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 2 June 1883, n. 3576, ad III; 11 June 1904, n. 4136, ad II.

253 IV. Two lighted candles.¹ Besides this, according to the rubric,² near the altar a candle is to be prepared, to be lighted at the elevation of the sacrament; but a contrary custom can be observed. The candles must be made of wax.³

Nevertheless, to the question: "Whether, considering even the great difficulty either of having true beeswax or of eliminating improper mixtures with other wax, the candles to be placed upon altars must be wholly and entirely of beeswax; or whether they can be mixed with other material, whether vegetable or animal?" the Sacred Congregation of Rites⁴ responded: "Considering the asserted difficulty, Negative to the first part; Affirmative to the second and according to the mind. The mind is that bishops should, according to their powers, take care that the paschal candle, the candle to be immersed in the baptismal water, and the two candles to be lighted at Masses be of beeswax, at least in the greatest part; but it is necessary that the material of the other candles which are to be placed upon altars be of the same wax in a greater or notable quantity. In this matter pastors and other rectors of churches and oratories will be able safely to stand by the norms handed down by their respective Ordinaries, nor are private priests who are going to celebrate Mass bound to inquire anxiously about the quality of the candles." Besides, the Sacred Congregation of Rites⁵ granted to missionaries in Oceania that they might use candles made and formed from whale fat, which in those regions are called *bougies a l'etoile*.

The candles must be placed upon the altar, not fixed to a wall almost touching the altar.⁶ For the rest, note:

a) Apart from an indult, by reason of some personal distinction it is not lawful for priests below a bishop - not even for the vicar general - to use more than two candles; by reason of some greater solemnity of a feast or Mass, it is lawful.⁷

b) It is a grave sin to celebrate without any light; this is lawful only by reason of administering Viaticum or by special permission. Likewise, it is more probably mortal to celebrate without any wax light, or with only lights from tallow or oil. Nevertheless this is lawful in a case of necessity, for example so that Viaticum may be administered or so that the people may hear Mass on a Sunday (St. Alphonsus, VI, 394, doubt 1). The other things oblige under venial sin; hence, for example, if two wax candles are lacking, it is lawful for a reasonable cause, even by reason only of devotion, to celebrate with one wax candle (St. Alphonsus, VI, 394).

c) If either light goes out during the celebration, the priest can continue while it is lighted again. If every light fails and no other can be had, if this happens after the consecration the Mass must be

continued; but if before it, more probably it must be interrupted (St. Alphonsus, VI, 394).

d) It is illicit above or within the altar, besides wax candles, to use stearin candles,⁸ gas illumination, or electric light.⁹ Moreover, "electric light is forbidden not only together with wax candles upon altars, but also in place of candles or lamps"¹⁰ which are prescribed before the Most Holy Sacrament or relics of Saints.¹¹ For other places of the church and other cases, electric illumination is permitted according to the prudent judgment of the Ordinary, provided that in all things the gravity which the holiness of the place and the dignity of the sacred liturgy demand is preserved. Nor is it lawful, during private or public exposition, to illuminate the interior part of the ciborium with electric lamps placed in that very interior part, so that the Most Holy Eucharist can be better seen by the faithful;¹² these things are also to be applied to stearin candles and gas illumination.

¹ Roman Missal, General Rubrics, title XX.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 9 June 1899, n. 4029, ad II.

³ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 1.

⁴ 14 December 1904, n. 4147.

⁵ 7 September 1850, n. 2985.

⁶ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 16 September 1865, n. 3137.

⁷ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 12 September 1857, ad IX, n. 3059.

⁸ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 4 September 1875, n. 3376.

⁹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 4 June 1895, n. 3859; 16 May 1902, n. 4097; 22 November 1907, n. 4206; 17 January 1908, n. 4210, ad I; Secretariat of State to the bishops of Italy, 3 October 1923.

¹⁰ Namely, so that it is substituted in their place.

¹¹ Namely, on the occasion of their solemn exposition.

¹² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 24 June 1914, n. 4322.

254 **V. An antependium;** namely, from the rubric:¹ "The altar is also to be adorned with a frontal of the color, as far as possible, corresponding to the feast day or office." It is required more probably under venial sin, unless the altar is of marble or another precious material, or has the form of a tomb (St. Alphonsus, VI, 395). No determinate material is prescribed, nor is it required that it be blessed. There are also those who judge that, from custom, celebration can take place without an antependium.

¹ General Rubrics, title XX.

Article II. On Sacred Vessels with Accessories

255 The following are required:

I. Chalice and paten; both of which must be consecrated.¹

1. **Matter.** The chalice must be gold or silver, at least as regards the cup;² by reason of poverty one made of tin is permitted,³ and, under certain conditions, one made of aluminum mixed with other metals;⁴ but not one of bronze, glass, or wood. The cup, unless it is gold, must be gilded under grave obligation (canon 1305, § 2). As regards the form of the chalice, the Sacred Congregation of

Rites⁵ prescribed: "let them not differ from the traditional forms, because of the danger of spilling the sacred species and of exciting astonishment."

The paten should be of the same material as the chalice,⁶ and unless it is gold, it must be gilded under grave obligation (canon 1305, § 2).

2. **Consecration.** Chalices and patens can be consecrated by: 1. Cardinals (canon 239, § 1, 20); 2. bishops (canon 1147, § 1); 3. vicars and prefects apostolic, but if they lack the episcopal character, only within the limits of their territory and while their office endures (canon 294, § 2); 4. abbots and prelates nullius, but if they are not adorned with the episcopal character, only for their churches (canon 323, § 2).

a) They lose consecration: 1. if they have undergone such injuries or changes that they have lost their former form and are no longer held suitable for their uses (canon 1305, § 1, 1), for example when a chalice is pierced in the bottom or near the bottom; when the cup is separated from the foot, unless the chalice is turnable; when it is broken or struck in such a way that it can no longer decently serve the sacrifice. They lose consecration, 2. if they have been used for indecorous uses or exposed to public sale (canon 1305, § 1, 2).

b) They do not lose consecration because of the wearing away or renewal of the gilding, with the grave obligation of gilding them again remaining safe, however, in the former case (canon 1305, § 2).

3. It is a grave sin to celebrate without a chalice or paten, likewise without consecrated ones, likewise with a chalice or paten made from prohibited material or not gilded (cf. canon 1305, § 2).

4. It is an abuse to execrate sacred vessels before they are handed over to an artisan to be repaired or recast.⁷

¹ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title I, n. 1.

² Roman Missal, loc. cit.

³ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 1.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 9 December 1866 (*Acta Sanctae Sedis* VI, p. 590).

⁵ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 30 June 1922 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1922, p. 437).

⁶ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title I, n. 1; *De defectibus*, title X, n. 1.

⁷ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 20 April 1822, n. 2620.

256 **II. A blessed corporal.**¹ It must be made of linen or hemp.² It is a grave sin to celebrate: 1. without a corporal; 2. without a blessed corporal; 3. with an enormously unclean corporal (St. Alphonsus, VI, 387). Grave necessity of celebrating excuses, for example so that the people may hear a Mass of precept. If it is not very unclean, strange priests are excused.

¹ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title I, n. 1.

² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 18 May 1819, n. 2600. From this decree it is clear that linen and hemp are equated.

257 **III. A blessed pall,**¹ made of linen or hemp; nevertheless it is lawful to use a pall covered on the upper part with silk, or with gold or silver interwoven and embroidered, provided the upper material is not black and does not represent signs of death.²

To the question: "From the decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites n. 3832, *Resolution of Doubts*, 17 July 1894, ad IV, it is permitted that the chalice pall on the upper part be covered with silk cloth, or with gold or silver, and embroidered, provided that the linen pall joined beneath covers the chalice and that the upper part is not black nor with any sign of death. It is asked: Can this pall joined beneath be a linen cloth furnished with a cross and sewn beneath, after the manner of a pall, and not removable?" the Sacred Congregation of Rites responded: "Negative, and the pall joined beneath, properly so called, should be linen, clean, and easily removable."³

The pall, and likewise its blessing, are sufficiently probably prescribed only under light obligation. If it is lacking, the chalice should be covered with the purificator, burse, or corporal (St. Alphonsus, VI, 388).

¹ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title I, n. 1.

² Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, loc. cit., compared with Sacred Congregation of Rites, 17 July 1894, ad 4, n. 3832.

³ 24 November 1905, n. 4174.

258 **IV. A purificator;** this can be blessed, but need not be.¹ If a purificator cannot easily be had, in its place a small towel can be used, which afterward is not to be used for another use (St. Alphonsus, VI, 389).

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 7 September 1816, n. 2572, ad XII.

259 **V. The chalice veil** is required under venial sin; it can be blessed, but need not be.¹ If it is not had, it is lawful to celebrate without it (St. Alphonsus, VI, 395).

¹ Roman Missal, General Rubrics, title 20.

260 **VI. The burse and hand towel,** which likewise can be blessed, but need not be.¹ It is fitting to use these (St. Alphonsus, VI, 390).

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 28 April 1866, n. 3149.

261 **VII. A small spoon,** by which water is placed into the chalice, can be used. It does not need a blessing, and can be made from any material.

262 **VIII. Cruets** per se must be glass,¹ but by legitimate custom gold and silver ones are permitted;² it is fitting to bless them.

¹ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title I, n. 1.

² Roman Missal, loc. cit.

263 **IX. A little bell,** by which a sign is given, is prescribed under venial sin.

264 **Note 1.** The blessings about which there was mention above can be imparted by the same persons who enjoy the faculty of blessing sacred vestments (n. 266).

Note 2. Some have erroneously judged that vessels and other things do not need consecration or blessing if they have been used in the celebration of the sacrifice before they were consecrated or blessed (St. Alphonsus, VI, 380).

265 **Question 1. To whom is it lawful to touch sacred vessels and sacred linens?**

Response 1. While they contain the Holy Eucharist, they are licitly touched only by priests and deacons. To others this is prohibited under grave sin, except in a case of necessity.

Response 2. While they do not actually contain the Holy Eucharist, canon 1306, § 1 should be considered: "Care should be taken that the chalice with the paten, and before washing the purificators, palls, and corporals which have been used in the sacrifice of the Mass, not be touched except by clerics or by those who have custody of them."

The canon regards: 1. chalices and patens, as soon as they have been consecrated; 2. purificators, palls, and corporals that have been used and not afterward washed; 3. by parity of reason, ciboria and lunules that have been used, that is, after they have in fact touched the Holy Eucharist; but not ostensories, since they do not immediately touch the Holy Eucharist.

The canon permits touching: 1. to clerics; 2. to those who have custody of these things, such as sacristans, both men and women. Nevertheless, to others it is prohibited at most under venial sin; and a just cause excuses (St. Alphonsus, VI, 382).

Question 2. What things are to be observed as regards the washing of linens used in Mass?

Response. Three washings are prescribed. The first cannot be done except by a cleric constituted in major orders. The second and third, however, can also be done by laypersons. The water of the first washing should be put into the sacrarium or, if this is lacking, into the fire (canon 1306, § 2). For the rest, the first washing is prohibited at most under venial sin, so that a reasonable cause excuses (St. Alphonsus, VI, 387).

Article III. On Sacred Vestments, Etc

266 **I. Sacred vestments**, considered according to their importance, are distinguished into greater and lesser. The greater are the alb, chasuble, and more probably also the stole and maniple. The lesser are the amice and cincture (St. Alphonsus, VI, 377). The following things are to be explained:

1. **The existence and object of the precept.** "A priest about to celebrate Mass," says canon 811, § 1, "shall wear a becoming garment reaching to the ankles and the sacred ornaments prescribed by the rubrics of his rite." If such a garment cannot be had, for example by an outsider, there is an excusing reason. As regards the sacred ornaments, the amice, alb, cincture, stole, maniple, and chasuble are prescribed. Therefore the sacred vestments should be:

a) **Made of the due material; likewise entire, becoming, clean, and beautiful.**¹ As regards the material, the amice and alb should be of linen or hemp.² The cincture, without another material being reprobated, can be woolen,³ also silken, but more fittingly⁴ linen; it should not be a band but a cord.⁵ The stole, maniple, and chasuble, although they need not be made of silk, should nevertheless be made of precious material, not of cotton, linen, or wool; a semi-silk or silk-threaded material suffices.⁶

b) **Made according to the customary form.** The Sacred Congregation of Rites declared that "it is not lawful, in making and using vestments for the sacrifice of the Mass and sacred functions, to depart from the usage received in the Church, and to introduce another mode and form, even an ancient one."

c) **Blessed.**⁷ The blessing can be imparted by: 1. all Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church and all bishops; 2. local Ordinaries lacking episcopal character, for the churches and oratories of their own territory; 3. the pastor for churches and oratories situated in the territory of his parish, and rectors of churches for their own churches; 4. priests delegated by the local Ordinary, within the limits of the delegation and of the jurisdiction of the one delegating; 5. religious superiors - and therefore even non-exempt superiors - and priests of the same religion delegated by them, for their own churches and oratories and for the churches of nuns subject to them (canon 1304).

A sacred vestment loses its blessing: 1. if it has undergone such injuries or changes that it has lost its former form, and is no longer held suitable for its uses (canon 1305, § 1, 1); and this is valid even if one vestment is made from another. Therefore the blessing is lost if the cincture is so broken that neither part suffices for girding the minister, if the alb loses a sleeve, if a maniple is made from a stole, etc. A sacred vestment loses its blessing, 2. if it has been used for indecorous uses or exposed to public sale (canon 1305, § 1, 2).

2. **The gravity of the precept.** a) It is mortal to celebrate without any sacred vestment; indeed, not even the ministering of Viaticum is held to be an excusing cause. It is disputed whether fear of death excuses, scandal and contempt being excluded (St. Alphonsus, VI, 377).⁸ Likewise it is grave to celebrate without any blessed sacred vestment.

b) It is also mortal to celebrate without an alb or chasuble, or with them unblessed; likewise to celebrate without a stole and without a maniple, or with them unblessed. A most grave cause would excuse, for example lest a dying person lack Viaticum (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

c) More probably it is mortal to celebrate without a stole or without a maniple, or with either one unblessed. The reason is that the aforesaid vestments seem, according to the mind of the Church, to be numbered among the greater; and this mind of the Church is evident both from the doctrine of the ancient theologians, who rather commonly hold the aforesaid vestments as greater, and from the fact that, just like the chasuble, they must be made from precious material. Nevertheless a grave cause excuses, for example that the people may hear the prescribed Mass (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

d) It is light to celebrate without an amice or cincture. A just cause excuses, for example "fervor of devotion or the opportunity of alms for a priest who is not wealthy" (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

e) The color assigned by the rubrics is of precept, as is clear both from what is to be said about rubrics in general (n. 270), and from responses of the Sacred Congregation of Rites.⁹ The obligation, however, apart from grave scandal, is light, so that a just cause excuses; indeed, as St. Alphonsus (VI, 378, doubt 5) teaches with Sporer, it is better "on any day whatever to say Mass in any color whatever than to omit it."

3. **Things to be noted.** a) Besides sacred vestments, it is prescribed that the priest about to celebrate Mass wear a becoming garment reaching to the ankles (canon 811, § 1). Moreover, he should be shod.¹⁰ The shoes should be such as approved clerics of the diocese commonly use in public.¹¹ "For this, however, it suffices that he be dressed in slippers commonly called *pianelle* or *pantofele*" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 402).

b) He should abstain from the skullcap and ring, unless he is a Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, a bishop, or a blessed abbot, or unless an apostolic indult permits him to use them in celebrating Mass

(canon 811, § 2).

Moreover, it would be mortal to use the skullcap throughout the whole Mass; outside the Canon, however, it is venial, scandal nevertheless being excluded. Hence it is not "illicit to celebrate without a dispensation with the skullcap (except during the Canon and with scandal set aside) for a reasonable cause, if it is evident to those standing by the celebration, for example because of the priest's old age or the coldness of the place, so that one could not celebrate with head uncovered without notable inconvenience" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 397, doubt 1).

c) The use of artificial hair is illicit.¹² Authors note, however, that this prohibition has become obsolete in many regions.

d) To no celebrating priest, except bishops and other prelates enjoying the use of pontificals, is it lawful, solely for the sake of honor or solemnity, to have an assisting priest (canon 812).

¹ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title II, n. 1.

² Linen and hemp are equated (n. 257).

³ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 23 December 1862, n. 3118.

⁴ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 22 January 1701, n. 2067.

⁵ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 24 November 1899, n. 4048.

⁶ Cf. *Ephemerides liturgicae* I, 24, 32; 9 December 1925 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1926, p. 58).

⁷ Roman Missal, Rite of Mass, title II, n. 2; *De defectibus*, title X, n. 1.

⁸ Cf. Constitution of Benedict XIV, *Aestas anni*, 11 October 1828[†].

⁹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 10 December 1829, n. 2675; 12 November 1831, ad 5, n. 2682.

¹⁰ Roman Missal, Rite to be observed, title I, n. 2.

¹¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 31 August 1872, n. 3268, ad 3.

¹² Sacred Congregation of Rites, 4 April 1699, n. 2027, ad 5; indeed it was prohibited by Innocent XI under pain of suspension (in St. Alphonsus, VI, 388).

267 II. The Missal is required, although the priest should know by memory the Mass which he intends to say;¹ indeed, considering the danger of erring gravely, it is commonly prescribed under grave obligation. Nevertheless, rather probably one celebrating without a Missal does not sin gravely "if he could not easily have one and, because of past experience, the moral danger of erring were absent. Hence they probably infer that a priest celebrates licitly who, because of weakness of sight, recites the Mass from memory, provided that, to avoid notice, he has the Missal on the altar, or another book in its place" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 390).

¹ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 1.

268 III. A cushion or small lectern for the Missal, and the altar cards of the secrets, are not of precept; nevertheless they are fittingly used.

269 IV. A server assisting at Mass is required, and indeed a male. If a man is lacking, a woman can be employed for a just cause, under this law, however, that she answer from a distance and in no way approach the altar (canon 813). Even devotion alone involves a just cause for employing a

woman. When the case occurs, however, everything required for the sacrifice should first be conveniently arranged (St. Alphonsus, VI, 392, doubt 2).¹ Moreover:

1. It is mortal to celebrate without any server; nevertheless a grave cause excuses, for example the necessity of ministering Viaticum; likewise, more probably, that the people may hear a Mass of precept. Besides this, rather probably, "once Mass has begun, especially if the oblation has been made, the celebrant is permitted to proceed without a server if the latter has gone away and is not going to return shortly" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 391, doubt 1). Indeed, since nowadays celebration without a server is easily conceded if no one can be found, and this even on a weekday and without a woman answering from afar, therefore, if unexpectedly a priest in a particular case lacks a server, it seems that permission can be presumed even by reason of devotion alone.
2. It is also mortal to employ a woman who ministers immediately; nor does grave necessity excuse, because it is preferable to celebrate without a server than with a woman immediately ministering.
3. It is more easily lawful to celebrate with a server who does not know how to answer than without a server; not, however, so easily as with a woman answering from afar. For the rest, "let the celebrant not make a scruple if the server pronounces badly, nor easily correct errors, lest he disturb himself or those standing around or the order of the Mass, although Croix with Gobat admonishes that the celebrant should supply what has been omitted by the server" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 391).

¹ Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, 27 August 1836, n. 2745, ad 8; 18 March 1899, n. 4015, ad 6.

Article IV. On Rubrics to Be Observed

Canon 818 states: "Any contrary custom being reprobated, the celebrating priest shall accurately and devoutly observe the rubrics of his ritual books, and shall take care not to add other ceremonies or prayers at his own discretion." And canon 819: "The sacrifice of the Mass is to be celebrated in the liturgical language of each one's rite approved by the Church." Therefore Mass in general is to be celebrated according to the rite or rubrics assigned by the Church in the Roman Missal. But authors disagree somewhat about the solution of the question, which rite or which rubrics are in fact prescribed. Hence the matter must be explained more fully:

I. The object of the precept; concerning which the following points seem to be established.

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1. **The rubrics to be observed within Mass are preceptive.** This assertion, which more recent authors commonly admit, is clear from the Council of Trent;¹ likewise from the Bull *Quo primum tempore* of St. Pius V,² placed at the beginning of the Roman Missal: "commanding and strictly enjoining upon all... in virtue of holy obedience, that they sing and read Mass according to the rite, manner, and norm which are now handed down by Us through this Missal, and that in the celebration of Mass they not presume to add or recite other ceremonies or prayers than those which are contained in this Missal." Canon 818 is added to this. The opinion which excepts certain lesser things is scarcely reconcilable with the words cited (St. Alphonsus, VI, 399).
2. **It is disputed whether the rubrics to be observed outside Mass,** that is, before or after Mass, are preceptive or merely directive. Moreover, with St. Alphonsus (VI, 399) and most more recent

authors, it seems that one must say that they are generally merely directive, unless they present those things which are obligatory from the nature of the matter. The reason is that the Bull cited speaks only of rubrics to be observed in the celebration of Mass, and canon 818 speaks only of the celebrating priest.

3. **In particular it is disputed** - even among those who admit the assertions under 1 and 2 - whether the following are truly prescribed or not:³

a) **The prayers assigned before Mass in the Roman Missal.** Rather commonly, and rightly, it is denied that they are truly prescribed, because they are said to be "to be said according to the opportunity of the priest" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 410, doubt 2). The same must be said of the prayers assigned after Mass.

b) **The washing of hands before Mass.** This seems truly to be prescribed, namely by reason of reverence toward the sacrifice, and in view both of its spiritual signification (namely, of spiritual cleanness) and of the precept given in the Old Law. It obliges under venial sin; but from the nature of the matter under grave sin, if the hands are very unclean. After Mass, however, it can be omitted, since it is not prescribed (St. Alphonsus, VI, 409).

c) **The prayers to be recited while the vestments are being put on.** More commonly they teach that these are truly prescribed, because they seem morally to pertain to Mass (St. Alphonsus, VI, 410, doubt 2).

d) **The canticle *Benedicite*.** Some affirm that it is imposed, because in the Order of Mass it is said: "The priest says"; but rather probably it is not truly prescribed, because by the rubric of the Roman Missal⁴ it is equated with the other prayers assigned after Mass (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 410, doubt 2).

4. **The Ceremonial of Bishops obliges just as the Roman Missal does.** This is clear both from the three Bulls prefixed to it and from the declaration of the Sacred Congregation of Rites⁵ (St. Alphonsus, *Examen ordinandorum*, n. 112).

5. **Responses of the Sacred Congregation of Rites present obligation** if they regard rubrics to be observed within Mass; otherwise they are merely directive, unless the contrary is to be drawn from the tenor.

6. **As regards custom against the rubrics, note:**

a) Any custom contrary to the rubrics is reprobated (canon 818), and therefore is not reasonable (canon 27, § 2); nevertheless, when circumstances have changed, more probably it can become reasonable (vol. I, n. 194).

b) Custom cannot derogate from rubrics contained in liturgical books by way of prescription; but it can by way of connivance, or by force of the legislator's personal consent (vol. I, n. 193). Besides this, a usage contrary to the rubrics can be tolerated until it can conveniently be removed by the bishop (vol. I, n. 193). If a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites contrary to the custom is added, the custom is of itself abrogated;⁶ if it cannot conveniently be removed, the Ordinary should propose the matter to the Sacred Congregation and await the response.

¹ Session 6, canon 13; session 22, decree on what is to be observed and avoided.

² 12 July 1570.

³ On the recitation of Matins with Lauds before Mass, see the treatise on the duties of clerics, n. 2.

⁴ Rite to be observed, title XII, n. 6.

⁵ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 8 January 1904 (*Acta Sanctae Sedis* XXXVI, p. 428).

⁶ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 17 August 1894, n. 3839.

Article IV. On Rubrics to Be Observed

271 **II. The gravity of the precept.** The precept or obligation of rubrics that are truly preceptive is grave from its genus. But the gravity of the matter must be judged not only from the quantity but also from the quality of the rites, as will be clearer from the corollaries. Moreover, one can sin against the precept by omission, addition, change, breaking off, and interruption.

1. **Omission.** Concerning this, notice with St. Alphonsus (VI, 404 sq.): 1. that the ordinary parts, that is, those which occur in every Mass (such as the principal prayers, Epistle, Gospel, etc.), oblige more gravely than the extraordinary parts (such as the Gloria, Creed, Commemorations); 2. that among the ordinary parts, those oblige more gravely which must be said or performed within the Canon, especially from the Consecration to Communion. With these points noted, with the Doctor mentioned we resolve:

a) It is grave to omit an essential or integral part; the Confession with the other prayers to be said at the foot of the altar; the Epistle; the Gospel; the principal prayers; the mixing of water in the chalice; the oblation of the bread and wine; the Preface; the *Pater noster*; the *Libera nos*; the breaking of the host and the mixing of it with the Blood; the purification of the chalice after Communion. Likewise in the Canon it is grave to omit any prayer whatever; or to change its words so that the sense is varied; or to omit some word such that, once it is removed, the remaining words do not make sense; or to omit, for example, ten names of Saints; or finally to omit several extraordinary parts together (St. Alphonsus, VI, 404, 405).

b) It is light to omit the washing of hands before Mass with the accompanying prayers; the prayers to be said while the priest clothes himself in the sacred vestments; the Psalm *Judica*; Kyrie; Gloria; Creed; Commemorations; or, in place of the proper Preface, *Communicantes*, or *Hanc igitur*, to take the said prayers as they occur in the common (St. Alphonsus, VI, 409).

c) An omitted part must always be supplied when it belongs to the essence or integrity of the Mass; likewise the mixing of water in the chalice, if it is noticed before the Consecration. For the rest, one who by error or forgetfulness has omitted something: if indeed it is light, should proceed; if it is grave and the error is noticed shortly afterward, that is, after a few words, he should resume what was omitted. Hence the Gloria or Creed are not to be resumed if the following prayers have already been begun; nor the Epistle, Gospel, Preface, or *Communicantes*, if he has taken one for another, unless, for example, he detects the error from the beginning of the false Epistle (St. Alphonsus, VI, 403).

2. **Addition.** a) It is a grave sin to add anything with the intention of introducing a new rite; likewise - even without the aforesaid intention - to add something notable (St. Alphonsus, VI, 411).

b) It is light to add: 1. a collect,¹ Gloria, Creed, *Pater, Ave*, or something similar; 2. at the elevation, even in a low voice, certain pious words;² otherwise, if it is done only mentally; 3. while the Gloria and Creed are being sung in Mass, to recite a canonical Hour from a book³ (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.).

3. **Change.** It is light: 1. scandal being excluded, to change the office, that is, to celebrate a Mass which cannot be celebrated on that day; 2. not to sing in solemn Mass the things which are prescribed to be sung; 3. to pronounce the words in a voice other than that prescribed. This, however, is grave: a) when someone pronounces a notable part, especially of the Canon, or the words of Consecration alone, in so loud a voice that they can be heard at a great distance, for example forty paces; b) when the priest forms the words of Consecration so secretly that he cannot even hear himself, unless perhaps deafness or noise prevents hearing. The reason is that he exposes the sacrament to the danger of nullity (n. 24; St. Alphonsus, VI, 413-416). According to the Roman Missal:⁴ 1. those things which are to be said in a clear voice must be pronounced "neither... in a voice too loud, lest he disturb others who perhaps are then celebrating in the same church, nor so low that he cannot be heard by those standing around." 2. "But those things which are to be said secretly he should pronounce in such a way that he himself hears himself, and is not heard by those standing around."

4. **Breaking off** consists in this, that Mass begun is not continued but is dismissed. Moreover, breaking off can and must take place:

a) **Before the Consecration:** 1. if the priest before the Consecration notices that he is not fasting, and can withdraw without infamy or scandal; 2. if the church is polluted before the Canon; 3. if before the Canon it is known that a vitandus excommunicate is present and cannot be expelled (St. Alphonsus, VI, 353).

b) **Before and after the Consecration:** 1. if danger threatens, for example because of an attack by enemies, danger of death, or profanation; in which case the priest, according to the circumstances, should at once consume the sacrament or carry it with him while fleeing; 2. if, once the Consecration has certainly or doubtfully been performed, the priest fails; in which case the following should be observed: If the priest who fails is foreseen after some time - even after taking food or drink - to recover his strength, he should be awaited, so that he may complete the sacrifice. If he cannot complete the sacrifice, another should be sought - even one not fasting, if one fasting is lacking⁵ - who may complete the sacrifice, beginning where the other left off; if the other still lives and can communicate, and another consecrated Host is not available, the priest who supplies the Mass should divide the Host, and give one part to the sick man, and take the other himself⁶ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 355). If, however, Mass cannot be continued within an hour, it need not be completed, because the required unity is probably lacking; nevertheless it can - even after a longer time - be completed, because the said unity is also probably present (St. Alphonsus, loc. cit.). If the sacrifice is not completed, the Host and chalice should be placed in the tabernacle, and on the next day they should be consumed by the celebrant before the purification.

5. **Interruption is lawful:** 1. if an instruction or sermon must be given, or certain things must be announced to the people, which is customarily done after the Gospel; 2. if a religious profession is made within Mass,⁷ or if it is permitted by liturgical law for another reason; 3. if necessity befalls the priest; 4. if one's neighbor falls into danger of death. But if this takes place before the Consecration, the priest can minister Baptism or Penance, Viaticum, and Extreme Unction to the

dying person. If it occurs after the Consecration, he can confer Baptism or Penance upon him; he must defer the conferral of Viaticum and Extreme Unction until he has finished Mass, or at least has taken the Most Holy Blood; nevertheless Viaticum can be ministered if the dying person is so near that it is not necessary to take off the sacred vestments⁸ (St. Alphonsus, VI, 353, 354). Besides this, if the necessity of one's neighbor urges after the Consecration, "let the priest take care that the Sacrament meanwhile be guarded, or let him enclose it in the tabernacle; and after he has returned, let him continue Mass from the point where he interrupted it. If the Consecration has not been made, and a short delay has intervened, for example within an hour, let him proceed where he left off; but if the delay is longer, let him begin from the beginning."⁹

¹ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 27 March 1779, ad VI, n. 2514.

² Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, 6 November 1925, ad I (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1926, p. 21).

³ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 20 March 1869, ad IX, n. 3201.

⁴ General Rubrics, title XVI, n. 2.

⁵ Indeed, if no other is available, even an excommunicate, who in the case must, after grace has been recovered, complete the sacrifice.

⁶ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 3.

⁷ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 27 August 1894, n. 3836; 5 June 1896, n. 3912.

⁸ Sacred Congregation of Rites, 19 December 1829, n. 2672, ad 1.

⁹ Aertnys-Damen, *Theologia moralis*, n. 259.

272 III. The excusing cause. One who because of illness or another cause cannot observe all the rubrics can nevertheless celebrate both privately and publicly, if he must omit or change only certain things that are of lesser importance, for example deep inclinations, genuflections down to the ground. If the matter is of greater importance, for example if the priest cannot approach the altar without a cane, or cannot celebrate except with both arms placed on the altar, privately indeed it is lawful to celebrate; publicly, provided the people are warned (St. Alphonsus, VI, 402). Finally, if the matter is wholly extraordinary, for example if the priest cannot celebrate except sitting or by briefly interrupting Mass or while continuously supported by another, a dispensation must be sought from the Holy See, or, for a transitory case, from the bishop.

273 Corollary I. In view of the things explained above, St. Alphonsus and most authors rightly teach with Benedict XIV¹ that "Mass should not be shorter than a third of an hour, nor longer than half an hour, because in a shorter space everything cannot be performed with due decorum, and in a longer space it would be tedious to those standing by. Hence we say that a priest who would finish Mass in under a quarter of an hour could with difficulty be excused from mortal sin, even if the Mass is among the shorter ones, or of St. Mary on Saturday; because in so brief a time he must necessarily commit two grave defects, one of grave irreverence toward the Sacrament, the other of grave scandal toward the people... But it is impossible for Mass to be completed in under a quarter of an hour without either words or ceremonies being omitted; or at least without the decency and gravity due to so great a Sacrifice being notably diminished. This must be carefully noticed; for someone perhaps will say that he pronounces the complete words of the Missal well and fulfills all the ceremonies of the Mass well. But although there may be someone so expeditious in tongue and movement that within such a time he would satisfy all the words and ceremonies of the Missal, nevertheless it is at

least morally impossible that he celebrate without notably detracting, on the one hand, from the reverence to be offered by him toward the Sacrifice, and, on the other, without himself being the cause that the people assisting fail in the veneration which is owed to that same Sacrifice" (St. Alphonsus, VI, 400).

Corollary II. In conformity with the doctrine stated, St. Alphonsus (loc. cit.) notes with others that "bishops and prelates of regulars are bound under grave obligation to root out disgraceful and scandalous speed."

¹ *De Sacrificio Missae*, section 2, n. 217.

Scholion. On Defects to Be Corrected Both in the Dispensation of the Holy Eucharist and in the Oblation of Mass

274 **I.** "If a consecrated host, or some particle of it, falls to the ground, it should be reverently taken up, and the place where it fell should be cleaned and somewhat scraped, and the dust or scraping of this kind should be put into the sacrarium. If it falls outside the corporal onto the altar cloth, or in any other way onto some linen, the altar cloth or linen of this kind should be diligently washed, and the washing itself poured into the sacrarium."¹ The prescribed washing does not oblige under grave sin. Hence it should rather be omitted whenever it would excite wonder, for example if the host should fall into the beard or clothing of the communicant. If it has slipped into a woman's bosom, she herself should look for it and hand it to the priest, or herself put it into her mouth with her own hands (St. Alphonsus, VI, 250). If the host has fallen inside the enclosure of nuns, the priest should enter the enclosure.

II. If through negligence something of the Blood of Christ has fallen, one must proceed as follows:

1. If indeed it has fallen upon the ground or upon a board, it should be licked with the tongue, and the place itself scraped as much as is enough, and the scraping burned; the ashes, however, should be stored in the sacrarium.
2. But if it has fallen upon the altar stone, let the priest absorb the drop, and let the place be well washed, and let the washing be cast into the sacrarium.
3. If it has fallen upon the altar linen, and the drop has reached another linen; if even to the third, the linens are to be washed three times where the drop fell, with the chalice placed underneath, and the water of the washing is to be cast into the sacrarium.
4. But if it has fallen only on the corporal itself or on the priestly vestments themselves, it should similarly be washed, and the washing cast into the sacrarium. If it has fallen on the cloth spread under the feet, or on a carpet, it should be well washed, as above.²

Moreover, in the spilling of the Blood, at least some washing must be done under grave obligation.

III. If in winter the Blood freezes in the chalice, the chalice should be wrapped in warmed cloths; if this does not help, it should be placed in boiling water near the altar, provided the water does not enter the chalice, until it liquefies.³

IV. If the priest "discovers after the consumption of the Body and Blood, or even after the ablution, that some consecrated remnants have been left behind, let him consume them, whether they are small or large, because they pertain to the same sacrifice."⁴ Let him do this also if the priest is already

in the sacristy, with the vestments not yet removed. If he has removed the vestments, let him place the fragments in the tabernacle or reserve them for a priest who is to celebrate that same morning; and let him proceed in the same way if the fragments are remnants of another sacrifice, because the Rubric permits him to consume only remnants which pertain to the same sacrifice (St. Alphonsus, VI, 251, question 3). But if an entire consecrated Host has been left, "let him put it in the tabernacle with the others; if this cannot be done, let him leave it for the following priest who is to celebrate there, decently covered on the altar over the corporal, to be consumed together with the other which he is going to consecrate; or if neither of these can be done, let him preserve it decently in the chalice itself or on the paten until either it is put into the tabernacle or consumed by another; but if he has no way in which it can be preserved honorably, he can consume it himself."⁵

V. If a ciborium which another priest needs must be purified, and the server through forgetfulness took the purification of the chalice before it had been purified, it is lawful - although the natural fast has ceased - to consume the small remnants found in the ciborium, because the consumption can be counted as by way of one act with Communion. It is more difficult to say that it is lawful to consume an entire host, since it can be kept for the following day.⁶

VI. If a sick person, or "a priest, vomits the Eucharist, if the species appear whole, they should be reverently consumed, unless nausea occurs; for then the consecrated species should be carefully separated and placed in some sacred place until they are corrupted, and afterward they should be cast into the sacrarium. But if the species do not appear, the vomit should be burned, and the ashes put into the sacrarium."⁷ If the sick person cannot swallow the host, or, after receiving Viaticum, immediately dies, the host, if it still appears in the mouth, should be extracted and preserved until it is corrupted.

¹ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 10.

² Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 12.

³ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 11.

⁴ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title VII, n. 2.

⁵ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title VII, n. 3.

⁶ Tamburini, *De methodo communicandi*, chapter 2, n. 37.

⁷ Roman Missal, *De defectibus*, title X, n. 14.

Article V. On Confession of the Dying

475 I. A dying person can be absolved who gives a sign of confession to the priest present, for example by a nod of the head, pressure of the hands, the eyes, etc. For all things required for validity, namely intention, manifested contrition, and confession, are present, or at least by law are presumed to be present.¹

II. Likewise a dying person deprived of the senses can be absolved who showed a desire of confession before the priest approached.²

It is disputed whether in this case the dying person is to be absolved absolutely or under condition. Several think that he is to be absolved absolutely, because the Roman Ritual, in the cited place, seems to equate this case with the prior case and makes no mention of a condition. Others teach that

absolution must be given under condition, because the accusation required for the validity of the sacrament is not certainly present, and consequently one can also doubt about the disposition (St. Alphonsus, VI, 481).

III. A dying person deprived of the senses, who neither gives a manifest sign of confession to the priest present, nor showed a desire of confession before the arrival of the priest, can be absolved under condition, whenever it is somewhat probable that the things required for validity are present. For in extremities, extreme things are to be tried. Now commonly the intention of receiving the sacrament is not certainly lacking, and perhaps some sign of confession and sorrow is exhibited by the dying person, for example a sigh, although the priest does not notice it. Added to this is that the doctrine is not certainly false which teaches that internal contrition alone, or internal attrition alone, is the necessary condition for the validity of the sacrament. Hence the following can be absolved: 1. a Catholic, whether he lived in a Christian manner or did not live in a Christian manner; 2. a Catholic who is deprived of the senses in the very act of sin, for example drunkenness or suicide; 3. an apostate who before his defection did not reject the priest, because, placed in extreme danger, he perhaps came to his senses; 4. one concerning whom it is doubted whether or not he is Catholic (St. Alphonsus, VI, 482, 483).

Observe that hearing commonly persists longer than the other senses; hence let the priest address the dying person in a loud voice, and suggest to him a general accusation and an act of contrition.

¹ Council of Orange I, chapter 12 (in Labbe, vol. 4, col. 703 sq.); Council of Carthage IV, chapter 76 (in Labbe, cited place, col. 1443; cf. canon *Is qui* 8, cause 26, question 6); St. Leo the Pope, Epistle 108 (otherwise 83) to Theodore, chapter 5 (in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 54, col. 1013 sq.); Roman Ritual, title III, chapter 1, n. 25.

² Council of Orange I, chapter 12 (in Labbe, vol. 4, col. 703 sq.); Council of Carthage IV, chapter 76 (in Labbe, cited place, col. 1443; cf. canon *Is qui* 8, cause 26, question 6); St. Leo the Pope, Epistle 108 (otherwise 83) to Theodore, chapter 5 (in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 54, col. 1013 sq.); Roman Ritual, title III, chapter 1, n. 25.

476 **Question 1.** Whether one can be absolved who, before he was deprived of the senses, rejected the priest.

Response. Having regard to the reverence due to the sacrament, it is better, as it seems, not to absolve him, unless the privation of the senses lasts rather long, or the dying person gives a sign which with some probability can be held as a declaration of a changed will.

Question 2. How often a dying person can be absolved.

Response 1. "While the sick person is still vigorous in his senses, it will help for absolution to be conferred on him several times after a brief reconciliation.

Response 2. "If the sick person now lacks the senses, it is not expedient that absolution be imparted to him more often within the same day. But in this matter the priest ought to direct himself by the conscience which they know of the sick person; for if he was habituated in evil thoughts, if he is dying from some wound, or is ensnared by some passion of hatred or impure love; if the illness is exceedingly bitter and he does not suffer with a willing spirit, then absolution can be given more often; but otherwise it suffices that a space of three or four hours intervene; more frequently, however, if he is already now about to die" (St. Alphonsus, *Praxis Confessarii*, n. 276).

Note. "It will not be beside the point to warn the sick person, while he is in possession of his mind, that, if he cannot speak, he should give some determinate sign while he seeks absolution, or while

the priest wishes to confer it on him: for example, let him close or open his eyes, raise his hand, incline his head, and the like" (St. Alphonsus, *Praxis Confessarii*, n. 276).

477 IV. **The apparently dead.**¹ The instant of death, or of the separation of the soul from the body, can be determined by no one. As regards signs that death has followed, not even cadaveric rigidity, but only advanced putrefaction, is held as a certain sign of death. There have been and there are physicians who think that not only in a case of asphyxia, but also in other cases, life persists latently for some time after the ordinary signs of life have ceased; and this both in sudden cases and when disease has had its ordinary outcome.² As regards sudden cases, it is reported that several apparently dead persons have returned to the activity of life. As regards ordinary disease, they rely especially on experiments in higher animals. Therefore, having regard to those things which are asserted by some physicians, and which are not to be held as certainly false, it seems one must speak as follows:

1. In a case in which someone has died, apparently, whether from a sudden accident or from a disease which lasted for a brief time, it is strongly to be advised that the necessary sacraments - more safely first Extreme Unction, then Absolution - be administered under condition, and this even two or more hours after someone seems to have died.
2. In a case in which someone seems to have died in the ordinary way, they say that latent life commonly persists for a shorter time, say for a quarter hour or a half hour; hence during that time it is licit to administer the necessary sacraments.
3. Where there is suspicion that a case of asphyxia is present, a still longer time is admitted for administering the sacraments. Such a case can occur after uremia, epilepsy, and other diseases, concerning which Antonelli³ and Capellmann-Bergmann⁴ speak.

¹ Cf. Ferreres-Geniesse, *La mort réelle et la mort apparente, et leurs rapports avec l'administration des Sacrements*; *Revue de Lille*, 1905-1906, p. 442 sq., 481 sq.; *Nouv. Rev. Théol.*, 1906, p. 606 sq.; 1907, p. 497 sq.

² Cf. Lacroix, *De Poenitentia*, VI, n. 1104.

³ Antonelli, *Medicina pastoralis*, II, n. 612 sq.

⁴ Capellmann-Bergmann, *Pastoral-Medizin*, p. 358 sq.

Article VI. On Confession of Baptized Non-Catholics

478 We are speaking of baptized non-Catholics who are in good faith, or at least are not certainly in bad faith. Now:

I. Outside danger of death, baptized non-Catholics cannot licitly be absolved. "It is forbidden," thus canon 731, § 2, "to minister the Sacraments of the Church to heretics or schismatics, even those erring in good faith and asking for them, unless first, having rejected their errors, they have been reconciled to the Church."

II. **In danger of death.** We distinguish between non-Catholics who admit confession and those who reject it.

1. Those who admit confession, as for example schismatics, can be absolved as follows:

a) If they are already deprived of the senses, they can be absolved, according to this response of the Holy Office:¹ "Whether absolution and extreme unction can be conferred on schismatics at the point

of death when deprived of the senses? Response: under condition, affirmatively, especially if from the circumstances it may be lawful to conjecture that they at least implicitly reject their errors, scandal nevertheless being effectively removed, namely by making manifest to those standing by that the Church supposes that they returned to unity at the last moment."

b) If they are not deprived of the senses, of themselves they cannot be absolved, because of themselves they must first be taught revealed doctrine and fulfill the obligation of embracing it. Added to this is canon 731, § 2, cited above. They seem, however, scandal being removed, to be able to be absolved as if incidentally, whether, after warning has been given, they are judged to persevere in error in good faith, or whether they are not warned, lest perhaps they be deprived of good faith. For first, it is in no way clear what from the nature of the matter stands in the way of the defended opinion. But a merely positive prohibition, where the salvation of a person placed in danger of death is at issue, should not easily be admitted. Then the Holy Office², to the question "Whether material schismatics who are in good faith can ever be absolved," the Holy Office, I say, responded to that question: "Since scandal cannot be avoided: negatively; except in danger of death; and then, scandal having been effectively removed."

Objection 1. Canon 731, § 2 absolutely forbids administering the sacraments to schismatics unless first, having rejected their errors, they have been reconciled to the Church; therefore neither in danger of death is it licit.

Response. A priori it is difficult to admit that the canon cannot be combined with the response of the Holy Office. And in fact the canon can well be understood in such a way that it establishes what ought of itself to be done, which does not prevent departure from the rule on account of a very grave cause; and such a cause is certainly present in the case posited.

Objection 2. The Holy Office, on May 17, 1916, to question II, "Whether the sacraments of either absolution or extreme unction can be conferred on material schismatics placed at the point of death, asking for them in good faith, without abjuration of errors," responded: "Negatively, but it is required that, in the best manner possible, they reject their errors and make a profession of faith."³ Therefore schismatics, at least before they are deprived of the senses, cannot be absolved.

Response. Again, a priori it is difficult to admit that this response cannot be combined with the response of July 20, 1898. And indeed the response can be understood in such a way that schismatics of themselves cannot be absolved unless they reject their errors and make a profession of faith. Indeed the Holy Office, by adding that these things are to be performed "in the best manner possible," perhaps hints that an explicit rejection of errors and profession of faith is not always to be urged.

2. Those who reject confession should not be absolved. Nevertheless, I would not condemn one who conditionally absolves them after they have been incited to penance, according to what was said in n. 41; yet proceed prudently, and especially endeavor to bring them to perfect contrition.

Corollary I. In doubt whether a dying non-Catholic, deprived of the senses, admits confession, he can be absolved under condition.

Corollary II. One who assists a dying non-Catholic should not omit to bring him to perfect contrition and to an act of charity with the other preliminary acts, so that he may be saved more securely.

¹ May 17, 1916, to 2 (in *Theol.-prakt. Quartalschrift*, 1916, p. 692-695).

² July 20, 1898 (*Collectanea*, n. 2012).

³ In *Theol.-prakt. Quartalschrift*, 1916, p. 692-695.

Section III. On the Things to Be Observed in the Oblation of Mass

We must speak of the disposition of the one offering, of the place, time, and rite of offering.

On the Disposition of the One Offering

The priest who is going to celebrate should be fasting from midnight, in the state of grace, and duly prepared.

241 I. The natural fast. It is not lawful for a priest to celebrate unless the natural fast from midnight has been observed (canon 808). See the things which regard the natural fast set forth in n. 187 sq. Add canon 247, § 5: "It, that is, the Congregation of the Holy Office, alone is competent concerning all those things which regard the Eucharistic fast for priests celebrating Mass." Finally, the Holy Office declared¹ that priests dispensed from the Eucharistic fast can, before the second Mass, take the ablution in the first.

¹ 16 November 1923 (*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 1923, p. 584).

242 II. The state of grace is required both for carrying out the consecration worthily (n. 26), and for receiving Communion (n. 179).

1. One who has lost the state of grace is bound per se to recover it through sacramental confession (canon 807); per accidens an act of perfect contrition suffices, namely if necessity urges and availability of a confessor is lacking (cited canon). See each of these things more fully explained in n. 179.

2. But if a priest conscious to himself of mortal sin has celebrated, availability of a confessor being lacking and necessity urging, yet after eliciting an act of perfect contrition, let him confess as soon as possible (canon 807).¹ It is said:

a) **A priest**; and so the law does not bind a layperson or a cleric not yet initiated into the priesthood (St. Alphonsus, VI, 268).

b) **Availability of a confessor being lacking and necessity urging, yet after eliciting an act of perfect contrition**; hence the law does not regard a priest who has celebrated without confession when either availability of a confessor was not lacking, or necessity was not urging, or the act of contrition was neglected. Those who celebrate thus commit sacrilege; but the reason why the law does not include sacrilegious persons is that it would become useless and an occasion of a new transgression (St. Alphonsus, VI, 260).

c) **Without sacramental confession having been made beforehand**; and so a priest is not held by the law if he celebrated after a confession in which he inculpably forgot a mortal sin, because he did not celebrate without a previous confession (St. Alphonsus, VI, 267).

d) **Has celebrated**; therefore a priest who has merely communicated is excepted. It is disputed, however, whether the law includes a priest who, while celebrating, remembers a grave sin or becomes guilty of one. Several deny this, because in the rubric² it is said that a priest who before Mass

remembers a sin and celebrates from necessity, not having availability of a confessor, is bound afterward to confess at the first opportunity. But speaking of one who remembers a sin in the celebration itself, the rubric³ says: Let him be contrite with the purpose of confessing, without adding: at the first opportunity (cf. St. Alphonsus, VI, 267).

e) **Let him confess as soon as possible.** Moreover:

alpha) Here there is a true precept; hence Alexander VII condemned the proposition: "The mandate of Trent made to a priest sacrificing from necessity with mortal sin, to confess as soon as possible, is counsel, not a precept."⁴ Moreover, that precept by the consent of all obliges under grave sin.

beta) This "as soon as possible," according to the common opinion, is understood as within three days, or in such a way that it is not lawful to wait beyond three days.⁵ The obligation of confessing exists even if someone is not going to celebrate except after a longer time. Moreover, meanwhile the priest cannot again celebrate without previous confession unless both necessity of celebrating is present and availability of a confessor is lacking. Finally, if someone can confess now and foresees that afterward the occasion of confessing will be lacking, he is bound to confess now, for example already on the first day (St. Alphonsus, VI, 266).

¹ Council of Trent, session 13, chapter 7.

² *De defectibus*, title VIII, n. 3.

³ *De defectibus*, title VII, n. 4.

⁴ Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1138.

⁵ Alexander VII condemned the proposition: "That particle 'as soon as possible' is understood as, when the priest will confess in his own time" (Denzinger-Bannwart, n. 1139).

243 III. Preparation and thanksgiving. Let the priest not omit to dispose himself by pious prayers for the oblation of the Eucharistic sacrifice, and, once it has been completed, to give thanks to God for so great a benefit (canon 810).