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THE HOLY EUCHARIST
AND FREQUENT AND DAILY
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An eloquent plea for the education of the heart as well as the head. A summing up of the arguments for the Catholic system of education, this book will be very useful for priests in preparing pleas and discourses on the subject of the parochial schools.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST AND FREQUENT AND DAILY COMMUNION

BY

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✠ JOHN M. FARLEY,
Archbishop of New York.

NEW YORK, MARCH 3, 1909.

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THIS LITTLE BOOK IS REVERENTLY
AND AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO

Right Rev. Camillus P. Maes, D.D.

Bishop of Covington

THE LEARNED AND ZEALOUS PROTECTOR OF THE
PRIESTS' EUCHARISTIC LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

Preface

AS EACH tiny snowflake adds its mite in forming the great snow avalanches; as each small rain-drop contributes its quantum in flushing the springs and swelling the swift-flowing streams; so, each eucharistic word, whether spoken or written, helps to foster a life of devotion and love toward our eucharistic Lord.

This little book goes on its mission of charity, inviting souls to seek and receive Him who has said, "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you" (*Matt.* xi. 28). It tells them of Our Lord's real presence in the Holy Eucharist, of His bloody sacrifice upon the cross, and its perpetuation in the bloodless sacrifice of the Mass. It aims to enlighten and encourage them to be

more assiduous, more zealous in approaching Him in the Sacrament of the Altar.

Following the leadership of our illustrious Pontiff and responsive to his wishes, the priest's greatest duty should be to gain souls to Jesus, who dwells beneath the sacramental veils. His sweetest labor should be to make known and loved our eucharistic Lord.

He should lead souls by every possible means at his command to the foot of the altar, and have them partake often, yes daily, of the bread of life which Christ offers them in the Blessed Eucharist. This little work is, therefore, sent on its way, to lend its measure of weight in winning souls to the divine Saviour in the Holy Eucharist.

THE AUTHOR.

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The Holy Eucharist

Delivered before the Conference of the Priests'
Eucharistic League, Louisville.

*“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the
words of eternal life” (John vi. 69).*

Simple Faith

AN ANCIENT Roman author has said:
“Times change and we change with them.”
The cycle of the years, like individuals,
peoples, and nations, possess distinct
characteristics, which are to be reckoned
with in dealing with them. Time was
when the faithful believed on the word of
God alone, molding their lives conform-
ably to it. They emulated the simple
faith of St. Peter.

The Divine Master took occasion from
the miraculous multiplication of the five

loaves to make the following solemn declaration and promise: “‘I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world.’ . . . Many, therefore, of His disciples hearing it, said: ‘This saying is hard, and who can hear it?’ . . . And many of them went back and walked no more with Him. Then Jesus said to the twelve: ‘Will you also go away?’ Simon Peter (in his naïve faith) answered Him: ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life’ ” (*John* vi. 51, 52, 61, 67, 69).

So in their day spake our forefathers in the Faith. All difficulties, all objections faded away at His word, like the morning mist before the rising sun. The motives which warranted their belief in His Church elicited their steadfast faith in His real presence in the Holy Eucharist. The reason of it: the Author of all truth voiced

it. One of the Fathers of the Church writes: "If Jesus Christ assures us that it is His body, who so bold as to gainsay Him? 'Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.'" The simple in faith reason little concerning the Blessed Sacrament, yet they understand it and feel all the more the countless blessings it bestows upon them. They recognize the fulfillment of Christ's saying: "I am with you all days, even to the consummation of time." "Not only," says St. John Chrysostom, "have they the satisfaction of seeing Our Lord, of touching, as the infirm woman mentioned in the Gospel, the hem of His garment; they touch Himself, carry Him in their hands, and receive Him into their hearts." The childlike simplicity of their faith placed beyond cavil their belief in His eucharistic presence. "Oh, truly," exclaims the author of the "Imitation" (bk. iv. c. xiv.), "the fervent faith of these men is a reasonable argument of Thy sacred presence."

Enlightened Faith

Though this simple faith still lingers among us, there is need nowadays of an enlightened belief, whereby not only the priesthood but the laity as well, may give an account of what they believe to those who having eyes see not, having ears hear not, yet long for the light of the Word, which may enable them to walk in the ways of truth and life.

Our age is an age of knowledge; it reaches after it, craves it. Its efforts are ceaseless, its aspirations without bounds to gain it. Two sources of knowledge are open to us: man's reason and God's revelation. The former needs to be encouraged, the latter scrupulously adhered to; the first must be directed and safeguarded; the second must be accepted in its entirety and with meekness and humility.

The Priest's and Layman's Sphere of Action

Whilst the priest is and should be the prime mover in propagating the truth among those who are not of the household of the Faith, the layman is not to be indifferent, but should be up and doing. 'Tis not for him to leave all to the clergy. He must work with them; aye, independent of them. The layman's responsibility in this age of enlightenment and progress is a momentous one. He should inform himself on religious topics, labor, speak, act, as conditions require, bent on serving the Church and doing good to his neighbor. While the priest lives his life, "spending and being spent," in seeking his sanctification by furthering that of others, the layman is not wholly exempt from doing in like manner. The action of the layman, in his sphere, is of paramount importance to-day, in spreading the kingdom of Christ among men. Of him, one of our profoundest thinkers has said:

“In discussion, the layman under responsibility, we hold, may take the initiative, and not await it from authority. He may open such questions as he deems important, and the business of authority is not to close his mouth, but to set him right when and where he goes wrong.”

Object of Discourse

Hence, the burden of my discourse to you to-day is to supply you with those weapons with which you can and should, when occasion demands, defend the most holy dogma of our creed—the Real Presence of our eucharistic Lord in the Sacrament of the Altar.

Dignity of the Holy Eucharist

Of all the sacred mysteries bequeathed to us by our blessed Redeemer as inexhaustible fountains of supernal life, the Holy Eucharist is the most glorious. No teaching of the Church is so beautiful, none so consoling as the doctrine of the

Real Presence. It is the most sublime dogma of our holy religion and the focus of God's condescension to man. The other sacraments are merely channels of grace; the Blessed Sacrament is the source from which flow all of heaven's choicest gifts. It is the heart of Christianity; the center of life and immutable truth; the incarnation perpetually present in the midst of us. Deprived of it, the Church would exhibit a body without a soul. "The Holy Eucharist," writes St. Thomas, "is the consummation of the spiritual life and the object of the other sacraments." Its excellence and grandeur far surpass the ken of our understanding. Like the ebb and flow of the ocean's boundless waters, real life emanates from and returns to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Altar, which is Jesus Himself. All blessings spring from it, depend upon it, and are united to it. 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life?' "

**Promise of the Holy Eucharist from Holy
Scripture**

All Christians acknowledge that Christ founded a Church and one Church only. All equally claim the Bible unfolds in clear decisive terms the teachings of that Church. Hence, our first proof is taken from these sacred writings.

“I am the bread of life,” says Jesus Christ (*John vi.*); “your fathers did eat manna in the desert and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever.” But what is this bread? Jesus Christ tells us: “And the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world.” The Jews themselves were fully convinced that He meant that they should partake of His flesh, for the Gospel narrative adds: “The Jews therefore strove among themselves

saying, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?' "

Jesus does not remonstrate with them; He does not say, "You are mistaken, you deceive yourselves egregiously if you believe from what I have said that I intend to give you the flesh of My body." Far from it; He confirms with pronounced emphasis the meaning they took from His words. He adds: "Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you."

Our Saviour gives a peremptory command that they shall eat of His flesh and drink of His blood, under the severe penalty of forfeiting life. We are therefore obligated to nourish our souls with His body. But how can we comply with His precept; how are we to partake of His body and His blood, if they are not contained in the Holy Eucharist? He is not a merciless God but a just and clement Father, "who wills not the death of the

sinner but rather that he be converted and live.”

He commands us to eat of His flesh and drink of His blood—and He would not be present? It would be the supremest of follies, but in God there is no folly. Our Redeemer continues: “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.” How could the flesh of Jesus Christ be meat indeed, and how could His blood be drink indeed, if the sacred Host were only bread, if the consecrated chalice were simple wine? “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him. He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever.”

Deluded Jews, you murmur and complain. You ask: “How can He give us

His flesh to eat?" When He fed you by the multiplication of the five loaves, you did not question as to how He did it; you exclaimed, "this is the power of God." "When God acts," says St. Cyril, "seek not to know how He does it, but concede to Him the intelligence and power to act." "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." We must, consequently, eat of the body of Jesus Christ if we will have life in us; it therefore follows that He is really and truly in the Holy Eucharist. St. Augustine says: "How does Jesus Christ give Himself to us, and how must we partake of this bread? You know it not; and yet if you eat not of it, you will not possess life." Our Saviour gives us an imperative order; He holds over us the sentence of death; our duty is to obey His command; hence He is verily body and blood, soul and divinity in the Sacrament of the Altar.

**Institution of the Holy Eucharist from Holy
Scripture**

On the eve of His death Jesus Christ “took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said, ‘Take ye and eat; this is My body.’ And taking the chalice He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, ‘Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins’” (*Matt.* xxxvi. 26–28). He asserts: “This is My body; this is My blood.” Who shall give us the truth, if not He? “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

St. Paul the Apostle writes: “The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?” (*1 Cor.* x. 16). “This is My body. This is My blood.” Never were

words clearer. Jesus utters them on the eve of His death; they are His last wishes, His dying testament. It is in that solemn moment, when of all other times in life man is expected to speak the truth—and we are told it was in that hour Jesus Christ chose to elaborate fiction; to deceive men; to plunge His Church into idolatry to the end of time—the Church, His spouse, for which He shed His blood! To the apostles He said: “With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer” (*Luke* xxii. 15). Why such a longing, if His intention was to give them only bread? This would be an ordinary repast, no more. Why such expressions, if there was to be nothing unusual? 'Tis an alliance with His dearest friends, the apostles—and he would select them to mock them and deceive them so shamefully? Who could ever believe that Jesus Christ, the Supreme Goodness, Wisdom, and Truth, would have brought about by His words the occasion of a false

teaching, of an irreparable error, of a monstrous idolatry? This is undoubtedly what He would have machinated and what in reality He accomplished, if His words so clear, so expressive, "This is My body, this is My blood," were spoken by Him in a figurative sense, as some would have it. Were it true, all the Fathers, Doctors, theologians, councils, and saints from the foundation of Christianity have been duped and drawn into a false, base worship. But St. Paul tells us: "For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread, and giving thanks broke and said, 'Take ye and eat; this is My body, which shall be delivered for you; this do for a commemoration of me.' In like manner also the chalice, after He had supped, saying: 'This chalice is the New Testament in My blood; this do ye, as often as ye shall drink, for the commemoration of Me'" (1 *Cor.* xi. 23-25).

Jesus Christ gives to His apostles the same body which He is about to sacrifice on the cross; He died on the cross, not in figure, but offered His own body, a living victim, the acceptable holocaust; therefore He gives Himself truly in holy communion, because He gives the same body He immolated on Calvary. Note well what St. Paul adds: "Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 *Cor.* xi. 27).

But if in the Holy Eucharist there is only bread, which would be true if Jesus Christ was there only in figure, how, then, would he who would only eat of the figure be guilty of the real body and blood of Jesus Christ? "Let a man," continues the Apostle (1 *Cor.* xi. 28-29), "prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning

the body of the Lord.” He will have us prove ourselves ere we partake of this bread. To what purpose, if it were only bread? Why, if it were only bread and wine, would we eat and drink our own condemnation, in the event we were not free from sin? The Holy Scriptures could not be more concise or plainer on the subject of the real presence of the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Eternal Truth has said it. What, then, have we to do, save with St. Peter to exclaim: “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.”

Real Presence Proved from the Fathers of the Church

History indites that the Real Presence was persistently taught in all ages of the Church and vigorously upheld by the Fathers. It is especially significant that for many centuries there was not a dissentient voice. From the volumes of

patristic testimony in reference to this doctrine a few selections must suffice.

St. Ignatius, martyr, a disciple of St. John, writing against the Docetæ, who denied altogether the reality of Our Lord's body, rejecting consequently His real presence in the Holy Eucharist, says: "Not admitting that Our Lord took unto Himself real flesh, these men abstained from the Eucharist and prayer because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ." Had the belief been that the Blessed Sacrament was only a symbol, they would have had no reason to take umbrage at it. But denying that He had a real body, they would not partake of a sacrament in which, as taught by the Church, are contained the body and blood of Christ.

St. Irenæus, a disciple of St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John, argues against the Gnostics in the same manner as did St. Ignatius against the Docetæ. "If the Lord came from another Father,

how did He act justly, when, taking the bread of the creation which lies around us, He confessed that it was His own body, and affirmed that the mixture of the chalice was His own blood."

"This food," says St. Justin, martyr, "is known among us as the Eucharist. . . . We do not receive these things as common bread and common drink; but as Jesus Christ our Saviour, being made flesh by the word of God, hath both flesh and blood for our salvation; so we have been taught that the food over which thanks have been given, through prayer in His words, and from which our blood and flesh have been nourished in such a way as to be changed, are the flesh and blood of that Jesus, who was made flesh."

St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century, instructed his neophytes in these terms: "This teaching of the Blessed Paul" (1 *Cor.* xi. 33), "is of itself sufficient to give you full assurance with regard to the holy mysteries, in which,

when you are thought worthy to be admitted, you will become of one body and one blood with Christ. For you have just heard the Apostle proclaiming that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and gave to His disciples, saying: 'Take ye and eat; this is My body'; and having taken the chalice and given thanks, He said, 'Take ye and drink; this is My blood.' When He Himself then has declared it, and said of the bread, 'This is My Body,' who shall henceforth presume to doubt? And when He has positively affirmed and said: 'This is My blood,' who shall be in uncertainty saying, 'It is not His blood?' Let us therefore partake of them with the fullest assurance as the body and blood of Christ; for under the form of bread is His body given, and under the form of wine is His blood given; that by partaking of the body and blood of Christ thou mayest be of one body and one blood with

Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, to be *Christopheri*, His body and His blood being diffused through our members; and thus according to the Blessed Peter, we are made partakers of the divine nature."

St. John Chrysostom writes: "Since therefore that Word says, 'This is My body,' let us take Him at His word and believe and see Him with the eye of the mind. Hadst thou indeed been incorporeal, He would have given thee His incorporeal gifts in their nakedness; but in as much as thy soul is united to a body, He gives thee what is spiritual in what is sensible. How many are they that say: how I should have wished to see His fair form, His figure, His clothes, His shoes! Why here you see Him, you touch Him, you eat Him, and while you are longing to see His clothes, He gives you Himself, not only to look at, but to touch, and to eat, and to receive within you."

St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, ex-

plains: "You say that you would like to see the face of God. Do you not see Him, do you not touch Him, do you not eat Him in the Eucharist?"

St. Augustine affirms: "As we believe that Jesus Christ is our mediator with the Father, so too do we firmly believe that He has given us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink."

Surely the Fathers of the Church could not have used plainer or stronger language to express the belief of Christianity in the Real Presence. There is not an event in the history of the world more emphatically handed down or more staunchly defended by the historians than is the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist by the Fathers of the Church.

Real Presence Proved from the Councils

Another means of ascertaining the belief of the Church in matters of faith is the condemnation of the contrary doctrine. Thus the Real Presence was de-

nied by Berengarius, Archdeacon of Angers, in the eleventh century. Leo IX, then Supreme Pontiff, called the Council of Vercelli where the heresy of Berengarius was denounced and condemned. He was subsequently condemned by three different councils, one at Tours and two at Rome. The general Council of Lateran, held under Innocent III, ratified the sentence of the previous councils and the same was done in the Council of Florence.

The Fathers assembled in Council at Alexandria under St. Cyril declare: "We are sanctified in partaking of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus, for we receive this nourishment not as ordinary bread, which God forbid, nor as the flesh of a man sanctified and united to the Word in dignity only, or in whom dwells the divinity; but as flesh truly living and hence as the very flesh of the Word, without whom it would not be life-giving."

In the thirteenth session of the Council

of Trent we find: “In the first place, the holy synod teaches and openly and simply professes that in the august sacrament of the Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, Our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and Man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of these sensible things.”

In the first canon of the same council on the Holy Eucharist we have: “If any one denieth that in the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ, but sayeth that He is only therein as in a sign, or in figure, or by His virtue, let him be anathema.”

Real Presence Proved from Tradition

There is not an epoch of time, since the foundation of the Church from that first pentecostal Sunday to our own day, that the belief in the real presence of Jesus

Christ in the Holy Eucharist has not been constant, invariable, and universal. Who during all those centuries that has opposed this doctrine or denied its truth did not find the Church universally teaching and upholding it? This sacrament is of worldwide and daily custom. It is the chief dogma of Christianity. How could such a common, universal, and constant article of faith undergo a change without its causing consternation in the ranks of Christians, fomenting bitter controversies, calling the attention of the Sovereign Pontiff's and Councils to it? Nowhere or at any time do we find mention of any such change. To effect it, with the combined efforts of the theologians, Fathers, and the Pope at their head, would be impossible without arousing unprecedented religious strife. It is evident that had such a change occurred the Church would have been the object of grave suspicions on the part of her enemies. But we meet

with nothing of the kind. An undeniable proof that the belief in the Real Presence never altered, is the fact that what is held to-day has been taught through all the ages of the Church. The Fathers, councils, confessors of faith, theologians, and ecclesiastical writers, make use of the same expression and give the same meaning when there is a question of the Holy Eucharist. The most ancient liturgies attest belief in the change of the substance of bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The Greek liturgy of Alexandria thus praised the Lord: "That Thy grace may change the offerings into the body and blood of our Saviour." The Gothic missal says in the Mass of the Epiphany: "May He who this day changed water into wine now change the wine here offered into His own blood." The Roman liturgy has consecrated these expressions: "Which oblation do thou, O God, vouchsafe in all respects to bless,

approve, ratify, and accept; that it may be made for us the body and blood of Thy most beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Real Presence Proved from Theological Reasons

If there is only bread, if the Host remains bread after consecration, the figure of bread has then supplanted the figurative lamb. Who can believe it? Would it not be more appropriate to continue with the lamb, than to replace it with a simple particle of bread? The lamb immolated according to the Old Law represented Jesus Christ suffering better than would the bread of the New Dispensation. The figure has given way to the reality. The symbol has been replaced by God's own divine Son. How passing strange and preposterous, to hold that the lamb would be a type if it were only bread!

It is on the eve of His passion that Jesus, all powerful, infinitely wise and

good, solemnly declares, while taking bread in the presence of His apostles: "This is My body; this is My blood." "I will not call you servants," He said, "for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you" (*John xv. 15*). He speaks to them not in parable or in figure; when He does He explains Himself: "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (*Matt. xiii. 12*). He addresses His ambassadors whom He sends into the whole world: "Go teach all nations, teaching them all I have commanded you." Are not ambassadors intrusted with the wishes, plans, and secrets of their king? Could it be, then, that Jesus Christ, giving His commands to His representatives: "This is My body, take ye and eat; this is My blood, take ye and drink," would have deceived them, by giving only bread when

He positively tells them it is His adorable body.

Again, when at the Last Supper, if He gave only bread to His apostles, why all the pomp in preparation for it? "And He sent Peter and John, saying: 'Go, and prepare for us the pasch, that we may eat.' But they said: 'Where wilt thou that we prepare?' And He said to them: 'Behold as you go into the city, there shall meet you a man, carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house, where he entereth in. And you shall say to the good man of the house: 'The Master saith to thee, where is the guest chamber?' And he will show you a large dining-room furnished, and there prepare" (*Luke xxii. 8-12*).

What a regal preparation, what solemnity to eat a morsel of bread! What ingenuity to deceive, to perpetrate a fraud, to mislead the Church and cause its members to fall into idolatry to the end of

time! All this would indeed be true were the Holy Eucharist only bread.

Jesus Christ came to redeem the world and to this end He chose the most humble Virgin Mary as His mother. His palace is a stable. The first to worship Him are poor shepherds. He passes His life humbly and in poverty. For thirty years He remains hidden away. He labors in the sweat of His face for His living. When the Jews would make Him king He flees to the mountains. He dies the ignominious death of the cross. But at the last supper, what splendor! what elaborate preparation! He addresses His apostles; He washes their feet; and all this He would do to give them what? A little bread!

Real Presence Proved from Heretics

The Nestorians, Armenians, and Gnostics hold to the Catholic belief in the Real Presence. Luther writing in the year

1532 to Albert, Duke of Prussia, says: "This article" (the Real Presence) "has been believed and acknowledged by common consent from the beginning of the Christian Church to our days. This is proved by the writings of the Fathers, both Greek and Latin. The testimony given by the Holy Church alone ought to be sufficient to make us accept the divine meaning of the words of Jesus Christ, and reject the wild interpretations of the sectaries; for it is dangerous, it is fearful to listen to, and to believe a voice which contradicts the unanimous testimony and belief of Christendom, and the doctrine uniformly held during fifteen centuries. To raise doubts on the subject, would be to condemn as heretics the Church and Christ Himself with His apostles and prophets." Elsewhere He writes: "If Carlstadt could have convinced me there was nothing in the Eucharist but bread and wine, he would have done me a great service. I would then have been in a position to wage

a relentless war against the Pope. But I am forced to believe in the Real Presence; I find no cause to deny it; the text of the Gospels is too convincing; too clear, too powerful; it is impossible to understand it in any other sense.”

Melanchthon asserts: “If you place in this sacrament the figure instead of the reality, you could overthrow all by such a method. You might say God is not God, Jesus Christ is not Jesus Christ.”

The Holy Eucharist a Mystery

From the array of cogent arguments which we have here given in corroboration of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist, we are appalled at the large numbers of Christians who, like the Jews of old, exclaim: “This saying is hard and who can hear it?” Whence comes their unbelief? Why repudiate the Real Presence? Because they do not understand it; it is a mystery. And why refuse to accept mysteries? Why prefer any al-

ternative rather than submit to the word of God Himself? when too, there is question of a truth that surpasses the range of their intellects? They overlook the fact that their mind is finite. They fail to recognize that mysteries dwell above and below, around and within them; for man, forsooth, is the greatest of natural phenomena. We move in a veritable labyrinth of mysteries. What are thought, imagination, memory? What is life? What sleep? How comes it that the child grows to maturity and then stops; or why one a boy, another a girl? You walk, move your limbs, stretch forth your hand; how do you do it? No one can tell how the mind influences the body; how the spirit exercises its sway over the flesh, or the immaterial over the material. How can the magnet draw steel toward it, exercising a force where it is not? We know not. Nature teems with mysteries that are insoluble. The most positive sciences have their mysteries. If such a condition ex-

ists in the order of nature, is it not most reasonable that it should abound in the supernatural order?

The foregoing is conclusive evidence of the little knowledge we have of the world around us and convincingly points out to us with what reverence and submission we should accept the truths of divine revelation, none more so than the Real Presence. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Ⓞbligation to Receive the Holy Eucharist

I have endeavored to place before you the dogma of the Real Presence. Dogma enlightens, unfolds to us divine truths and creates devotion. Among other reasons why we find devotion at a low ebb is because we are far from being grounded in the knowledge of the dogmas of our holy religion. The light of truth penetrates our intellects, and through the intellect finds its way to the will and enters and possesses the heart. Our duty toward

our eucharistic Lord is plain. We must receive Him. He commands it. "Amen, amen, I say to you; unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you" (*John* vi. 54). A more mandatory precept he could not give; under pain of death we are required to receive holy communion. "Take ye and eat; this is My Body." Here again we are positively told to partake of the Holy Eucharist. Unless we nourish our souls with the body and blood of Jesus Christ, we can not live the spiritual life, which is that of the soul. Its existence being the grace of God, if cut off from the fountain head of divine grace, the Holy Eucharist, it will languish and die.

Duty of Frequent Communion

To be admitted to the table of Jesus Christ, to receive Him, to nourish our souls with Him is a wondrous blessing.

What happiness! There is nothing greater, more honorable, more consoling! Jesus permits us to come to Him; He wishes it, nay more, He ordains it. So intense is His desire to do us a favor, to fill us with His graces, to give Himself to us, that He says: "This is My body, take ye and eat; this is My blood, take ye and drink." The early Christians were wont to receive every day. Fervent souls in all times went often to holy communion; sincere Christians to-day approach the Sacred Banquet frequently. St. Peter Chrysologus strongly recommends frequent communion, urging that the precious body of Jesus Christ becomes the daily bread of Christians. St. Elzear communicated several times in the week. "I do not think," he said, "one can conceive the delight I experienced in receiving holy communion. Our greatest consolation in this pilgrimage of life is to nourish our souls often with the blood of Jesus." All the saints

cherished a love for the Holy Eucharist, for through it they were sanctified and made perfect.

What purpose did our Saviour have in instituting the Most Blessed Sacrament? That we be constantly united with Him. "With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you" (*Luke* xxii. 15). Hence, St. Augustine says: "He gave us this sacrament as our food; He therefore made a repast of it, inviting us to take and eat of it often. Do we not ask for the eucharistic bread daily when we repeat, 'Give us this day our daily bread'? St. Ambrose asks, "What if this sacrament is bread; if it is to constitute the daily substance for our soul; does it suffice to receive it but once in the year?" "Receive," writes St. Augustine, "this food, as often as it can profit you; and if it helps you daily receive it every day. It follows that while you are not obliged to receive daily, you should be each day disposed to communicate." "Live in such a manner,"

says St. Ambrose, "as to be worthy to receive daily. Holy communion is a help to the just, that they continue in grace and advance in virtue and perfection. It aids the sinner, who has repented and been renewed in grace, not to relapse again, to gain new graces, and to atone for his sins."

But, it will be said, great preparation is required to go to holy communion; a salutary fear withholds us from it; we should tremble to go even once in a year. True, we should prepare well, but what better disposition than that which holy communion itself affords us? One communion is a thanksgiving for the other, and the communion of to-day is the very best preparation for that of to-morrow. It is, however, with the confessor to regulate the frequency of your communions. He is the judge, not you. He is the appointed of the Lord and it is your duty to obey him. To communicate often and still always have the same imperfections, the same self-

will, would be to expose you, to say the least, to make indifferent communions.

Advantages of Holy Communion

In holy communion we are united with Jesus Christ. "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in Him" (*John vi. 57*). "When we receive holy communion," says St. Augustine, "the body of Jesus Christ changes not into our substance but converts us rather into the substance of Jesus. He unites Himself to us and makes us like unto Him, which ordinary bread does not effect." "In the Holy Eucharist," writes St. Jerome, "the soul receives God as her portion, but in return she becomes the portion of God; first, greatest, and blessed portion and intimately united to Jesus Christ." "O Lord," exclaims St. Augustine, "you delivered me entirely, that you might possess me entirely." The union that takes place in holy communion is so intimate that, according to St. Cyril of

Alexandria, Jesus Christ and the recipient are but one. "The union is so perfect," says Tertullian, "that the soul lives on God." St. Teresa likens the union between the soul and Jesus in the Eucharist to the rains of heaven falling into a reservoir; they mingle so perfectly that they become one body of water. She again compares the union to the waters of a river flowing into the ocean, which are no longer distinct but one and the same.

Holy communion changes us, so to speak, into God. "But as many as received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God" (*John* i. 12). "We are transformed into the same image" (*Cor.* iii. 18). "Now you are the body of Christ and member of member" (1 *Cor.* ii. 27). "Because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (*Eph.* v. 30), "we are made partakers of Christ" (*Heb.* iii. 14). "And I live, not I; but Christ liveth in me" (*Gal.*

ii. 20). “We are mingled,” says St. Cyril, “with the body of Jesus, hence to His divinity; therefore we constitute but one body and one blood with Jesus Christ; we are *Christopheri*.”

“God,” avers St. Augustine, “became man that man might become as God; that man might eat the bread of angels, the God of angels became man.” The virtue of the Holy Eucharist is to transform man into God to whom he is made alike. St. John Chrysostom tells us that we are, in holy communion, not only changed into Christ by love, but in reality we become the flesh of Jesus Christ; this miracle is wrought by the food He gives us. “We are the same body and the same blood with Jesus,” says St. Cyril of Jerusalem; “we form one and the same body.”

Another advantage is the union with our neighbor. Communion signifies common union. This is true, as there is but one table and but one food. We receive the same food, the body of Christ Jesus. St.

Paul gives a third reason: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord. For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread" (1 *Cor.* x. 16, 17). St. Cyril says: "My body is united to the body of Jesus Christ in communion; the body of Jesus Christ is united to the bodies of my brothers; therefore my body and those of my brothers are truly united in the sacrament of love."

Jesus is the bond of charity which unites all, for we receive the same Lord and God, who says to us: "If, therefore, thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother; and then coming thou shalt offer thy gifts." In the Eucharist we receive that Jesus who tells us: "But I say to you, love your enemies; do good to them

that hate you; pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (*Matt.* v. 44). "For one is your Master and all are your brethren" (*Matt.* xxiii. 8). And again: "that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (*John* xiii. 34). Holy communion is our strength. St. Paul writing to the Philippians (iv. 13) assures them: "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me"; and to the Romans (viii. 31): "If God be for us, who is against us?" "We come from holy communion," says St. John Chrysostom, "like a lion ready for the combat; for we are then a terror to the demons. St. Thomas tells us that one of the reasons the Holy Eucharist frees us from and helps us to overcome temptation is because Satan, the world, and the flesh, were conquered in the death of Jesus Christ, and that the Sacrament of the Altar being the representation of His death they flee in presence of it.

Suarez and other theologians teach us

that holy communion cleanses us from mortal sin, when, after a diligent examination of conscience, we may have forgotten some grievous offence. Thus the sinner who would involuntarily overlook a mortal sin and would communicate in good faith would receive pardon and justification. "The precious blood," writes Cardinal Manning, "will cleanse away all sin; though it be red as scarlet it will be white as snow; though it be like crimson, it shall be as wool; the almighty power of the Holy Ghost will purify all things as 'by the spirit of burning.'" The Council of Trent (Sess. xiii, Chap. ii), holds that the Holy Eucharist purifies us from venial sin.

We could write volumes on the benefits we derive from holy communion, but time will not allow; we will therefore give but one other signal blessing of holy communion.

The reception of the body and blood of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the as-

surance of our resurrection and glorious eternity. "Your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever. . . . He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day" (*John vi. 55-59*). From the Beloved Apostle we learn that holy communion is Our Lord's promise to us of a glorious arising; and the Council of Nice calls it the "symbol of resurrection." St. Cyril names it the food of immortality and of eternal life. St. Thomas tells us that it holds a promise of life everlasting, while the Council of Trent declares it a pledge of our happiness and glory.

Conclusion

Let it be, then, a labor of love to propagate the knowledge and devotion of the Blessed Sacrament, for our own personal sanctification, and for that of our neighbor. Endeavor to have all share in its boundless blessings. To this end we must

be ourselves devoted to our eucharistic Lord. Come often to His sacred table; make frequent spiritual communions; repair when you can to the church to pay a visit to Jesus dwelling in the silent tabernacle. Never pass His house without saluting Him. Are you troubled in mind; sad of heart; oppressed in soul? Go to Him. He will be light to your mind; solace to your heart; peace to your soul. When those days come upon you which at some time in life fall to the lot of all in this valley of tears, when the heavens appear dark and foreboding over you; the very elements themselves seem to war against you; not a friend is left you—oh, then seek Jesus in holy communion, who from out His sacred Heart calls to you: “Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened and I will refresh you” (*Matt. xi. 28*).

He lives among us to council us, to guide us, to cheer us. Did He not encourage the martyr on the gridiron, on the

rack, in the midst of fire and flame, among the wild beasts, or when flayed alive? He comforts the confessor of the Faith; He is a companion to the exile; He is the joy of virgins, the peace of Religious, the happiness and strength of the priest. We are poor—He has become poor for our sakes and remains poor to enrich us in eternity. We are rich in the world's goods—He offers us riches that neither time nor moth can consume. We are weak—He is all power. We are of the great—He prays us to become meek and humble that we may be exalted. On Calvary He drew just and repentant sinners to His sacred Heart and poured out His saving blood upon them; on our altars where He daily offers Himself as on Golgotha, He draws saint and repentant prodigal to His divine Heart. All these are blessings of His eucharistical presence and consequently of our frequent communions. He is here, all to all. In the Holy Eucharist He is the light and life of the world. In all our ne-

cessities, therefore, let us, from grateful and loving hearts, exclaim with St. Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

“From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, said the Lord of hosts” (*Malach. i. 11*).

The Holy Eucharist a Sacrament and a Sacrifice

The Holy Eucharist is not only a sacrament, but it is also a sacrifice and as such is called the sacrifice of the Mass.

Meaning of the Word Mass

According to some of the best authors who have written on the subject, the word Mass is of Latin origin and this view is now generally accepted by the most eminent scholars. It is derived from *missa*, “sent,” which is the participle of the Latin verb *mittere*, “to send.” The expression

in the liturgy of the Church was used in the beginning to notify the catechumens, after the first gospel and sermon, to withdraw prior to the more solemn parts of the sacrifice and to dismiss the faithful at the close of the services.

This regulation in the early days of the Church, was known as the Discipline of the Secret. It was in those days deemed a necessary measure to safeguard the infant Church against a violently hostile paganism.

The catechumens were converts to Christianity, but were still under instruction. They were not allowed to remain throughout the entire eucharistic service. The more sacred parts of the Mass were exclusively reserved for the faithful who were better acquainted with the profounder mysteries. In consequence of this ordinance, the first part of the Mass was called the Mass of the catechumens, while the second part was known as the Mass of the faithful.

When the persecutions abated, the Discipline of the Secret was no longer enforced and the catechumens were privileged to remain during all the ceremony or Mass. In the course of time the entire service received the name of Mass.

Sacrifice in General

A sacrifice is an offering of some external, sensible thing made to God by a lawful minister, to acknowledge by its destruction or change God's absolute dominion over us and our entire dependence on Him, and thereby to pay to Him the supreme homage of adoration.

Abel, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Melchisedech; the Hebrews in Egypt, in the desert, in the promised land, all offered sacrifices to God. "Under all the laws which have governed mankind," declares the Council of Trent, "priesthood and sacrifice have been indissolubly united." Man, sincerely contrite for his misdeeds, has the power by the offering of sacrifice

to reap a benefit therefrom by participating in the consummation of the immolated victim.

Speaking of the necessity of the immolation, the Apostle says: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (*Heb. ix. 22*). It is understood that in partaking of the offering, the victim immolated is substituted for man and is offered in his behalf. By eating of the victims offered on the altars, the Israelites participated in the sacrifice. (*1 Cor. x. 18.*) Rollin has said of the pagans: "Among them the feast follows the sacrifice and is made a part of it." Gerbet has written, that, "a communion with grace, at once spiritual and material, invisible in its manifestation, such was the center toward which tended the liturgies of all nations, in that which they had in common; such was the living focus of universal worship."

For centuries the principal sacrifice ordained by the Mosaic law was, that "every year on the tenth day of the first month,

every head of a family was to procure a male lamb, of that year, free from all blemish and defect." Four days later, at the same hour in every house, the lamb was sacrificed, care being taken not to break any of its bones.

As to the communion, it was to be made in haste, with a sort of hurried eagerness, in the posture and dress of travelers ready to set out.

"You will have shoes on your feet, staves in your hands." No part of the victim was to remain until the morning; neither the head, nor the feet, nor the entrails; and with the flesh, wasted with fire, they could eat none but wild or bitter lettuce. The blood of the lamb sprinkled on the transom and door jambs of each house, so as to form a T or a cross, had in Egypt averted the death, which the destroying angel brought into the dwellings of God's enemies (*Ex. xii*).

Accordingly, it was under pain of death and extermination that this sacrifice and

communion were obligatory (*Num.* ix. 13). Whilst the people were required to offer those sacrifices, God had them to know, by the mouth of His prophets, that they were valueless in His eyes.

By Daniel he announced that after some years "the sacrifices offered in the temple were to cease"; by Malachy, "soon in every place a pure oblation shall be offered in His name"; and by David that, "Christ shall be a priest according to the order of Melchisedech"; that is to say, that in His sacrifice He will follow the rite adopted by Melchisedech, who represented the victim, promised to the world, under the symbols of bread and wine.

The Sacrifices of the Old Law Imperfect

The sacrifices of the Old Law were insufficient. They were not perfect in the sight of God. They were only figures of the sacrifice of the New Law. When the Word incarnate entered into the world, He said to His Father: "Sacrifice and

oblation Thou wouldst not; but a body Thou hast fitted to me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then, said I, behold I come" (*Heb.* x. 5-7). Both priest and victim of the Old Law are to pass away; another priesthood and an entirely different victim will replace them.

The former sacrifices pleased God only in so far as they foreshowed the sacrifices of Calvary and the altar. The victim should be free from blemish, as emblematic of the perfection which the Victim of the New Law, Jesus Christ, was to possess. God spoke to the Jews by His prophet Malachy, who was the last of the prophets and who lived near the time of the advent of Christ, as follows: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts; and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For," said He, "from the rising of the sun, even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is

great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts.”

In this prophecy, the man of God refers to the sacrifice of the cross and the altar, for since Christ there is no other sacrifice but His.

It is offered up in all places and at every hour. The sacrifices of the Old Law were inadequate to the ends for which they were offered, because their value was limited.

To answer the needs of mankind, the victim must be of infinite worth, for only such a one has the efficacy to redress the outrage that sin offers the majesty of an infinite Deity. Man has no such victim. God, from out His boundless mercy, supplies this want. He sends His only begotten Son who becomes Himself our great high-priest and victim.

In offering Himself on the cross, He made full atonement for sin, and purchased redemption for all men.

The Ends of Sacrifice

The servants of God have in view four great ends in offering sacrifice to Him. In the first place, they acknowledge Him to be their Creator. They recognize Him as the Supreme Ruler and Lord of the world. They know, in the words of the Psalmist, that He holds life and death in His hands. To Him, therefore, is due supreme worship. Sacrifice alone can properly answer the purpose. In the second instance, they appreciate that they owe Him the homage of grateful hearts for the countless blessings they receive at His hands.

Their greatest acts of thankfulness for His manifold benefactions are rendered by way of sacrifice. Again, they are aware that in transgressing His laws they offend Him and incur His displeasure.

Great is the offence and great must be the satisfaction in atonement for it. To appease His wrath and satisfy His jus-

tice the shedding of blood or sacrifice is demanded.

Finally, man is ever in need of heaven's help. He is, of himself, powerless to effect anything. He lives, and moves, and has his being by the favor of the Almighty. To render heaven propitious to him, to be worthy of its graces, he recognizes the offering of sacrifice to be the most efficient means.

But the sacrifices of the Old Law did not possess the virtue necessary to those ends. The sacrifice of Calvary alone could suffice. In His mercy to us, Christ perpetuates the merits of the general redemption vouchsafed to man by the shedding of His blood, in the sacrifice of the Mass, which is the same as that of Golgotha.

In the Mass, therefore, He affords to each one a means of applying the benefits of Calvary's bloody tragedy to his soul.

What is the Mass?

The Mass is the sacrifice of the New Testament. It is the bloodless sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It is a true sacrifice, for Christ is really present under the appearances of bread and wine, and is offered to God for our sins; it is a bloodless sacrifice, for He can not suffer or die again, "having died once He dieth now no more"; hence He is not really but mystically slain, and the sacrifice is perfected, since Christ is not only offered but consumed.

The Mass commemorates and continues the sacrifice of the cross as St. Paul teaches, "Christ, our pasch, is sacrificed" (1 *Cor.* v. 7); that is, that Christ under the forms and appearances of bread and wine of the pasch is offered for us in the eucharistic sacrifice.

The Apostle speaks in another place of the altar on which it is offered: "We have an altar whereof they have no power to

eat that serve the tabernacle” (*Heb.* xiii. 10). In these words he clearly points out that the Christians have an altar from which the Jews are excluded.

The Mass perpetually “shows the death of Christ” (1 *Cor.* xi. 13), by the separate consecration of the bread and wine. The priest says in the name of Christ, “This is my body”; whereby the bread is changed into the body of Christ, and “This is my blood,” whereby the wine is changed into His blood.

The Mass is thus a true continuation of the sacrifice of Calvary, differing only in the manner of its oblation. On the cross, Christ really shed His blood and died; on the altar His blood is mystically shed and He is as it were, slain. The bloody and unbloody victim is still one and the same, and the oblation of the cross is daily and hourly renewed in the eucharistic sacrifice, in obedience to the command of Our Lord; “This do for a commemoration of me.”

The priest is also the same, Christ our

Lord; the ministers who offer this sacrifice, consecrate the holy mysteries not in their own but in the person of Christ.

The Sacrifice of the Mass Foretold

The Holy Mass is the sacrifice foretold by the prophet Malachias, the last of the prophets; "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts" (*Malach. i. 11*).

God was not pleased with the former unworthy sacrifices and the prophet announces that those will disappear with the Jewish dispensation, but the "clean oblation" of the Gentiles will be offered up everywhere, from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same.

In the foregoing prophecy of the great prophet Malachias, the sacrifice of the cross and that of the altar are plainly fore-

told, for since the coming of Christ, there is no other, and this sacrifice is offered up hourly and in every place.

After the advent of Jesus Christ, all the other oblations ceased to please God and from thenceforward they were discontinued. Hence St. Paul writes to the Hebrews: "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith: Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not; but a body Thou hast fitted to Me. Holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then said I: behold I come; in the head of the book it is written of Me that I should do Thy will, O God. In saying before: Sacrifices, and oblations, and holocausts for sin Thou wouldst not, neither are they pleasing to Thee, which are offered according to the law. Then said I: behold I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish that which followeth" (*Heb. x. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9*). The Apostle explains that God, since the coming of the promised Redeemer, rejected the victims,

the holocausts, the sacrifices ordained by the law, demanding in their stead the only sacrifice acceptable henceforward in his sight, that of His only begotten Son, who from all eternity said, "Behold, I come." He it is, who having offered Himself once on Calvary in a bloody manner, offers Himself daily on our altars in an unbloody manner, perpetuating thus the remembrance of the sacrifice of Calvary. The oblation of the Saviour of men supplants all the old offerings and sacrifices. It is as far above them as the Creator is above His creature.

In the Psalms, David calls Christ a priest according to the order of Melchisedech, when he represents God the Father, speaking to the promised Messias: "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech" (*Ps.* cix. 4).

In his epistle to the Hebrews (vii. 24), St. Paul explains this prophecy of David: "But this (Jesus Christ) for that

He continueth forever, hath an everlasting priesthood.” Christ is the principal sacrificer, His priest the secondary; hence the prophecy is fulfilled every time Christ offers Himself by the hands of His priests in the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass.

Proof of the Sacrifice of the Mass from Holy Scripture

We now come to the accomplishment of the great prophecy in regard to the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The combined narrations of the Evangelists will unfold minutely its verification.

The evening before His death, immediately after the celebration of the paschal sacrifice, Jesus took bread (*Matt.* xxvi. 26), gave thanks (*Luke* xxii. 19), blessed, brake, and gave to His disciples, saying: “Take ye and eat; this is My body (*Matt.* xxvi. 26), which is given for you; do this for a commemoration of Me.” In like manner, taking the chalice, after He had supped, He offered thanks and gave to

them, saying (*Luke* xxii. 19–20), “drink ye all of this; for this is My blood, the blood of the New Testament (*Matt.* xxvi. 28), which shall be shed for you (*Luke* xxii. 20) and for many for the remission of sins” (*Matt.* xxvi. 28). And they all drank of it (*Mark* xiv. 23).

The Apostle St. Paul gives an account of this same institution to the Christians at Corinth. He apprises them at the same time, that he himself offers up the holy sacrifice of the Mass. “I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said: ‘Take ye and eat; this is My body which shall be delivered for you; this do for the commemoration of Me.’ In like manner also the chalice after He had supped, saying: ‘This chalice is the New Testament in My blood. This do ye, as often as ye shall drink, for the commemoration of Me.’ For as often as you shall eat this bread

and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come. Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to Himself, not discerning the body of the Lord" (1 *Cor.* xi. 23–29).

Elsewhere he seeks to turn the Corinthians away from all participation in idolatrous sacrifices. To accomplish this he writes: "But the things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils" (1 *Cor.* x. 20).

He describes the holy sacrifice of the Mass, as showing "the Lord's death," and the Blessed Eucharist as the "Lord's body." "Christ, our pasch, is sacrificed for us."

No truth of Christianity is set forth with greater force in the Holy Scriptures than that of the sacrifice of the Mass, which is so well elucidated by the foregoing passages on this great subject. It is the central dogma, around which cluster all the other teachings of the Church. Eliminate what the Holy Bible contains concerning this august sacrifice and you take from it the pivotal truth of religion.

No wonder, then, that it was prayed for by all the men of God prior to the coming of Christ, and that the great high priest of the Old Law was ready to depart this life in peace, when the victim of the New Sacrifice was placed in his arms.

Next to the Scriptures come the councils of the Church, as authority in matters of faith and morals.

Proof of the Sacrifice of the Mass from the Council of Trent

The Council of Trent being an epitome of all previous councils and one which those

outside the fold consider authoritative, we shall restrict ourselves to its teachings on the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

In the first chapter of the twenty-second session of this great council, we find the following, concerning the Holy Mass:

“For as much as under the former testament, according to the testimony of the Apostle Paul, there was no *perfection, because of the weakness of the Levitical priesthood* (*Heb. vii. 11–18*). There was need, God the Father of mercies so ordaining, *that another priest should rise, according to the order of Melchisedech* (*Heb. v. 10*), Our Lord Jesus Christ, who might consummate and lead to what is perfect as many as were to be sanctified. He, therefore, our God, and our Lord, though He was about to offer Himself once on the altar of the cross unto God the Father, *by means of His death* (*Heb. ix. 5*), there to operate *an eternal redemption* (*Heb. ix. 12*); nevertheless, because that His priest-

hood was not to be extinguished by His death, in the Last Supper, on the night in which He was betrayed, that He might leave, to His own beloved Spouse, the Church, a visible sacrifice, such as the nature of man requires, whereby that bloody sacrifice, once to be accomplished on the cross, might be represented, and the memory thereof remain even unto the end of the world, and its salutary virtue be applied to the remission of those sins which we daily commit, declaring himself constituted *a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech* (*Ps. cix. 4*), He offered up to God the Father His own body and blood, under the species of bread and wine; and under the symbols of these same things He delivered His own body and blood to be received by His apostles, whom He constituted priests of the New Testament; and by these words, '*do this in commemoration of Me*' (*Luke xxii. 19*), He commanded them and their successors in the priesthood to offer (them); even as the

Catholic Church has always understood and taught.

“For having celebrated the ancient Passover, which the multitude of the children of Israel immolated in memory of their going out of Egypt, He instituted the new Passover (to wit), Himself, to be immolated, under visible signs, by the Church through (the ministry of) priests, in memory of His own passage from this world unto the Father, when by the effusion of His own blood He redeemed us, *and delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into His kingdom (Col. i. 13).*

“And this is, indeed, that clean oblation, which can not be defiled by any unworthiness or malice of those that offer (it), which the Lord foretold by Malachias was to be *offered in every place, clean to His name, which was to be great among the Gentiles (Malach. i. 11)*; and which the Apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, has not obscurely indicated, when he says,

that they who are defiled by the *participation of the table of the devils, can not be partakers of the table of the Lord* (1 Cor. x. 21); by the *table*, meaning in both places, the altar.

“This, in fine, is that oblation, which was prefigured by various types of sacrifices, during the period of nature and of the law; in as much as it comprises all the good things signified by those sacrifices, as being the consummation and perfection of them all.”

Such is the language of the Church in the general Council at Trent, wherein she emphasizes and explains her belief in the eucharistic sacrifice or the Holy Mass.

She goes farther and condemns those who unwittingly or maliciously reject the truth of this teaching in the following canons: “If (Canon 1) any one saith, that in the Mass a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God; or, that to be offered is nothing else but that Christ is given to us to eat; let him be anathema.” Again

in her second canon on the sacrifice of the Mass, she says: "If any one saith, that by these words, '*Do this for the commemoration of Me*' (*Luke* xxii. 19), Christ did not institute the apostles priests; or, did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His own body and blood; let him be anathema."

Religion without sacrifice is a misnomer. Sacrifice is the very soul of the cult man owes to his Creator—the offering and immolation to the Supreme Being of a sensible victim, acknowledging His absolute sovereignty over all the works of His hands and the need there is for man to appease His just anger, caused by sin.

The Council of Trent teaches that there were many and varied sacrifices under the natural and Mosaic laws; yet they were only figures of that great sacrifice in which the Son of God made man was to offer and immolate Himself to eternal justice as a victim of propitiation for a sinful world.

The sacrifice of Calvary was to take the

place of all other sacrifices. Christianity knows no other than the unique sacrifice of the cross and the altar.

When Jesus Christ took upon Himself to atone for sin by His death, the justice of God, writes St. Paul to the Hebrews, was satisfied, and no further price was demanded for our redemption. This sacrifice, being of an infinite value and being once offered, won the victory over death.

The sacrifice of the Mass is not a new sacrifice. It is not one different from that of Calvary, in which we pretend to offer to God a new atonement for sin, but as is expressly stated in the words of the council, it was instituted "to represent the bloody sacrifice, once to be accomplished on the cross, and the memory thereof remain even unto the end of the world, and its salutary virtue to be applied to the remission of these sins which we daily commit."

It is a sacrifice of commemoration and application. The Church does not hold

that there is anything wanting to the sacrifice of the cross, but teaches that it is all-sufficient and that what henceforth takes place is to celebrate the memory of it and apply its merits. "If," says the Council in the fourth canon on the Mass; "any one saith, that, by the sacrifice of the Mass a blasphemy is cast upon the most holy sacrifice of Christ consummated on the cross; or that it is thereby derogated from; let him be anathema."

The sacrifice of the Mass, which draws its efficacy from the sacrifice of the cross, of which it is the representation and consummation, is a true sacrifice. A victim is truly offered to God to recognize His sovereign dominion over all things, to praise Him, to thank Him for His blessings, and to conciliate Him to us.

The victim is the same as that of Calvary, the manner of the oblation alone differing.

The sacrifice of the Mass is propitiatory both for the living and the dead, which is

stated in strong terms by the council in the second chapter of the twenty-second session.

“The holy synod teaches that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory, and that by means thereof this is effected, that we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid, if we draw nigh unto God, contrite and penitent, with a sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence. Not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities of the faithful who are living, but also for those who are departed in Christ, and who are not as yet fully purified, is it rightly offered, agreeably to a tradition of the apostles.”

Corroborative of this teaching, the council has the following (Canon iii): “If any one saith, that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and of thanksgiving; or that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice commemorated on the cross, but not a propitiatory sacrifice; or, that it profits him only who receives; and that it

ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities; let him be anathema.”

Christ our Lord is then really present in the Holy Eucharist, and the words of consecration pronounced separately over the bread and wine, “this is My body,” “this is the chalice of My blood,” represents the divine mediator as victim under the image of death, His body and His blood being mystically separated. In this manner and under the signs of death, Christ, renewing the memory of the bloody sacrifice of the cross, offers to His Father in the Mass the price of that immolation and in so doing makes intercession for us.

Further evidence on what the Church teaches concerning the sacrifice of the Mass would not be necessary; but for the edification of the faithful and to enlighten more and more those who are without the pale of the Church, we will gather valuable testimony on the subject from other fruitful sources. The first of these foun-

tains of light and knowledge is that of the accumulated patristic lore of many centuries.

**Proof of the Sacrifice of the Mass from the
Fathers of the Church**

St. Ambrose in his treatise on the sacraments (bk. iv. c. iv.) writes: "That bread is indeed bread before the sacramental words are uttered; but when consecration is added, from being bread it becomes the body of Christ. Let us establish this point then. How can that which is bread be the body of Christ? By consecration. And by what words is consecration effected and by whose words? By those of the Lord Jesus. For all that is said in the liturgy before the consecration is said by the priest; praises are offered to God; prayers are asked for the people, the princes, and the rest; but at the moment the adorable sacrament is to be produced, the priest ceases to speak in his own name; he uses the words of Christ. And if the

words of the Lord Jesus had such power that things that had no existence began to exist, how much more efficacious shall it be in causing what already exists to be changed into another?

“There was no heaven, there was no sea, there was no earth; but listen to David: ‘He spake and they were made; He commanded and they were created.’ To reply, then, to your objection, before the consecration it was not the body of Christ, but, after consecration, I say to you that now it is the body of Christ. ‘He spake and it was made.’ But to return. It was, indeed, a great marvel and worthy of veneration that manna was rained from heaven for the Jews; but consider; which is greater, manna or the body of Christ? Surely the body of Christ, who is the maker of heaven. Besides, he that ate the manna died; whereas he that eateth this body will obtain remission of sins, and will not die eternally.”

The disciple of this great Doctor of the

Church, St. Augustine, in his explanations of one of the Psalms has this comment: "How this is to be understood of David himself, I do not see; but I do see how it is to be understood of Christ. For Christ was borne in His own hands when, speaking of His own very body He says: 'This is My body.' For that body is borne in His own hands."

St. John Chrysostom spoke to the Christians at Antioch in the following terms: "The Jews mangled that all-sacred body and thou receivest it into a polluted soul, and that, too, after so many mercies. For it was not enough for Him to become man, nor yet to be buffeted and slain; He ever mingles Himself with us, and makes us His body, not only by faith, but in very truth and reality.

"What purity, then, can be too great for him who partakes of this sacrifice? Purer than the very sunbeam should be the hand that divides this flesh, the mouth that is filled with spiritual fire, the tongue

that is purpled with that most awe-inspiring blood!

“Think what an honor has been done thee; of what a table thou art a partaker. What shepherd feeds his sheep with his own lambs? And why say I shepherd? Mothers there are often, who, after all their travail pains, hire out their children to be nursed by others; but He endured not to do this, but feeds us Himself with His own blood, and by every means unites us to Himself.”

In other parts of his writings he tells us that when the Lamb of God is immolated, the seraphim are present, covering their faces with their wings. Again, he says, while we sojourn here, this sacrifice of the Mass changes for us earth into heaven.

The “Imitation of Christ” (bk. iv. c. v), instructs on this subject: “When a priest celebrateth, he honoreth God, he rejoiceth the angels, he edifieth the Church, he helpeth the living, he obtaineth rest for the de-

parted, and maketh himself partaker of all that is good.”

St. Justin, martyr, in the year of Our Lord 130, quotes the prophet Malachias to prove the eucharistic sacrifice. “The oblation of wheaten flour prescribed to be offered to those who were purified from leprosy (*Lev. xiv.*) was a type of the bread of the Eucharist, which Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to offer for a commemoration of the passion, which He endured for those who are purified as to their souls from all iniquity of sin.

“Whence God, as I said, declares of the sacrifices then offered by you, by Malachias, one of the twelve: ‘I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts; and I will not receive a gift of your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of

hosts.' Even then does he foretell concerning the sacrifices from every place by us Gentiles, that is, of the bread of the Eucharist; saying that His name is by us glorified and by you profaned."

St. Cyprian, who was born in the year of Our Lord 200 and suffered martyrdom in the year 258, is pronounced in his views on this subject. "Melchisedech," he says, "was a priest of the most high God when he offered up wine and blessed Abraham. And who, I pray, is more properly and truly a priest of the most high God than Our Lord Jesus Christ? Who offered up a sacrifice to His Father, the very same which Melchisedech had offered up before Him, namely, 'bread and wine, which were His own body and blood.'"

Among his writings we find this passage, "If Jesus Christ our Lord and God be Himself the great High Priest of God the Father, and accordingly first offered His own person as a sacrifice to the Father, and afterward directed us to do

the like in commemoration of Him, then that priest doth most properly represent his Master in this action, keeps most closely to the pattern which Christ hath set him; he then offers up to God the Father, in His Church, *the truest and completest sacrifice*, if he celebrates it in the manner wherein he is assured that Christ Himself did celebrate it."

In his "De Lapsis" (Sec. 13), he tells us what occurred on a certain occasion when he was offering up the holy sacrifice of the Mass: "A woman somewhat advanced in years, who crept in unobserved amongst the communicants when I was engaged in offering up the Holy Sacrifice, she, as soon as she received the holy elements, began to heave and struggle for her life."

These excerpts from the writings of the Fathers of the Church leave no room for doubt concerning their belief in the sacrifice of the Mass. The most biased minds, the bitterest opponents of the Church, can

not but admit that it was the universal teaching of the Fathers.

So cogent is their testimony that heretics themselves have admitted its truth.

Proof of the Sacrifice of the Mass from Heretics

The Protestant writer Grabe declares that Irenæus and all the Fathers who lived in the times of the apostles or soon thereafter, “recognize in the Eucharist the sacrifice of the New Covenant. This was not a belief peculiar to this or that Father. On the contrary, it was the public faith and teaching of the Church, which held fast the deposit of the apostles, as the apostles had received it from Jesus Christ Himself. Irenæus proves this clearly in the thirty-second and thirty-fourth chapters against heresies. Before him, Justin had maintained the same doctrine in his first apology addressed to the Emperor Antoninus, and still more explicitly in his Dialogue with Tryphon. It is useless to cite these texts, or those

of St. Ignatius, Tertullian, or Cyprian. They have often been transcribed by Roman Catholic authors and by learned Protestants.”

Thus we find the Nestorians, Euty-chians, Armenians, Jacobites, Marcosians, Gnostics, and other sects preserving the Catholic creed and rites of the eucharistic sacrifice.

Zwinglius held that the Mass was believed to be the sacrifice of the New Law in the days of Augustine; Calvin admitted that it was the practice of the early Church; Luther claims that it was the teaching of the Church from the times of the apostles to his day. He went so far as to defy Carlstadt to gainsay his assertion, and when the latter accepted the challenge and did deny it, Luther replied that he should be treated as “an assassin of souls.”

Erasmus, writing to Conrad, expresses himself in this wise: “I have always held that it would be impossible to bring me

to believe that Jesus Christ was not present in the Eucharist, especially when I consider the evidence of the Gospels and Epistles of the apostles, which is so strong in affirming that it is the body of Jesus Christ which is given and that it is His blood which is shed on the altar. I could never believe, nor can I now believe, that Jesus Christ, who is eternal Truth, eternal Charity, could have allowed His spouse, the Church, to be given, for any period of time, to such an egregious error or to permit that she should constantly worship a piece of bread.”

All this exhibits the uniform adherence of the Church to the dogma of the reality of the sacrifice of the Mass.

Proof of the Sacrifice of the Mass from the Constant Practice of the Church

We glean from numberless passages of Church history and from many places in profane history, incontestable testimony of the constant, invariable, and universal

teaching of the Church concerning the august sacrifice of the Mass. Her language touching this sacrifice of the New Testament has not varied in the slightest since the days of her foundation.

The Fathers of the Church, the popes, the councils, the liturgies, the confessions of faith, and the legions of ecclesiastical writers make use of the same phraseology whenever they treat of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The liturgies, from those attributed to the apostles, to Saints Basil and Chrysostom; from the ancient Gallican, Nestorian, Syrian, and scores of others, are conformable in substance to those of the Roman Mass as celebrated to-day.

From the rising of the sun to its going down, everywhere the Church teaches that the sacrifice of the Mass is the oblation of the body and blood of Jesus Christ; that it is the same as that of the cross, save in the manner of immolation; that of the cross being the bloody, that of the altar

the unbloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The position of the Church can be further substantiated from an accumulation of theological reasons of which we will here give but a few.

Proof of the Sacrifice of the Mass from Theological Reasons

The sacrifices of the Old Law were figures of the sacrifice of the New Dispensation, no more. All former sacrifices have been discontinued since the sacrifice of the cross and the altar. Were we to admit that the Holy Eucharist was only bread, the reality, in that event, could not even compare with the figure.

Can we imagine that God, rejecting the sacrifices of former victims, would accept as a pure, unblemished and most agreeable oblation a mere morsel of bread? The time when the old sacrifices would cease was foretold by the prophets. According to them it would come to pass

when Jesus Christ said, "This is My body." Could what He calls His own body be no more than a small particle of bread! Could it be that all those sacrifices would be abolished, to give place to a little bread! And that mere bread would replace perfectly and would be the reality of those sacrifices which were but a figure of what was to come!

Could it be that God, who was not pleased with the blood of goats and oxen, would be satisfied, since the coming of Christ and to the close of time, with a scrap of bread! Would it be reasonable that the Church, making an offering of this bread to God, would say: "It is paramount in value to Him, it has an infinite worth"; and would God, think you, be pleased with such an offering?

If Christ is not truly offered in the Holy Eucharist, God has deceived Himself and led into the grossest error His prophet Malachias, when by him He spoke: "From the rising of the sun

even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation." And this "clean oblation," offered everywhere to God, would be but a crumb of bread!

The Evangelists and St. Paul in expounding the words of the Saviour, "This is My body, this is My blood," avow that it is His body and His blood which shall be delivered for the remission of sin. It was not bread that was offered; it was the body of Christ. It was not wine that was shed, it was the blood of Jesus. Hence, not bread and wine redeemed us, but the sacred body and the precious blood of the Saviour of men.

The great Bossuet reasons in this manner: This is bread, this is wine. He who hears me understands my thought. He knows that I wish him to be convinced, that what I say is bread, is bread, and what I say is wine, is wine. Is it necessary that I add: this is in all truth, bread;

this is in very deed, wine? Would not such an explanation appear superfluous? Would it not seem useless? But Jesus, when He uttered these words, "This is My body, this is My blood," would leave us in no doubt about them, but told us that it is the same body which shall be given for us on the cross, the same blood that will be shed for us on Calvary.

Conclusion

The Mass, therefore, is the most efficacious application possible of the sacrifice of the cross. It sums up the whole life of Christ. In speaking of the Mass, one of our ablest theologians has said: "In this sacrifice, Jesus Christ gives us all that He has done for us; His immolation, objective as it was, becomes subjective, adapted to each of us individually. The Redeemer sacrificing Himself for us on the cross is still a stranger to us; in worship He is our own peculiar possession, our victim. There He gave Himself for

all men; here He gives Himself for each of us.”

It only remains for us to magnify and bless the name of the Lord, that He has perpetuated for our benefit Calvary's sacrifice in that of the Mass.

With grateful hearts we must sing His praises that we have seen the verification of the words of His prophet Malachias; “From the rising of the sun even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, said the Lord of hosts.”

Frequent and Daily Communion

“Give us this day our daily bread” (*Luke xi. 3*).

Its Meaning

“GIVE us this day our daily bread,” is one of the petitions of that beautiful prayer which fell from the lips of the divine Teacher.

His apostles, being witnesses of the peace of mind, the joy of heart, and the strength of soul, which He seemed to draw from prayer, besought Him to teach them how to pray. In answer to their request He taught them the Our Father.

He tells them to say: “Give us this day our daily bread.” In supplicating our heavenly Father to give us our daily bread, we ask before all else that spiritual food, the grace of God, which penetrates, nourishes, fortifies, and enriches the soul

with the power of winning heaven. The soul, no less than the body, requires food to sustain life, and God's grace is the life of the soul.

"Give us this day our daily bread." We pray that we be given the word of God, for according to Christ's own declaration, "Man doth not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." His word enables us to practise virtue and to do good.

"Give us this day our daily bread." We beg Him to give us the Holy Eucharist, that "bread of life" which came down from heaven, and to enable us in partaking of it to reach the mountain of God. For our Saviour has said, "Who-soever shall eat of this bread shall live forever." We plead for that sacrament of His infinite love in which we receive Christ Himself, who can strengthen our soul to every good work.

The Food of the Soul

The eucharistic communion is the bread of the soul. It produces, cements, and consummates a real, life-giving union with Jesus Christ, who is life itself. Holy communion is a pledge of our resurrection. It is the principle of the resurrection. "I am the resurrection and the life." At His table He gives to His guest that food which is life eternal. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, I will raise him up at the last day." Hence in receiving Him we can not become the prey of death.

The pleasure we experience at His sacred banquet is a foretaste of the eternal happiness which awaits us in the celestial paradise. To this sentiment the Church gives expression in the Mass for the solemn feast of Corpus Christi: "The temporal reception prefigures the eternal fruition." "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life."

“If,” says the Abbé Gerbet, “while the divine substance unites itself to our substance, God transformed, in the same proportion, our intelligence and our will into His love, then we should see Him face to face and should love Him with a love corresponding to that clear vision. Heaven is nothing else than this. Let us wait a little; the day of transformation approaches. As the infant, by an instinct of self-preservation attaches itself to its mother’s breast, from which it receives life, before it has opened its eyes to the light, so is man fed on God before he sees Him. Such is the universal order of Providence; for in all things there is a substantial union which precedes the union of intelligence and will. But soon the child knows the authors of its life, as it is known by them and makes but one and the same soul with them. So, when we have gone out of this world, as out of our cradle, this union, begun on earth, will be consummated; and God, penetra-

ting our whole being at once with His power, will be in us and we in Him according to all that He is, and all that we are capable of being.”

While among men, tabernacling in the flesh, He consoled and comforted them. In the Holy Eucharist He cheers and encourages them. He has declared: “he that eateth Me shall live by Me, he abideth in Me and I in him.” In holy communion He becomes the daily bread of the Christian, the real life of his soul. This we ask for when we repeat, “give us this day our daily bread.”

According to St. Francis de Sales, the participation in the holy mysteries is the soul of piety, the heart of devotion, the center of Christianity, the sun of the spiritual life. The sign of a good communion, he further tells us, is progress in gentleness and meekness.

St. Francis Xavier says: “The greatest suffering of the missionary is his being unable under certain circumstances to

celebrate the holy mysteries, thus being deprived of the heavenly bread which strengthens the heart of man and forms his only consolation among the ills and crosses of life."

St. Vincent de Paul asks: "When you have received the adorable body of Jesus Christ, do you not feel a divine fire burning in your breast?"

"Give us this day our daily bread." We beseech Him to give us of that bread which He gave His apostles at the Last Supper, when He said: "Take ye and eat; this is My body." For this bread is the food of the soul.

Our Obligation to Receive Holy Communion

He who would claim that we could live and thrive without food, would be looked upon as an insane person. Food is as essential to the life of the body as rain and sunshine to vegetation, as water to the fish, as grass to the beasts of the field. Nor can we look upon the one who refuses

food to the soul in any other light than as a person bereft of reason; for the soul stands no less in need of spiritual than the body of corporal food. The Church in her great wisdom, and acting under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, gives a positive precept to us, that we nourish our souls with this "bread of life." In so doing she but adheres to the injunction of her divine Founder: "Take ye and eat, this is My body." "Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins" (*Matt.* xxvi. 26-28). For this reason the Councils of the Church in legislation concerning the Holy Eucharist make it obligatory on the faithful to receive holy communion at stated times.

In St. John's Gospel (vi. 54) we find this divine ordinance; "Amen, Amen, I say unto you; except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." In these

words our Saviour warns us that we must receive the Holy Eucharist and nourish our souls on it, if we would live and not die. Those who contravene this solemn command resemble the Jews sojourning in the desert, who murmured against God and Moses, "Why didst thou bring us out of Egypt, to die in the wilderness? There is no bread nor have we any water; our soul now loatheth this very light food" (*Num.* xxi. 5). So, too, many Christians to whom the Bread of Angels has become insipid complain and turn away from it. We may liken them to those spoken of in the Apocalypse who would seem to live yet have no life in them. "I know thy works, that thou hast the name of being alive; and thou art dead" (*Apoc.* iii. 1).

Frequent Communion

God, the creator of all things, who has care for the birds of the air, the beasts of the fields, and man's temporal good,

has promised a heavenly food for what is dearer to Him than all these—the soul. To her He gives as nourishment the body and blood of the Emmanuel.

“With desire,” we read in St. Matthew (xxii. 15), “I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer.” For this reason, writes St. Augustine, Jesus gives Himself to us in the Eucharist as our food; for this reason He made it our beverage; for this reason He constituted it a repast to have us “know that it is this food which we must use and that often.” The soul, like the body, would grow faint and languish deprived of its aliment. Jesus pleads with us to come to Him; He invites us to partake often of the food He has prepared for us.” “Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you” (*Prov.* ix. 5). It is morally impossible for those who communicate frequently to fail to purify their hearts and to practise virtue. How happy the apostles, are we wont to exclaim, and all

those who surrounded Jesus on earth, who were witnesses of His miracles, who were the recipients of His bounty; and yet you possess all these blessings and more in holy communion.

Frequent communion enables us to make progress in perfection and that without our perceiving it. In order to maintain religious institutions in their fervor, or to bring them back to their pristine purity, the Council of Trent prescribes, in the first place, communion at least every month (*Sess.* xxv. 10; xxiii. 18). This, the Council declares, would be "the health-giving aliment of their piety and their invincible defence against the assaults of the enemy." But, "let a man prove himself before eating of that bread and drinking of that chalice." "This proof," continues the Council, "consists in this, that no Christian having his conscience burdened by a mortal sin, however great his contrition may appear to himself to be, should dare to

approach the Holy Table without being previously purified by the bath of penitence." The Church, in her official capacity, has urged upon the faithful frequent communion and encouraged them to receive every time they assisted at the august sacrifice of the Mass.

Daily Communion

Daily we nourish our body with food, that body which soon, very soon, will become the prey of worms. Can we afford to neglect to give the soul its daily bread? the soul which is so precious in the sight of God, the soul which is immortal and made for eternal glory? God created it to His own image. He gave his life for it. He has provided a special food for it which comes down from heaven. Can we refuse to give it that bread which is the body and blood of Jesus? For centuries Christians were accustomed to approach the Sacred Table daily and nourish their souls with its

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precious life-giving bread. All who attended the holy sacrifice of the Mass received holy communion; this was, at least the custom, if not the strict requirement. In the days of St. Augustine communion at every Mass was certainly the rule, albeit not compulsory. St. Francis de Sales writes: "To communicate every week, one must be free from mortal sin and from all affection to venial sin, and have a great desire of communion; but to communicate daily it is necessary in addition to this to have surmounted the greater part of our evil inclinations and to have the consent of our spiritual father." Touching this very laudable custom we have now a decree on daily communion from the Sacred Congregation of the Council published on December 24, 1905. This decree constitutes henceforth the rule and law by which theologians and confessors are to be governed in theory as well as in practice. It holds

that no more special dispositions are required for daily than for weekly communion. It decides that all that is demanded is freedom from mortal sin and a right and pious disposition of mind when we approach the Holy Table.

Communion should not be partaken of through any unworthy motive, but only for the love of God. We should not receive through custom, or vanity, or human motives, but with the desire of obeying the will of God, of becoming more closely united to Him by charity, and of making use of that divine medicine as a remedy to overcome our weaknesses and shortcomings. Should it appear to the confessor that the communicant approaches the Holy Table from any of the motives stated above, or any like motives, he would be justified, and indeed he would be doing his strict duty, in preventing daily communion. The decree puts an end to all further controversies on the sub-

ject of daily communion; nevertheless, it leaves the penitent in the hands of the confessor.

That there was a time, says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, when the faithful received holy communion every day, we learn from the Acts of the Apostles. All who then professed the faith of Christ burned with such pure and ardent charity, that devoting themselves, as they did unceasingly, to prayer and other works of piety, they were found prepared to communicate daily. It was also for centuries the practice of the Church that, as soon as the Holy Sacrifice was ended, the priest, turning to the faithful, invited them to the Sacred Banquet in these words "Come, brethren, and receive the communion"; and those who were prepared, advanced to receive the holy mysteries with hearts animated by the most fervent devotion.

Incentives to Daily Communion

Apart from the command of Christ, the precept of the Church, or the pressing needs of the soul, we have real solid comforts in the fruits of holy communion, which are akin to the joys reserved for us in eternity, and which should encourage us to frequent or daily participation in the Heavenly Banquet. Jesus is our joy, for he who rejoices in Him, says St. Augustine, cannot be deceived in His consolations. The secret of our felicity is found in the mercy, the love, and the promise of Jesus. "Let your soul rejoice in His mercy, and you shall not be confounded in His praise" (*Ecclus.* li. 37). "For my hope is in the Eternal, that He will save you; and joy is come upon me from the Holy One, because of the mercy which shall come to you from our everlasting Saviour" (*Bar.* iv. 22). "I, I Myself will comfort you" (*Is.* li. 12). "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the

dance, the young men and old men together; and I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them, and make them joyful after their sorrow. And I will fill the soul of the priests with fatness; and my people shall be filled with my good things, saith the Lord" (*Jer.* xxxi. 13-14). "Give praise, O daughter of Sion; shout, O Israel; be glad, and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem" (*Soph.* iii. 14). And why all this joy, all this rejoicing? Because, "the Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save; He will rejoice over thee with gladness; He will be silent in His love; He will be joyful over thee in praise" (*Soph.* iii. 17). "I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk in His name, saith the Lord" (*Zach.* x. 12).

Jesus is our true happiness. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I say, rejoice" (*Philipp.* iv. 4). "Delight in the Lord and He will give thee the requests of thy

heart" (*Ps.* xxxvi. 4). "My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God" (*Ps.* lxxxiii. 3). "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord and my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; and with the robe of justice He hath covered me, as a bridegroom decked with a crown and as a bride adorned with her jewels" (*Is.* i. 10). "But I will rejoice in the Lord; and I will joy in God my Jesus" (*Hab.* iii. 18). This prophet, six hundred years before the coming of Jesus Christ, announces and names Him and rejoices in Him; because He sees that He is to be our Emmanuel. "Far from me, O Lord," says St. Augustine, "far be it from the heart of Thy servant to believe myself happy in whatever joy I may experience out of Thee; but help me to feel that joy which the wicked can not know, and which Thou givest to those who serve Thee. That joy is Thyself; it is that celestial happiness that has us to rejoice

with Thee, in Thee, and for Thee; behold the real joy, there is no other."

He who seeks God, seeks joy, for in approaching God he is enlightened, fortified, loved of God. God alone is the true and universal joy of the heart; He alone fills the heart of man, and satisfies the angels.

The joys of a Christian soul are gained by an intimate union with Jesus. Where will you find such happiness? "In that chaste union," says St. Laurence Justinian, "there is a constant feast and the fattened lamb is often partaken of." "Oh," exclaims St. Augustine, "how sweet it has been for me to part with senseless pleasures. For me, it is great joy to bid farewell to what I feared to lose. Thou hast cast all that from me, Thou, O my God, Thou, the true and supreme sweetness; Thou put it back of me and Thou take its place, Thou, who art more delectable than all other pleasures." In the possession of Jesus, the joy of the heart

is limitless; the soul renews itself and experiences an ineffable sweetness; she gains a spiritual intelligence, the blessings of faith, an increase of hope, the fire of charity, and the beauty of virtue. The soul that possesses Jesus has in prayer familiar colloquies with Him. She feels that He hears her and grants her often what she asks. Happy the soul that corresponds to the graces of holy communion. Even in this life she is blessed an hundred-fold. She is at peace with all and merits for the hereafter the eternal beatitude of the just in the heavenly Jerusalem. In making her Saviour captive in holy communion she passes from the joy of grace to that of glory; from a river of delights to an unbounded ocean of an eternal communion with Him.

In the Eucharist we become verily members of Christ. "Because we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (*Eph.* v. 30). "Know you not that your bodies are the members of

Christ? . . . For he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 *Cor.* vi. 15, 17). Through it we are co-heirs with Him to the Kingdom of heaven. "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body" (*Eph.* iii. 6). "For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; yet so, if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him" (*Rom.* viii. 16, 17). Furthermore, by it we are clothed with Him. "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences" (*Rom.* xiii. 14).

The Apostle of the Gentiles would have us know that He is "all to all." "Which is His body, and the fulness of Him who is filled all in all" (*Eph.* i. 23). In Solomon He is wisdom, in Joseph purity, in Moses power and meekness, in the prophets holiness, in the apostles zeal, in

the martyrs patience, in the virgins innocence, and in holy communion He is "all in all." Need we greater evidence of the joys of a soul united to Jesus in holy communion, or do we require more encouragement to have us become frequent or daily communicants? Hearken to its marvels.

Wonders of the Blessed Sacrament

The Psalmist, in clear vision peering into the future ages, speaks of that marvelous bread which God is to give to the children of men. "He hath made a remembrance of His wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord; He hath given food to them that fear Him" (*Ps. cx. 45*). This food is none other than the body and blood of the Son of God, and through it He perpetuated the memorial of His wonderful works. In this manner He is with the blessed in heaven and among men on earth. He vivifies and rejoices the angels by His presence;

He nourishes and cheers man in giving Himself to him in holy communion. He thereby creates a most perfect and intimate union with him. Of all the handiworks of the Almighty in the heavens above or on the earth below, the Holy Eucharist is undoubtedly the greatest. His power is manifest in the creation of the universe. By a word of His, He called out of nothingness millions upon millions of noble creatures. The heavens He created and studded with bright stars and blazing suns without number; He made of the earth a magnificent paradise, filling it with beauty and grandeur; He peopled the heaven with angels and earth with men who reflect His eternal intelligence. But it remains for the acme of His power to be made manifest in the Holy Eucharist, wherein by a word of His priests He converts a piece of bread into His own body. The bread is changed into His divine person by the words of consecration in the Mass. In creation God brings forth only

creatures, while in the consecration of the holy sacrifice of the Mass from bread He Himself is brought forth. The bread by the consecration ceases to be bread, but becomes God. We have His own word for this greatest of marvels. The Holy Eucharist is a memorial of the Incarnation: "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us"; of the Visitation: "whence comes it that the Mother of my God should visit me"; of the Epiphany: "And falling down they adored Him"; of the Purification: "Now, O Lord, let the soul of Thy servant depart in peace"; of the Transfiguration: "It is well for us to be here"; of the Last Supper: "This is My body, take ye and eat"; of His Passion: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death"; of the Ascension: "I go to My Father." Who can fathom the height or the depth, the width or the breadth of the wisdom of God in this His most wonderful work, the real presence of His only begotten Son in the Adorable Sacrament of the

Eucharist? But this is not all: we may now consider some of the blessings holy communion produces in the soul.

Advantages of Holy Communion

When we approach the Sacred Banquet we unite ourselves intimately with Christ, who speaks to the soul much after the same manner in which He once addressed His heavenly Father: "And all My things are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them" (*John* xvii. 10). He corroborates this in the following words: "that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." He is in God the Father by the unity of the divine essence and we are in Him by holy communion. St. Hilary says: "Jesus is in God the Father by His divine nature; we are in Him through communion, for He has said: 'He who eateth My flesh abideth in Me and I in Him.'" This union between Christ and the soul in the Holy Eucha-

rist is so perfect that He likened it to the union which takes place between the body and the nourishment we take. "For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him" (*John* vi. 56-57). He does not say: "He comes to Me," but "He lives in Me." He does not say, "I go to him," but "I dwell in him." "He abideth in Me and I in him." We are in this manner made as it were like unto God (*John* i. 12). "But we all beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord" (*2 Cor.* iii. 18). And this called forth from St. Paul the pronouncement, "And I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me" (*Gal.* xi. 20). Satan, albeit unwittingly, spoke truly when he, tempting, said: "You shall be as gods" (*Gen.* iii. 5). Man, it is true, will be as God, not in eating of the forbidden fruit,

but in partaking of holy communion. God became man, writes St. Cyprian, that we might become like unto Him. In holy communion, avers St. John Chrysostom, we are not only changed into Christ by love, but in very deed we become the flesh of Jesus and this miracle is wrought by the food He gives us.

With such love and charity in us we are encouraged to love our neighbor as ourselves for His sake.

As from a great number of grains of wheat the same bread is made, so by holy communion all the faithful are but one and the same holy and living bread, being one and the same mystical body with Christ Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. It was in this way that the early Christians were so closely united, receiving daily as they did their Lord and God in the holy mysteries and were of one will and one mind. "And the multitude of the believers had but one heart and one soul" (*Acts* iv. 32). "The body of Jesus being invis-

ible," declares St. John Chrysostom, "you take not one part and I another; but you and I, each of us, receive it whole and entire, having the same Christ in us; we are therefore but one and the same body. Holy communion is, therefore, the bond of union between us and our neighbor since we receive the same God who says to all: "If therefore thou offer thy gift at the altar, and there thou remember that thy brother hath anything against thee; leave there thy offering before the altar, and go first to be reconciled to thy brother; and then coming thou shalt offer thy gift" (*Matt. v. 23-24*). We receive Him who said, "But I say to you, love your enemies; do good to those that hate you; and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (*Matt. v. 44*). The same who said: "But be not you called Rabbi. For one is your master; and all you are brethren" (*Matt. xxiii. 8*). Again: "A new commandment I give unto you: That you love one another, as I have loved you, that you

also love one another” (*John* xiii. 34). Christ, whom the Apostle calls the power of God, communicates of its virtues to us. A fierce and cruel combat awaits us, we are told by St. Cyprian, and the soldiers of the cross must be prepared for it. They should drink daily of the chalice of the blood of Jesus Christ, that they may be able to give their blood for Him.

“I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me” (*Philipp.* iv. 13). “If God be for us, who is against us?” The devil, the world and the flesh war against us. Jesus alone can overcome them. “Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith? Then rising up he commanded the winds and the sea, and there came a great calm” (*Matt.* viii. 26). St. Thomas holds that one of the reasons the Holy Eucharist frees us from and helps us to overcome temptation is that the armed enemies of our soul having been overcome by Christ’s ignominious death on the cross, must fall back and beat a rapid retreat in presence

of the Blessed Sacrament, which is a representation of His death. Whence comes the courage of the martyrs? asks St. John Chrysostom; and answers, from the body and blood of Christ.

Fed by this heavenly food, says St. Augustine, the martyrs suffer patiently the most cruel treatments, while at times they do not even feel them. St. Bernard assures us that to holy communion we owe our victory over all our trials. St. John Chrysostom says it is the strength of the soul, the courage of the heart, the hope, the salvation, the very life of man. Fortified by this power of God we possess efficacious means of repelling the assaults of our enemies. Those who were afflicted with any of the numerous infirmities to which flesh and blood are heir, had but to touch the hem of Christ's garment and they were healed. Who, then, can measure the immense virtue in holy communion, which is the body and blood of Jesus?

Are you proud? Receive Him who so

humbled himself that He is compared to the vile worm we trample under foot. This precious blood will make you meek and humble. Are you sick from the infirmity of the flesh? Drink of the chalice that fosters virgins. Whatever be your ailment, seek Him who is "all to all" and He will heal you. Are you sick unto death? Call on Him, receive Him, and you will die the death of the just. "For me, to live is Christ; and to die is gain" (*Philipp.* i. 2). After receiving holy communion St. Ælred expired, exclaiming, "Lord, I will sing throughout all eternity Thy great mercy." St. Bernard having been fortified with the holy Viaticum heard a voice say, "Come, we await you." St. Francis Regis, having received Our Lord in holy communion, cried out, "I die happy." All who follow those beautiful examples may repeat with the Royal Prophet (cxxii. 1): "I rejoiced at the things that were said to me; we shall go into the house of the Lord."

Jesus is the Desire of All Nations

This desire of the human breast is common to all men and it predominates over every other feeling of the soul. It was the wish of the generations of men before the coming of Christ, who sighed and prayed for His coming. "I beseech Thee, Lord, send whom Thou wilt send" (*Ex.* iv. 13). "O that Thou wouldst rend the heavens, and wouldst come down," exclaims Isaias (lxiv. 1); "the mountains would melt away at Thy presence." And in Aggeus (xi. 8), we read: "And I will move all nations; and the desired of all nations shall come." Since the advent of the desired of all nations, Jesus, whose delight is to be with the children of men, devout souls pine for Him. St. Bernard thus expresses the ardent zeal of such hearts for Him: "O my Jesus, a thousand times I desire you; when will you come, when will you make me happy, when will you replenish me with yourself?"

Come, O Jesus, admirable King, ineffable sweetness, you who are the desired of all. When you come into our hearts, we possess the truth, and the vanity of the world is nothing to us, for your love consumes us."

St. Denis calls Jesus the real tree of life, because He gives food in abundance to the faithful in many ways and ceases not to do so until He has raised them from the life of grace to that of glory. He gives us the bread of tears, of trials, of good works; the gifts of grace, the consolation of virtue, but above all He gives Himself in the Holy Eucharist. To him who fittingly partakes of this food is given an incorruptible life. According to St. Thomas, man in his saddened condition stood in need of a union with the God-head and of ridding himself of the old man. Jesus vouchsafed to grant us both in making us by His grace participants of the divine nature and then by Baptism changing us into the new man.

By His incarnation He has become our companion; in breaking bread with us, He gives us His own flesh and blood; He suffers a bitter passion and dies on the cross to redeem us; He perpetuates Himself as our food in the Holy Eucharist; He gives us Himself as our eternal reward in glory. His love for us is without bounds especially on the cross and in holy communion, wherein He is the desired of all nations. For "Christ died for all" (2 *Cor.* v. 15).

Conclusion

"Give us this day our daily bread." Whether in body or in soul we grow weary or faint, let us go to Jesus and ask Him for food. He will give more than the crumbs that fall from the table; He will not turn us away hungry; He will give us the manna from heaven. "Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it will be opened unto you." "Give us this day our daily bread," should be our constant prayer.

Are you hungry? Seek Jesus; He is the bread of life, the food of the soul, the nourishment of the angels. He is the heavenly manna, which pleases and satisfies all tastes. Are you thirsty? Go to Jesus; He is the source of those living waters that flow from the celestial heights and refresh all who slake their thirst with their life-giving draught. Are you sick? Call on Jesus; He is the physician, the Saviour, health itself. Are you in danger of death? Pray that Jesus come to you; He is the life and the resurrection. Are you in doubt? Confer with Jesus; He is the angel of good council. Are you perhaps a sinner? Invoke Jesus; He will save His people from all sin; for this did He come into the world, that He overcome sins; He went after the lost sheep and, having found it, brought it back upon His shoulders to the fold; He poured oil and wine into the wounds of the man who fell into the hands of robbers and brought him to an inn and had him cared for; He

clasped the prodigal to His bosom and forgave him his sins; He prayed for those who nailed Him to the infamous gibbet of the cross. Do you crave riches? In Him are all treasures. Do you envy honors? He is the King of glory. Are you in need of a friend? He came down from heaven to be a friend to you. "What more can I do for you," He says, "than to give my life for you." Stand you in want of consolation? He is the comforter of the afflicted; the joy of the angels. Do you wish for peace? He is the prince of peace. Jesus in a word is "all to all." Commenting on these words of the Apostle, Origen writes: You can easily understand that Jesus is "all to all"; that He is all good in all.

Life is good; He is life. Light is good; He is the light. Truth is good; He is Truth. Resurrection is good; He is the resurrection. He is all in Himself and giving Himself entirely in holy communion He is "all to all." "As therefore you

have received Jesus Christ the Lord, walk ye in Him" (*Col. ii. 6*).

"For unto this are you called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving you an example that you should follow His steps" (*1 Peter xi. 21*).

All our thoughts, words, and actions, should be conformable to His holy and divine will.

"Give us this day our daily bread." This must be our prayer and practice; and we should so live that we be found worthy to partake daily of the bread of life which He gives us for the life of our soul, His own flesh and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar. O sweet Jesus, O loving Jesus, my God and my all, I pray and beseech Thee to "give us this day our daily bread."

The Ordinary of the Mass

THAT we may assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass with much profit and derive abundant graces from this bounteous source of heavenly benedictions, we deem it of great moment to give a summary of the more salient parts of the Ordinary of the Mass.

The Offertory, Consecration, and Communion constitute the three principal parts of the August Sacrifice, while the prayers and ceremonies that are prior to the Offertory are merely a preparation for it.

The priest begins by making on himself the sign of the cross, saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

In so doing, he announces in whose name and by whose authority he is about

to ascend the altar of God to offer anew the blood of Calvary's divine victim vouchsafed us by the Almighty for the remission of sin. He points out, furthermore, in signing himself with the sign of the cross, that he offers the sacrifice to God the Father, to appease His wrath caused by sin and to render Him propitious to our supplications; that he immolates the only begotten Son of the Father, the Saviour of men, who from all eternity proffered himself to His Father as the only worthy oblation for sin, and, finally, that he officiates in the name of the Holy Ghost, through whose virtue he offers up the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

The psalm, "Judica me, Deus," which he next recites, is intended to awaken in us the fear of God's judgments, to express our sorrow for past transgressions and to arouse within us such holy feelings as should fill our souls when we approach the altar.

The Confiteor is then said to excite sen-

timents of humility and quicken contrition in our hearts preparatory to the sacrifice.

The Kyrie Eleison, which follows, is repeated thrice, respectively in honor of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, to obtain the mercy and assistance of the triune God.

The Gloria, wherein we sing His praises, honor, and magnify His holy name, is then said.

The Oremus, which comes closely after, suggests that all who are present at the Mass should unite in prayer, while the Dominus Vobiscum implies that we should invoke, in union with the priest, the Holy Spirit, that He bestow His graces upon us with a lavish hand.

The Epistle signifies the Old Law; the Gradual indicates the penance performed by the people at the preaching of St. John the Baptist, the Alleluia recalls the joy of the repentant sinner, and the Gospel represents the New Law or the teachings of the divine Master.

The sign of the cross, which the celebrant makes on the Gospel, is to remind us that we must profess Christ and follow Him. The celebrant signs in like manner his forehead to warn us that the blush of shame should never mantle our brow, when there is question of our Faith, but that we should rather glory in Christ and in His cross; he signs his lips to teach us that we must be prudent in our speech and frequently call on the holy name of Jesus; and he makes the same sign on his breast to show that our hearts should be filled with the love of God.

The Credo is next recited. It is a beautiful profession of our faith in Christ our Lord.

The second part of the Mass, which is the holiest, the most sacred, the most sublime part, begins with the Offertory and closes with the Pater Noster.

The Offertory is so styled, because the bread and wine are herein set aside and especially offered for the Consecration.

The small quantity of water which is put into the wine represents that which came from the side of our Saviour when He was transfixed with a lance while hanging on the gibbet of the cross.

Both wine and water are presented to the celebrant to remind us that the faithful also share in the sacrifice.

The purity of mind and heart so necessary to worthily offer or assist at the Mass is symbolized by the washing of the priest's fingers.

Through the *Orate Frates*, the celebrant entreats those who are in attendance to pray that the sacrifice he is about to offer in which they unite with him, may be pleasing and acceptable to the Almighty.

The Preface is a prelude to the prayers of the Canon of the Mass, and particularly is it a preparation for the Consecration. It is a song of triumph and of glory, an invitation to raise our hearts and minds to heaven, and in union with the

choirs of angels to praise the God of the heaven and earth.

The Sanctus has, so to speak, come down from heaven and was heard by St. John the Evangelist, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty" (*Apoc.* iv. 8), and by the prophet Isaias, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, all the earth is full of His glory" (vi. 3).

The word Canon signifies a rule or fixed order of prayers which is to be universally adhered to by all priests offering the Holy Sacrifice and from which they are not allowed to depart. At the outset of the Canon the celebrant raises his hands toward heaven, as if supplicating heaven and earth to join in fervent prayer to God that He bless and accept the offering made to Him.

In the Memento for the living the priest prays in the name of the whole Church for all the faithful, especially for those who assist at the Mass and for those for whom it may be said.

The sublime, the marvelous moment of Consecration is now at hand; the assembled people bow their heads in presence of this miracle of miracles; a wondrous *fiat* is spoken and the King of kings, the Lord of heaven and earth, the Saviour of men is present on the altar.

That which until now was bread and wine has become the body and blood, the soul and the divinity of Jesus Christ. And whilst the faithful worship humbly prostrate before Him, the angels descend from heaven and with their wings covering their faces adore Him. What a sublime, what an awe-inspiring spectacle!

The many signs of the cross made by the priest remind us of Christ and of His cross; the frequent genuflections represent the adoration we owe God really present on our altar and the profound respect His august presence demands of us.

The Memento for the dead is a remembrance of the souls in purgatory, an ear-

nest prayer to God, that He have mercy on them, and a plea that He free them from their sufferings.

Then the prayer of prayers is said, the Our Father, which serves as a prelude to the third part of the Mass, which now begins.

The celebrant divides the sacred Host, after the manner in which Christ took bread and broke and gave to His apostles saying, "Take ye and eat; this is My body" (*Matt.* xxvi. 26).

He drops one part of the divided consecrated host into the chalice, that we may understand that the peace he prayed for in the Pax Domini is sealed with the blood of Jesus.

This mingling of a part of the Host with the blood of Christ is to call to our attention: (1) the union of God and man in the incarnation; (2) the union of God with man in holy communion; (3) the union of the blessed in heaven with God.

That we may be privileged to enjoy this

most precious peace, this most desirable and glorious union, we must free ourselves from all guilt of grievous sin.

Hence the *Agnus Dei* and the *Domine non Sum Dignus* are then fervently said by the priest.

After those humble and contrite prayers the celebrant receives communion, and the faithful who are prepared come to the Sacred Table to be nourished with the body and blood of Christ.

The prayers that follow are a thanksgiving to God for the blessings vouchsafed us through the merits of the sacrifice of the Mass, which is a perpetuation of the great sacrifice of Calvary.

Sacerdotal Vestments

A WORD of explanation concerning the different vestments worn by the priest in saying Mass will help to increase our devotion while attending the Holy Sacrifice.

The amice, which is placed around the neck and on the shoulders, represents the veil with which our Saviour was blindfolded during His passion. "Then they spat in His face, and buffeted Him; and others struck His face with the palms of their hands" (*Matt.* xxvi. 67). "And they blindfolded Him, and smote His face. And they asked Him saying: Prophecy who is it that struck Thee?" (*Luke* xxii. 64).

The alb is a vestment of white linen reaching from head to foot and with sleeves, which signifies the white robe with

which Herod, in derision, had Our Lord clothed. "And Herod with his army set him at nought, and mocked him, putting on him a white garment, and sent him back to Pilate" (*Luke* xxiii. 11).

The cincture or girdle represents the cords with which the Jews bound Him in the Garden of Olives and the scourges used by the uncouth soldiery at His flagellation. "Then therefore Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him" (*John* xix. 1).

The maniple indicates the ropes the soldiers used to fasten Him to the pillar. It is worn on the left forearm, which is nearer the heart, to express the love of Jesus for us.

The stole represents the cords with which they held Him on the cross whilst they nailed Him to it.

The chasuble reminds us of the purple cloak that was put on Him and the tunic over which they cast lots, as they wished not to divide this garment, which was of one piece. "And they put on Him a pur-

ple garment" (*John* xix. 2). "Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be" (*John* xix. 24).

The cross on the chasuble keeps before our eyes the image of the instrument of our Saviour's cruel death.

Each vestment recalls some phase of the bitter passion and death of our suffering Lord. They help us to fix more attentively our minds on the passion of Christ and thus enable us to derive greater blessings from the Mass when we assist at it. They also impress us with confidence in the goodness and mercy of Jesus.

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