

### THIRD PART, QUESTION 83

#### Of the Rite of This Sacrament (In Six Articles)

We have now to consider the Rite of this sacrament, under which head there are six points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether Christ is sacrificed in the celebration of this mystery?
- (2) Of the time of celebrating;
- (3) Of the place and other matters relating to the equipment for this celebration;
- (4) Of the words uttered in celebrating this mystery;
- (5) Of the actions performed in celebrating this mystery.
- (6) Of the defects which occur in the celebration of this sacrament.

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#### Whether Christ is sacrificed in this sacrament?

IIIa q. 83 a. 1

**Objection 1.** It seems that Christ is not sacrificed in the celebration of this sacrament. For it is written (Heb. 10:14) that “Christ by one oblation hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” But that oblation was His oblation. Therefore Christ is not sacrificed in the celebration of this sacrament.

**Objection 2.** Further, Christ’s sacrifice was made upon the cross, whereon “He delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness,” as is said in Eph. 5:2. But Christ is not crucified in the celebration of this mystery. Therefore, neither is He sacrificed.

**Objection 3.** Further, as Augustine says (*De Trin.* iv), in Christ’s sacrifice the priest and the victim are one and the same. But in the celebration of this sacrament the priest and the victim are not the same. Therefore, the celebration of this sacrament is not a sacrifice of Christ.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says in the *Liber Sentent. Prosp.* (cf. Ep. xcvi): “Christ was sacrificed once in Himself, and yet He is sacrificed daily in the Sacrament.”

**I answer that,** The celebration of this sacrament is called a sacrifice for two reasons. First, because, as Augustine says (*Ad Simplician.* ii), “the images of things are called by the names of the things whereof they are the images; as when we look upon a picture or a fresco, we say, ‘This is Cicero and that is Sallust.’” But, as was said above (q. 79, a. 1), the celebration of this sacrament is an image representing Christ’s Passion, which is His true sacrifice. Accordingly the celebration of this sacrament is called Christ’s sacrifice. Hence it is that Ambrose, in commenting on Heb. 10:1, says: “In Christ was offered up a sacrifice capable of giving eternal salvation; what then do we do? Do we not offer it up every day

in memory of His death?” Secondly it is called a sacrifice, in respect of the effect of His Passion: because, to wit, by this sacrament, we are made partakers of the fruit of our Lord’s Passion. Hence in one of the Sunday Secrets (Ninth Sunday after Pentecost) we say: “Whenever the commemoration of this sacrifice is celebrated, the work of our redemption is enacted.” Consequently, according to the first reason, it is true to say that Christ was sacrificed, even in the figures of the Old Testament: hence it is stated in the Apocalypse (13:8): “Whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb, which was slain from the beginning of the world.” But according to the second reason, it is proper to this sacrament for Christ to be sacrificed in its celebration.

**Reply to Objection 1.** As Ambrose says (commenting on Heb. 10:1), “there is but one victim,” namely that which Christ offered, and which we offer, “and not many victims, because Christ was offered but once: and this latter sacrifice is the pattern of the former. For, just as what is offered everywhere is one body, and not many bodies, so also is it but one sacrifice.”

**Reply to Objection 2.** As the celebration of this sacrament is an image representing Christ’s Passion, so the altar is representative of the cross itself, upon which Christ was sacrificed in His proper species.

**Reply to Objection 3.** For the same reason (cf. Reply obj. 2) the priest also bears Christ’s image, in Whose person and by Whose power he pronounces the words of consecration, as is evident from what was said above (q. 82, Aa. 1,3). And so, in a measure, the priest and victim are one and the same.

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#### Whether the time for celebrating this mystery has been properly determined?

IIIa q. 83 a. 2

**Objection 1.** It seems that the time for celebrating this mystery has not been properly determined. For as was observed above (a. 1), this sacrament is representative of our Lord’s Passion. But the commemoration of our Lord’s Passion takes place in the Church once in the year: because Augustine says (*Enarr.* ii in Ps. 21): “Is not Christ slain as often as the Pasch is celebrated? Nevertheless, the anniversary remembrance represents what took place in by-gone days; and

so it does not cause us to be stirred as if we saw our Lord hanging upon the cross.” Therefore this sacrament ought to be celebrated but once a year.

**Objection 2.** Further, Christ’s Passion is commemorated in the Church on the Friday before Easter, and not on Christmas Day. Consequently, since this sacrament is commemorative of our Lord’s Passion, it seems unsuitable for this sacrament to be celebrated thrice on Christmas Day,

and to be entirely omitted on Good Friday.

**Objection 3.** Further, in the celebration of this sacrament the Church ought to imitate Christ's institution. But it was in the evening that Christ consecrated this sacrament. Therefore it seems that this sacrament ought to be celebrated at that time of day.

**Objection 4.** Further, as is set down in the Decretals (De Consecr., dist. i), Pope Leo I wrote to Dioscorus, Bishop of Alexandria, that "it is permissible to celebrate mass in the first part of the day." But the day begins at midnight, as was said above (q. 80, a. 8, ad 5). Therefore it seems that after midnight it is lawful to celebrate.

**Objection 5.** Further, in one of the Sunday Secrets (Ninth Sunday after Pentecost) we say: "Grant us, Lord, we beseech Thee, to frequent these mysteries." But there will be greater frequency if the priest celebrates several times a day. Therefore it seems that the priest ought not to be hindered from celebrating several times daily.

On the contrary is the custom which the Church observes according to the statutes of the Canons.

**I answer that,** As stated above (a. 1), in the celebration of this mystery, we must take into consideration the representation of our Lord's Passion, and the participation of its fruits; and the time suitable for the celebration of this mystery ought to be determined by each of these considerations. Now since, owing to our daily defects, we stand in daily need of the fruits of our Lord's Passion, this sacrament is offered regularly every day in the Church. Hence our Lord teaches us to pray (Lk. 11:3): "Give us this day our daily bread": in explanation of which words Augustine says (De Verb. Dom. xxviii): "If it be a daily bread, why do you take it once a year, as the Greeks have the custom in the east? Receive it daily that it may benefit you every day."

But since our Lord's Passion was celebrated from the third to the ninth hour, therefore this sacrament is solemnly celebrated by the Church in that part of the day.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Christ's Passion is recalled in this sacrament, inasmuch as its effect flows out to the faithful; but at Passion-tide Christ's Passion is recalled inasmuch as it was wrought in Him Who is our Head. This took place but once; whereas the faithful receive daily the fruits of His Passion: consequently, the former is commemorated but once in the year, whereas the latter takes place every day, both that we may partake of its fruit and in order that we may have a perpetual memorial.

**Reply to Objection 2.** The figure ceases on the advent of the reality. But this sacrament is a figure and a representation of our Lord's Passion, as stated above. And therefore on the day on which our Lord's Passion is recalled as it was really accomplished, this sacrament is not consecrated. Nevertheless, lest the Church be deprived on that day of the fruit of the Passion offered to us by this sacrament, the body of Christ consecrated the day before is reserved to be consumed on that day; but the blood is not reserved, on account of danger, and because the blood is more specially the image of our Lord's Passion, as stated above (q. 78, a. 3, ad 2). Nor is it true, as some affirm, that the wine is changed into blood when the particle of Christ's body is dropped into it. Because

this cannot be done otherwise than by consecration under the due form of words.

On Christmas Day, however, several masses are said on account of Christ's threefold nativity. Of these the first is His eternal birth, which is hidden in our regard, and therefore one mass is sung in the night, in the "Introit" of which we say: "The Lord said unto Me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." The second is His nativity in time, and the spiritual birth, whereby Christ rises "as the day-star in our [Vulg.: 'your'] hearts" (2 Pet. 1:19), and on this account the mass is sung at dawn, and in the "Introit" we say: "The light will shine on us today." The third is Christ's temporal and bodily birth, according as He went forth from the virginal womb, becoming visible to us through being clothed with flesh: and on that account the third mass is sung in broad daylight, in the "Introit" of which we say: "A child is born to us." Nevertheless, on the other hand, it can be said that His eternal generation, of itself, is in the full light, and on this account in the gospel of the third mass mention is made of His eternal birth. But regarding His birth in the body, He was literally born during the night, as a sign that He came to the darkneses of our infirmity; hence also in the midnight mass we say the gospel of Christ's nativity in the flesh.

Likewise on other days upon which many of God's benefits have to be recalled or besought, several masses are celebrated on one day, as for instance, one for the feast, and another for a fast or for the dead.

**Reply to Objection 3.** As already observed (q. 73, a. 5), Christ wished to give this sacrament last of all, in order that it might make a deeper impression on the hearts of the disciples; and therefore it was after supper, at the close of day, that He consecrated this sacrament and gave it to His disciples. But we celebrate at the hour when our Lord suffered, i.e. either, as on feast-days, at the hour of Terce, when He was crucified by the tongues of the Jews (Mk. 15:25), and when the Holy Ghost descended upon the disciples (Acts 2:15); or, as when no feast is kept, at the hour of Sext, when He was crucified at the hands of the soldiers (Jn. 19:14), or, as on fasting days, at None, when crying out with a loud voice He gave up the ghost (Mat. 27:46,50).

Nevertheless the mass can be postponed, especially when Holy orders have to be conferred, and still more on Holy Saturday; both on account of the length of the office, and also because orders belong to the Sunday, as is set forth in the Decretals (dist. 75).

Masses, however, can be celebrated "in the first part of the day," owing to any necessity; as is stated De Consecr., dist. 1.

**Reply to Objection 4.** As a rule mass ought to be said in the day and not in the night, because Christ is present in this sacrament, Who says (Jn. 9:4,5): "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, whilst it is day: because the night cometh when no man can work; as long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Yet this should be done in such a manner that the beginning of the day is not to be taken from midnight; nor from sunrise, that is, when the substance of the sun appears above the earth; but when the dawn begins

to show: because then the sun is said to be risen when the brightness of his beams appears. Accordingly it is written (Mk. 16:1) that “the women came to the tomb, the sun being now risen”; though, as John relates (Jn. 20:1), “while it was yet dark they came to the tomb.” It is in this way that Augustine explains this difference (De Consens. Evang. iii).

Exception is made on the night of Christmas eve, when mass is celebrated, because our Lord was born in the night (De Consecr., dist. 1). And in like manner it is celebrated on Holy Saturday towards the beginning of the night, since our Lord rose in the night, that is, “when it was yet dark, before the sun’s rising was manifest.”

**Reply to Objection 5.** As is set down in the decree (De

Consecr., dist. 1), in virtue of a decree of Pope Alexander II, “it is enough for a priest to celebrate one mass each day, because Christ suffered once and redeemed the whole world; and very happy is he who can worthily celebrate one mass. But there are some who say one mass for the dead, and another of the day, if need be. But I do not deem that those escape condemnation who presume to celebrate several masses daily, either for the sake of money, or to gain flattery from the laity.” And Pope Innocent III says (Extra, De Celebr. Miss., chap. Consuluisti) that “except on the day of our Lord’s birth, unless necessity urges, it suffices for a priest to celebrate only one mass each day.”

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**Whether this sacrament ought to be celebrated in a house and with sacred vessels?**

IIIa q. 83 a. 3

**Objection 1.** It seems that this sacrament ought not to be celebrated in a house and with sacred vessels. For this sacrament is a representation of our Lord’s Passion. But Christ did not suffer in a house, but outside the city gate, according to Heb. 1:12: “Jesus, that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, suffered without the gate.” Therefore, it seems that this sacrament ought not to be celebrated in a house, but rather in the open air.

**Objection 2.** Further, in the celebration of this sacrament the Church ought to imitate the custom of Christ and the apostles. But the house wherein Christ first wrought this sacrament was not consecrated, but merely an ordinary supper-room prepared by the master of the house, as related in Lk. 22:11,12. Moreover, we read (Acts 2:46) that “the apostles were continuing daily with one accord in the temple; and, breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness.” Consequently, there is no need for houses, in which this sacrament is celebrated, to be consecrated.

**Objection 3.** Further, nothing that is to no purpose ought to be done in the Church, which is governed by the Holy Ghost. But it seems useless to consecrate a church, or an altar, or such like inanimate things, since they are not capable of receiving grace or spiritual virtue. Therefore it is unbecoming for such consecrations to be performed in the Church.

**Objection 4.** Further, only Divine works ought to be recalled with solemnity, according to Ps. 91:5: “I shall rejoice in the works of Thy hands.” Now the consecration of a church or altar, is the work of a man; as is also the consecration of the chalice, and of the ministers, and of other such things. But these latter consecrations are not commemorated in the Church. Therefore neither ought the consecration of a church or of an altar to be commemorated with solemnity.

**Objection 5.** Further, the truth ought to correspond with the figure. But in the Old Testament, which was a figure of the New, the altar was not made of hewn stones: for, it is written (Ex. 20:24): “You shall make an altar of earth unto Me...and if thou make an altar of stone unto Me, thou shalt not build it of hewn stones.” Again, the altar is commanded to be made of “setim-wood,” covered “with brass”

(Ex. 27:1,2), or “with gold” (Ex. 25). Consequently, it seems unfitting for the Church to make exclusive use of altars made of stone.

**Objection 6.** Further, the chalice with the paten represents Christ’s tomb, which was “hewn in a rock,” as is narrated in the Gospels. Consequently, the chalice ought to be of stone, and not of gold or of silver or tin.

**Objection 7.** Further, just as gold is the most precious among the materials of the altar vessels, so are cloths of silk the most precious among other cloths. Consequently, since the chalice is of gold, the altar cloths ought to be made of silk and not of linen.

**Objection 8.** Further, the dispensing and ordering of the sacraments belong to the Church’s ministers, just as the ordering of temporal affairs is subject to the ruling of secular princes; hence the Apostle says (1 Cor. 4:1): “Let a man so esteem us as the ministers of Christ end the dispensers of the mysteries of God.” But if anything be done against the ordinances of princes it is deemed void. Therefore, if the various items mentioned above are suitably commanded by the Church’s prelates, it seems that the body of Christ could not be consecrated unless they be observed; and so it appears to follow that Christ’s words are not sufficient of themselves for consecrating this sacrament: which is contrary to the fact. Consequently, it does not seem fitting for such ordinances to be made touching the celebration of this sacrament.

**On the contrary,** The Church’s ordinances are Christ’s own ordinances; since He said (Mat. 18:20): “Wherever two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.”

**I answer that,** There are two things to be considered regarding the equipment of this sacrament: one of these belongs to the representation of the events connected with our Lord’s Passion; while the other is connected with the reverence due to the sacrament, in which Christ is contained verily, and not in figure only.

Hence we consecrate those things which we make use of in this sacrament; both that we may show our reverence for the sacrament, and in order to represent the holiness which is the effect of the Passion of Christ, according to Heb. 13:12: “Jesus, that He might sanctify the people by His own blood,” etc.

**Reply to Objection 1.** This sacrament ought as a rule to be celebrated in a house, whereby the Church is signified, according to 1 Tim. 3:15: "That thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God." Because "outside the Church there is no place for the true sacrifice," as Augustine says (*Liber Sentent. Prosp.* xv). And because the Church was not to be confined within the territories of the Jewish people, but was to be established throughout the whole world, therefore Christ's Passion was not celebrated within the city of the Jews, but in the open country, that so the whole world might serve as a house for Christ's Passion. Nevertheless, as is said in *De Consecr.*, dist. 1, "if a church be not to hand, we permit travelers to celebrate mass in the open air, or in a tent, if there be a consecrated altar-table to hand, and the other requisites belonging to the sacred function."

**Reply to Objection 2.** The house in which this sacrament is celebrated denotes the Church, and is termed a church; and so it is fittingly consecrated, both to represent the holiness which the Church acquired from the Passion, as well as to denote the holiness required of them who have to receive this sacrament. By the altar Christ Himself is signified, of Whom the Apostle says (*Heb.* 13:15): "Through Him we offer a sacrifice of praise to God." Hence the consecration of the altar signifies Christ's holiness, of which it was said (*Lk.* 1:35): "The Holy one born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Hence we read in *De Consecr.*, dist. 1: "It has seemed pleasing for the altars to be consecrated not merely with the anointing of chrism, but likewise with the priestly blessing."

And therefore, as a rule, it is not lawful to celebrate this sacrament except in a consecrated house. Hence it is enacted (*De Consecr.*, dist. 1): "Let no priest presume to say mass except in places consecrated by the bishop." And furthermore because pagans and other unbelievers are not members of the Church, therefore we read (*De Consecr.*, dist. 1): "It is not lawful to bless a church in which the bodies of unbelievers are buried, but if it seem suitable for consecration, then, after removing the corpses and tearing down the walls or beams, let it be rebuilt. If, however, it has been already consecrated, and the faithful lie in it, it is lawful to celebrate mass therein." Nevertheless in a case of necessity this sacrament can be performed in houses which have not been consecrated, or which have been profaned; but with the bishop's consent. Hence we read in the same distinction: "We deem that masses are not to be celebrated everywhere, but in places consecrated by the bishop, or where he gives permission." But not without a portable altar consecrated by the bishop: hence in the same distinction we read: "We permit that, if the churches be devastated or burned, masses may be celebrated in chapels, with a consecrated altar." For because Christ's holiness is the fount of all the Church's holiness, therefore in necessity a consecrated altar suffices for performing this sacrament. And on this account a church is never consecrated without consecrating the altar. Yet sometimes an altar is consecrated apart from the church, with the relics of the saints, "whose lives are hidden with Christ in God" (*Col.* 3:3). Accordingly under the same distinction we

read: "It is our pleasure that altars, in which no relics of saints are found enclosed, be thrown down, if possible, by the bishops presiding over such places."

**Reply to Objection 3.** The church, altar, and other like inanimate things are consecrated, not because they are capable of receiving grace, but because they acquire special spiritual virtue from the consecration, whereby they are rendered fit for the Divine worship, so that man derives devotion therefrom, making him more fitted for Divine functions, unless this be hindered by want of reverence. Hence it is written (*2 Macc.* 3:38): "There is undoubtedly in that place a certain power of God; for He that hath His dwelling in the heavens is the visitor, and the protector of that place."

Hence it is that such places are cleansed and exorcised before being consecrated, that the enemy's power may be driven forth. And for the same reason churches defiled by shedding of blood or seed are reconciled: because some machination of the enemy is apparent on account of the sin committed there. And for this reason we read in the same distinction: "Wherever you find churches of the Arians, consecrate them as Catholic churches without delay by means of devout prayers and rites." Hence, too, it is that some say with probability, that by entering a consecrated church one obtains forgiveness of venial sins, just as one does by the sprinkling of holy water; alleging the words of *Ps.* 84:2,3: "Lord, Thou hast blessed Thy land...Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of Thy people." And therefore, in consequence of the virtue acquired by a church's consecration, the consecration is never repeated. Accordingly we find in the same distinction the following words quoted from the Council of Nicaea: "Churches which have once been consecrated, must not be consecrated again, except they be devastated by fire, or defiled by shedding of blood or of anyone's seed; because, just as a child once baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, ought not to be baptized again, so neither ought a place, once dedicated to God, to be consecrated again, except owing to the causes mentioned above; provided that the consecrators held faith in the Holy Trinity": in fact, those outside the Church cannot consecrate. But, as we read in the same distinction: "Churches or altars of doubtful consecration are to be consecrated anew."

And since they acquire special spiritual virtue from their consecration, we find it laid down in the same distinction that "the beams of a dedicated church ought not to be used for any other purpose, except it be for some other church, or else they are to be burned, or put to the use of brethren in some monastery: but on no account are they to be discarded for works of the laity." We read there, too, that "the altar covering, chair, candlesticks, and veil, are to be burned when worn out; and their ashes are to be placed in the baptistery, or in the walls, or else cast into the trenches beneath the flag-stones, so as not to be defiled by the feet of those that enter."

**Reply to Objection 4.** Since the consecration of the altar signifies Christ's holiness, and the consecration of a house the holiness of the entire Church, therefore the consecration of a church or of an altar is more fittingly commemorated.

And on this account the solemnity of a church dedication is observed for eight days, in order to signify the happy resurrection of Christ and of the Church's members. Nor is the consecration of a church or altar man's doing only, since it has a spiritual virtue. Hence in the same distinction (De Consecr.) it is said: "The solemnities of the dedication of churches are to be solemnly celebrated each year: and that dedications are to be kept up for eight days, you will find in the third book of Kings" (8:66).

**Reply to Objection 5.** As we read in De Consecr., dist. 1, "altars, if not of stone, are not to be consecrated with the anointing of chrism." And this is in keeping with the signification of this sacrament; both because the altar signifies Christ, for in 1 Cor. 10:3, it is written, "But the rock was Christ": and because Christ's body was laid in a stone sepulchre. This is also in keeping with the use of the sacrament. Because stone is solid, and may be found everywhere, which was not necessary in the old Law, when the altar was made in one place. As to the commandment to make the altar of earth, or of unhewn stones, this was given in order to remove idolatry.

**Reply to Objection 6.** As is laid down in the same distinction, "formerly the priests did not use golden but wooden chalices; but Pope Zephyrinus ordered the mass to be said with glass patens; and subsequently Pope Urban had everything made of silver." Afterwards it was decided that "the Lord's chalice with the paten should be made entirely of gold, or of silver or at least of tin. But it is not to be made of brass, or copper, because the action of the wine thereon produces verdigris, and provokes vomiting. But no one is to presume to sing mass with a chalice of wood or of glass," because as the wood is porous, the consecrated blood would remain in it; while glass is brittle and there might arise danger

of breakage; and the same applies to stone. Consequently, out of reverence for the sacrament, it was enacted that the chalice should be made of the aforesaid materials.

**Reply to Objection 7.** Where it could be done without danger, the Church gave order for that thing to be used which more expressively represents Christ's Passion. But there was not so much danger regarding the body which is placed on the corporal, as there is with the blood contained in the chalice. And consequently, although the chalice is not made of stone, yet the corporal is made of linen, since Christ's body was wrapped therein. Hence we read in an Epistle of Pope Silvester, quoted in the same distinction: "By a unanimous decree we command that no one shall presume to celebrate the sacrifice of the altar upon a cloth of silk, or dyed material, but upon linen consecrated by the bishop; as Christ's body was buried in a clean linen winding-sheet." Moreover, linen material is becoming, owing to its cleanness, to denote purity of conscience, and, owing to the manifold labor with which it is prepared, to denote Christ's Passion.

**Reply to Objection 8.** The dispensing of the sacraments belongs to the Church's ministers; but their consecration is from God Himself. Consequently, the Church's ministers can make no ordinances regarding the form of the consecration, and the manner of celebrating. And therefore, if the priest pronounces the words of consecration over the proper matter with the intention of consecrating, then, without every one of the things mentioned above—namely, without house, and altar, consecrated chalice and corporal, and the other things instituted by the Church—he consecrates Christ's body in very truth; yet he is guilty of grave sin, in not following the rite of the Church.

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**Whether the words spoken in this sacrament are properly framed?**

IIIa q. 83 a. 4

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**Objection 1.** It seems that the words spoken in this sacrament are not properly framed. For, as Ambrose says (De Sacram. iv), this sacrament is consecrated with Christ's own words. Therefore no other words besides Christ's should be spoken in this sacrament.

**Objection 2.** Further, Christ's words and deeds are made known to us through the Gospel. But in consecrating this sacrament words are used which are not set down in the Gospels: for we do not read in the Gospel, of Christ lifting up His eyes to heaven while consecrating this sacrament: and similarly it is said in the Gospel: "Take ye and eat" [comedite] without the addition of the word "all," whereas in celebrating this sacrament we say: "Lifting up His eyes to heaven," and again, "Take ye and eat [manducate] of this." Therefore such words as these are out of place when spoken in the celebration of this sacrament.

**Objection 3.** Further, all the other sacraments are ordained for the salvation of all the faithful. But in the celebration of the other sacraments there is no common prayer put up for the salvation of all the faithful and of the departed. Consequently it is unbecoming in this sacrament.

**Objection 4.** Further, Baptism especially is called the

sacrament of faith. Consequently, the truths which belong to instruction in the faith ought rather to be given regarding Baptism than regarding this sacrament, such as the doctrine of the apostles and of the Gospels.

**Objection 5.** Further, devotion on the part of the faithful is required in every sacrament. Consequently, the devotion of the faithful ought not to be stirred up in this sacrament more than in the others by Divine praises and by admonitions, such as, "Lift up your hearts."

**Objection 6.** Further, the minister of this sacrament is the priest, as stated above (q. 82, a. 1). Consequently, all the words spoken in this sacrament ought to be uttered by the priest, and not some by the ministers, and some by the choir.

**Objection 7.** Further, the Divine power works this sacrament unflinchingly. Therefore it is to no purpose that the priest asks for the perfecting of this sacrament, saying: "Which oblation do thou, O God, in all," etc.

**Objection 8.** Further, the sacrifice of the New Law is much more excellent than the sacrifice of the fathers of old. Therefore, it is unfitting for the priest to pray that this sacrifice may be as acceptable as the sacrifice of Abel, Abraham, and Melchisedech.

**Objection 9.** Further, just as Christ's body does not begin to be in this sacrament by change of place, as stated above (q. 75, a. 2), so likewise neither does it cease to be there. Consequently, it is improper for the priest to ask: "Bid these things be borne by the hands of thy holy angel unto Thine altar on high."

**On the contrary,** We find it stated in De Consecr., dist. 1, that "James, the brother of the Lord according to the flesh, and Basil, bishop of Caesarea, edited the rite of celebrating the mass": and from their authority it is manifest that whatever words are employed in this matter, are chosen becomingly.

**Answer that,** Since the whole mystery of our salvation is comprised in this sacrament, therefore is it performed with greater solemnity than the other sacraments. And since it is written (Eccles. 4:17): "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God"; and (Ecclus. 18:23): "Before prayer prepare thy soul," therefore the celebration of this mystery is preceded by a certain preparation in order that we may perform worthily that which follows after. The first part of this preparation is Divine praise, and consists in the "Introit": according to Ps. 49:23: "The sacrifice of praise shall glorify me; and there is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God": and this is taken for the most part from the Psalms, or, at least, is sung with a Psalm, because, as Dionysius says (Eccl. Hier. iii): "The Psalms comprise by way of praise whatever is contained in Sacred Scripture."

The second part contains a reference to our present misery, by reason of which we pray for mercy, saying: "Lord, have mercy on us," thrice for the Person of the Father, and "Christ, have mercy on us," thrice for the Person of the Son, and "Lord, have mercy on us," thrice for the Person of the Holy Ghost; against the threefold misery of ignorance, sin, and punishment; or else to express the "circuminsession" of all the Divine Persons.

The third part commemorates the heavenly glory, to the possession of which, after this life of misery, we are tending, in the words, "Glory be to God on high," which are sung on festival days, on which the heavenly glory is commemorated, but are omitted in those sorrowful offices which commemorate our unhappy state.

The fourth part contains the prayer which the priest makes for the people, that they may be made worthy of such great mysteries.

There precedes, in the second place, the instruction of the faithful, because this sacrament is "a mystery of faith," as stated above (q. 78, a. 3, ad 5). Now this instruction is given "dispositively," when the Lectors and Sub-deacons read aloud in the church the teachings of the prophets and apostles: after this "lesson," the choir sing the "Gradual," which signifies progress in life; then the "Alleluia" is intoned, and this denotes spiritual joy; or in mournful offices the "Tract", expressive of spiritual sighing; for all these things ought to result from the aforesaid teaching. But the people are instructed "perfectly" by Christ's teaching contained in the Gospel, which is read by the higher ministers, that is, by the Deacons. And because we believe Christ as the Divine truth, according to Jn. 8:46, "If I tell you the truth, why

do you not believe Me?" after the Gospel has been read, the "Creed" is sung in which the people show that they assent by faith to Christ's doctrine. And it is sung on those festivals of which mention is made therein, as on the festivals of Christ, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the apostles, who laid the foundations of this faith, and on other such days.

So then, after the people have been prepared and instructed, the next step is to proceed to the celebration of the mystery, which is both offered as a sacrifice, and consecrated and received as a sacrament: since first we have the oblation; then the consecration of the matter offered; and thirdly, its reception.

In regard to the oblation, two things are done, namely, the people's praise in singing the "offertory," expressing the joy of the offerers, and the priest's prayer asking for the people's oblation to be made acceptable to God. Hence David said (1 Para 29:17): "In the simplicity of my heart, I have...offered all these things: and I have seen with great joy Thy people which are here present, offer Thee their offerings": and then he makes the following prayer: "O Lord God...keep...this will."

Then, regarding the consecration, performed by supernatural power, the people are first of all excited to devotion in the "Preface," hence they are admonished "to lift up their hearts to the Lord," and therefore when the "Preface" is ended the people devoutly praise Christ's Godhead, saying with the angels: "Holy, Holy, Holy"; and His humanity, saying with the children: "Blessed is he that cometh." In the next place the priest makes a "commemoration," first of those for whom this sacrifice is offered, namely, for the whole Church, and "for those set in high places" (1 Tim. 2:2), and, in a special manner, of them "who offer, or for whom the mass is offered." Secondly, he commemorates the saints, invoking their patronage for those mentioned above, when he says: "Communicating with, and honoring the memory," etc. Thirdly, he concludes the petition when he says: "Wherefore that this oblation," etc., in order that the oblation may be salutary to them for whom it is offered.

Then he comes to the consecration itself. Here he asks first of all for the effect of the consecration, when he says: "Which oblation do Thou, O God," etc. Secondly, he performs the consecration using our Saviour's words, when he says: "Who the day before," etc. Thirdly, he makes excuse for his presumption in obeying Christ's command, saying: "Wherefore, calling to mind," etc. Fourthly, he asks that the sacrifice accomplished may find favor with God, when he says: "Look down upon them with a propitious," etc. Fifthly, he begs for the effect of this sacrifice and sacrament, first for the partakers, saying: "We humbly beseech Thee"; then for the dead, who can no longer receive it, saying: "Be mindful also, O Lord," etc.; thirdly, for the priests themselves who offer, saying: "And to us sinners," etc.

Then follows the act of receiving the sacrament. First of all, the people are prepared for Communion; first, by the common prayer of the congregation, which is the Lord's Prayer, in which we ask for our daily bread to be given us; and also by private prayer, which the priest puts up specially for the people, when he says: "Deliver us, we beseech

Thee, O Lord," etc. Secondly, the people are prepared by the "Pax" which is given with the words, "Lamb of God," etc., because this is the sacrament of unity and peace, as stated above (q. 73, a. 4; q. 79, a. 1). But in masses for the dead, in which the sacrifice is offered not for present peace, but for the repose of the dead, the "Pax" is omitted.

Then follows the reception of the sacrament, the priest receiving first, and afterwards giving it to others, because, as Dionysius says (Eccl. Hier. iii), he who gives Divine things to others, ought first to partake thereof himself.

Finally, the whole celebration of mass ends with the thanksgiving, the people rejoicing for having received the mystery (and this is the meaning of the singing after the Communion); and the priest returning thanks by prayer, as Christ, at the close of the supper with His disciples, "said a hymn" (Mat. 26:30).

**Reply to Objection 1.** The consecration is accomplished by Christ's words only; but the other words must be added to dispose the people for receiving it, as stated above.

**Reply to Objection 2.** As is stated in the last chapter of John (verse 25), our Lord said and did many things which are not written down by the Evangelists; and among them is the uplifting of His eyes to heaven at the supper; nevertheless the Roman Church had it by tradition from the apostles. For it seems reasonable that He Who lifted up His eyes to the Father in raising Lazarus to life, as related in Jn. 11:41, and in the prayer which He made for the disciples (Jn. 17:1), had more reason to do so in instituting this sacrament, as being of greater import.

The use of the word "manducate" instead of "comedite" makes no difference in the meaning, nor does the expression signify, especially since those words are no part of the form, as stated above (q. 78, a. 1, ad 2,4).

The additional word "all" is understood in the Gospels, although not expressed, because He had said (Jn. 6:54): "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man...you shall not have life in you."

**Reply to Objection 3.** The Eucharist is the sacrament of the unity of the whole Church: and therefore in this sacrament, more than in the others, mention ought to be made of all that belongs to the salvation of the entire Church.

**Reply to Objection 4.** There is a twofold instruction in the Faith: the first is for those receiving it for the first time, that is to say, for catechumens, and such instruction is given in connection with Baptism. The other is the instruction of the faithful who take part in this sacrament; and such instruction is given in connection with this sacrament. Nevertheless catechumens and unbelievers are not excluded therefrom. Hence in De Consecr., dist. 1, it is laid down: "Let the bishop hinder no one from entering the church, and hearing the word of God, be they Gentiles, heretics, or Jews, until the mass of the Catechumens begins," in which the instruction regarding the Faith is contained.

**Reply to Objection 5.** Greater devotion is required in this sacrament than in the others, for the reason that the entire Christ is contained therein. Moreover, this sacrament requires a more general devotion, i.e. on the part of the whole people, since for them it is offered; and not merely on

the part of the recipients, as in the other sacraments. Hence Cyprian observes (De Orat. Domin. 31), "The priest, in saying the Preface, disposes the souls of the brethren by saying, 'Lift up your hearts,' and when the people answer—'We have lifted them up to the Lord,' let them remember that they are to think of nothing else but God."

**Reply to Objection 6.** As was said above (ad 3), those things are mentioned in this sacrament which belong to the entire Church; and consequently some things which refer to the people are sung by the choir, and some of these words are all sung by the choir, as though inspiring the entire people with them; and there are other words which the priest begins and the people take up, the priest then acting as in the person of God; to show that the things they denote have come to the people through Divine revelation, such as faith and heavenly glory; and therefore the priest intones the "Creed" and the "Gloria in excelsis Deo." Other words are uttered by the ministers, such as the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, as a sign that this doctrine was announced to the peoples through ministers sent by God. And there are other words which the priest alone recites, namely, such as belong to his personal office, "that he may offer up gifts and prayers for the people" (Heb. 5:1). Some of these, however, he says aloud, namely, such as are common to priest and people alike, such as the "common prayers"; other words, however, belong to the priest alone, such as the oblation and the consecration; consequently, the prayers that are said in connection with these have to be said by the priest in secret. Nevertheless, in both he calls the people to attention by saying: "The Lord be with you," and he waits for them to assent by saying "Amen." And therefore before the secret prayers he says aloud, "The Lord be with you," and he concludes, "For ever and ever." Or the priest secretly pronounces some of the words as a token that regarding Christ's Passion the disciples acknowledged Him only in secret.

**Reply to Objection 7.** The efficacy of the sacramental words can be hindered by the priest's intention. Nor is there anything unbecoming in our asking of God for what we know He will do, just as Christ (Jn. 17:1,5) asked for His glorification.

But the priest does not seem to pray there for the consecration to be fulfilled, but that it may be fruitful in our regard, hence he says expressively: "That it may become 'to us' the body and the blood." Again, the words preceding these have that meaning, when he says: "Vouchsafe to make this oblation blessed," i.e. according to Augustine (Paschasius, De Corp. et Sang. Dom. xii), "that we may receive a blessing," namely, through grace; "enrolled," i.e. that we may be enrolled in heaven; "ratified," i.e. that we may be incorporated in Christ; "reasonable," i.e. that we may be stripped of our animal sense; "acceptable," i.e. that we who in ourselves are displeasing, may, by its means, be made acceptable to His only Son."

**Reply to Objection 8.** Although this sacrament is of itself preferable to all ancient sacrifices, yet the sacrifices of the men of old were most acceptable to God on account of their devotion. Consequently the priest asks that this sacrifice may be accepted by God through the devotion of the

offerers, just as the former sacrifices were accepted by Him.

**Reply to Objection 9.** The priest does not pray that the sacramental species may be borne up to heaven; nor that Christ's true body may be borne thither, for it does not cease to be there; but he offers this prayer for Christ's mystical body, which is signified in this sacrament, that the angel standing by at the Divine mysteries may present to God the prayers of both priest and people, according to Apoc. 8:4: "And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel." But God's "altar on high" means either the Church triumphant, unto which we pray to be translated, or else God Himself, in Whom we ask to share; because it is said of this altar (Ex. 20:26): "Thou shalt not go up by steps unto My altar, i.e.

thou shalt make no steps towards the Trinity." Or else by the angel we are to understand Christ Himself, Who is the "Angel of great counsel" (Is. 9:6: Septuagint), Who unites His mystical body with God the Father and the Church triumphant.

And from this the mass derives its name [missa]; because the priest sends [mittit] his prayers up to God through the angel, as the people do through the priest. or else because Christ is the victim sent [missa] to us: accordingly the deacon on festival days "dismisses" the people at the end of the mass, by saying: "Ite, missa est," that is, the victim has been sent [missa est] to God through the angel, so that it may be accepted by God.

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**Whether the actions performed in celebrating this sacrament are becoming?**

IIIa q. 83 a. 5

**Objection 1.** It seems that the actions performed in celebrating this mystery are not becoming. For, as is evident from its form, this sacrament belongs to the New Testament. But under the New Testament the ceremonies of the old are not to be observed, such as that the priests and ministers were purified with water when they drew nigh to offer up the sacrifice: for we read (Ex. 30:19,20): "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and feet...when they are going into the tabernacle of the testimony...and when they are to come to the altar." Therefore it is not fitting that the priest should wash his hands when celebrating mass.

**Objection 2.** Further, (Ex. 30:7), the Lord commanded Aaron to "burn sweet-smelling incense" upon the altar which was "before the propitiatory": and the same action was part of the ceremonies of the Old Law. Therefore it is not fitting for the priest to use incense during mass.

**Objection 3.** Further, the ceremonies performed in the sacraments of the Church ought not to be repeated. Consequently it is not proper for the priest to repeat the sign of the cross many times over this sacrament.

**Objection 4.** Further, the Apostle says (Heb. 7:7): "And without all contradiction, that which is less, is blessed by the better." But Christ, Who is in this sacrament after the consecration, is much greater than the priest. Therefore quite unseemingly the priest, after the consecration, blesses this sacrament, by signing it with the cross.

**Objection 5.** Further, nothing which appears ridiculous ought to be done in one of the Church's sacraments. But it seems ridiculous to perform gestures, e.g. for the priest to stretch out his arms at times, to join his hands, to join together his fingers, and to bow down. Consequently, such things ought not to be done in this sacrament.

**Objection 6.** Further, it seems ridiculous for the priest to turn round frequently towards the people, and often to greet the people. Consequently, such things ought not to be done in the celebration of this sacrament.

**Objection 7.** Further, the Apostle (1 Cor. 13) deems it improper for Christ to be divided. But Christ is in this sacrament after the consecration. Therefore it is not proper for the priest to divide the host.

**Objection 8.** Further, the ceremonies performed in this

sacrament represent Christ's Passion. But during the Passion Christ's body was divided in the places of the five wounds. Therefore Christ's body ought to be broken into five parts rather than into three.

**Objection 9.** Further, Christ's entire body is consecrated in this sacrament apart from the blood. Consequently, it is not proper for a part of the body to be mixed with the blood.

**Objection 10.** Further, just as, in this sacrament, Christ's body is set before us as food, so is His blood, as drink. But in receiving Christ's body no other bodily food is added in the celebration of the mass. Therefore, it is out of place for the priest, after taking Christ's blood, to receive other wine which is not consecrated.

**Objection 11.** Further, the truth ought to be conformable with the figure. But regarding the Paschal Lamb, which was a figure of this sacrament, it was commanded that nothing of it should "remain until the morning." It is improper therefore for consecrated hosts to be reserved, and not consumed at once.

**Objection 12.** Further, the priest addresses in the plural number those who are hearing mass, when he says, "The Lord be with you": and, "Let us return thanks." But it is out of keeping to address one individual in the plural number, especially an inferior. Consequently it seems unfitting for a priest to say mass with only a single server present. Therefore in the celebration of this sacrament it seems that some of the things done are out of place.

**On the contrary,** The custom of the Church stands for these things: and the Church cannot err, since she is taught by the Holy Ghost.

**I answer that,** As was said above (q. 60, a. 6), there is a twofold manner of signification in the sacraments, by words, and by actions, in order that the signification may thus be more perfect. Now, in the celebration of this sacrament words are used to signify things pertaining to Christ's Passion, which is represented in this sacrament; or again, pertaining to Christ's mystical body, which is signified therein; and again, things pertaining to the use of this sacrament, which use ought to be devout and reverent. Consequently, in the celebration of this mystery some things are done in

order to represent Christ's Passion, or the disposing of His mystical body, and some others are done which pertain to the devotion and reverence due to this sacrament.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The washing of the hands is done in the celebration of mass out of reverence for this sacrament; and this for two reasons: first, because we are not wont to handle precious objects except the hands be washed; hence it seems indecent for anyone to approach so great a sacrament with hands that are, even literally, unclean. Secondly, on account of its signification, because, as Dionysius says (Eccl. Hier. iii), the washing of the extremities of the limbs denotes cleansing from even the smallest sins, according to Jn. 13:10: "He that is washed needeth not but to wash his feet." And such cleansing is required of him who approaches this sacrament; and this is denoted by the confession which is made before the "Introit" of the mass. Moreover, this was signified by the washing of the priests under the Old Law, as Dionysius says (Eccl. Hier. iii). However, the Church observes this ceremony, not because it was prescribed under the Old Law, but because it is becoming in itself, and therefore instituted by the Church. Hence it is not observed in the same way as it was then: because the washing of the feet is omitted, and the washing of the hands is observed; for this can be done more readily, and suffices far denoting perfect cleansing. For, since the hand is the "organ of organs" (De Anima iii), all works are attributed to the hands: hence it is said in Ps. 25:6: "I will wash my hands among the innocent."

**Reply to Objection 2.** We use incense, not as commanded by a ceremonial precept of the Law, but as prescribed by the Church; accordingly we do not use it in the same fashion as it was ordered under the Old Law. It has reference to two things: first, to the reverence due to this sacrament, i.e. in order by its good odor, to remove any disagreeable smell that may be about the place; secondly, it serves to show the effect of grace, wherewith Christ was filled as with a good odor, according to Gn. 27:27: "Behold, the odor of my son is like the odor of a ripe field"; and from Christ it spreads to the faithful by the work of His ministers, according to 2 Cor. 2:14: "He manifesteth the odor of his knowledge by us in every place"; and therefore when the altar which represents Christ, has been incensed on every side, then all are incensed in their proper order.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The priest, in celebrating the mass, makes use of the sign of the cross to signify Christ's Passion which was ended upon the cross. Now, Christ's Passion was accomplished in certain stages. First of all there was Christ's betrayal, which was the work of God, of Judas, and of the Jews; and this is signified by the triple sign of the cross at the words, "These gifts, these presents, these holy unspotted sacrifices."

Secondly, there was the selling of Christ. Now he was sold to the Priests, to the Scribes, and to the Pharisees: and to signify this the threefold sign of the cross is repeated, at the words, "blessed, enrolled, ratified." Or again, to signify the price for which He was sold, viz. thirty pence. And a double cross is added at the words—"that it may become to us the Body and the Blood," etc., to signify the person of Judas the

seller, and of Christ Who was sold.

Thirdly, there was the foreshadowing of the Passion at the last supper. To denote this, in the third place, two crosses are made, one in consecrating the body, the other in consecrating the blood; each time while saying, "He blessed."

Fourthly, there was Christ's Passion itself. And so in order to represent His five wounds, in the fourth place, there is a fivefold signing of the cross at the words, "a pure Victim, a holy Victim, a spotless Victim, the holy bread of eternal life, and the cup of everlasting salvation."

Fifthly, the outstretching of Christ's body, and the shedding of the blood, and the fruits of the Passion, are signified by the triple signing of the cross at the words, "as many as shall receive the body and blood, may be filled with every blessing," etc.

Sixthly, Christ's threefold prayer upon the cross is represented; one for His persecutors when He said, "Father, forgive them"; the second for deliverance from death, when He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" the third referring to His entrance into glory, when He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit"; and in order to denote these there is a triple signing with the cross made at the words, "Thou dost sanctify, quicken, bless."

Seventhly, the three hours during which He hung upon the cross, that is, from the sixth to the ninth hour, are represented; in signification of which we make once more a triple sign of the cross at the words, "Through Him, and with Him, and in Him."

Eighthly, the separation of His soul from the body is signified by the two subsequent crosses made over the chalice.

Ninthly, the resurrection on the third day is represented by the three crosses made at the words—"May the peace of the Lord be ever with you."

In short, we may say that the consecration of this sacrament, and the acceptance of this sacrifice, and its fruits, proceed from the virtue of the cross of Christ, and therefore wherever mention is made of these, the priest makes use of the sign of the cross.

**Reply to Objection 4.** After the consecration, the priest makes the sign of the cross, not for the purpose of blessing and consecrating, but only for calling to mind the virtue of the cross, and the manner of Christ's suffering, as is evident from what has been said (ad 3).

**Reply to Objection 5.** The actions performed by the priest in mass are not ridiculous gestures, since they are done so as to represent something else. The priest in extending his arms signifies the outstretching of Christ's arms upon the cross. He also lifts up his hands as he prays, to point out that his prayer is directed to God for the people, according to Lam. 3:41: "Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to the Lord in the heavens"; and Ex. 17:11: "And when Moses lifted up his hands Israel overcame." That at times he joins his hands, and bows down, praying earnestly and humbly, denotes the humility and obedience of Christ, out of which He suffered. He closes his fingers, i.e. the thumb and first finger, after the consecration, because, with them, he had touched the consecrated body of Christ; so that if any particle cling to the fingers, it may not be scattered: and this belongs to

the reverence for this sacrament.

**Reply to Objection 6.** Five times does the priest turn round towards the people, to denote that our Lord manifested Himself five times on the day of His Resurrection, as stated above in the treatise on Christ's Resurrection (q. 55, a. 3, obj. 3). But the priest greets the people seven times, namely, five times, by turning round to the people, and twice without turning round, namely, when he says, "The Lord be with you" before the "Preface," and again when he says, "May the peace of the Lord be ever with you": and this is to denote the sevenfold grace of the Holy Ghost. But a bishop, when he celebrates on festival days, in his first greeting says, "Peace be to you," which was our Lord's greeting after Resurrection, Whose person the bishop chiefly represents.

**Reply to Objection 7.** The breaking of the host denotes three things: first, the rending of Christ's body, which took place in the Passion; secondly, the distinction of His mystical body according to its various states; and thirdly, the distribution of the graces which flow from Christ's Passion, as Dionysius observes (Eccl. Hier. iii). Hence this breaking does not imply severance in Christ.

**Reply to Objection 8.** As Pope Sergius says, and it is to be found in the Decretals (De Consecr., dist. ii), "the Lord's body is threefold; the part offered and put into the chalice signifies Christ's risen body," namely, Christ Himself, and the Blessed Virgin, and the other saints, if there be any, who are already in glory with their bodies. "The part consumed denotes those still walking upon earth," because while living upon earth they are united together by this sacrament; and are bruised by the passions, just as the bread eaten is bruised by the teeth. "The part reserved on the altar till the close of the mass, is His body hidden in the sepulchre, because the bodies of the saints will be in their graves until the end of the world": though their souls are either in purgatory, or in heaven. However, this rite of reserving one part on the altar till the close of the mass is no longer observed, on account of the danger; nevertheless, the same meaning of the parts continues, which some persons have expressed in verse, thus:

"The host being rent—

What is dipped, means the blest;

What is dry, means the living;

What is kept, those at rest."

Others, however, say that the part put into the chalice denotes those still living in this world, while the part kept outside the chalice denotes those fully blessed both in soul and body; while the part consumed means the others.

**Reply to Objection 9.** Two things can be signified by the chalice: first, the Passion itself, which is represented in this sacrament, and according to this, by the part put into the chalice are denoted those who are still sharers of Christ's suf-

ferings; secondly, the enjoyment of the Blessed can be signified, which is likewise foreshadowed in this sacrament; and therefore those whose bodies are already in full beatitude, are denoted by the part put into the chalice. And it is to be observed that the part put into the chalice ought not to be given to the people to supplement the communion, because Christ gave dipped bread only to Judas the betrayer.

**Reply to Objection 10.** Wine, by reason of its humidity, is capable of washing, consequently it is received in order to rinse the mouth after receiving this sacrament, lest any particles remain: and this belongs to reverence for the sacrament. Hence (Extra, De Celebratione missae, chap. Ex parte), it is said: "The priest should always cleanse his mouth with wine after receiving the entire sacrament of Eucharist: except when he has to celebrate another mass on the same day, lest from taking the ablution-wine he be prevented from celebrating again"; and it is for the same reason that wine is poured over the fingers with which he had touched the body of Christ.

**Reply to Objection 11.** The truth ought to be conformable with the figure, in some respect: namely, because a part of the host consecrated, of which the priest and ministers or even the people communicate, ought not to be reserved until the day following. Hence, as is laid down (De Consecr., dist. ii), Pope Clement I ordered that "as many hosts are to be offered on the altar as shall suffice for the people; should any be left over, they are not to be reserved until the morrow, but let the clergy carefully consume them with fear and trembling." Nevertheless, since this sacrament is to be received daily, whereas the Paschal Lamb was not, it is therefore necessary for other hosts to be reserved for the sick. Hence we read in the same distinction: "Let the priest always have the Eucharist ready, so that, when anyone fall sick, he may take Communion to him at once, lest he die without it."

**Reply to Objection 12.** Several persons ought to be present at the solemn celebration of the mass. Hence Pope Soter says (De Consecr., dist. 1): "It has also been ordained, that no priest is to presume to celebrate solemn mass, unless two others be present answering him, while he himself makes the third; because when he says in the plural, 'The Lord be with you,' and again in the Secrets, 'Pray ye for me,' it is most becoming that they should answer his greeting." Hence it is for the sake of greater solemnity that we find it decreed (De Consecr. dist. 1) that a bishop is to solemnize mass with several assistants. Nevertheless, in private masses it suffices to have one server, who takes the place of the whole Catholic people, on whose behalf he makes answer in the plural to the priest.

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Whether the defects occurring during the celebration of this sacrament can be sufficiently met by observing the Church's statutes?

IIIa q. 83 a. 6

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**Objection 1.** It seems that the defects occurring during the celebration of this sacrament cannot be sufficiently met by observing the statutes of the Church. For it sometimes happens that before or after the consecration the priest dies

or goes mad, or is hindered by some other infirmity from receiving the sacrament and completing the mass. Consequently it seems impossible to observe the Church's statute, whereby the priest consecrating must communicate of his

own sacrifice.

**Objection 2.** Further, it sometimes happens that, before the consecration, the priest remembers that he has eaten or drunk something, or that he is in mortal sin, or under excommunication, which he did not remember previously. Therefore, in such a dilemma a man must necessarily commit mortal sin by acting against the Church's statute, whether he receives or not.

**Objection 3.** Further, it sometimes happens that a fly or a spider, or some other poisonous creature falls into the chalice after the consecration. Or even that the priest comes to know that poison has been put in by some evilly disposed person in order to kill him. Now in this instance, if he takes it, he appears to sin by killing himself, or by tempting God: also in like manner if he does not take it, he sins by acting against the Church's statute. Consequently, he seems to be perplexed, and under necessity of sinning, which is not becoming.

**Objection 4.** Further, it sometimes happens from the server's want of heed that water is not added to the chalice, or even the wine overlooked, and that the priest discovers this. Therefore he seems to be perplexed likewise in this case, whether he receives the body without the blood, thus making the sacrifice to be incomplete, or whether he receives neither the body nor the blood.

**Objection 5.** Further, it sometimes happens that the priest cannot remember having said the words of consecration, or other words which are uttered in the celebration of this sacrament. In this case he seems to sin, whether he repeats the words over the same matter, which words possibly he has said before, or whether he uses bread and wine which are not consecrated, as if they were consecrated.

**Objection 6.** Further, it sometimes comes to pass owing to the cold that the host will slip from the priest's hands into the chalice, either before or after the breaking. In this case then the priest will not be able to comply with the Church's rite, either as to the breaking, or else as to this, that only a third part is put into the chalice.

**Objection 7.** Further, sometimes, too, it happens, owing to the priest's want of care, that Christ's blood is spilled, or that he vomits the sacrament received, or that the consecrated hosts are kept so long that they become corrupt, or that they are nibbled by mice, or lost in any manner whatsoever; in which cases it does not seem possible for due reverence to be shown towards this sacrament, as the Church's ordinances require. It does not seem then that such defects or dangers can be met by keeping to the Church's statutes.

**On the contrary,** Just as God does not command an impossibility, so neither does the Church.

**I answer that,** Dangers or defects happening to this sacrament can be met in two ways: first, by preventing any such mishaps from occurring; secondly, by dealing with them in such a way, that what may have happened amiss is put right, either by employing a remedy, or at least by repentance on his part who has acted negligently regarding this sacrament.

**Reply to Objection 1.** If the priest be stricken by death or grave sickness before the consecration of our Lord's body

and blood, there is no need for it to be completed by another. But if this happens after the consecration is begun, for instance, when the body has been consecrated and before the consecration of the blood, or even after both have been consecrated, then the celebration of the mass ought to be finished by someone else. Hence, as is laid down (Decretal vii, q. 1), we read the following decree of the (Seventh) Council of Toledo: "We consider it to be fitting that when the sacred mysteries are consecrated by priests during the time of mass, if any sickness supervenes, in consequence of which they cannot finish the mystery begun, let it be free for the bishop or another priest to finish the consecration of the office thus begun. For nothing else is suitable for completing the mysteries commenced, unless the consecration be completed either by the priest who began it, or by the one who follows him: because they cannot be completed except they be performed in perfect order. For since we are all one in Christ, the change of persons makes no difference, since unity of faith insures the happy issue of the mystery. Yet let not the course we propose for cases of natural debility, be presumptuously abused: and let no minister or priest presume ever to leave the Divine offices unfinished, unless he be absolutely prevented from continuing. If anyone shall have rashly presumed to do so, he will incur sentence of excommunication."

**Reply to Objection 2.** Where difficulty arises, the less dangerous course should always be followed. But the greatest danger regarding this sacrament lies in whatever may prevent its completion, because this is a heinous sacrilege; while that danger is of less account which regards the condition of the receiver. Consequently, if after the consecration has been begun the priest remembers that he has eaten or drunk anything, he ought nevertheless to complete the sacrifice and receive the sacrament. Likewise, if he recalls a sin committed, he ought to make an act of contrition, with the firm purpose of confessing and making satisfaction for it: and thus he will not receive the sacrament unworthily, but with profit. The same applies if he calls to mind that he is under some excommunication; for he ought to make the resolution of humbly seeking absolution; and so he will receive absolution from the invisible High Priest Jesus Christ for his act of completing the Divine mysteries.

But if he calls to mind any of the above facts previous to the consecration, I should deem it safer for him to interrupt the mass begun, especially if he has broken his fast, or is under excommunication, unless grave scandal were to be feared.

**Reply to Objection 3.** If a fly or a spider falls into the chalice before consecration, or if it be discovered that the wine is poisoned, it ought to be poured out, and after purifying the chalice, fresh wine should be served for consecration. But if anything of the sort happen after the consecration, the insect should be caught carefully and washed thoroughly, then burned, and the "ablution," together with the ashes, thrown into the sacrarium. If it be discovered that the wine has been poisoned, the priest should neither receive it nor administer it to others on any account, lest the life-giving chalice become one of death, but it ought to be kept

in a suitable vessel with the relics: and in order that the sacrament may not remain incomplete, he ought to put other wine into the chalice, resume the mass from the consecration of the blood, and complete the sacrifice.

**Reply to Objection 4.** If before the consecration of the blood, and after the consecration of the body the priest detect that either the wine or the water is absent, then he ought at once to add them and consecrate. But if after the words of consecration he discover that the water is absent, he ought notwithstanding to proceed straight on, because the addition of the water is not necessary for the sacrament, as stated above (q. 74, a. 7): nevertheless the person responsible for the neglect ought to be punished. And on no account should water be mixed with the consecrated wine, because corruption of the sacrament would ensue in part, as was said above (q. 77, a. 8). But if after the words of consecration the priest perceive that no wine has been put in the chalice, and if he detect it before receiving the body, then rejecting the water, he ought to pour in wine with water, and begin over again the consecrating words of the blood. But if he notice it after receiving the body, he ought to procure another host which must be consecrated together with the blood; and I say so for this reason, because if he were to say only the words of consecration of the blood, the proper order of consecrating would not be observed; and, as is laid down by the Council of Toledo, quoted above (ad 1), sacrifices cannot be perfect, except they be performed in perfect order. But if he were to begin from the consecration of the blood, and were to repeat all the words which follow, it would not suffice, unless there was a consecrated host present, since in those words there are things to be said and done not only regarding the blood, but also regarding the body; and at the close he ought once more to receive the consecrated host and blood, even if he had already taken the water which was in the chalice, because the precept of the completing this sacrament is of greater weight than the precept of receiving the sacrament while fasting, as stated above (q. 80, a. 8).

**Reply to Objection 5.** Although the priest may not recollect having said some of the words he ought to say, he ought not to be disturbed mentally on that account; for a man who utters many words cannot recall to mind all that he has said; unless perchance in uttering them he adverts to something connected with the consecration; for so it is impressed on the memory. Hence, if a man pays attention to what he is saying, but without adverting to the fact that he is saying these particular words, he remembers soon after that he has said them; for, a thing is presented to the memory under the formality of the past (*De Mem. et Remin. i*).

But if it seem to the priest that he has probably omitted some of the words that are not necessary for the sacrament, I think that he ought not to repeat them on that account, changing the order of the sacrifice, but that he ought to proceed: but if he is certain that he has left out any of those that are necessary for the sacrament, namely, the form of the con-

secration, since the form of the consecration is necessary for the sacrament, just as the matter is, it seems that the same thing ought to be done as was stated above (ad 4) with regard to defect in the matter, namely, that he should begin again with the form of the consecration, and repeat the other things in order, lest the order of the sacrifice be altered.

**Reply to Objection 6.** The breaking of the consecrated host, and the putting of only one part into the chalice, regards the mystical body, just as the mixing with water signifies the people, and therefore the omission of either of them causes no such imperfection in the sacrifice, as calls for repetition regarding the celebration of this sacrament.

**Reply to Objection 7.** According to the decree, *De Consecr.*, dist. ii, quoting a decree of Pope Pius I, "If from neglect any of the blood falls upon a board which is fixed to the ground, let it be taken up with the tongue, and let the board be scraped. But if it be not a board, let the ground be scraped, and the scrapings burned, and the ashes buried inside the altar and let the priest do penance for forty days. But if a drop fall from the chalice on to the altar, let the minister suck up the drop, and do penance during three days; if it falls upon the altar cloth and penetrates to the second altar cloth, let him do four days' penance; if it penetrates to the third, let him do nine days' penance; if to the fourth, let him do twenty days' penance; and let the altar linens which the drop touched be washed three times by the priest, holding the chalice below, then let the water be taken and put away nigh to the altar." It might even be drunk by the minister, unless it might be rejected from nausea. Some persons go further, and cut out that part of the linen, which they burn, putting the ashes in the altar or down the sacarium. And the Decretal continues with a quotation from the Penitential of Bede the Priest: "If, owing to drunkenness or gluttony, anyone vomits up the Eucharist, let him do forty days' penance, if he be a layman; but let clerics or monks, deacons and priests, do seventy days' penance; and let a bishop do ninety days'. But if they vomit from sickness, let them do penance for seven days." And in the same distinction, we read a decree of the (Fourth) Council of Arles: "They who do not keep proper custody over the sacrament, if a mouse or other animal consume it, must do forty days' penance: he who loses it in a church, or if a part fall and be not found, shall do thirty days' penance." And the priest seems to deserve the same penance, who from neglect allows the hosts to putrefy. And on those days the one doing penance ought to fast, and abstain from Communion. However, after weighing the circumstances of the fact and of the person, the said penances may be lessened or increased. But it must be observed that wherever the species are found to be entire, they must be preserved reverently, or consumed; because Christ's body is there so long as the species last, as stated above (q. 77, Aa. 4,5). But if it can be done conveniently, the things in which they are found are to be burned, and the ashes put in the sacarium, as was said of the scrapings of the altar-table, here above.