

However, *it should be our aim to worship God every moment of our lives*, by consecrating ourselves and our intentions all to Him each day. Even while working, we should once in a while pause to give a thought of love to God, and *offer ourselves to Him*.

4. *Adoration of God includes public worship*, that is, worship in which a number of persons participate. From the earliest times, *God has given commands about public worship to be rendered to Him*. Public worship edifies and gives *good example* to the different participants, so that they are encouraged to greater love of God. In public worship, we show ourselves a united body openly manifesting by visible signs our adoration of God.

Public worship is rendered to God very specially *during the offering of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass*. Some signs of public worship are kneeling, genuflecting, making the sign of the cross, vocal and community prayers, singing of hymns, and sermons. A magnificent example of public worship is an international eucharistic congress.

5. *We should honor and reverence creatures who reflect the perfections of God*. Thus we venerate saints, and honor and love persons on earth; but *we do not adore them*.

HOW DO WE WORSHIP GOD?

We worship God *by acts* of the virtues of *faith, hope, charity, and religion*.

1. True piety and adoration of God do not include a *gloomy manner*, a melancholy expression, and a hard exterior. *True piety is cheerful, full of joy*. "Serve God with gladness" (Ps. 99:2).

They are mistaken who think that a forbidding demeanor, continual groaning and sighings and weeping are *pleasing to God*. They only serve to repel others. We should remember that of all creatures, *God loves most an innocent child*. We shall not be mistaken in practices if we imitate him.

2. *In our devotions we should avoid all singularity and exaggerations*; these only make piety ridiculous and subject it to contempt. All devotions of extraordinary character, such as praying with outspread or upraised arms, should be done in private.

Some kinds of singularity, if shown in public, may do harm rather than good, and may cause our religion to be looked upon with contempt. It would be out of place, for example, to kneel down and pray on the street upon hearing the Angelus bell while walking there.

What does FAITH oblige us to do?

1. *To make efforts to find out what God has revealed*. If one is ignorant of his religion, he must seek instruction. Parents are strictly forbidden to send their children to anti-Catholic schools.

It is *forbidden* to read, print, lend, give or sell, books or periodicals against faith or morals.

2. *To believe firmly what God has revealed*. We worship God by faith when we firmly believe all the truths God has revealed.

Once we are sure God has revealed something, we must believe it. Faith does not require us to believe anything contrary to reason. Even if we cannot understand what is revealed, like the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, we act according to reason in believing it, for our reason tells us God cannot err, lie, or deceive nor be deceived.

3. *To profess our faith openly whenever necessary*. We are obliged to do so *when we are challenged to make profession of it*, or when an omission to do so would harm our neighbor or bring religion into contempt, or when we are questioned by lawful authority. *We must never deny our faith*.

Our Lord says: "Therefore everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge him before my Father in heaven" (Matt. 10:32).

What does HOPE oblige us to do?

Hope obliges us to *trust firmly that God will give us eternal life* and the means to obtain it.

We worship God by hope when we firmly trust that God, Who is almighty and faithful to His promises, will help us attain eternal happiness. *"My trust is in the Lord"* (Ps. 30:7).

What does CHARITY oblige us to do?

Charity obliges us to *love God above all things* because He is infinitely good, and to love our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

We worship God by charity when we love Him above all things for His own sake, and others as ourselves for love of Him.

What does RELIGION oblige us to do?

Religion obliges us: *to acknowledge God's infinite perfection, our complete dependence upon Him, our utter subjection to His will*; and to *render Him due worship* with all our faculties and acts of body, intellect, and will—adoring Him and praying to Him.



We pay special honor to the Blessed Virgin because she is the Mother of God, and our Mother. God has exalted her above all other creatures. Her intercession is more powerful with God than that of any other saint. No man refuses his mother a favor;

so God does not refuse any request of Mary. Christ even worked his first miracle in advance of His time, because Mary asked Him. Let us all love and honor the Blessed Virgin, for she is our Mother, whom Christ Himself gave us from the cross.

94. Veneration of Saints

Does the first commandment FORBID US TO HONOR THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN?

The first commandment *does not forbid us to honor the saints in heaven*, provided we do not give them the honor that belongs to God alone.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and veneration of the saints, are not opposed to the commandment to adore God alone. *We do not worship the saints; we only honor them* as the special friends and servants of God. We adore God alone.

1. *By venerating the saints we honor God* Himself, Who is the cause of their holiness. Without the help of God, they would not have done anything holy. *We do not adore saints*. Should we not reverence those who reflect God's perfections? So we venerate the saints. Similarly we honor outstanding persons on earth; but we do not adore them.

We give to God the supreme honor and adoration, called *latria*. We render the saints our veneration, called *dulia*. To the Blessed Virgin we give special veneration, called *hyperdulia*, because she is above all angels and saints as the Mother of God. But even the Blessed Virgin we do not and cannot adore. However saintly, not all the saints and angels together can approach the infinite holiness of God.

2. A person who died in the grace of God and is already in heaven is a *saint*. In the strict sense of the term, a saint is one solemnly declared by the Church to be in heaven, and may be given public veneration.

Before a person is declared a saint, rigid proof is required of a life of heroic virtue. Inquiry is made into his life, virtues, and writings. The process goes through *three stages* which, if satisfactory, end in papal declarations for three degrees, with titles given of Venerable, Blessed, and Saint.

3. *To one whose martyrdom or heroic virtue has been proved*, the title *Venerable* is given; he may be accorded no public veneration. If the inquiry continues, this second stage is the process of *beatification*; *ending successfully, it grants the person the title Blessed*, with a limited public veneration.

The cause for beatification is not opened unless the holiness of the person is outstanding and ascertained by competent authority, or unless the miracles worked are of an extraordinary character. Proof is required of at least *two miracles* worked at his intercession: these are unquestioned signs of God's approval.

4. If formal investigation proceeds into the third stage, that is the process of *canonization*. If satisfactory, it ends with a papal declaration *giving the title Saint*, with public veneration in the universal Church.

For canonization proof is required of at least two additional *miracles*, subsequently worked by the beatified one. Canonization does not *make* a saint; it surely is not a permission for entrance into heaven. It is merely an official declaration by the Church that a person is already in heaven, worthy of public veneration and imitation. It is a formal proclamation of the state of a deceased person.

WHY DO WE HONOR the saints in heaven?

We honor the saints in heaven *because they practiced great virtue when they were on earth*, and because in honoring those who are the chosen friends of God, we honor God Himself.

If we are eager to show honor to earthly royalty, how much more should we honor the saints of God, princes of heaven! If we ask for prayers of our fellowmen on earth, how much more eager should we be to ask the saints, our friends in heaven!

We can HONOR THE SAINTS:

1. *By imitating their holy lives*. The highest honor we can pay them is to *imitate their virtues*.

The saints are models presented by the Church before our eyes so that *we may know how to live according to the desires of God*.

2. *By praying to them*. We honor them by praising them in word and song, and asking for their intercession.

We may pray *in private* to anyone who we believe is either in heaven or purgatory. But we are forbidden to give public veneration to anyone who is not beatified or canonized.

3. *By showing respect to their relics and images*, and by celebrating their feasts and taking them as our patrons and models.

When we pray to the saints, WHAT DO WE ASK THEM TO DO?

When we pray to the saints we ask them *to offer their prayers to God for us*.

1. This is what *we call the "intercession of the saints"*. If we are grateful for the *intercession* of a friend before an earthly superior, how much more so should we be for the intercession of saints before God!

How many times have the saints obtained favors from God for men? And God likes this intercession: as He said, He would not destroy Sodom for the sake of ten just men (Gen. 18:32).

2. Experience has proved *that much is gained by invoking certain saints* in times of special need. It appears that God has given to individual saints powers to help us in special needs.

Thus we invoke St. Joseph as the patron of a happy death; St. Anthony when we have lost anything; St. Blaise for diseases of the throat, etc. Many wonderful *answers to prayer* lead to the belief that the saints take particular interest in persons whose circumstances are the same as theirs were on earth.

HOW DO WE KNOW that the saints will pray for us?

We know that the saints will pray for us, *because they are with God and have great love for us*.

1. *The saints in heaven are, with us, members of the Church, of one body belonging to Christ*. "So we, the many, are one body in Christ, but severally members one of another" (Rom. 12:5).

2. *The Church* omits no opportunity to *urge us to the veneration of saints*. At Baptism we receive the name of a saint. Each day of the year one or more saints are commemorated. Images and pictures of the saints are placed in the churches. Saints are invoked in the Mass, the litanies, and other public prayers.

The Church worships God, and honors the saints as friends and servants of God. So churches and altars are dedicated and consecrated to God alone although named after saints and placed under their protection. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered to God alone, although it may be celebrated in memory of the saints. In praying, we say *to God, "Have mercy on us," but to the saints, "Pray for us,"* just as we would say it to a dear friend.



The true cross was found by St. Helena, mother of the emperor Constantine the Great in the year 326. Her workmen, digging on Mount Calvary in search of the true cross of Christ, found three crosses. Two of the crosses were applied without result to

a very sick woman. As soon as the third cross touched her, she was instantly cured. The odoration of the Cross on Good Friday is part of the Holy Week devotions. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross is kept on September 14.

95. Relics and Images

WHY DO WE HONOR RELICS?

We honor relics because **they are the bodies of the saints, or objects connected with the saints or with Our Lord.**

In a similar manner we preserve with reverence certain objects connected with our great men,—a sword, a coat, or books.

1. Remains of the **bodies of saints**, the Cross on which Our Lord died, the nails that crucified Him, are all **relics**. The clothes and furniture used by the saints are also held as relics.

Only those relics are **authentic** to which the name of the saint and the episcopal seal are attached; relics cannot be sold. God has often shown His approval of the use of relics by working miracles by means of them. "When it had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life" (4 Kings 13:21).

2. Relics **deserve** to be venerated. The bodies of the saints were temples of the Holy Spirit, and instruments by which God worked.

God shows His approval of the veneration of relics by working frequent miracles at their application. "**God worked more than the usual miracles by the hand of Paul**; so that even handkerchiefs and aprons were carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out" (Acts 19:12).

However, **no Catholic is requested to believe in miracles** like the one of the blood of St. Januarius, kept in a vial at Naples, that liquefies several times a year for certain periods. In a like manner, **he is not obliged to believe in private revelations** as those of Lourdes and Fatima.

3. We honor relics when we **preserve** them **with reverence**, **visit** the places where they are deposited, **pray** before them, etc.

Honor has been paid to relics from the earliest days of Christianity. When St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, was thrown to the lions, two of his companions came by night and gathered up his bones. When St. Polycarp was burned alive, the Christians collected his ashes for veneration.

4. Most *prized* of all relics are **relics of Christ's Passion**, particularly of the cross on which He died.

Some scoff at the relics of the cross, saying that there are too many to be genuine. But if all known pieces were put together, they would make a block only about 1/6 of a cubic foot. Today the twelve most famous portions of the true Cross range from 6.33 cubic inches to 33 cubic inches. The largest are to be found in Jerusalem, Brussels, Ghent, and Rome. Particles venerated are very small.

IS IT RIGHT TO SHOW RESPECT TO THE STATUES AND PICTURES OF CHRIST AND OF THE SAINTS?

It is right to show respect to the statues and pictures of Christ and of the saints, just as it is right to show respect to the images of those whom we love on earth.

We cherish photographs of our family and friends. We cherish and honor our National Flag, not because of the cloth out of which it is made, but because of what it represents. In a similar manner we respect sacred statues and pictures.

1. **The honor** we pay sacred images and pictures is *not idolatry*, because **we do not adore them**.

God Himself, after giving the First Commandment, ordered the making of statues to be placed in the Temple; and God cannot contradict Himself. Sacred images do not promote *false worship*.

2. **Some of the benefits we derive from the veneration of sacred images are:**

(a) Through them effective, and sometimes supernatural, **graces are obtained**. There have been instances of miraculous pictures and statues, as well as crucifixes.

(b) They **help us avoid distractions** while praying, by fixing our attention.

(c) They serve as a **silent admonition** to encourage us to imitation.

(d) They are wonderful **means for instructing the faithful in religion**. The greatest artists in the world have been Catholic artists. Their greatest masterpieces treat of religious subjects. Even the most unlettered can understand a picture.

Do we honor Christ and the saints when we pray before the crucifix, relics, and sacred images?

We honor Christ and the saints when we pray before the crucifix, relics, and sacred images, because **we honor the persons they represent**; we adore Christ and venerate the saints.

Our actions should always conform to the faith implied by the pictures we display. We have those holy images for holy purposes, to venerate the saints for God's sake, and to imitate their holy lives.

1. We show *veneration* for sacred pictures and statues **by placing them in our homes, in churches, and in schools**. Jesus made a special promise to bless the house in which an image of **His Sacred Heart** is exposed.

We pray before them, adorn them with flowers, burn lights before them, and kiss them with reverence. We make visits and pilgrimages to the tombs or shrines of the saints. Similarly, on civil holidays, we show honor to our heroes by placing wreaths on their graves; we visit their homes, etc.

2. **Above all other sacred representations**, we venerate **the crucifix most**. **It is the sign of our redemption**. On the cross Our Lord died to save us from the consequences of sin.

Such is the honor the Church pays the crucifix that she allows no sacrament to be administered, no Mass to be celebrated, no act of worship to be performed, unless in the presence of a crucifix. We place the crucifix in the hands of the dying. It accompanies us to the grave. Every Christian home should have a crucifix prominently displayed.

DO WE PRAY to the crucifix or to the images and relics of the saints?

We do not pray to the crucifix or to the images and relics of the saints, **but to the persons they represent**.

1. The veneration we pay to sacred images and relics is *not paid to the relic, picture, or statue itself, but to the one represented*, God, or one of the saints or angels.

In the same way when we kiss our mother's picture we do not give our affection to the paper, but to our mother. Disrespect to an image is disrespect to the one represented.

2. In venerating relics, sacred statues, and pictures, **we do not believe that any divine power resides in them**. They cannot, of themselves, work miracles.

The numerous miracles worked through the use of relics were a result, not of the relics' power, but of God's, acting through them. **The Gospels tell the moving story of the woman cured by touching the hem of Our Lord's garment**. Yet even that sacred garment did not by itself work the miracle; **Christ used His power, working through the garment**. And so today relics continue to play a part in the working of miracles, in the suspension of the natural law, but always as mere instruments of Almighty God.



If we love God, no sacrifice is too great to offer Him for His pleasure. Millions of mortyrs have been glad to give their lives for their faith. During the great persecutions under the pogan Roman emperors, thousands were taken to the oreno to be torn

by wild beasts. Thousands of others were covered with pitch and lighted as torches. All kinds of human tortures were invented to make the Christians deny their faith. But their pure love of God caused them to be firm ond to meet death gladly.

96. Sins Against Faith

HOW DOES A CATHOLIC SIN against faith?

A Catholic sins against faith *by infidelity, apostasy, heresy, indifferentism, and by taking part in non-Catholic worship.*

We may lose our faith by: (a) *not learning well* the doctrines of the Church; (b) *witfully doubting* truths that have been revealed to the Church; (c) *reading books and other literature* against our religion; (d) *attending assemblies* of people who are opposed to our religion; and (e) *neglecting the practice of our religion.* (See pages 152-157.)

1. **INFIDELITY** is: (a) *the unbelief* of one to whom *the truths of faith* have been sufficiently proposed, but who nevertheless deliberately refuses to accept them; (b) *the ignorance of the Faith* by one who has had no chance to learn it, or who does not realize the importance of learning.

Persons who do not believe in Christianity as a divinely revealed religion, are commonly referred to as "*infidels.*" But as the word may sound offensive, in ordinary speech it is *better to call them simply "non-Christians."*

But, *is it not utterly reasonable to have faith in an almighty God, Who knows much more than we can ever hope to know, and Who can do things beyond our understanding? It is necessary that we serve God in the way He requires, not in the way it pleases us to do so.* For this reason we must practice the religion *revealed* by God, and avoid making up our own religions according to our whims and innumerable fancies.

2. **APOSTASY** is *complete rejection of the truths of the Christian faith* by one who has been baptized. A vicious and sinful life often leads to apostasy. No really good man has ever fallen away from the Christian faith.

An *apostate* denies or gives up his religion through fear or shame, or through worldly motives or human respect, and denies Christ Himself. *He is under sentence of eternal damnation,* for Christ says: "Whoever disowns me before men, I in turn will disown him before my Father in heaven" (Matt. 10:33). It may happen that a Catholic gives up his religion because he had a quarrel with the priest. He crucifies Christ because of a petty disagreement with a mortal. Such a man should ever remember that "he who loses his goods loses much; he who lose his life, loses more; *but he who loses his faith loses all.*"

3. **HERESY** is *the refusal* of baptized persons *to accept* one or more of *the truths revealed by God and taught by the Catholic Church*. If this refusal is voluntary and obstinate, there is *formal heresy*; if it is involuntary, there is *material heresy*.

A *heretic* claims to be Christian, but denies one or more truths revealed by God. Members of Protestant denominations are heretics. Much of their heresy, however, is negative, or material; that is, accompanied by no obstinacy of the will; for example, the heresy of a Protestant who has always believed his is the religion ordained by God.

4. **INDIFFERENTISM** is the error of those who hold that *one religion is as good as another* and that all religions are equally true and pleasing to God, or that *one is free to accept or reject any or all religions*. Many a Catholic does not want to trouble himself about studying his religion, and gradually loses his faith.

Why should Christ, and after Him the Apostles, and after them a long line of Catholics, have suffered so much and resisted persecution so firmly, if it were of no importance what a man believed? *It is absurd to suppose that God does not care whether men denounce His Son as an impostor and blasphemers, or worship Him as God.*

WHY DOES A CATHOLIC SIN against faith by taking part in non-Catholic worship?

A Catholic sins against faith by taking part in non-Catholic worship, *because he thus professes belief in a religion he knows is not the true one.*

1. It is wrong to be present at non-Catholic services even when we do not participate in them, because such services are intended to honor God in a manner He does not wish to be honored in. *If God instituted a Church of His own, He must wish to be honored in the ways of that Church.*

When necessary, for social obligations, a Catholic may be present at a non-Catholic wedding or funeral, but he must not participate in the services.

2. *It is a sin to belong to any society which is opposed to the Church.* *Freemasonry,* or Masonry is condemned by the Church. Many charitable persons, who have joined Masonry merely for social or business

reasons, do not understand the stand of the Church. Most of them serve only the Third Degree, and hold no spirit of antagonism against the Church; but these good persons do not realize the basic purposes of their organization.

In actual fact, *Freemasonry is a religious sect bent upon the destruction of the Catholic Church.* It has its own doctrines, priesthood, and ritual; it has its own characteristic morality. For instance, it imposes an oath that requires blind obedience; it does not accept Divine Revelation. "By their fruits ye shall know them," and the fruits of Freemasonry are evident throughout European history. May we say that no one need be ashamed of the fruits of the Catholic Church in all places and all times?

How can a Catholic BEST SAFEGUARD HIS FAITH?

A Catholic can best safeguard his faith *by making frequent acts of faith, by praying* for a strong faith, *by studying* his religion very earnestly, by living a good life, by good reading, by refusing to associate with the enemies of the Church, and by not reading books and papers opposed to the Church and her teaching.

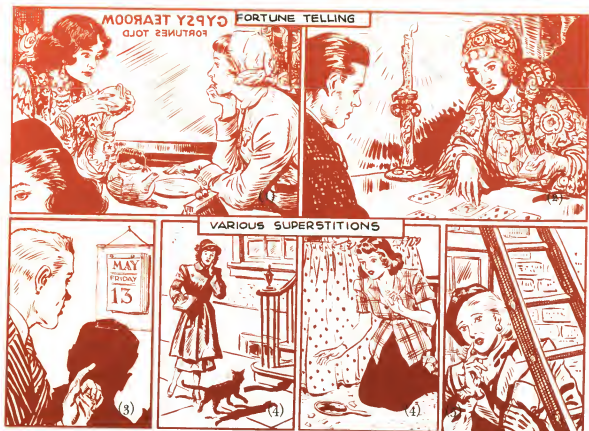
1. *Acts of faith are prayers said to tell God we believe in Him.* Pleading to God also are prayers of faith, such as the Apostles made to the Lord: "*Increase our faith*" (Luke 17:5). The more we believe, the firmer our faith becomes, by God's grace.

We should *study* our religion well, especially the Christian doctrine. If we have any doubts about it, we should consult a good spiritual adviser or confessor. Many have lost their religion by misunderstanding its doctrines.

2. A strong bulwark to faith is a *good life.* *Never does a just man, living according to the teachings of the Church, lose his faith.* To increase in faith, let us go to Confession and receive Holy Communion often, that our spirits may be nourished by divine food. Those who lead bad lives may easily lose their faith.

3. *We must take care that the books and magazines we read* are neither wicked nor against the doctrines of the Church. The eyes are the windows of the soul; through them it may be attracted to good or evil.

We must also refrain from being intimate with *enemies* of the Church, who speak against it and assail it on all occasions. Let us avoid pitfalls, that we may not fall into them.



Above are illustrated some of the most common forms of superstition. Sick people or their relatives sometimes resort to witchcraft in a vain hope of cure (1). Many otherwise sensible people resort to

fortune-tellers to find out about the future (2). Others believe in signs and omens, (3-5). Superstition, aside from being against the virtue of religion, fetters the mind.

97. Religion and Superstition

HOW DO WE WORSHIP GOD by the virtue of religion?

We worship God by the virtue of religion *by adoring Him alone as the one and Supreme Being*, the chief expression of adoration being prayer.

1. *We adore God by acknowledging His infinite excellence, our complete dependence upon Him, our absolute subjection to His will; we pray to God* by lifting up our minds and hearts to Him.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, veneration of saints, relics, and images, are not opposed to this virtue. *We do not worship the saints; we only honor them* as the special friends and servants of God. We adore God alone. *Neither do we worship images and sacred pictures or relics.* We only pay them honor as belonging to or representing God or the saints. In a similar manner we commonly cherish the photographs of our dear friends.

2. *The principal sins* against the virtue of religion are: *superstition, sacrilege, idolatry, and simony.*

We fail in our duty of worship when we spend all our lives for the world and material interests.

When does a person SIN BY SUPERSTITION?

A person sins by superstition *when he attributes to a creature a power that belongs to God alone.*

1. *Examples of superstitious practices are:* the use of charms or spells, belief in dreams or fortune-telling. As today practiced, all these superstitions are merely *nonsense*: they may be taken only as some social fun, like "bingo." *Among Christians, only simpletons actually believe* in these practices, in mascots, omens, astrology.

As today practiced, manifestations of superstitious beliefs are fraudulent. Those "magicians" merely perform sleight-of-hand tricks; the "witches," "fortune-tellers," and "spiritists" only use their sharp faculties of observation and their retentive memory.

And yet, there are still unintelligent persons who believe in lucky and unlucky days and numbers; they believe finding a horseshoe is good luck, breaking a mirror means seven years' bad luck, and so on. On the contrary, *all is nonsense*.

2. A *charm* is anything used with the belief that it has magic power to protect. *Spells* are words by the saying of which the superstitious believe evil can be averted, or good fortune obtained.

We often deceive ourselves by trying to interpret dreams. Sometimes they are nothing but the expression of our wishes, uncontrolled by reason or conscience. The "dreams" in the Holy Scripture and the lives of the saints are, more properly speaking, revelation or inspiration rather than dreams; *God uses particular means for exceptional cases.*

3. *Spiritism* consists in attempts to communicate with the spirits of the dead, or with other spirits, usually by the use of mediums and seances. *Magic* refers to manifestations of wonders, through the intervention of evil spirits, whether real or pretended, going as far as invocation of devils.

There is no positive proof that a spiritist or magician has been able to communicate with the spirits of the dead. Houdini, who was the greatest of all magicians, laid a public wager that he could reproduce any spiritistic manifestation by using purely natural means.

4. If there were such a thing as *fortune-telling*, why do not those fortune-tellers improve their own fortunes by foretelling the rise of the stock market and buying up all the stock? Then they would not need to labor at the telling of fortunes at only so much per fortune predicted.

When does a person SIN BY SACRILEGE?

A person sins by sacrilege *when he mistreats sacred persons, places or things.*

Sacrilege is a kind of blasphemy consisting of the *violation or profanation of a person, place or thing consecrated to God.* For example, it is sacrilege incurring excommunication to lay violent hands upon a priest, a nun, or any other person consecrated to God. It is sacrilege to commit acts of impurity or of violence, like killing or fighting, in a church or consecrated graveyard, to receive the sacraments unworthily,

to steal sacred vessels or other Church property, to do damage in a church, to despise relics and holy pictures or mutilate images.

Baltassar, King of Babylon, was guilty of sacrilege when he used the sacred vessels of the Temple of Jerusalem as drinking cups at a feast. His punishment, as announced by the handwriting on the wall, is well-known. In order to avoid possible disrespect to sacred images and holy pictures that are already too old to use, we should burn them.

When does a person SIN BY IDOLATRY?

A person sins by idolatry *when he pays to a creature the supreme worship due to God alone* as Creator and Preserver of all things.

In the early days of Christianity, many Christians were put to death for refusing to burn incense before idols. God punished the Israelites for their idolatry from time to time.

One who knows the Catholic Church to be the True Church, yet refuses to join and obey it, is guilty of *resisting the known Christian truth*, a form of idolatry, since by it one stubbornly denies due worship to God.

The Scribes and Pharisees knew well all the prophecies concerning the Messias. Jesus Christ proved Himself the promised Messias by wonderful miracles, after announcing Himself as the Son of God. But their pride was a barrier to their humble acknowledgement of Jesus; they calumniated and persecuted Him to the limit. They were guilty of resisting the known Christian truth. "They stubbornly turned their backs and stopped their ears so as not to hear" (Zach. 7:11).

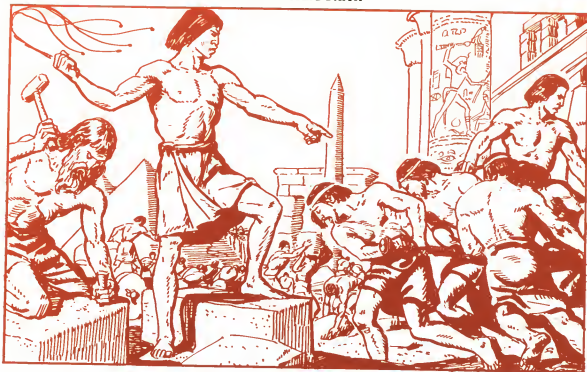
When does a person SIN BY SIMONY?

A person sins by simony *when he buys or sells sacred or spiritual things or positions.*

The term "simony" comes from Simon Magus, who offered the Apostles money to give him the power of giving the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:19-20). *It is simony to sell a rosary for more than its ordinary price on account of a blessing it has. Thus sold, indulgenced objects lose their indulgences.*

Giving a priest money to offer Mass "for our intentions" is not simony, because we do not and cannot buy a Mass. The money is only an offering towards the materials for the Mass, and to help support the priest.

As St. Paul said, "They who serve the altar have their share with the altar. So also the Lord directed that those who preach the Gospel should have their living from the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). It would not be for the dignity of the priesthood nor for the benefit of religious work if priests needed to labor at secular occupations to support themselves.



"Then a new king...came to power in Egypt. He said..."Look how numerous and powerful the Israelite people are growing, more so than we ourselves! Come, let us...stop their increase...Accordingly, taskmasters were set over the Israelites to oppress them with forced labor. Thus they had to build for Pharaoh the supply cities...Yet the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and

spread. The Egyptians, then, dreaded the Israelites and reduced them to cruel slavery...But the Lord said:

"I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers, so I know well what they are suffering" (Ex. 1:8-14; 3:7). God still hears the cry of the oppressed poor.

98. Sins Against Hope and Charity

What are the SINS AGAINST HOPE?

The sins against hope are *presumption* and *despair*.

When does a person SIN BY PRESUMPTION?

A person sins by presumption *when he trusts that he can be saved by his own efforts without God's help, or by God's help without his own efforts.*

1. *One who relies on his own powers, on his friends, or on earthly things more than on God commits presumption.* He thus puts his hope on "strange gods" in competition with Almighty God. Such hope is purely human, not supernatural, heavenly, or Christian.

Such hope is built on sand, as how many have found out to their distress! Peter thought he was

strong, and denied his Lord. It is this human kind of hope, this presumption, that causes one to expose oneself to occasions of sin, in the belief that one has the strength to resist. "Rely not on your strength in following the desires of your heart. Say not: 'Who can prevail against me?'" (Sirach 5:2-3). "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes" (Ps. 117:8).

2. *It is presumption to commit sin boldly,* pleading that God easily pardons sinners. Our confidence in God's mercy must always go hand in hand with our knowledge of His justice. In this way, even while we trust in our merciful Father, we have a salutary fear of His judgments. *God wishes us to work out our salvation in fear and trembling.*

Nobody can be absolutely sure that he is safe from hell, that he will persevere in justice till death. *What happened to Solomon with all his wisdom, and the blessings God rained on him! "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall"* (1 Cor. 10:12).

3. *We must not tempt God by exposing ourselves to sin and its occasions* in the hope that God will protect and save us; this is *presuming on God's mercy*. We can be sure of God's help only if we try our best to do His will. "**He who loves danger will perish in it**" (Sirach 3:25). The greatest saints took as their watchword regarding sins, "**Safety in flight**,"—flight from all occasions that might tempt them to sin. However, those who by their profession or necessity are compelled to expose themselves to even proximate occasions of sin must humbly put their trust in God; He will surely protect them.

It is presumption to expect to be saved by faith alone without attempting to accomplish good works; to hope to obtain forgiveness of our sins without penance; or while hoping in God's mercy, to remain in the state of sin, and put off conversion. Our Lord said clearly, "**Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given you besides**" (Matt. 6:33).

When does a person SIN BY DESPAIR?

A person sins by despair *when he deliberately refuses to trust* that God will give him the necessary help to save his soul.

1. **DESPAIR** is an abandonment of all hope for obtaining eternal salvation and the means of attaining it. Despair is wicked, because it is a denial of the goodness of God, and His willingness to forgive.

Cain was guilty of this sin when he cried out after murdering his brother Abel, "My punishment is too great to bear" (Gen. 4:13). **He is guilty of despair who believes he cannot resist certain temptations**, overcome certain sins, or amend his life. Despair results in temporal as well as spiritual evil, because **often those in despair commit suicide**, as Judas did.

2. *When tempted to despair*, let us remember that God is *infinitely merciful*, that He is nearest when our need for Him is greatest, and that **there is no sin that He will not forgive** if we go to Him with a repentant heart.

To avoid sin we may ponder on God's justice and the fear of God; but once we have fallen into sin, let us meditate on His infinite mercy. **Let us remember that God is the Good Shepherd Who goes out to seek His sheep that have fallen among the thorns of life**. St. John Chrysostom says, "As a spark is to the ocean, so is the wickedness of man compared to the mercy of God." "But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just; and he is a propitiation for our sins, not for ours only but also for those of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

What are the chief SINS AGAINST CHARITY?

The chief sins against charity are **hatred of God and of our neighbor, sloth, envy, and scandal**.

Without charity, faith and hope will profit us nothing, for God will not open the gates of His Kingdom except to those that love Him. "If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have charity, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal" (1 Cor. 13:1).

1. Every *grave sin* is a violation of charity, **because it destroys the love of God**. "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). **HATRED of God, or of one's neighbor**, is a special offense against charity; by it one desires evil or harm to befall, or rejoices at the misfortune of others.

To desire death from a yearning for heaven in order to be reunited with God is *not wrong*. The Apostle Paul himself sighed, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). "I am . . . desiring to depart and to be with Christ" (Philipp. 1:23). **But to desire death out of impatience** or despair, or to wish death or misfortune to another out of selfishness or hatred, is sinful.

2. **SLOTH** is a sin against charity, because it paralyzes the faculties of the soul. **One who is ruled by sloth is too lazy to love God or his neighbor**, because such love or zeal takes trouble.

Sloth begets tepidity and indifference. Someone has said with truth that **a great sinner may become a great saint**, but a slothful person, never.

3. One is guilty of **ENVY** if one is bitter about another's good fortune.

Envy is the sin of the devil, the sin above all that implies malice, the sin that leads to calumny, gossip, hatred, and other sins. The best means of overcoming envy is to do every good possible to our neighbor, especially to the one that we are tempted to envy. **There is no reason for envy; it will not make us any richer, more popular, more satisfied**. Satan envied Adam and Eve, so happy in Paradise. The Pharisees envied Jesus Christ the wonderful miracles He worked, and His consequent great following.

4. **SCANDAL** is given *when we injure our neighbor's soul by causing* or tempting him to sin. As charity helps him towards heaven, so scandal pushes him towards hell.

Our Lord said that at the end of the world the angels "will gather out of his kingdom all scandals . . . and cast them into the furnace of fire, where there will be the weeping, and the gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41-42). (See pages 228-229.)



By the most holy Name of Jesus the Apostles worked innumerable miracles. Among the first examples was that of the lame man that sat and begged at the gate of the Temple. Upon seeing Peter and John about to enter the Temple, he asked for an alms.

Peter said, "Silver and gold I have none; but what I have that I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk" (Acts 3:6). And the man lame from birth leaped up and walked into the Temple, praising God.

99. The Second Commandment

"You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain" (Ex. 20:7).

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED by the second commandment?

By the second commandment we are commanded always *to speak with reverence of God, of the saints, and of holy things, and to be truthful in taking oaths, and faithful to them and to our vows.*

"Blessed be the name of the LORD both now and forever. From the rising to the setting of the sun is the name of the LORD to be praised" (Ps. 112:2-3). "I say to you not to swear at all . . . But let your speech be, 'Yes, yes'; 'No, no'" (Matt. 5:34-37). "The tongue no man can tame . . . Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing" (Jas. 3:8,10).

1. *We should never speak God's name without holy respect.* We should frequently call upon the name of God with true and heartfelt devotion, especially at the commencement and end of all our important actions, and in time of trouble.

"Then call upon me in time of distress; I will rescue you, and you shall glorify me" (Ps. 49:15).

We should often praise God for His perfections and infinite goodness, and particularly when we receive favors from Him. *It is strange how often good gifts come to us from Almighty God, and we simply take without a word of thanks.* Let us say that old saying of truly Christian hearts, *Deo gratias! Thanks be to God!* "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (Ps. 102:2).

2. *The name of Jesus is the most powerful of all names:* through it we can obtain all that we need. "If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you" (John 16:23). *We should pay reverence to the name of Jesus by bowing every time we speak it.* We should especially pronounce the name of Jesus at the hour of death.

"At the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). St. Stephen's last words were: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). By the name of Jesus the apostles and saints worked innumerable miracles, as St. Peter did when he said to the lame man, "In the name of Jesus Christ, arise and walk" (Acts 3:6). Holy Scripture truly says, "There is no other name under heaven given to men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

What is meant BY TAKING GOD'S NAME IN VAIN?

By taking God's name in vain is meant that *the name of God or the holy name of Jesus Christ is used without reverence*: for example, to express surprise or anger.

"So one who swears continually by the Holy Name will not remain free from sin" (Sirach 23:10).

1. *Profanity is the use of irreverent language.* We should not use sacred names in impatience, jest, mere surprise, or habit, with *no idea of paying God honor.*

Many have the habit of exclaiming at every trifling circumstance: "Good Lord!" "My God!" "Jesus, Mary, Joseph!" It is a thoughtless habit that should be corrected. *It is wrong likewise to quote Holy Scripture in a light or irreverent manner.*

2. We should distinguish between profanity and *vulgarity*. *Profanity is a sin of irreverence*; vulgarity is not necessarily sinful.

Vulgarity is the use of coarse expressions like "devil," "hell," etc., through thoughtlessness or habit. It is a *breach of good manners*, and if indulged in will lead to profanity. If used with malice, vulgarity is certainly a sin.

3. Let us use *God's holy Name* only in prayer and adoration. *Irreverence to that Name is sacrilege*, since by the sin we profane a holy thing. "For the LORD will not leave unpunished him who takes his name in vain" (Ex. 20:7).

Among the ancient Jews the word for God was so sacred that even the high priest could speak it only once a year, at the feast of the Atonement, when he entered the most sacred part of the Temple.

4. *It is a sin to take God's name in vain*; ordinarily it is a venial sin.

The Holy Name Society aims to promote love and reverence for the Holy Name of God and Jesus Christ; to suppress and make reparations for blasphemy, perjury, forbidden oaths, profanity, and any improper language. Every man should be a member of this Society, which is only for men. At present the membership (1961) is over 5,000,000; most Catholic policemen of New York City are faithful members.

What is CURSING?

Cursing is *the calling down of some evil on a person, place, or thing.*

1. To *call down* some punishment on ourselves or other creatures of God in a moment of anger, is cursing. If the name of God is used, *the sin is worse.*

When angry, parents sometimes curse their children, and workmen their animals and tools. Often the one who curses does not mean what he says. If he does, *it is indeed a most grievous sin to ask God to damn a person or send him to hell.*

2. *A Christian should never curse.* "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse" (Rom. 12:14).

The habit of cursing is an indication of lack of refinement and of self-control. Gentlemen do not curse. Generally we know the origin of a person by the words that come forth from his mouth; one who curses advertises his origin as the gutter.

What is BLASPHEMY?

Blasphemy is *insulting language which expresses contempt for God*, either directly or through His saints and holy things.

1. Contemptuous or *abusive language against God, scoffing at the true religion*, or *ridiculing* sacred ceremonies,—all these are *blasphemous*. Sacrilege is a form of blasphemy; irreverent actions and thoughts against God, the saints and angels, or holy persons and things, are also blasphemous.

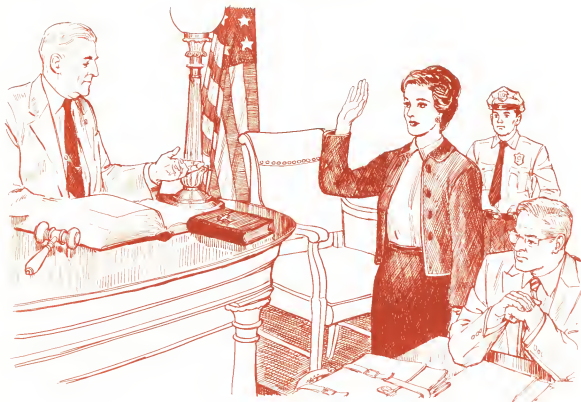
In the Old Law the blasphemer was condemned to death. "Anyone who curses his God shall bear the penalty of his sin; *whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD shall be put to death*" (Lev. 24:16). It is blasphemy to speak scornfully of God or of His actions; or to attribute to a creature a prerogative of God. Thus the people blasphemed when they said, after King Herod had spoken to them: "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man" (Acts 12:22).

2. *Blasphemy is a sin of the devil.* By *insulting language against God*, one offends the Almighty directly, not only His image. *Blasphemy is essentially malicious*, not as other sins that arise from human weakness or ignorance.

"Whom hast thou blasphemed, against whom hast thou exalted thy voice? Against the holy One of Israel" (4 Kings 19:22). The soldiers blasphemed Christ; so did the impenitent thief.

3. *Deliberate blasphemy is one of the gravest sins.* God punishes it even on earth with severe chastisements, and in hell after death. "*God is not mocked*" (Gal. 6:7).

King Baltassar used the sacred vessels for his feasting. A strange hand wrote his fate on the wall; that same night the enemy entered his city, killed him, and made his kingdom part of the empire of the Medes and Persians. *King Sennacherib blasphemed God, and died by the hand of his own sons.* But the worst punishment will be after death; one cannot blaspheme God and escape unpunished. "They shall be cursed those who despise you" (Job. 13:16).



In a court trial a witness, before taking the stand, must swear "to tell the truth, the whole truth and

nothing but the truth—So help me God". To lie under oath is to commit perjury.

100. Oaths and Vows

What is AN OATH?

An oath is *the calling on God to witness to the truth of what we say.*

1. Taking an oath is called *swearing*. In swearing, we call either upon God or upon something sacred. *In solemn oaths, we place a hand on the Bible, or kiss it.* Sometimes we also kiss the crucifix.

If we swear by God, such words are used as: "*God is my witness,*" "*So help me God,*" "As the Lord liveth," etc. If we swear by holy things, we say: "By the holy Gospel," "by the cross of Christ," etc. *Such expressions as "Upon my word," "by my honor," are not oaths but merely emphasize assertions.*

2. An oath may be *simple or solemn*. A *simple oath* is one *between man and man* in ordinary intercourse. A *solemn oath* is one taken *before ecclesiastical or civil authority*, in the presence of an official.

An oath of public office is a solemn oath. The formula used ends with: "*So help me God.*" Our Lord swore solemnly when Caiphas adjured Him by the Living God to tell the truth (Matt. 26:64).

3. *We must not take an oath of blind obedience to a secret society.*

4. A promise under oath *ceases to bind under certain conditions:*

- (a) *if it is relaxed by the person to whom the promise was given;*
- (b) *if the object of the promise is substantially changed;*
- (c) *if the object becomes sinful or useless;*
- (d) *if the reason for the oath ceases to exist;*
- (e) *if a condition, under which the oath was given ceases; and*
- (f) *if the oath is annulled, dispensed, or commuted by lawful authority.*

WHAT THINGS ARE NECESSARY to make an oath lawful?

To make an oath lawful, three things are necessary:

1. *We must have a good reason for taking an oath.* An oath properly taken is permitted by God and pleasing in His sight. No one should be compelled to take an oath, however. It is not necessary to swear at every provocation, such as when friends do not believe us, or to emphasize statements.

Trivial matters should not be the subject of oaths. A number of people have the bad habit of raising the hand in a gesture of swearing every time someone doubts their slightest assertions.

2. *We must be convinced that what we say under oath is true.* It is wrong to take oaths about what we do not know, just because a friend asks us to swear to it.

If we take an oath, promising to do something, and in our mind we have plans of breaking our word, then we are swearing falsely. *If we take an oath before a court of justice, saying we saw such and such a person in a certain place at a certain hour, and we know we really did not see him, then we are swearing falsely.* We must think well before taking an oath; rash oaths are sinful.

3. *We must not swear, that is, take an oath, to do what is wrong.* We should never keep an oath to do evil. *If one* is so unfortunate as to have *made such an evil oath, he should promptly determine not to keep it, or he will commit greater sins.*

Herod swore to grant Salome, the daughter of his unlawful wife, anything she asked. When she demanded the head of St. John the Baptist, he gave it to her. *Thus he committed a worse crime by keeping his wicked and rash oath.*

What great sin does a person commit who deliberately calls on God to bear witness to a lie?

A person who deliberately calls on God to bear witness to a lie *commits the very grievous sin of perjury.*

1. *Perjury* is false swearing. *One commits perjury when he confirms by oath what he knows is not true, or what he is doubtful about, or when he swears to a promise which he does not intend to keep.*

Perjury is a grave sin, because it *insults God* by calling Him to witness a lie. Perjury before a civil court of law is punishable by imprisonment.

2. *Regarding the non-fulfillment of an oath, the sin may be venial or grave, according to importance of the matter concerned.*

The witnesses who swore falsely at the trial of Christ committed a grave sin of perjury. If circumstances arise that prevent our keeping a valid oath, we should consult our confessor, to know what to do.

What is A VOW?

A vow is *a deliberate promise made to God*, by which a person binds himself under pain of sin *to do something* that is especially *pleasing to God.*

1. A vow is made to *God alone*, not to anyone else. The subject of the vow must not be a mere trifle, *but something good in itself, and better than its opposite.* A vow is the most solemn promise we can ever make, an act of divine worship.

A vow made under compulsion is invalid. A vow to do something that will offend God must not be accomplished. In general we should *consult our confessor* before making a vow. "You had better not make a vow than make it and not fulfill it" (Eccl. 5:4).

Sometimes vows are accompanied by certain conditions. For example, in 1248, St. Louis of France vowed to lead a Crusade if he got over a severe illness. In our days, people vow to go on specified pilgrimages, to get cured of sickness.

2. *We must not confuse* vows and *oaths with mere promises or resolutions.* These last do not bind under pain of sin.

For instance, some make a promise not to go to shows or dances for a certain length of time. If they go, they do not commit a mortal sin, for simple promises and resolutions do not bind under pain of sin. However, we should not make promises or resolutions that we are not *earnest about keeping.*

3. *A vow is most pleasing to God, because it is a voluntary offering made to Him.* The most important vows are the *religious vows*, taken by those joining a religious order: *vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.*

By the religious vows *a person gives up* the world entirely, consecrating *not only what he does, but what he is* to the exclusive service of God.

4. *Non-fulfillment, or needless postponement, of a vow is a venial or mortal sin, according to the importance of the matter.*

The guilt is doubled, if at the same time one transgress a commandment, as when violating a vow of chastity. If we are not able to fulfill a vow, we must consult our confessor about having it annulled or changed into some other good work. The vows of children may be cancelled by their parents. Bishops and other superiors have authority to release or absolve from some vows.



Movable Feasts

- + ALL SUNDAYS OF THE YEAR
- HOLY NAME OF JESUS - Sunday after January 1st
- THE HOLY FAMILY - Sunday after Epiphany
- SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY - 9th Sunday before Easter
- ASH WEDNESDAY - 40th day before Easter
- 1st SUNDAY OF LENT - 6th Sunday before Easter
- 2nd SUNDAY OF LENT - 5th Sunday before Easter
- 3rd SUNDAY OF LENT - 4th Sunday before Easter
- 4th SUNDAY OF LENT - 3rd Sunday before Easter
- PASSION SUNDAY - 15th day before Easter
- COMM. OUR LADY OF SORROWS - Friday b. Palm Sunday
- PALM SUNDAY - Sunday before Easter
- GOOD FRIDAY - Friday in Holy Week
- EASTER SUNDAY - Sunday after full moon of March
- + ASCENSION THURSDAY - 40th day after Easter
- PENTECOST SUNDAY - 7th Sunday after Easter
- MOST HOLY TRINITY - Sunday after Pentecost
- CORPUS CHRISTI - Thursday after Trinity Sunday
- M.S. HEART OF JESUS - 2nd Friday after Corp. Christi
- MISSION SUNDAY - Sunday before Christ the King
- CHRIST THE KING - Last Sunday of October
- 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 4th Sunday before Christmas
- 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 3rd Sunday before Christmas
- 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT - 2nd Sunday before Christmas
- 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT - Sunday before Christmas

Chief Fixed Holydays

- + JAN. 1 OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS--CIRCUMCISION
- JAN. 6 THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD
- JAN. 13 COMM. OF THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD
- FEB. 2 PURIFICATION OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- MAR 19 ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE B. V. MARY
- MAR 25 ANNUNCIATION OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- MAY 1 ST. JOSEPH THE WORKMAN
- MAY 31 QUEENSHIP OF B. VIRGIN MARY
- JUNE 24 BIRTHDAY OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
- JUNE 29 SS. PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES
- JULY 1 MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD OF OUR LORD
- JULY 2 VISITATION OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- JULY 16 COMM. OF THE B. V. M. OF MT. CARMEL
- + AUG. 15 ASSUMPTION OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- AUG. 22 IMMACULATE HEART OF THE B. V. MARY
- SEPT 8 THE BIRTHDAY OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- SEPT 12 MOST HOLY NAME OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- SEPT 15 SEVEN SORROWS OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- SEPT 29 DEDICATION OF ST. MICHAEL ARCHANGEL
- OCT. 7 BLESSED VIRGIN MARY OF THE ROSARY
- OCT. 11 THE MOTHERHOOD OF THE B. VIRGIN MARY
- + NOV. 1 ALL SAINTS FEAST DAY
- + NOV. 2 COMM. OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED
- + DEC. 8 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE B. V. M.
- + DEC. 25 THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

In these tables the holydays of obligation which do not necessarily fall on a Sunday are marked by crosses. They are to be observed exactly as the Sunday by hearing Mass, abstaining from unnecessary servile work, and doing other pious exer-

cises. The other feasts which do not fall on a Sunday are not of obligation. They are, however, important feasts, and all who can should at least hear Mass on those days. If we can visit human friends on days important to them, why not God?

101. The Third Commandment

"Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day" (Ex. 20:8-9).

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED by the third commandment?

By the third commandment we are commanded to *worship God in a special manner on Sunday*, the Lord's day.

"Therefore, you must keep the Sabbath as something sacred. Whoever desecrates it shall be put to death. If anyone does work on that day, he must be rooted out of his people. Six days there are for doing work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of complete rest, sacred to the LORD. Anyone who does work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death" (Ex. 31:14-15).

1. *God commanded the observance of a definite day*, in order that man may devote one day a week to the special worship of his Creator. Natural law obliges man to adore and thank God for His continuous blessings.

If God gives us six days to work for ourselves, we ought to be glad to devote one day to Him exclusively. The day enables us to join in public worship and receive religious instruction. If we had to work always, seven days a week, year in and year out, our health would break under the strain.

2. In the Old Law, the celebration of a definite day, the sabbath, had been ordered only specially for the Jews, just as circumcision and bloody sacrifices had been. The Old Law was abrogated upon institution of the New (Acts 10:15; Col. 2:16).

In the Old Law the Jews kept holy the seventh day of the week, Saturday. The vital principle of the Third Commandment was not the specific day, but that one day out of seven should be devoted to the worship of God the Creator.

3. In the *New Law*, Catholics keep holy the first day of the week, Sunday. It is called "**The Lord's Day.**" St. Paul refers twice to its observance. (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2. **The Church commands us to keep Sunday as the Lord's day, because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead, and on Sunday the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles.**)

In the *New Law*, Christ delegated His authority to the Church, His Living Voice. **It remained then for the Church to indicate the ceremonial day to be kept holy.** In the same way the early Church caused circumcision and bloody sacrifices to make way for Baptism and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

HOW DOES THE CHURCH COMMAND us to worship God on Sunday?

The Church commands us to worship God on Sunday **by assisting at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.**

1. **The obligation of Mass is binding on all persons** who have attained the use of reason; that is, including children seven years old. Those who find it impossible, or very difficult, to hear Mass, are excused.

The sick, the very aged and infirm, and those engaged in works of necessity at the hour of Mass, are excused from attending it. Those who live too far to walk and have no conveyance are also excused. Very bad weather may be sufficient excuse.

2. **Not to hear Sunday Mass, or to miss a notable part of Sunday Mass, is a mortal sin.** To come a little late and not make up for it in another Mass, is a venial sin.

A person should be present for the entire Mass, from the beginning to the last Gospel. It is a venial sin to miss even a slight part of a Mass of obligation deliberately and a mortal sin to miss a notable part. The obligation to assist at Mass is not fulfilled if the Consecration or the Communion is missed. The obligation can be fulfilled by hearing parts of two or more Masses in succession, provided one is present for both the Consecration and the Communion of the same Mass.

3. **Those who on every slight pretext** excuse themselves from their obligation of hearing Sunday Mass **will gradually slip into religious carelessness and indifference.** We should be sturdy Christians, and not let anything but impossibility or serious illness interfere with our hearing Mass on Sunday.

Not to have a new or clean dress is not sufficient reason for staying away from Sunday Mass. Neither is an excursion that leaves early a reason. One should go to Mass before going on the excursion.

4. **Mass is not our only obligation on Sunday,** for God commands us to sanctify the *whole day*, and not *only* a part of it. We should perform other good works.

We may hear sermons or instruction, receive the sacraments, attend vespers or benediction, read the Bible or other spiritual books, say the rosary, attend a sodality or confraternity meeting, visit the Blessed Sacrament, the poor, the sick, and perform other works of mercy. It is not an obligation to spend the entire Sunday in such works, but **we should try to give as much time to them as we can, for the love of God.** If we do things not required for the love of our friends on earth, how much more eager we should be to do them for our best Friend of all, God!

WHY SHOULD WE PARTICIPATE in the holy sacrifice of the mass?

We should participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for by it we offer adoration to God, we obtain instruction in our Faith, and we secure our sanctification.

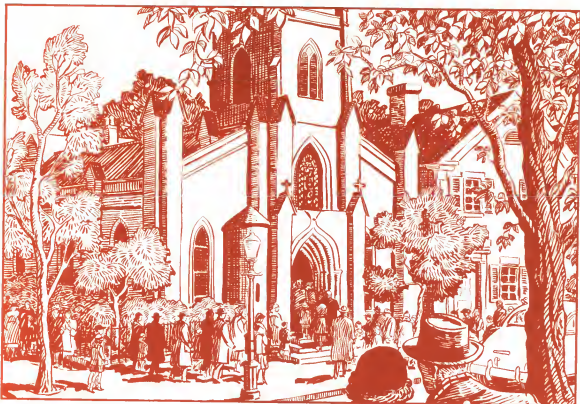
1. **At Holy Mass we are part of one corporate body,** one great social union, the Catholic Church, **the Mystical Body of Christ,** the Communion of Saints with members—on earth, in heaven, in purgatory—offering God a **perpetual oblation,** our homage in adoration and praise. (See pages 158-159.)

By Holy Mass we partake supernaturally of the divine life itself, giving the plenitude of glory to God. For who can give Him greater glory than His own Son, with Whom we are united in the Mystical Body, and Who offers Himself in sacrifice at Mass?

2. **Holy Mass,** as it is said in the course of the Liturgical Year, is a deep **source of knowledge.** It follows a definite program, unfolding a vivid drama, presenting to our minds and hearts the story of God's love for men.

In the course of the year Holy Mass is a dramatic summary of the principal truths of our Faith, unfolded with the beauty of ritual and ceremonial. With its functions it unfolds, not one mystery alone, as private devotions do, but the entire drama of man's redemption. It is a catechism by which the Church inculcates dogmas and precepts, investing them with the grandeur of rite and chant.

3. **By Holy Mass,** and particularly if we partake of the Holy Eucharist, **we secure graces,** effecting our **sanctification.** The graces come to us through Christ, Head of the Mystical Body.



The illustration shows a parish church on a Sunday morning. The people are hastening to church, to obey the precept of hearing Mass. It is a mortal sin to fail to sanctify Sundays and holydays through our own fault. To keep these days holy, we must

hear Mass, abstain from servile work, and devote the day to pious works. Wholesome recreation and innocent amusements which do not interfere with our religious obligations are allowed; too often, however, "fun" appears to be the main feature.

102. Unnecessary Servile Work

WHAT IS FORBIDDEN by the third commandment of God?

By the third commandment of God *all unnecessary servile work on Sunday is forbidden.*

What is **SERVILE WORK**?

Servile *work* is that which *requires labor of body* rather than of mind.

Work performed by laborers, such as farming, mechanical and industrial labor, is forbidden, even if done for pleasure and without gain.

1. *Work in which the mind has the greater share* or which is done for recreation *is not servile* and is not forbidden.

This includes reading, writing, typewriting, drawing, painting, playing music, travelling, hunting, fishing, and the like.

2. *Employers who force* their employees *to do unnecessary servile* work on Sunday are responsible for the violation of the Third Commandment.

The trial of lawsuits and public buying and selling are also forbidden. Catholics should make provision on Saturday for their food and other necessities of Sunday, so that no store may be forced to keep open.

3. *The obligation to avoid servile work* on Sunday *is grave*, and therefore its violation is a mortal sin if one works for a notable time.

Servile work on Sunday is not considered a grievous sin unless it is continued beyond *two hours*, or *becomes the cause of scandal* or bad example.

It often happens that those who continue to work on Sundays lose their health and thereby sink into poverty. In Holy Scripture we find the Jews losing their Holy City and being taken into captivity, *because*, among other sins, *they violated the sabbath* (Read *Ezekiel 20:13-16; 22:8-26; and 23:36-38*).

WHEN IS SERVILE WORK ALLOWED on Sunday?

Servile work is allowed on Sunday *when the honor of God, our own need, or that of our neighbor* requires it.

1. *Preparing a place for Holy Mass* is a work for the *honor of God*, and may be done even on a Sunday.

In a parish where the women are all occupied during the week, and can meet for their altar society meetings only on Sunday, they would be allowed to sew or repair vestments for the church.

2. *Work of daily necessity* such as cooking, cleaning, and sweeping, and buying and selling of necessary food may be performed even on Sunday. Even *servile work* when *necessary for the common good*, or to prevent serious financial loss, is permitted on Sunday.

Farmers are allowed to care for their cattle and domestic animals, and even to get in crops that otherwise might spoil. *Our Lord does not desire man to suffer on account of Sunday*, for He says: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

3. *Those in charge of persons who are necessarily on duty on Sunday*, such as workmen engaged in the service of public utilities such as railroad, fire department, light, power, and heat plants, policemen, firemen and soldiers, are obliged to give them an opportunity to offer Mass, if not every Sunday, at least as often as possible.

Catholics who must work on holydays are obliged to offer Mass, unless excused by a reasonable grave cause.

Domestic help can easily be permitted to go to Mass, if their duties are properly arranged.

Are amusements forbidden on Sunday?

Amusements are not forbidden on Sunday; only *those that interfere with the Sunday obligations are forbidden*.

Not too much emphasis should be given in competitive games as to which side wins or loses. A good loser is better than a poor winner who is proud of himself.

1. *Sunday is a day of rest*. On Sunday, therefore, we are permitted to relax from our daily work, in wholesome recreation.

"God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all his work of crea-

tion" (Gen. 2:3). If God, Who needed no "rest," chose to stop His work of creation, we should imitate His divine example and rest after six days of labor. The experience of all peoples has borne out the wisdom of this practice of resting one day out of the week. As an example we may cite the case of the French Revolution. The French atheists in control wished to change the old order completely, and went so far as to change the number of days in the week to ten. They could not, however, retain the new week, because of the resistance of the great majority of the people.

2. *To attend entertainments such as dances up to a late hour on Saturday night*, even when in themselves they are not wrong, *is a poor way of preparing for the Lord's day*.

An outstanding example of such entertainments is the New Year's eve all-night dancing so fashionable in these days. People go to dances and carousals in different varieties of dress and undress, with paint, powder, and all kinds of worldly decorations on their persons. Then those who feel a twinge of conscience run out for an intermission of Mass, to return perhaps to the dance, or to go home to sleep all the day of New Year, the feast of the Circumcision and Octave of Christmas, a holyday of obligation! *Let any reasonable man say whether this kind of amusement is in consonance with the commandment to sanctify the Lord's day*.

3. *Some people seem to take advantage of Sunday to indulge more freely in useless or sinful pastimes*. It is a scandal to see people engaged in excessive eating, drinking, dancing, and vanity on Sunday, of all days. It is an abuse of a sacred institution: the Lord's Day. "The kingdom of God does not consist in food and drink" (Rom. 14:17).

To others the Lord's day and holydays are nothing more than days of enjoyment. What was intended as an accompaniment becomes the main theme. Not infrequently Sunday is taken as a favorite day for gambling, drinking, and other vices. *Then indeed is God's day desecrated*, and God robbed of the honor due Him.

4. *When Sunday is desecrated* by vice and unrestrained pleasure, *we can expect* by this loosening of morals *the gradual dissolution of family ties* and the final *dissolution of society*.

Neglecting common worship, members of the family become indifferent to each other. Children turn stubborn and disobedient. The father hardly stays home, and knows strangers better than his own children. Since the children lose respect for their parents, it is an easy step to loss of respect for all authority, including the secular power. Thus by forgetting God's day, men will fall into all kinds of vices and die outside God's grace.



(1). The Child Jesus should be our model of obedience: "And he went down with them (Mary and Joseph) and came to Nazareth and was subject to them" (Luke 2:51). Our Lord, God Himself,



lived in humble obedience to two mortals, Mary and Joseph, to give us an example.

The picture (2) shows Tobia, a model of a good son, curing his father of his blindness.

103. The Fourth Commandment

"Honor your father and your mother" (Ex. 20:12).

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED by the fourth commandment?

By the fourth commandment we are commanded to **respect** and **love our parents**, to **obey them** in all that is not sinful, and to help them when they are in need.

The word "**honor**" in this commandment includes the doing of everything leading to the welfare, both material and spiritual, of our parents.

1. One **respects** his parents (a) by **reverencing** them as holding God's place; (b) by **accepting** their corrections willingly; and (c) by **excusing** and **hiding** their faults.

It was God Himself who gave us our parents, and we reverence God when we respect them who are His direct representatives over us. Respect is one duty that a child, however old and famous he

may become in later life, will always owe his parents. "The eye that mocks a father, or scorns an aged mother, will be plucked out by the ravens in the valley; the young eagles will devour it" (Prov. 30:17).

2. One **loves** his parents **by trying to please them**, by **helping them**, and **praying for them**. Children who love their parents make their home a place of joy and peace.

A loving child does not wait to be commanded by his parents, but will do all he can for them, help them out, and accomplish their wishes as far as he can, without a word from them.

3. *A young child should obey his parents without question, complaint, or delay, just as he is told. He will show himself glad to obey. Older children may inquire about the reasons for certain commands, but they too should obey their parents in everything*

lawful. They will do what their parents wish, even before they are asked. **They will obey willingly and promptly.**

Because parents are the direct representatives of God over their children, such children owe them obedience. **Obedience that is the result of fear of punishment or a trick to get some favor is not true Christian obedience,** and much of the merit is lost. "Honor your father and your mother, **that you may have a long life** in the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you" (Ex. 20:12).

4. It is a mistake **for one to think he knows more than his parents.** It is his duty to consult them about important steps he contemplates, such as marriage. In all important things, God-fearing parents know more than their children. **When a child is unwilling or ashamed to let his parents know about something,** it is generally wrong.

5. **A grown-up child should provide for his parents in need,** and make their lives as comfortable as possible. For example, an adult son with earnings **should support his old parents** who have nothing. He **help out with the younger children.**

We should especially provide for our parents when ill. We should call the priest for Confession, and if necessary, for the "Viaticum" and the "Anointing of the Sick." After their death we should provide a worthy **funeral** according to our means. **We should pray,** and have Masses offered for them annually at least, and faithfully **carry out their last wishes.**

6. The perfect **model of obedience** is the **Child Jesus.** All children should have Him for their model. He, God Himself, was subject to Mary and Joseph all the time that He lived with them in Nazareth.

The blessing of God is always with a closely united family with members loving each other, doing their best to help everybody in the family.

Does the fourth commandment oblige us to respect and TO OBEY OTHERS BESIDES OUR PARENTS?

Besides our parents, the fourth commandment obliges us **to respect** and **to obey** all our **lawful superiors.**

1. **Guardians** take the **place of parents.** A child owes his guardians the same respect and obedience due his parents.

Teachers, godparents of baptism and confirmation, and elderly persons like **grandparents,** may be called guardians. All old people are to be re-

spected by the young: "Stand up in the presence of the aged, and **show respect for the old;** thus shall you fear your God" (Lev. 19:32).

2. **Employees** are bound to respect and obey their superiors. They should be loyal, and careful about the property entrusted to them. **Tutors** and **nurses** must be especially faithful because to them are entrusted human souls. **They must see** to it that the **children under their care are protected** from harm to body and soul.

It is **wrong** of inferiors to **carry stories** about **their superiors** back and forth. If they cannot be loyal to their master, they should leave his service.

3. All are obliged to respect and obey legitimate civil and ecclesiastical **authorities** in lawful discharge of official duties.

"Let everyone be subject to the higher authorities, for there exists no authority except from God, and those who exist have been appointed by God" (Rom. 13:1).

WHAT ARE OUR DUTIES towards our ecclesiastical superiors?

We are obliged **to render respect, obedience,** and **support** to our ecclesiastical superiors.

1. We should **revere our priests** and **bishops** as our fathers in Christ, obey them in spiritual matters, and pray for them. We should contribute to their support according to our means.

St. Paul tells us: "**Obey your superiors and be subject to them, for they keep watch as having to render an account of your souls**" (Heb. 13:17). One offends God gravely if he opposes bishops or priests, speaks ill of them, gossips about them.

2. We must **be loyal to the Holy Father** and **obey** him in spiritual matters. He is the visible head of the body of Christ, the Church, of which we are the members. We must honor him, respect his authority.

In reverencing the Pope, we but reverence Jesus Christ, whose representative he is. We must assist him in the arduous duties of his office by spiritual and material offerings. Hierarchy and laity, all in the Church, **without exception,** are subject to the Pope, and are bound to yield him perfect obedience in all spiritual matters. We should pray for the Pope, and if we can, give him material help.

3. On their part, **bishops and priests have the obligation of caring for those under their charge,** of teaching them their duties, and helping them lead good lives.

They are bound to pray for their flocks, and to offer Mass on Sundays and holidays for the members of their diocese or parish.



Parents have the duty of beginning their child's religious training as soon as possible.

(1) Shows a good mother teaching her child the sign of the cross.

(2) Parents have the duty of sending their child

to a Catholic school, whenever one is available. Careless parents have much to answer for before God if they send their child to a non-Catholic school, and the child grows up in ignorance or hatred of the Catholic faith.

104. Duties of Parents

WHAT DUTY HAVE PARENTS toward their children?

Parents *must provide for the spiritual and bodily welfare* of their children.

The fourth commandment *requires parents to love their children*, and care for them in body and soul. Their duties include provision for their children's religious and moral training, bodily needs, education, discipline, manners, etc.

1. *Parents* must provide a minor with food and clothing, guard him from sickness and accidents, and give him suitable play and exercise. *It is the duty of parents to exercise personal supervision*, and not leave everything to household help. God gave children to parents, not to nursemaids.

Likewise, those institutions (called nurseries) where even babies may be left all day, however

good they may be, and even if they are under the supervision of Sisters, *should be resorted to only for grave reasons*.

2. *It is the duty of Catholic parents to send their child to a Catholic school*. Secular or non-Catholic schools where the Catholic religion is not taught may be tolerated only when the diocesan bishop gives permission on account of prevailing circumstances. In no case may a child be sent to anti-Catholic schools.

At home, the *parents* should supervise the child's studies. They *should support the authority of the teacher*, in order to teach the child proper respect for authority. It is not edifying for parents to criticize or ridicule the teacher in the child's presence.

3. *Parents must provide for a child's future* by giving him an education that will develop his mind and character. They

should also enable him to acquire some training, trade, or profession by which he may later become self-supporting.

Parents who give a child all the food, candy, toys, and clothing he asks for, only indulge him, and show false love. Girls should be made to dress with modesty. Parents have no obligation to support their grown-up children. It is a bad practice to continue supporting older children.

HOW SHOULD PARENTS PROVIDE moral and religious training?

Parents should **begin early** to give their child religious training.

1. As soon as **the child** can speak, he **should be taught the ordinary prayers**, and told of God and holy things. It is a very praiseworthy custom to have **family prayers**, in which all of the family participate.

A child should be made to say his morning and night prayers regularly. He should be taught his catechism and prepared for Confession and first Holy Communion; he should be made **to attend Mass, and perform all his religious duties faithfully.**

2. Parents must exercise continual **vigilance**, to guard the child from moral evil.

As the child grows older, he should not be allowed excessive liberty, especially with regard to the company he keeps, and to staying out at night. **Parents should always know where the child is**, who his companions are, what he reads, what shows he sees.

3. Parents must **correct** the child's faults, taking care not to be either harsh or over-indulgent. They must act with **justice** as well as **mercy**. They must treat all their children equally, and show no favoritism.

Parents who fly into a rage about a fault one day and laugh at the same fault another day can hardly expect their child to respect them. Parents who are too "good" to correct, chide, or punish a child who has committed grave faults are either stupid or lazy. They are bad parents, failing in their duties to God.

4. Parents must give **good example** to the child. Deeds are more powerful than words. **If the parents neglect the sacraments**, Mass on Sundays and holydays, and other religious duties, **they cannot well expect their child to be faithful.**

Some parents think that just because they send their child to a good Catholic school, they have no further responsibility over his training. **However good a school, God did not give a child into its independent care, but into that of parents.** Parents must train their children not only by precept, but chiefly by example. By the fruit the tree is known.

What should be the ATTITUDE OF PARENTS WHEN their CHILD IS GROWN UP?

When their child is grown up, parents should remember that their child is an individual **whom God created for His own purposes**, and that **he has his own rights and privileges.**

Parents should help their child accomplish God's purposes as much as they can. They must never be an obstacle to the child, through false love.

1. **In their child's choice of an occupation or profession or priestly or religious vocation**, parents should act with wisdom and understanding; they should advise, but **never force**. It happens sometimes that a child shows a strong inclination for a certain study. This should be encouraged, for it is a sign of talent. If the child shows no **special inclination, a mutual agreement and understanding should prevail.**

If the child is strongly attracted to the study of farming or architecture, he should not be forced to become a lawyer because his father is a lawyer or because his parents wish to boast of a politician-son.

2. **Many parents out of pure caprice interfere** with the practice of their child's profession or occupation, by preventing his acceptance of positions or by wishing him to stay home with them.

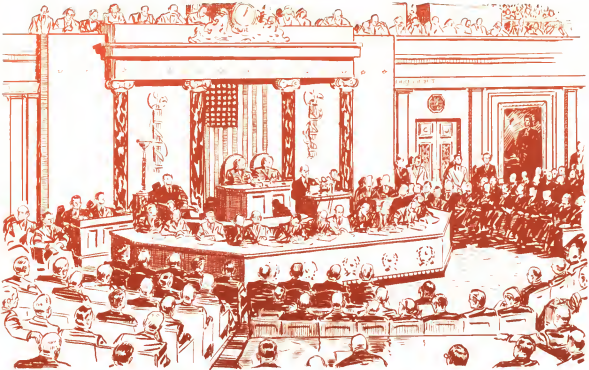
Such parents need not be surprised if they find themselves burdened with the support of their grown-up children and their families. If you cut off the wings of a bird, it cannot fly.

3. In the **choice of a state of life**, which may make or mar the life of their child, parents should advise, but not interfere. If he wishes to marry, and they have any objection to the partner he has chosen, they may state their objections. If the objection is very serious, they may try to prevent the marriage, but never otherwise.

Parents should not be **selfish**. Many are so selfish that, wishing to keep their child to themselves, they can find no one in the whole world satisfactory as a partner for him. Parents should remember that the child is entitled to his own life. When they die, he should be able to exist without them.

4. Parents sin when they **force** their child **to marry** someone he does not care for.

Parents must **not meddle** in the affairs of their married children. This interference is a frequent source of disagreement between couples. **Parents must be very careful of their attitude if their child chooses a religious vocation.** (See page 379.)



Upon being chosen to a public office, an official acquires not only rights, but duties as well. Judges, legislators, and other public officials must treat everybody with equal justice, and must give the

best service they can to the people. They are responsible before God for everything that they do, for all the decisions they make. Above is the U. S. President addressing Congress.

105. Duties of Other Superiors

WHAT DUTY HAVE SUPERIORS towards those under their care?

Superiors, according to their varying degrees of responsibility, **must care for those entrusted to them.**

1. **Employers** should be *considerate of employees.* They must not oppress them, nor keep back their wages, **nor exploit them in any way.**

In the United States and most other industrially advanced countries, **organized labor is surrounded by all kinds of legal protection,** but employers must nevertheless keep in mind their moral, as well as legal obligations to those who work under them in order to **insure that social justice prevails.**

2. Employers **should give** their employees a *living wage;* that is **enough for them and their families** to live on decently. They should allow them **ample facilities for fulfilling religious duties.**

WHAT ARE THE CHIEF DUTIES of those who hold public office?

The chief duties of **those who hold public office** are: **to be just** to all in exercising their authority, and **to promote** the general welfare.

1. **Public officials have a grave responsibility before God.** The *higher* the post, the *greater* the responsibility. Legislators, members of the cabinet, judges, all office-holders **will have to give a rigid account to God** of all that they have thought, said, done, or omitted, every law passed, every vote given. "For the powerful a rigorous scrutiny impends" (Wis. 6:8).

2. No one should **strive after a position of authority which he is not competent** to fill.

One who aspires to a dignity, to the duties of which he is unequal, is like a baker who tries to man an airship. **If, however, a person feels himself competent** to fulfill the duties of a post, **it is good for him to endeavor to obtain it** if thereby he can contribute towards the welfare of others.

3. *One on whom honors and positions are conferred* should have as his principal thought the accomplishment of the *duties* connected with his position. He must not think much of himself on account of the honor; *it makes him no better in God's sight.*

Virtue alone gives a man true worth and distinction. Herod was a king; Mary and Joseph were poor laborers. But Mary and Joseph now are very near God, and surely Herod is not so near God. "Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; even as the Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve" (Matt. 20:27-28).

4. *Public officials* must set a *good example* because they occupy a conspicuous position, and because example is better than precept. *Officials do more by their example than by their orders and regulations.*

Like a city seated on a mountain, public officials cannot be hid. Others quickly imitate them. What a responsibility before God is it for an official to lead an immoral life and thus corrupt numerous young people by his bad example! *What a scandal it is for an official to be the first to break the law!*

How should public officials PROMOTE THE GENERAL WELFARE?

Public officials should promote the general welfare *by safeguarding the rights of all, passing good and just laws and enforcing these laws* impartially, interesting themselves in the spread of good moral customs and religion, and *punishing evildoers.*

1. *Being the representatives of God*, public officials should imitate His justice. The *common good*, not the benefit of a single person or group, should be the object.

Civil officials should be ready to sacrifice themselves for the citizens.

2. Officials must be *impartial*. They must show favor to none, but treat all equally, rich or poor, prominent or unknown. *"With God there is no respect of persons"* (Rom. 2:11).

Judges must beware of acting unjustly, or of allowing themselves to be corrupted by bribes. They must not let the rich and powerful induce them to give unjust judgment. Acceptance of bribes by public officials is a sin against the seventh commandment. "For the Lord of all shows no partiality, nor he fears greatness, because he himself made the great as well as the small, and he provides for all alike" (Wis. 6:8).

3. *Public officials* should particularly provide for the *welfare* of the *poor* and *helpless*: the destitute, sick, orphan, and the great body of the working people.

These less fortunate citizens often have no power to protect themselves. The laws and rulers must therefore safeguard them without, however, injuring the welfare and rights of others.

4. Officials have a serious obligation to promote the *Christian foundations* of our Constitution.

They should work *to make Christian principles prevail in a Christian country*; to safeguard *education and marriage*, and *respect the Lord's Day.*

WHAT DOES the fourth commandment FORBID?

The fourth commandment forbids *disrespect, unkindness, and disobedience* to our parents and lawful superiors.

1. *Disrespect* includes all irreverence and stubbornness *against lawful authority*. One offends against the respect due his parents when he talks back at them, refuses their correction, ridicules them or strikes them.

One who thinks and acts as if he were "superior" to his parents is a disgraceful snob. For *even if a son or daughter has graduated with highest honors from the best university in the world, he still owes his parents due respect* as God's representatives.

2. *Contempt* and *unkindness* are *contrary to the love we owe* our parents. One offends against the love due his parents if he curses them, despises them, hates them, grieves them, or makes them angry.

Children at times speak sharply and insultingly to their parents. If they would reflect upon parents' endless sacrifices, they would burn out their tongues rather than speak contemptuously of their parents. *"Anyone who curses his father or mother shall be put to death"* (Lev. 2:9).

3. *Children may sin against obedience* either by refusing or neglecting to do what is commanded, or by doing what is forbidden. Showing *unwillingness* is also a form of disobedience.

A young child is disobedient if he neglects his studies, goes with forbidden companions, goes out without permission. *Older children disobey* by attending forbidden shows or dances, going out with forbidden companions or at forbidden times, or concealing their earnings from their parents.



VOTING IS A CIVIC DUTY

Among the civic duties is that of voting. All who are granted this right should exercise it. They must not prostitute their right, but use it justly for the good of all.



LOYALTY TO OUR COUNTRY IS A DUTY

It is the duty of every citizen to be loyal to his country, to support its institutions, and to respect its laws and its flag. A good Catholic is a good citizen.

106. Civic Duties

What are THE DUTIES OF A CITIZEN toward his country?

A citizen *must love his country*, be sincerely *interested in its welfare*, and *respect and obey* its lawful *authority*.

God gave us our country, and we show Him our gratitude by rendering it our love and service. Love is shown not by words, but by actions. But *true love of country is always subject to the law of Him who gave us our country*.

How does a citizen show a SINCERE INTEREST in his country's welfare?

A citizen shows a sincere interest in his country's welfare *by voting honestly* and without selfish motives, *by paying taxes*, and *by defending his country's rights* when necessary.

1. *We are responsible to God for the men we elect to office*, for He has permitted us to have the right and duty to select the men we want. Every one who has the right to vote has likewise a *serious obligation to use that right properly*. *Electors must choose men of experience and Christian principles*. If we elect men with no religious principles, we should not be surprised if later in office they turn out unsatisfactory.

It is wrong to sell one's vote; it is selling one's convictions. *Persons who buy votes* are not likely to use the office they might thereby gain for the good of anyone else but themselves.

2. *Every Catholic* who has the right to vote *should exercise that right*. Matters closely connected with the life of the people are the constant subject of legislation or debate. Even if your vote does not enable

the good candidate to win, at least it will lessen the margin of his defeat. A Catholic elector must vote for the best candidate regardless of religious affiliation.

It is the Catholic voter's duty to vote for candidates that will act justly in questions of morals, and have the Christian principles at heart. Those who do not have the right to vote ought to pray for a result in the election favorable to upright men and the country in general.

3. *A Catholic elector must not vote for any candidate who despises the teachings of the Church.* Before voting, he should find out the candidate's views of education, marriage, observance of Sunday, Communism and statism.

It may happen that all the candidates for an office are indifferent or hostile to religion. In that case, if no other candidate can be made available, the Catholic should vote for the one least hostile to Christian principles, most moral in his qualities.

4. We are bound to contribute towards the expenses of government *by paying taxes. It is wrong to cheat the State in the matter of taxation.*

It is only just that the citizens should contribute towards the maintenance of peace, order, good works, the army, etc. Our Lord Himself paid taxes (Matt. 17:26). It is only just that we should help support the government that secures us protection.

5. In case of a war, men should be ready to render military service for the defense of their country.

A war of conquest in which the just rights of other peoples are overridden is not just. A war in self-defense, however, may be just (see page 225), though under modern conditions it will be rarely justified. Those who during wartime offer their lives for the defense of their homeland will receive an eternal reward if they are in God's grace.

WHY must we RESPECT and OBEY the LAWFUL AUTHORITY of our country?

We must respect and obey the lawful authority of our country *because it comes from God*, the Source of all authority.

1. *God has entrusted the maintenance of peace and order in human society to the secular authorities.* It is His will that among so many some should rule and the others be subject to that rule, for law and order.

"There exists no authority except from God" (Rom. 13:1). "Be subject . . . whether to the king as supreme, or to governors as sent through him . . . for such is the will of God" (1 Pet. 2:13-15).

2. Our *civil rulers* or superiors are those who have authority in the government. We call them *civil officials*. Most of our officials obtain their offices by the vote of qualified electors. Therefore *if we get a bad government, it is our own fault.*

Our civil officials are the President, Senators, Representatives, Justices of the Supreme Court and other judges, governors, mayors, etc. Others, such as sheriffs, policemen, etc., *are also civil officials.*

3. We should be *loyal* to our civil officials, obey their just laws, and pray for them. *We are bound to obey just laws*, because all lawful authority comes from God (Rom. 13:1-7). With respect to unjust laws, we must strive wherever possible to insure their repeal. Laws contrary to divine law, opposed to the law of God, cannot be just. If, therefore, we are commanded to do what God forbids, or to desist from doing what He commands, we *"must obey God rather than men"* (Acts 5:29).

We should pray for our civil superiors, as St. Paul urges us: *"I urge therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made for all men; for kings, and for all in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and worthy behavior"* (1 Tim. 2:1-2). We have a serious obligation towards our civil officials *even if they are not the ones that we voted for*. If God permitted them to obtain the post, we *must render them support.*

4. *It is a sin to plot against our government and country. Treason is a crime against God and our fellowmen.* We are bound to love our country and defend it against all its enemies, within and without. Citizens in a Communist dictatorship, where there is no chance for democracy or constitutionalism, may of course, resort to force against tyranny.

"Therefore he who resists the authority resists the ordinance of God; and they that resist bring on themselves condemnation" (Rom. 13:2).

Why are we obliged to take an active part in works of GOOD CITIZENSHIP?

We are obliged to take an active part in works of good citizenship, *because right reason requires citizens to work together for the public welfare of the country.*

The citizens of a State are mutually dependent: the welfare of all depends on the active contribution made by all. It is in a State where the citizens have no interest that evil men get into the public service in order to loot it, and enrich themselves at the expense of the public.



The first murder on earth was committed by Cain when he slew Abel. Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let us go out into the field." Now when they were in the field, Cain turned against his brother Abel

and slew him. Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He answered, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:8-9). Murderers do not act as brothers of the murdered.

107. The Fifth Commandment

"You shall not kill" (Ex. 20:13)

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED by the fifth commandment?

By the fifth commandment we are commanded *to take proper care of our own spiritual and bodily well-being and that of our neighbor.*

1. *Sins against* this commandment are many, including *murder* and *suicide*, and also *anger*, *hatred*, *revenge*, *drunkenness*, and *bad example*. We may almost say that all injury to body and soul is a violation of this commandment.

"The works of the flesh are manifest, which are . . . enmities, contentions . . . anger, quarrels . . . murders, drunkenness, carousings, and such-like. And concerning these I warn you, as I have warned you, that *they who do such things will not attain the kingdom of God*" (Gal. 5:19-21).

2. *Anger* is a strong feeling of displeasure, combined with a desire to inflict punishment on the offender. It is contrary to the spirit of Christ, Who is meek and humble of heart. We must take care not to hurt or wound *another's feelings*. If we fall into the misfortune of doing so, we must apologize or make amends in some other way. "*Do not let the sun go down upon your anger*" (Eph. 4:26).

Anger often arises from pride or envy. *Those who think much of themselves get angry at every supposed slight or injury*. They should remember Christian charity, and fear these words: "Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment" (Matt. 5:22). "But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath. For the wrath of man does not work the justice of God" (James 1:19-20).

3. **Hatred is a kind of habitual anger**, a strong dislike of or ill-will towards anyone. **When a person hates someone, he sees no good in the one hated**; he would like to see evil rain down on the one hated; he rejoices in all misfortune of the one hated. **Hatred is a sin** because it violates God's commandment: "**You shall love your neighbor as yourself.**"

If we hate certain qualities of a person, but have no antagonism towards the person himself, our feeling is not necessarily sinful. It is not hatred to detest the evil qualities of others; **we must hate the sin, but not the sinner.** We must be careful, however, not to commit rash judgment, regarding qualities, as we cannot know all circumstances; let us have charity towards all.

4. The sin of **revenge** is the desire to **inflict immoderate or unjust punishment on someone who has injured us**, from a motive of anger. When serious, revenge is **vengeance**, a sin against charity and justice, most sinful and unChristian. However much we are injured, **we have no right to take the law into our hands.**

St. Paul said, "**Do not avenge yourselves**, beloved, but give place to the wrath, for it is written: Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19). "Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven" (Sirach 28:2).

What is MURDER?

Murder is **the voluntary and unjust killing of a human being.**

1. Murder is a great sin. A murderer **violates the rights of God over human life**, and, besides taking a life, robs his victim of the opportunity to gain merits for heaven, and prepare himself for death.

God created man, and has supreme dominion over life. "You know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).

2. The direct intention to kill an **innocent person** is always forbidden, as against this commandment, **whether it be by public or private authority.** And the human body may not be **mutilated** unless that were the only way to preserve the health or save a life.

Since violation of the body is forbidden except to save life or health, anyone performing "**sterilization**" for the purpose of preventing conception **commits grave sin.**

Some would propagate the idea of **euthanasia**, or "**mercy killing**", a direct and deliberate killing of those in great pain, of the defective, moronic, or

otherwise incapacitated. Such "**mercy killers**" are **murderers, who usurp the rights of God over life.**

3. A **mother bearing a child** should be very **careful to protect and preserve the life** of her child. As the soul is created at the very moment of conception, **anything wilfully done** which results in the death of even an unborn child is **murder.**

Not even to save the mother's life may an unborn child be killed by direct **abortion.** If the death of the child results secondarily, in an attempt to save the mother's life, and after all precautions have been taken to safeguard the child, this is indirect abortion, and is permitted, for grave cause. In the United States one pregnancy out of three ends in abortion.

4. It is lawful to kill **animals** for food, because God has given them for the use of man. **The fifth commandment forbids the killing only of human beings.** God Himself commanded the killing of animals for sacrifice, after having given this commandment.

It is our duty to care for animals, refrain from tormenting them, and from killing any useful animal without reasons; but we must not lavish on them exaggerated affection, as if they were idols.

WHEN IS IT LAWFUL to take another's life?

It is lawful to take another's life:

1. In **self-defense**, or the **defense of another unjustly attacked.** A woman may **kill**, to protect herself against criminal assault. **One may defend life or property against enemies**, going so far as to kill.

One, however, may not do more than what is needed for defense; if wounding an assailant is sufficient, it would be wrong to kill him. One is not justified to kill in order to protect property of trifling value. Setting a trap to kill a chicken thief is murder.

2. In executing **criminals** condemned by legitimate authority. **Society** must protect itself from crime, and **may through constituted authority order a sentence of death.**

Private persons and mobs have no right to put anyone to death. **Lynching is murder.**

3. In a **just war.** A **nation** has the right to exist and protect itself. **It is lawful for it to repel by force those seeking to destroy it**, and thus to defend its rights in a grave matter. Nations may also assist other nations unjustly attacked, or whose rights are encroached upon.

War, however, is an evil which must not be embarked upon except as a last resort.



After betraying Our Lord, Judas fell into despair. "Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priest, and the elders, saying: 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.' But they said 'What is that to us? See

to it thyself.' And he flung the pieces of silver into the temple, and withdrew; and went away and hanged himself with a halter" (Matt. 27:3-5). If Judas had repented, instead of despairing, and had asked pardon, Our Lord would have forgiven him, as He forgave the good thief.

108. Caring for Our Health and Life

WHAT ARE OUR DUTIES respecting our health and life?

We have the obligation *to preserve our health and life.*

1. Man has *no right* to encroach upon God's dominion over life; man created *no human being, not even his own self.* Our body is *not our own*; it belongs to God. We are bound to take care of it, and to do with it not what we wish, but what God wills. God created our body as an *abode* for our immortal soul.

Very often the condition of the body affects that of the soul. If the body is unhealthy, the soul suffers. There is a wise Roman proverb: "*A healthy mind in a healthy body.*" However, we are not obliged to employ unusual means involving great expense, or extraordinary suffering.

2. We must exercise prudence in *preserving* our health and that of those under our care. *Prudence would imply* cleanliness, temperance, regularity, industry, and the use of remedies during sickness.

Driving a car at *excessive speed*, crossing the tracks when a train is approaching, playing with loaded firearms, jumping into or out of a car when it is in motion, *are imprudent actions, taking risks for insufficient reason.*

3. *We have the obligation* to do nothing which tends to *injure or destroy* health or life. It injures health to indulge to excess in eating, drinking, smoking, dancing until all hours, and vanity in dress.

Some women and girls are gravely responsible for not eating proper food out of a desire *to keep thin* and thus be more pleasing in the eyes of

others, *to the injury of their health*. Some men and boys form the vice of *drunkenness*, taking so much of intoxicants as to lose their reason.

Why is DRUNKENNESS A SIN?

Drunkenness is a sin *because it injures the health*, and often leads to other sins.

"Let us walk becomingly as in the day, *not in revelry and drunkenness*, not in debauchery and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and as for the flesh, take no thought for its lusts" (Rom. 13:13).

1. *By drunkenness one* deliberately *be-numbs* without just cause his *reason*, a precious gift from God to man.

St. Paul said: "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are . . . enmities, . . . *drunkenness*, carousings, and suchlike. And concerning these I warn you, as I have warned you, that *they who do such things will not attain the kingdom of God*" (Gal. 5:19-21).

2. *When committed publicly, drunkenness* occasions bad example and *scandal*, and has often promoted fights and even murder. By habitual drinking, a person not only injures his health, but neglects the support of his family, and not unlikely also fails in his obligations to the State and to God.

Drunkenness is a form of slow suicide; drunkards do not live long. If a man would reason the matter out, he would never submit to the vice of drunkenness, which lowers him in the sight of God and of his fellow-men.

What is SUICIDE?

Suicide is the deliberate taking of one's own life.

1. *Suicide is a great sin*: it is *self-murder*. *The Church denies Christian burial* to those who knowingly take their own life. By this the Church *does not mean that those souls are surely condemned to hell*. Their judgment is in the hands of God. The Church merely wishes to show *public condemnation* of such sins.

One who commits *suicide sins against God*, Who is the exclusive arbiter of life or death; he *sins against himself*, by exposing himself to be plunged into hell; and he *sins against his family*, whom he leaves to bear his shame, and perhaps to live in want for lack of his support.

2. *Suicide* is the result of *lack of religion*. Experience teaches that *as religion weakens* in a land, *the number of suicides increases*.

Suicide is usually committed by one who has gotten into trouble, or committed some great sin, lost his fortune, or cannot bear some disappointment.

If we get into trouble, *we should have patience and trust in God*.

3. *Suicide is the sin* of those in *despair*, who do not believe or hope in God's mercy and ability to carry them through all adversities. *Suicide is a sin of Judas*.

The suicide no longer holds that God *forgives* anything and everything when a sinner repents. *He no longer holds that God is infinitely merciful*, and infinitely powerful, that He can draw good out of the most horrible evils.

4. If one committed great sins, the remedy is not to commit suicide, but to *repent*. *The thing to do* is not to hang or shoot or poison oneself, but to *cling to God in sincere sorrow*.

Even if one has to suffer contempt and disgrace in this life for his sins, he will only be preparing his soul for heaven. But if he commits suicide, he will only be preparing it for the torments of hell.

DUEL

A *duel is a combat carried out by agreement between two persons*, fought with deadly weapons, usually before witnesses called seconds. *Duelling* is nothing else but *suicide and murder combined*. A Catholic is bound to refuse to fight a duel. *Christian burial is denied to those who are killed in a duel*.

The duellist is guilty of a *double murder*: he intends to kill his antagonist, and he risks his own life. The Church excommunicates those who challenge or accept a challenge to a duel, the seconds, and all who sanction a duel by their presence.

HEROIC DEATH

It is not wrong, but *highly meritorious, to endanger our health and life* in order to *gain everlasting life*, or to *rescue* our fellow-men from physical or spiritual death. Christ Himself knowingly gave His life to save souls.

Martyrs, priests and missionaries, doctors and nurses who expose their lives, merit an *eternal reward*. Those who lose their lives rescuing others deserve renown. "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather be afraid of him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28). "He who finds his life will lose it, and *he who loses his life for my sake, will find it*" (Matt. 10:39).



Christ said, concerning scandalizing children: "But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it were better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck, and to be

drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandal! For it must needs be that scandals come, but woe to the man through whom scandal does come!" (Matt. 18:6-7).

109. Bad Example and Scandal

What is BAD EXAMPLE?

Bad example *is doing wrong in the presence of others.*

1. *Bad example* is the principal occasion of *scandal*, which is occasioning the sin of another by any word or deed having at least the appearance of evil. *If any help or encouragement is given in any way to cause another to do wrong, scandal* is committed or given.

Bad example and scandal are sins against the soul included in the Fifth Commandment. They injure our neighbor's soul, and so are worse evils than injuring his body. They do the devil's work and draw souls into hell. If by deliberate scandal and bad example we cause another to commit a grave sin, *we are worse than murderers.* St. Augustine said, "If you persuade your neighbor to sin, you are his murderer."

2. *Our Lord* condemned scandal in no uncertain terms, saying: "*Woe to the man through whom scandal does come!* And if thy hand or thy foot is an occasion of sin to thee, cut it off and cast it from thee! *It is better for thee to enter life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire*" (Matt. 18:7-8).

Grievous indeed must scandal be, to make *our gentle Lord* use such strong words of condemnation. "*The Son of man* will send forth *his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all scandals and those who work iniquity, and cast them into the furnace of fire*" (Matt. 13:41-42).

3. *Some ways of giving bad example or scandal are:* by indecent talk, by selling or circulating bad books or pictures, by singing improper songs, by dressing immodestly,

by appearing in public in a state of drunkenness, by profanity and cursing, by doing servile work publicly on Sunday, by behaving indecorously in church, by ridiculing religion and priests, by writing against religion, by publicly violating one of the commandments of God or the Church, etc.

We should be very careful in our actions, however innocent, so that they may not be the cause of scandal to others. "And if thy eye is an occasion of sin to thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee! It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into the hell of fire" (Matt. 18:9).

4. *By committing scandalous acts* a person influences others to do the same. This is specially true of **children**, who easily imitate their parents and elders. He who gives scandal is like a man who digs a pit into which others fall, break their necks.

Parents who quarrel in the presence of their children, however great the provocation, set them a bad example, and commit scandal. **Public officials** who break the law by gambling or immorality give scandal. **Older brothers** who go to forbidden shows and other places, or take their younger brothers with them are guilty of scandal. **Older sisters** who are excessively vain in their toilette give bad example to their younger sisters.

5. *We should avoid giving scandal as far as possible.* We even ought to abstain from

good actions of counsel if they may give scandal. For example, if one is dispensed from abstinence on account of bad health, he should refrain from eating meat before others, in order to prevent their being scandalized. Otherwise, he should explain why he eats the meats.

The aged Eleazar preferred to die rather than give the mere appearance that he was eating swine's flesh, which was forbidden by the Law. He feared to scandalize young persons, who might think he had gone over to the ranks of the heathen (2 Mach. 6:24).

WHAT MUST WE DO if we have been the occasion of scandal or bad example?

If we have been the occasion of scandal or bad example, *we are bound to repair the mischief done.*

A public scandal must be repaired in a public manner. Even then we usually cannot begin to repair the greater part of the evil we have caused.

We must try our best to save those we have scandalized from the effects of our example. *We must perform the contrary virtue, incite them by good example, and pray for them.* We ought to be more careful about giving scandal, because of the difficulty, nay, almost the impossibility, of repairing the effects of scandal.

THE CROSS



LATIN CROSS



GREEK CROSS



CELTIC CROSS



EASTERN CROSS

PATRIARCHAL
CROSS

TAU CROSS

ST. ANDREW'S
CROSS

The **crucifix** is a symbol of the Redemption, and of Christianity in general. *The crucifix differs from a cross, in that it has on it an image of Christ's body.* Every home should have a crucifix displayed in a prominent place. The symbol INRI at the top of the crucifix is made up of the first letters of *the Latin inscription* meaning **Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews**. Pontius Pilate ordered this inscription on a tablet placed on the cross over Jesus' head. It was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek.

Most common forms of the cross are: the **Latin cross**, the **Greek cross**, the **Celtic cross**, and the archiepiscopal or patriarchal cross, and the tau cross. The **Latin cross** is the most common, what we almost always see. The **Greek cross** has four arms of equal length. The **Celtic cross** has the arms connected by a circle. The **archiepiscopal** or patriarchal cross has two cross bars. The **tau cross** resembles the letter T: it is called "tau" because that is the Greek word for our letter T. Another variety, called **St. Andrew's cross**, is in the form of the letter X, and is so called because the Apostle Andrew was put to death on such a cross. The feast of "*The Exaltation of the Holy Cross*" is celebrated September 14th.



God punishes the sin of impurity very severely even here on earth. For that sin He destroyed all living things except those in the ark of Noe during the great deluge. "For all men lived corruptly on the earth... I will destroy them" (Gen. 6:13).

For the same sin God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah: "The Lord poured down on Sodom and Gomorrah sulphur and fire" (Gen. 19:24). Today the site of these cities is covered by the Dead Sea, an everpresent reminder of the evil of impurity.

110. The Sixth and Ninth Commandments

"You shall not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14)

"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (Ex. 20:17)

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED by the sixth and ninth commandments?

By the sixth commandment we are commanded to be pure and modest in our behavior; by the ninth, in thought and in desire.

"Do you not know that *your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you*? . . . Glorify God, and bear him in your body" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). "Beloved, I exhort you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from carnal desires which war against the soul" (1 Peter 2:11).

1. *The sixth and ninth commandments* are studied together because they both deal with commands about purity. The sixth commandment refers to external acts, and the ninth to wilful thoughts and desires.

"The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (1 Cor. 6:13).

2. *God has always shown special love for those whose chastity is outstanding.* Consider how He chose that purest of all mortals, the Blessed Virgin, as His Mother.

Our Lord chose St. John, the virgin Apostle, as the Beloved Disciple; it was John who was privileged to lean on His Heart at the Last Supper; it was to him that Christ entrusted His Mother.

WHAT DOES the sixth commandment FORBID?

The sixth commandment forbids *all impurity and immodesty in words, looks, and actions*, whether alone or with others.

To distinguish between the virtues of "purity" and "modesty," let us say that purity regulates the

expression of the rights of the married and excludes them outside the married state; while *modesty* is a form of temperance which inclines one to refrain from what may lead to unlawful pleasure.

1. This commandment forbids *adultery*, which is *the unfaithfulness of a married person*. It is a duty before God and men for married people to be true to each other. Adultery is a great evil which breaks up the harmony of the family, and brings punishments in this life and the next.

Adultery is a sin not only against chastity, but also against justice; because it is injustice towards the spouse of the married person. In the Old Law the adulterer was punished with death.

2. *Matrimony is a holy state*, through which Almighty God intends the *propagation* of the race. Actions in accordance with this purpose of matrimony are permitted to the married, but *positively* forbidden to the unmarried. *Fornication is at all times a grave sin*.

By "*the married*" is meant *those Catholics validly married in the Catholic Church*. Catholics who marry before a justice of the peace or a non-Catholic minister, cannot live together as married people, because they are *not married* either in the eyes of the Church or before God. *If those Catholics who are not married before a Catholic priest live together and have children*, these are considered *illegitimate*, and are so registered at Baptism.

3. *All impure and immodest actions*, whether committed alone or with others, are forbidden. When *impurity* is committed deliberately, it is always a mortal sin.

The gravity of the sin of immodesty varies according to its nature, the conditions, and the relationship of the persons committing it. A good rule would be to refrain from doing anything you would be ashamed to have your pure mother or chaste daughter know you do.

WHAT ARE THE CHIEF DANGERS to the virtue of chastity?

The chief dangers to the virtue of chastity are: *idleness, sinful curiosity, bad companions, drinking, immodest dress and indecent books, plays, motion pictures, television*.

Do not try to discover knowledge of sexual matters from companions. Ask older people whom you respect. And it is not enough to avoid the occasions; one must do the positive, opposite to the dangers. "*Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation*". The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41).

1. *Idleness* is the parent of sin. Man is like the earth: if it is not planted to good

seed, weeds grow on it fast. So *a person is beset by all kinds of evil temptations unless he has some worthwhile occupation*.

When iron is not used, it begins to rust. And so man, who was made to be active, stagnates and becomes foul when nothing occupies him all day.

2. *Sinful curiosity* is a dangerous occasion of unchastity. So is too free companionship with the other sex. *Undue familiarity between opposite sexes inflames the passions*, just as straw blazes up when brought near the fire. Girls and young women certainly know that if they want to be respected, they must respect themselves, and not be too familiar with men.

There is a tendency today to mix up boys and girls indiscriminately in classrooms, in gatherings, in games, etc. Such familiarity rubs off the delicacy from girls, and the protective and gallant instinct from boys. Extremes should be avoided; the danger is because of undue familiarity.

3. *Bad companions* are the cause for the fall into impurity of numberless young people.

A rotten tomato in a basket will rot all the rest. We should carefully avoid persons whose conversation is unchaste. Those who take pleasure in listening to improper conversation run a serious risk of falling into sins of impurity.

4. *Excess in eating and drinking* encourages sensuality, and *will surely end in sins of impurity*.

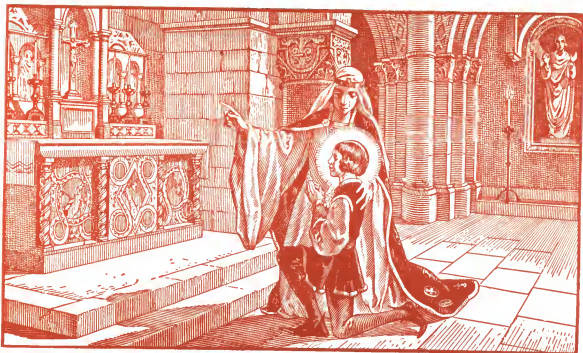
As an indication of this truth, fasting is associated with holy persons, dedicated to religious work and penance. If a man is taken up with his stomach, he will have no thought for his soul.

5. *Immodesty and excessive luxury in dress* is a grave occasion for impurity. A beautifully dressed girl is pleasing to look at; but the "art of looking nice" should not be indulged in to excess. Those who dress immodestly are instruments of the devil for the ruin of souls.

Women whose aim in life is to deck themselves in order to attract the attention of men are putting themselves in the way of unchastity. Undue longing for admiration does not come from a simple or childlike heart.

6. *Indecent books, plays, motion pictures, television*, as well as *immoral magazines and newspapers* should be avoided like the plague.

Bad shows, whether on the stage or the screen corrupt more *subtly* than immoral conversation, because what one sees leaves a stronger impression. Moreover, bad shows represent *evil in attractive garb*.



The illustration shows the holy queen Blanche of France and her young son, later St. Louis, King of France. From babyhood the queen brought up her son in the love of God. She used to say to him over and over that she would rather see him dead than

have him commit sin. She guarded him particularly, so that he grew up chaste in body and soul.

All mothers should imitate Queen Blanche; the training she gave helped her son in living a pure and holy life, and in becoming a great saint.

111. Sinful Desires Against Chastity

WHAT IS FORBIDDEN by the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment forbids *all thoughts and desires contrary to chastity.*

"You have heard that it was said to the ancients, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' But I say to you that anyone who even looks with lust at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28).

An impure desire is the wish or intention to do something unchaste or impure. Almost always, sins against purity, thoughts and desires as well as acts, are grave or mortal sins. Whenever we are beset by temptation, we should immediately pray, especially to our beloved Mother, the purest of mortals.

An impure desire, however, is a venial sin if committed through lack of attention or reflection, through negligence or slowness in rejecting a thought, or by giving only a partial consent. Only full and deliberate consent makes a sin mortal.

"Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:80).

ARE MERE THOUGHTS about impure things always sinful in themselves?

Mere thoughts about impure things are *not always sinful in themselves*, but such thoughts are dangerous.

1. It is a *mistake* to suppose that all impure thoughts and desires are sinful. *We are not responsible for the wicked thoughts that enter our mind unless we bring them in ourselves.* But we should try to avoid all such thoughts, by occupying ourselves in something useful.

Thinking often of something makes us used to that thing; we are in danger of losing our fear of impurity by familiarizing ourselves with thoughts of impure things. It is like walking on the brink of the abyss of sin—any little push may throw us in.

2. A *mere temptation* to impurity, even when accompanied by bodily feeling, is *not sinful unless there is wilful consent*, at least to some degree. The stronger the

temptation, the more merit we gain if we are faithful and resist. *No matter how long* the temptation lasts, even if it lasts our whole life, **as long as we give it no consent, we are free from sin.**

St. Catherine of Siena was once severely tempted against purity. Shortly after Our Lord appeared to her. She asked, "Where wert Thou, Lord, when those evil thoughts were in my mind?" Jesus replied, "I was in thy heart, taking pleasure in the victorious battle thou wert waging."

3. By **resisting** an impure thought or desire is not meant thinking of and pondering over it. In temptation of this nature, **the most effective means is to reject it at once**, then to **ignore** it, to do something else to distract the mind. Worrying about the temptation only makes it more persistent.

WHEN DO THOUGHTS about impure things BECOME SINFUL?

Thoughts about impure things become sinful **when a person thinks** of an unchaste act **and deliberately takes pleasure** in so thinking, or when unchaste desire or passion is aroused and consent is given to it.

An impure thought or desire becomes sinful when instead of rejecting it **we take pleasure** in it and keep it in our mind. **Impure desires**, if not rejected, **lead to impure acts** and a life of vice.

It is said that the model **the great artist Leonardo da Vinci** used for the figure of Jesus Christ in his painting "**The Last Supper**" was a young man of exceptional beauty, whose countenance expressed innocence and purity in a remarkable degree.

Some years after, when Leonardo da Vinci was ready to draw the figure of Judas the traitorous Apostle, he had a difficult time trying to find a model. So he went into the most disreputable haunts of the city, to seek a suitable model. He saw all sorts of criminals, immoral men altogether lost to all sense of decency, but still he was not satisfied.

At last one day he espied a wreck of a man, sinking in a corner of a low resort. His face had an expression so vicious and diabolical that the artist knew his search for a model for Judas was ended. Going near, he prevailed upon the fellow, with the offer of a great sum of money, to sit as a model.

The series of sittings was about to end, when one day Leonardo da Vinci said, "You know, since you came, I have always had a feeling that I have seen you somewhere before. I must be wrong, but the feeling persists. . . ." Thereupon the man in an

outburst of despair cried, "**Yes, you have seen me before! I was the innocent young man who sat as a model for the figure of that Christ there. . . . And now, see how I am sitting for Judas, for Judas. . . .**"

What are the chief MEANS OF PRESERVING the virtue of CHASTITY?

The chief means of preserving the virtue of chastity are: to avoid carefully all unnecessary dangers, to seek God's help through prayer, frequent confession, Holy Communion, and assistance at Holy Mass, and to have a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

1. In all things form the habit of temperance. **Avoid all unnecessary dangers; do not take any chances** with unchastity; **do not experiment**. If you put a match to gunpowder it is sure to explode; there is no necessity to try and see whether it will not.

Shun the company of those that are impure. Impurity is no wonderful achievement to be proud about: any idiot can be impure. It is the strong soul that resists temptation and keeps himself clean. It is the chaste person that possesses manly strength.

2. Always remember that **God sees us**. Let us therefore seek His help through prayer.

"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mark 14:38). **For instruction** about matters of sex, **go to your parents or to your pastor or older people** whom you know are good.

3. Be always **modest** and **pure** in your **dress, posture, and conversation**. This is not only to save yourself from immodesty, but to avoid giving occasion to others to sin, or being even an unwitting cause for others to sin.

Women who waste hours looking at themselves in the mirror, painting their faces and varnishing their nails, or choosing clothes to put on, **care more for their body** than for their soul. They should remember that after death, they will become **skull and bones** just like the rest.

4. Besides **approaching regularly** the sacrament of **Penance**, attend **Holy Mass with Communion** as frequently as possible.

Thus we follow the injunction: "Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

5. **We should have a special love and devotion for our Blessed Mother**, and daily ask her to preserve us in the chastity that she so greatly cherished.



Parents should be most careful to teach their children honesty in thought, word, and deed. As the child, so the man. If parents laugh indulgently at their child stealing food from the cupboard (1), keeping back change after errands, copying in examinations, throwing stones to break windows,



defacing walls and books, picking flowers and fruits from another person's garden, then those parents must not be surprised if when the child is grown up, he steals from the bank (2), forges signatures, cheats his employers and becomes a usurer.

112. The Seventh and Tenth Commandments

"You shall not steal" (Ex. 20:15) "You shall not covet your neighbor's house" (Ex. 20:17)

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED BY THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT?

By the seventh commandment we are commanded to *respect what belongs to others*, to live up to our business agreements, and to pay our just debts.

"Do not act dishonestly in using measures of length or weight or capacity. *You shall have a true scale and true weights*, an honest epha and an honest hin" (Lev. 19:35-36). "Better a little with justice than a large income with injustice" (Prov. 16:8). "The wicked man borrows and does not repay" (Ps. 36:21).

1. *The seventh and tenth commandments* are treated together because *both deal with commands about property*. The *seventh*

commandment refers to *external* acts, and the *tenth* to *intentions* or *desires*, against honesty.

One who is starving may, however, take what he absolutely needs. The right to live is above the right of property. But this permission must be used only in rare and extreme cases, when all other means have been exhausted.

2. *The obligations regarding honesty are imposed on us in conscience*, even though the civil laws may not compel us.

"Take heed and guard yourself from all covetousness, for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). *Violations of these commandments are opposed to natural law and justice*, and are an attack on society, a menace to public security and peace.

CHIEF VIOLATIONS OF THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

1. **STEALING** or *theft is the secret taking of another person's property.*

Few sins are more common than theft. Covetousness leads to theft. Those who like to show themselves off in luxury but have not the means frequently resort to theft. *One must be very careful in avoiding even petty thefts, or he will contract a vice, and in a short time will find himself stealing more valuable things.*

2. **ROBBERY** is the open and forcible taking of another person's property. Robbery or stealing is a slight or grave sin according to the injury done. *Stealing a day's wages from a person is usually a mortal sin.*

Stealing even a very small amount from a very poor person can be a mortal sin. A number of different small thefts from the same person or different persons within the space of one or two months, and amounting to a considerable sum, may be a mortal sin.

3. **CHEATING** is depriving another of his property by crafty means. Included in cheating are: using false weights and measures, issuing counterfeit money, adulterating food and other products for sale, forgery, falsification of documents, smuggling, tampering with boundary lines, overcharging, excessive profits, arson with a view to collection of insurance money, etc.

Copying during an examination, or *copying the work of another* and presenting it as one's own work is also cheating. By it one obtains credit for what does not belong to him, and often gets what justly belongs to another. *Copyrights are a form of property* that must be respected.

4. **USURY** is the charging of excessive interest on money. A usurer takes unjust advantage of the need of another in order to make excessive profits. Under the appearance of helping the needy, a usurer involves them in greater hardships, taking from them their means of livelihood.

Another form of dishonesty is *cornering the market*, which consists in buying up the entire supply of one product, such as wheat, for the purpose of forcing up prices, and thus making excessive profits.

5. **UNJUST DAMAGE** done to the property of others is against the seventh commandment. One may injure another's property by setting it on fire, treading down his crops, fishing or shooting on his grounds without permission, pulling down fences,

defacing books, furniture, and buildings, etc. One who does *wilful damage* to another's property must make good the loss. Accidental damage need not be made good, unless it came about through culpable negligence.

Thoughtless persons who pass through a farm sometimes pick fruit, vegetables, or corn. Some travelers have the bad habit of *taking towels*, dishes, pens, and similar things from trains, boats, and hotels as souvenirs. *Children pick flowers* from other people's gardens, *throw stones* at houses, *write on desks*, walls, and fences. They should be taught *not to injure the property of others.*

6. **Public officials** must be very careful not to **ACCEPT BRIBES**; they must guard against all signs of embezzlement.

Officials are placed in office not to enrich themselves, but to serve the public. They must treat all the citizens fairly and justly, reject all dishonest efforts to sway them from honesty, shun all kinds of speculation, and be most careful in their duty.

7. *It is a sin* to contract **debts** beyond one's ability to pay, and **not to pay debts** when due, even if able.

Young people should not go into debt; most of them, not having as yet any means of earning, would have no sure source from which to repay their debts. *It is very wrong to get into debt to satisfy a craving for amusement*, in order to buy more and more fashionable clothes, etc. But once in debt, to pay is a moral obligation.

8. **Employers** who do not pay a **just living wage** defraud others, and are guilty of injustice. **Employees** who *waste* time, do bad work willfully, or **neglect to take reasonable care** of their employers' property violate the seventh commandment.

(Regarding relations between employers and employees, see more on pages 240-241.)

9. Another sin against this commandment is the **violation of business contracts.**

One may be guilty of dishonesty by obtaining money or goods from others for a specific purpose and using the donated articles for other purposes. One who borrows books, instruments, etc. must take care of them and return them in proper condition and in the proper time. Children must not steal from parents, or keep change from purchases.

10. **Buying or receiving stolen goods** is a sin against the seventh commandment; **those who buy or receive stolen goods help and encourage thieves** for the sake of gain.

Receiving all or a portion of the estate of a deceased person contrary to the expressed wishes of that person is a sin of dishonesty, even if done with the approval of civil courts.



Once Our Lord was walking through Jericho. A rich publican, Zacheus, wished to see Him, but the crowd was so great that he could not. He therefore climbed up a tree along the path of Our Lord. Jesus saw Zacheus and told him to come down, for He

would be his guest. Zacheus told Jesus that he would restore fourfold whatever he had taken wrongly from anyone. Thus he determined to make reparation for his usury. Upon this Jesus called Zacheus a son of Abraham (Luke 19:1-10).

113. Reparation of Damage to Property

Are we obliged TO REPAIR DAMAGE UNJUSTLY DONE to the property of others?

We are obliged *to repair damage unjustly done* to the property of others, or *to pay the amount of the damage*, as far as we are able.

"When a man is burning over a field or a vineyard, if he lets the fire spread so that it burns in another's field, he must make restitution with the best produce of his own field or vineyard" (Ex. 22:4).

1. *If we have unknowingly*, by purchase or gift, obtained possession of *stolen property*, we are bound *to restore* it to the rightful owner, *as soon as we learn the truth*.

We are just possessors only as long as we do not know the goods were stolen. As soon as we become aware of that fact, we must give up the property. "The beginning of a good way is to do justice; and

this is more acceptable with God, than to offer sacrifices . . . Better is a little with justice, than great revenues with iniquity" (Proverbs 16:5, 8).

2. *If one refuses to restore stolen property* or to repair damage he has unjustly done to the property of others, he cannot be forgiven. *He will not obtain pardon from God, nor absolution from the priest*, even if he confess his sin over and over again.

As long as one does not *sincerely intend to make reparation*, his sin will not be remitted, even though he entreat divine pardon with weeping, or seek to appease divine justice by fasts and penances. It was not till Zacheus declared his determination to make restitution that Our Lord called him a son of Abraham (Luke 19:9).

3. *Justice requires reparation of the evil we do*, in so far as we have ability to make that reparation. *Without restitution or reparation, there is no forgiveness*.

St. Alphonsus relates the story of a rich man who had an ulcer in the arm and was near death. The priest urged him to restore the property he had unjustly acquired, but the man refused, saying that if he did so, his three sons would be left penniless.

The priest then said he knew of a cure for the rich man's disease: a living person must allow his hand to be burned, and while still raw, be applied to the ulcer. Eager to get well, the rich man had his three sons called, but not one of them was willing to have his hand burned.

The priest then said: "See, not one of your sons will burn a hand for you; yet you are willing to burn in hell-fire for all eternity, only to leave them your wealth." The rich man's eyes were opened, and he consented to make restitution.

4. **A person who has accidentally damaged the property** of another is not obliged to repair the damage **unless required by civil law**. Employees are bound to take reasonable care of the property of employers.

Are we obliged TO RESTORE TO the owner STOLEN GOODS, OR their value?

We are obliged to restore to the owner stolen goods, or their value, whenever we are able.

"When a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters or sells it, he shall restore five oxen for the one ox, and four sheep for the one sheep" (Ex. 21:37).

1. **If the rightful owner is dead**, the property must **be restored to his heirs**. If there are **no heirs**, it must be **given to the poor** or for some other charitable purpose.

If the thief cannot restore all he has stolen, **he must restore all he can**. If he has used what has been stolen, he must repair the damage done by restoring the equivalent. If he cannot restore anything, he must at least pray for the person he has wronged.

2. **If poverty or some other circumstance prevent** the thief from making restitution **immediately, he must resolve to do so as soon as possible**, and must make an effort to fulfill his resolution.

Restitution may be made secretly, without letting the owner know that restitution is being made. For instance, a money-order may be sent with a fictitious name; or the priest, who is pledged to secrecy, may be entrusted with the property to be restored.

3. **If we find an article of value**, we must **strive to discover the owner**, in order to restore the article. The **more valuable** it is,

the **greater our obligation to discover** the owner and restore it to him. If after all our earnest efforts we fail to find the rightful owner, **we may keep the article**.

A mason, engaged in repairing the stone wall of a building, found a metal box hidden in a cavity in the wall. He broke open the box and found that it contained jewels of all descriptions. He at once concealed the box and took it home without telling anyone what he had found. A few days afterwards, wishing to realize some money on the jewels, he took out several from the box and offered them to a jeweler for sale. The jeweler immediately had him arrested. The jewels he had offered were recognized as having belonged to a rich merchant who had been robbed and murdered a month before. The mason was unable to prove that he had merely found the box of jewels. He was tried and imprisoned for life for the murder of the merchant.

WHAT DOES the tenth commandment FORBID?

The tenth commandment forbids **all desire to take or to keep unjustly what belongs to others**, and also forbids envy at their success.

We are permitted to desire the property of others only when we propose to obtain it by **legitimate means**, such as by purchase or exchange.

"For covetousness is the root of all evils, and some in their eagerness to get rich have strayed from the faith and have involved themselves in many troubles" (1 Tim. 6:10).

AMONG THOSE GUILTY of violating the tenth commandment are:

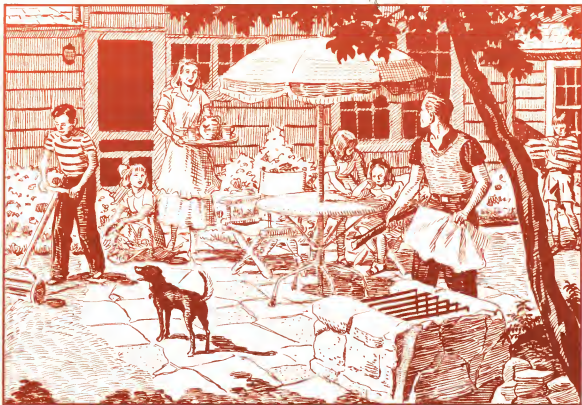
(a) **Those who desire or resolve to steal** or cause loss to others, even if the resolution is not carried out;

(b) **Children who wish for the death of their parents** in order to obtain their property;

(c) **Those who wish for war, epidemics, storms, fire, legal troubles, social outbreaks or other calamities, in order to profit** from the resulting high prices of their products; and

(d) **Those who deny the right of private property, such as Communists.**

Communism is an extreme form of Socialism, a form of politico-economic system in which ownership of all property is vested in civil society, which then would control both production and distribution. It has repeatedly been condemned in papal encyclicals, notably those of Leo XIII, Pius XI and XII.



CITIZENS ARE MOST HAPPY AND INDUSTRIOUS WHEN THEY OWN PROPERTY, HOWEVER MODEST.

The government should protect the right of private ownership. Citizens are most contented when they have some property to call their own, on which they can depend for the necessities of their families and for maintenance in their old age. Problems of

peace and order increase with the increase of people who have no property of their own to think about. Something is wrong when a country's wealth is in the hands of a limited few; everyone should be owner of something, however little.

114. Distribution of Property

What is THE INDUSTRIAL PROBLEM of the modern world?

The industrial problem of the modern world is *the question of honesty in economic matters* regarding social and civic aspects, and *a just distribution of property*—problems of religion because they concern fundamental human rights.

Some of the major phases of the problem are dealt with in the papal encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* (1891) of Leo XIII, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) of Pius XI, and *Mater et Magistra* (1961) of John XXIII.

1. The seventh and tenth commandments direct *the exercise of justice between man and man in the possession and use of property*. The rights of all must be respected; everyone must be given his due. In the modern world this has raised *a continuing issue*

between the employer and the employee—between Capital and Labor—on the subject of returns justly proportionate to corresponding contribution to industry.

This modern problem arose from the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, *when machinery came to be widely used, and the factory system was developed*. In consequence enormous wealth came to be concentrated in the hands of the propertied classes, while for the laboring classes there was a progressive lowering of wages below living standards.

2. *The problem has led to class conflict* and class tensions in some countries. Communists have tried to exploit this situation. *Industrially advanced countries* based on constitutionalism *have largely solved* the problem through reform. *Reform, not revolution, is the answer to the industrial problem.*

With great care people will consider not only the rights, but also the needs, of each factor in the modern conflict. Even from the point of view of strict justice alone, something does appear unbalanced in a world tolerating economic dictatorship in immense fortunes, side by side with virtual economic thralldom in excessive poverty.

WHAT CONSIDERATIONS ARE IMPORTANT in the resolution of the modern industrial problem?

In the resolution of the problem, *considerations on the rights and duties of the employer and of the employee* are important.

1. *The employer has the right to a just return on his investment—on the capital, the energy, the intelligence, and other factors that he supplies in his business. From his employees he has the right to expect honest work, and a reasonable care of his property. (See pages 217, 221, 237.)*

The employer has the right to a favorable reputation, without which he would fail in his business.

2. *The employee has the right to a just wage, to protection from unnecessary hazards in labor conditions, and to reasonable security in work. (See pages 214, 221, 235.)*

While it would not be possible to have all dangers in labor conditions removed, for the employees' safety dangerous machinery must be muzzled, protection must be provided against dusts and poisons of mines, sanitary conditions must prevail, etc.

Why is private ownership A RIGHT?

Private ownership is a right *because everyone has a right to life, and to all means necessary for the purposes of life.*

From earliest times the need and right of ownership have been recognized, even among the most undeveloped peoples. Every tongue certainly has words meaning "my" and "mine." It must be within man's right to have things, not merely for temporary and momentary use, as other living beings have them, but in stable and permanent possession" (Leo XIII).

1. *Individual ownership of the goods of the earth is a right derived, under God, from man's very nature. Man has a right to life, and must have everything necessary for the purposes of life. The seventh and tenth commandments are themselves based on this right; if nothing had owners, how could anything be stolen?*

Man has a basic need for wholesome living. There could be no adequate family life without some form of private ownership. Regarding other needs,

let us consider the effect on the self-respect of a man if he should become sure that he could never dispose of any goods, but must always be economically dependent. Let us try to imagine what stimulus a clever young man ordinarily would have who knew that even with the utmost exertion of his efforts, all he gained would finally be communal property.

2. However, *the Church does not hold the right of ownership as absolute, with complete freedom to do whatever one wishes with one's property. Common welfare makes necessary certain limitations to the right. That right is under God and subject to His will, limited by man's duties to God and his neighbor.*

Extreme individualism stands for the right of absolute ownership; extreme collectivism denies all right of private ownership. The Catholic concept is intermediate: private ownership is a right, but limited by the Great Commandments.

What is A LIVING WAGE?

A living wage is *one sufficient to support a man and his family in reasonable and frugal comfort.*

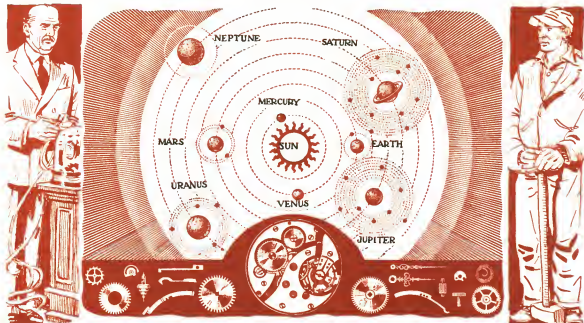
Man is made of body and soul, and when the most urgent material needs—such as food, shelter, clothing, and adequate conditions of work and living—are absent, it becomes very difficult for him to serve God as he ought, and avoid sin.

1. *For the same reason that ownership is a right, a just wage is a right, because a man has an inalienable right to life and to all means necessary for the purposes of life.*

"There is a dictate of nature more imperious and more ancient than any bargain between man and man, that the remuneration must be enough to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort" (Leo XIII). "The wage paid to the working-man must be sufficient for the support of himself and of his family" (Pius XI).

2. *A wage that would be sufficient to support a man and his family "in reasonable and frugal comfort" would be of an amount to cover the cost of living; it is variable according to conditions of time and place.*

A just wage should cover the cost of living for a family of husband and wife with their small children. Under American standards, it should include expenses for food, clothing, housing and house furnishings, heat and light, transportation, care of health, amusements, church contributions, and some incidentals. In the computation of wages it must be kept in mind that with Sundays and legal holidays the average workman has some sixty non-working days a year; besides, he is laid off with no work for about thirty days; and each year several work days are lost for unavoidable cause, like illness.



Capitol and Labor should work together, and not against each other. Neither can exist without the other. There must be co-operation for the common good, or order ceases. Order is the law of the universe. Around the sun revolve the planets; around the planets revolve their moons and

satellites. A watch runs smoothly as long as each part, however small, does its share; otherwise the watch goes out of order. The humblest laborer must be treated justly by his employer and in turn must be loyal to the employer, otherwise order will cease.

115. Social Justice

What remedies have been proposed for the modern industrial problem of the world?

Free countries (countries free from Communist colonialism) carry out social reform (social justice), while maintaining political freedom. Totalitarian countries (Fascist and Communist) claim to emancipate their people from subjection, but in fact "entire peoples found themselves in danger of falling back into a barbarism worse than that which oppressed the greater part of the world at the coming of the Redeemer." (Pope Pius XI, 1937 Encyclical on Atheistic Communism).

The Church advocates social justice within the moral order, with respect for private property. Enemies of the Church would destroy the moral order, and revolutionize society into a Godless ant heap.

In 1959 the Catholic Bishops of the United States declared: "Ultimately, the problem of Communism as a threat to peace and freedom will be met only when we exemplify the principles that we proclaim as Christian members of a nation dedicated to God's law. ... There must be a searching reappraisal of

our devotion to the principles we proclaim. We cannot live as materialists and expect to convert others to our system of freedom and peace under God."

The Bishops said that in 1959 Soviet dictator Khrushchev "took every opportunity to compare unfavorably capitalism with Communism in their economic aspects." But, the Bishops cautioned, this "is not the basic issue." The choice which "men and nations must make today is between freedom and coercion."

What is SOCIAL JUSTICE?

Social justice is *the exercise of God-given individual rights taken in relation to common welfare.*

In order to carry out its primary objective of sanctifying and saving men, *the Church defines certain principles—of what we term "social justice"—applying the law of God to conditions of present-day economic life.*

1. *The attitude of the Church on social justice is best summarized in the papal encyclical Mater et Magistra (Mother and Teacher)—1961—of John XXIII. The aim is to achieve a balance between individualism and the actions of the public authori-*

ties, for the common good, and for the wealthier nations to help uplift the poorer. "First of all it should be affirmed that **the economic order is the creation of the personal initiative of private citizens...** But... the public authorities must not remain inactive, if they are to promote in a proper way the productive development in behalf of social progress for the benefit of all citizens."

The principle of subsidiarity states that "just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to the community at large what private enterprise and industry can accomplish, so too it is an injustice, a grave ill, and a disturbance of right order for a larger and higher organization to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies....Of its very nature, the true aim of all social activity should be to help individual members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them."

2. **Remuneration of work.** "This requires that **the workers should be paid a wage which allows them to live a truly human life** and to face up with dignity to their family responsibilities, but it requires, too, that in the assessment of their remuneration regard be had to their effective contribution to the production and to the economic state of the enterprise and to the requirement of the common good of the respective political communities."

3. **Labor-Management relations.** "...the relations (should) be marked by **appreciation, understanding, a loyal and active cooperation**, and devotion to an undertaking **common to both**, and that the work be considered and effected by all the members of the enterprise, not merely as a source of income, but also as **the fulfillment of a duty** and the rendering of a service."

4. **The principle of natural right to private ownership inclusive of productive goods.** "The right of private ownership of goods, of productive goods inclusively, has a permanent validity...history and experience testify that in those political regimes which do not recognize the rights of private ownership of goods, the fundamental manifestations of freedom are suppressed or stifled." Further, "...the right of private property is intrinsically linked (to) a social function...the goods of the earth are above all destined for the worthy support of all human beings..."

5. **The rich nations should help the poor.** "...it is, therefore, indispensable and corre-

sponds to the need of justice that...**technical and financial aid be given in sincere political disinterestedness**, for the purpose of putting those communities on the way to economic development, in a position to **realize their own proper economic and social growth**. In such a way, a **precious contribution** to the formation of a world community would be made, a community in which all members are subjects conscious of their own duties and rights, working on a basis of equality **for the bringing about of the universal common good.**"

What are LABOR UNIONS?

Labor unions are **associations of workmen, aimed at the improvement of conditions under which they work**, as free members of a free society.

Many unions make provision for unemployment, sickness, old age, and death, in cooperation with management.

1. In spite of their faults, labor unions have brought benefits to their members. More than any other force, they have obtained a measure of justice for Labor, helping to equalize forces in the economy. **For the preservation of Labor's rights their existence is needed.**

Man has a natural right to organize, to form organizations that will help him in his chosen work. One can easily see that a single workman trying to sell his labor at a fair price bargains at a great disadvantage with a large business corporation. But if he is a member of a labor union, by the collective bargaining of that union he will be able to obtain reasonable terms.

2. The **strike is justifiable for just reasons**. Such reasons would be: **when rights are violated** or ignored, when **lawful contracts** are broken, or when other **difficulties of a serious nature** exist. **The strike should be used only as a last resort**, when no other means are available.

Workingmen in a strike must use no violence; they should not unreasonably lower the reputation of the employer. **Rights and needs of the community affected have to be well considered.**

3. **Labor unions must be careful not to impose politics of their leaders on members**, and must deal effectively with labor racketeers. **Labor leaders have a responsibility to their members, to industry, and to the public at large.**



116a. Peace on Earth

Teachings from the encyclical "*Pacem in Terris*" of Pope John XXIII dated April 11, 1963

Introduction. Order in the Universe

Peace on earth can be firmly established only if the order laid down by God be dutifully observed. "O Lord our Master! The majesty of Thy name fills all the earth." (Ps. VIII:1)

Part I. Order Between Men

Every human being has rights and duties. Rights include those to life and worthy standard of living, freedom of religion and association, freedom of speech and the right to search for truth, the right to free initiative in the economic field and the right to work, and the right to emigrate and immigrate.

But those who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other. *Political society should be based on truth and the moral order.* Any human society that is established on relations of force must be regarded as inhuman, inasmuch as the personality of its members is repressed or restricted, when in fact they should be provided with appropriate incentives and means for developing and perfecting themselves. In addition, the people of one country or ethnic group should not be subject to political powers located outside. *Racial discrimination can no longer be justified*, at least doctrinally and in theory.

Part II. Relations Between Individuals and the Public Authorities

Legitimate authority comes only from God. Where the civil authority uses as its only or its chief means either threat and fear of punishment or promises of reward, it cannot effectively move men to promote the common good of all. *Authority is chiefly concerned with moral, not physical force*, and no one may be coerced to perform interior acts.

If a human society is not based on the moral order and if it does not recognize that the source of its authority is God, its laws and actions are not binding on the consciences of its citizens. This means that, *if any government does not acknowledge the rights of man or violates them*, it not only fails its duty, but its orders completely lack juridical force.

The common good is best preserved where free enterprise in the economic order prevails. For this principle must always be retained: that *state activity in the economic field ought not to be exercised in such a way as to curtail an individual's freedom or personal initiative.* Rather it should work to expand that freedom as much as possible by the effective protection of the essential rights of each and every individual.

The same form of government is not prescribed for all, so long as authority is recognized as coming from God and so long as the moral order is observed: "It is in keeping with their dignity as persons that human beings should take an active part in government, although the manner in which they share in it will depend on the level of development of the political community to which they belong."

Part III. Relations Between States

Relations between states must be based on the moral law. Each state has the right to existence, to self-development; on the international level, one state may not develop itself by restricting or oppressing other states.

There are countries with an abundance of arable land and a scarcity of manpower, while in other countries there is no proportion between natural resources and the capital available. This demand that peoples should set up relationships of mutual collaboration, facilitating the circulation from one to the other of capital, goods and manpower.

Disagreements must be settled, not by force, nor by deceit or trickery. What a sad plight is that of the phenomenon of political refugees; a phenomenon which has assumed large proportions and which always hides numberless and acute sufferings!

Pope John deploras "the enormous stocks of armaments that have been and still are being made on the grounds that peace cannot be preserved without equal balance of armaments." "Consequently, people live in constant fear lest the storm should break upon them." "Justice, right reason and humanity urgently demand that the arms race should cease." "Nuclear weapons and nuclear tests, undertaken with war in mind, should be banned."

Because liberty is just as important as peace, relations between states should be based on freedom, that is to say, that no country may unjustly oppress others or unduly meddle in their affairs.

Part IV. Relationship of Men and of Political Communities with the World Community

The Holy Father calls for the establishment of a new world public authority "set up by common accord and not imposed by force. But he does not have in mind a world government. The difficulty is that there would be reason to fear that a super-national or worldwide public authority, imposed by force... might be or might become an instrument of one-sided interests.

Thus sovereign states are right in not easily yielding in obedience to an authority imposed by force, or to an authority in whose creation they had no part or to which they themselves did not decide to submit by conscious and free choice. Indeed the confederate public authority of the world, which should recognize the principle of subsidiarity just as it should be recognized within states, is not intended to limit the sphere of action of the public authority of the individual community, much less to take its place. Its sole task is to promote human rights and security of individual states.

It is the earnest wish of Pope John that the United Nations—in its structure and in its means—may become ever more equal to the magnitude and nobility of its tasks, and that the day may come when every human being will find therein an effective safeguard for his rights.

Part V. Pastoral Exhortations

Catholics are called on to work with non-Catholics, and Christians with non-Christians. Even historical movements based on error may change. Thus it may be opportune to draw nearer or hold meetings with such movements. "But to decide whether this moment has arrived, and also to lay down the ways and degrees in which work in common might be possible for the achievement of economic, social, cultural and political ends which are honorable and useful: these are the problems which can only be solved with the virtue of prudence, which is the guiding light of the virtues that regulate the moral life, both individual and social."

Salvation and justice are not to be found in revolution, but in evolution through concord. Violence has always achieved only destruction, not construction, the kindling of passion, not their pacification, the accumulation of hate and ruin, not the reconciliation of the contending parties.

And the Pope concludes: "However, peace will be but an empty-sounding word unless it is founded on the order which this present document has outlined in confident hope: An order founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom."

"Upon all men of good will to whom this encyclical letter is addressed, we implore from Almighty God health and prosperity."

116b. Communism

What do Communists believe?

Communists believe that what exists in the Soviet Union, as well as in the satellite states of eastern Europe and the Far East, is Socialism. According to the Communists, Socialism is an imperfect society which, although an improvement on Capitalism, falls short of the perfection of Communism. But the objective of all Communists is Communism, a society in which everyone will think and act as Communists do.

Communists often refer to Communism as the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism, or "scientific Socialism" (to distinguish it from "unscientific Socialism," or Socialism which deviates from the Moscow norm). Karl Marx, the German philosopher (1813-1883), and Vladimir I. Lenin, founder of the Communist Party and dictator of the Soviet Union (1870-1924) are the authoritative exponents of the doctrine, which is interpreted by whoever happens to be dictator of the Soviet Union (currently Nikita Khrushchev, 1894—).

In March, 1917, a revolution ousted Tsar Nicholas II and ultimately brought to power of the *Russian Government* a naive idealist named Alexander Kerensky.

With German help, Lenin and the Bolsheviks returned to Russia and began to infiltrate into the most effective anti-Kerensky organization—the Soviets. In November, 1917, the Bolsheviks overthrew the Kerensky regime.

Lenin changed the name of his party in January, 1918, from the Bolshevik wing of the Social Democrat Party to the Communist Party. Lenin died in 1924, and then a struggle for power began, waged by Stalin, Trotsky, Kámenev and Zinoviev. Using ruthless methods, Stalin won out in 1928.

Lenin hoped that revolutionary-minded Marxists in other countries would follow the example of the Bolsheviks and overthrow Capitalism everywhere. In March, 1919, he created the Third International, in order to direct and coordinate the efforts of Communists everywhere.

Communists believe that human beings can be remolded in the Communist image and likeness, and their former standard of values can be replaced by "Leninist morality."

However, *there is no evidence that persons living in the Soviet Union or in Soviet colonies are any better off* for living in Soviet society. Indeed the *constant stream of refugees and escapees* from the Soviet Empire *suggests that there is mass dissatisfaction* with dictatorial rule and lack of human freedoms.

Describe the Communist METHOD OF ACTION.

1. Communist tactics change with the ebb and flow of the revolutionary tide. Lenin laid down the principle that Communist policy must "zig" and "zag" in order to reach the ultimate goal; he described this procedure as "taking two steps backwards in order to take one step forward." Thus Moscow exploits areas of weakness and advances until it meets strong opposition, at which time it halts, lulls the opposition to sleep with talk of peace, and shifts the attack to a new area of weakness.

The Bolsheviks have come a long way since those dark days in 1917, when all they possessed was a rented room in Zurich. Today they control one-third of the world's population, and one-fourth of the land area of the world. But there are only 42 million members of Communist parties in the world, and since 1949 they have failed to take over a single nation outside the Communist bloc. They have tried in Greece, Malaya, Korea and Vietnam, and have failed every time.

In the final analysis, what counts for the Communist is power, diplomacy, and subversion, not election results. No Communist dictatorship has ever been established through free elections; in every case it has been the result of Communist military action, diplomacy, and subversion.

2. *The Draft Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, prepared for the 22nd Party Congress in October, 1961*, boasts that "The world of socialism is growing larger. The world of socialism is contracting. . . . Socialism will inevitably take over from capitalism everywhere; such is the objective law of the development of society. . . . Marxism-Leninism has become the mighty ideological weapon of the revolutionary transformation of society." "The success of the struggle which the working class wages for the victory of the revolution will depend on how well the working class and its party master the use of all forms of struggle—peaceful and non-peaceful, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary—and how well they are prepared to replace one form of struggle by another as quickly and unexpectedly as possible. . . . But whatever the form in which the transition from capitalism to socialism is effected, that transition can come about only through revolution."

Why does Communism ATTRACT PEOPLE?

Like Nazism and Fascism, *Communism promises pie in the sky*, bye and bye. Yet the Communists have to build walls and iron curtains to keep their people from leaving. Before the Berlin Wall was built, 200,000 people every year moved from east Germany to Berlin and West Germany. 10,000 persons a month leave mainland China for Hong Kong and Formosa. 70% of the Chinese prisoners taken by the UN Command during the Korean war chose to go to Formosa rather than return to the Communist mainland.

Communism is not really interested in *reform or human progress* within the framework of an orderly Judaeo-Christian society. Communists do not really want to uplift the laboring man or strengthen civil rights. Inside the Soviet bloc labor is enslaved and there are no civil rights. Communists do strive to take advantage of the weaknesses and internal schisms of free societies in order to overthrow these societies and impose Communist dictatorships.

Non-Communists must continue to work hard to improve their own societies and to eliminate injustice and inhumanity. The Communist challenge is essentially military and conspiratorial, not economic or social.

What is the ATTITUDE OF THE HOLY SEE towards Communism?

From the beginning the Holy See has perceived the evil of Communism, and has issued warnings against it.

1. During the time of Marx, *Pope Pius IX* in 1846 pronounced a condemnation of the theory.

He described it as "absolutely contrary to the natural law itself," a doctrine which, if adopted, would "utterly destroy the rights, property, and possessions of all men, and even society itself."

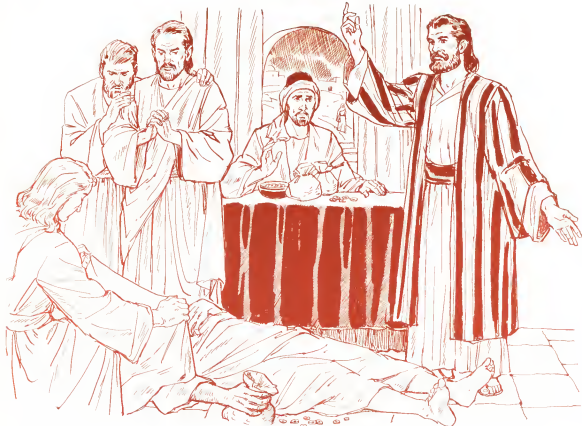
Pope Pius XI in his encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* (1937) said, "The most urgent need of the present day is, therefore, the energetic and timely application of remedies which will effectively ward off the catastrophe that daily grows more threatening. *We cherish the firm hope that the fanaticism* with which the sons of darkness work day and night at their materialistic and atheistic propaganda *will at least serve the holy purpose of stimulating* the sons of light to a like and even greater zeal for the honor of the Divine Majesty."

In the same encyclical *Divini Redemptoris*, he wrote, "The most persistent enemies of the Church who from Moscow are directing the struggle against Christian civilization themselves bear witness, by their unceasing attacks in word and act, that even to this hour the Papacy has continued faithfully to protect the sanctuary of the Christian religion, and that it has called public attention to the perils of Communism more frequently and more effectively than any other public authority on earth."

How can Communism BE PREVENTED?

The Free World must demonstrate that the chief point of difference between it and the Soviet Empire is human freedom. Where human dignity is violated in the Free World, governments act to correct the situation. But in the Soviet realm *Communist dictatorships* systematically *repress and liquidate freedom-loving and God-fearing people*.

The Western ethic is rooted in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, with its emphasis on the responsible individual possessing God-given rights. The Soviet ethic is rooted in the Marxist-Leninist tradition, with its emphasis on nihilism, the omniscient leader, and the mass of the people who are without rights.



It was the custom among the first Christians for the rich to sell their property and give the money to the Apostles to be shared among all. Ananias and his wife Sapphira, two disciples, sold their land. But they plotted to keep back some of the money. Giving the rest to St. Peter, Ananias pretended

that it was the whole price that had been received for the land. St. Peter rebuked him and said that he lied against the Holy Ghost. Ananias fell down dead. Later, Sapphira, not knowing what had happened to her husband, told the same lie to St. Peter. She also fell and died immediately after.

117. The Eighth Commandment

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex. 20:16).

WHAT ARE WE COMMANDED by the eighth commandment?

By the eighth commandment we are commanded *to speak the truth in all things*, but especially in what concerns the good name and honor of others.

1. **God is the God of truth**, and we are obliged to respect that truth. If we would prove ourselves children of God, we should, like Him, *always respect the truth*.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life," says Our Lord (John 14:6). "*You shall not lie*" (Lev. 19:11). This is why a lie, even when told for a good purpose, is always a sin, because it is contrary to the nature of God.

2. **The lover of truth** is like God, and *well-pleasing to Him*. The lover of truth is also held in esteem by his fellowmen, who know that they can trust him, for in him, as in Nathaniel (John 1:47), is no guile.

Even if we suffer from telling the truth, we shall be saved trouble and shall possess a clear conscience.

3. **A habitual liar** not only is often led into grave sin, but forfeits the trust of his fellow-beings, and is the cause of a great deal of harm. **When people know that one is a habitual liar, they do not believe him even when he tells the truth.**

"Better a thief than an inveterate liar, yet both will suffer disgrace" (Sirach 20:24).

OUR NEIGHBOR'S GOOD NAME

1. In the eighth commandment *God forbids us to detract* in any way from our neighbor's honor or reputation. It is our good reputation that keeps us well-thought of and well-spoken of among our fellowmen.

"A good name is more desirable than great riches, and high esteem than gold and silver" (Prov. 22:1). *The esteem of others is essential to real happiness*; those who know they are despised by their fellowmen are not likely to be happy in this life. One who brings another into disrepute is a thief, stealing a good name.

2. A good name is acquired by consistent struggle, by leading an upright life, by defending ourselves whenever false accusations are made against us. This is why, in ordinary cases, we do our good works openly in accordance with Our Lord's injunction, "So let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

Good works are the best means of defending a good name. We must, however, be sure we do not do our good works only to make a show before men, but chiefly to please God. When our name is in danger, we should defend ourselves and justify ourselves; but it is foolish to make too much fuss over trifles, as going to court over nothing.

3. If we would not speak so often, we would avoid many sins into which we habitually fall, consisting of sins of the tongue. Most of the sins committed are sins of the tongue: lying, backbiting, slander, gossip, calumny, detraction, the telling of secrets, all the results of talkativeness.

Let us try an experiment: For one whole day do not speak unless absolutely necessary, but each time you would have talked, jot down what you had wanted to talk about. At the end of the day you will see how many useless things, things wasteful of time, not to mention unkind and sinful things, you had wanted to say. If people would only hold their tongues, how much more useful they could be!

4. Truthfulness promotes the general welfare of society and mutual trust among men. The orderliness of the social order depends greatly on members speaking the truth.

Let us imagine our own special community, with our favorite friends and tradesmen, with those we contact every day on various matters. Let us imagine the situation if we were not certain they were telling the truth all the time, but only a probable ten percent of the time!

What is AN EVASION?

An evasion is a statement that may be interpreted in two ways.

1. We are permitted to give an evasive or doublemeaning answer when there is no obligation to answer, and in order: (a) to conceal a secret we have an obligation or a right to keep; and (b) to shield ourselves or others from harm. In an evasive reply, the hearer deceives himself by his interpretation of what he hears.

St. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, was concealed in a vessel on the Nile, when the soldiers of the Emperor Julian overtook and stopped it. On their inquiring where Athanasius was, his servant replied: "He is not gone far." The soldiers went onward.

2. We are not supposed or expected to tell everybody our private affairs or those of our friends or superiors. Many persons out of carelessness or curiosity have a most irritating habit of asking very personal questions, such as "Where have you been?" "Where are you going?" "Did you have a visitor?" "Where do you get so much money?" "What do you do all day?" "What is your work now?" "How much did you pay for your dress?" "Why did you leave home?" etc. If we are asked indiscreet questions by such curious or ill-bred people, we have a right to give an evasive answer.

At best these questions are a sign of extreme ill-breeding. We should be more thoughtful and discreet, and give everybody the right to his own private affairs. Answering, "He is not at home" is a social custom understood to mean that the person is not receiving callers, even if he is in the house. If a person we cannot trust tries to borrow money from us we can say: "I have no money" (meaning, I have none to lend you).

3. When another has the right to the truth, we must answer simply and openly. Such is the case in buying or selling, or in drawing up an agreement. It would be against justice if two persons about to marry were to deceive each other by evasions about money matters and other things.

WHAT DOES the eighth commandment FORBID?

The eighth commandment forbids lies, rash judgment, detraction, calumny, and the telling of secrets we are bound to keep.

"Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD" (Prov. 12:22). "Wherefore, put away lying and speak truth each one with his neighbor, because we are members of one another" (Eph. 4:25).



1. The greatest columnies were spoken when false witnesses testified against Jesus before Coiphos. The high priest gave ear to the columnies and condemned Our Lord to death, although he knew Him to be innocent.



2. People who gossip and spread tales that detract from the reputation of someone have much to answer for. "He who speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law" (Jas. 4:11).

118. Sins Against Truth

What is a LIE?

A lie is **something said for the purpose of deceiving others**, which we know or suspect to be untrue.

A lie expresses **opposition between one's word and one's thought**; it implies the intention to deceive by stating what is false.

Lying is a sin even when it may be the means of effecting much good; we must not commit evil in order to obtain good.

(a) A **malicious lie** is told for the purpose of **injuring someone**. It is by its nature a mortal sin; it becomes venial when the injury done is slight. **A lie taken under oath is perjury**, a mortal sin.

(b) An **officious lie** is told to avert evil from oneself or others. It is called a **"white" lie**.

(c) A **jocose lie** is told to **amuse others**. Very often it is no sin at all, as when we relate an imaginary narrative for the amusement or instruction of others, tell a joke which we made up, relate fables and fairy tales, etc. But if a jocose lie has harmful results, it becomes sinful.

(d) **Sins related to lying**, as violations of the respect due to truth, are **hypocrisy**, and **flattery**.

1. **Hypocrisy** or dissimulation is **acting a lie**. It is hypocrisy to pretend to be better than we are.

It was **hypocrisy of Judas to kiss Our Lord like a friend**, when it was only to betray Him. Those who are outwardly pious but lead lives of sin are hypocrites. They resemble Satan, who can assume the form of an angel of light. **Jesus called** hypocrites **"whited sepulchers"**, beautiful outside, but within full of dead men's bones.

2. **Flattery** consists in praising a person immoderately, against one's conviction, for an ulterior motive. **A flatterer lies in order to secure an advantage for himself**.

"The man who flatters his neighbor is spreading a net under his feet" (Prov. 29:5). "Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil, who change darkness into light, and light into darkness" (Is. 5:20).

When does a person commit the sin of RASH JUDGMENT?

A person commits the sin of rash judgment *when*, without sufficient reason, **he believes something harmful to another's character.**

People judge others by themselves; he who is not evil will less likely think evil quickly of others; he who is a sinner will interpret the actions of others in an evil manner at once. "*Charity thinks no evil*" (1 Cor. 13:5). A just person, even when he sees evil, tries to avoid thinking of it, and leaves the judgment to God. "*Do not judge, that you may not be judged*. For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged" (Matt. 7:1-2).

When does a person commit the sin of DETRACTION?

A person commits the sin of detraction *when*, without good reason, **he makes known the hidden faults of another.**

1. To speak of *what everybody knows* or of what appeared in the newspapers is not detraction.

It is however contemptible for newspapers to publish family troubles that are of no public concern. *Tale-bearing* is a most despicable form of detraction, in repeating to a person unfavorable remarks made about him.

2. *Uncharitable conversation* is commonly termed *backbiting*, a cowardly act of discussing the known faults of another without necessity, and behind his back.

It is *wrong* to *listen* to detraction and uncharitable conversation, if we take pleasure in it or encourage it. "Let anything you heard die within you" (Sirach 19:9).

When does a person commit the sin of CALUMNY or SLANDER?

A person commits the sin of calumny or slander when by lying he injures the good name of another.

GOSSIP is a *form of calumny*, because it usually exaggerates a person's faults or sin with malice.

CONTUMELY or insult dishonors a person unjustly in his presence *by refusing to show him the signs of honor due him*, or by not noticing him.

LIBEL is *any public defamatory accusation*, maliciously made, whether the facts be true or not. This may be done by letter, telephone, radio, motion picture, television, etc. Calumny or slander, gossip or libel **are sins against justice.**

When are we obliged to keep a SECRET?

We are obliged to keep a secret *when we have promised* to do so, when *our office requires* it, or when *the good of another* demands it.

1. *A priest may never* reveal anything confided to him *in confession*, even if keeping it secret will result in death for himself or others. **This rule has no exception.**

2. *A secret may be revealed* when: (a) it is for the good of the guilty person; (b) it will save ourselves or others from evil; (c) keeping it secret is against justice or the welfare of society; and (d) the person to whom it is revealed has a right to know.

When there is just reason for revealing a secret, we may do so to persons in *authority*, such as parents, superiors, teachers, or courts of law. Serious faults should be made known to parents, teachers, and superiors, who may be able to correct them. Care should be taken to **avoid exaggerating faults.**

3. *It is wrong to read another person's letters* without permission. *Eavesdroppers* are contemptible. *A tattletale* is despicable.

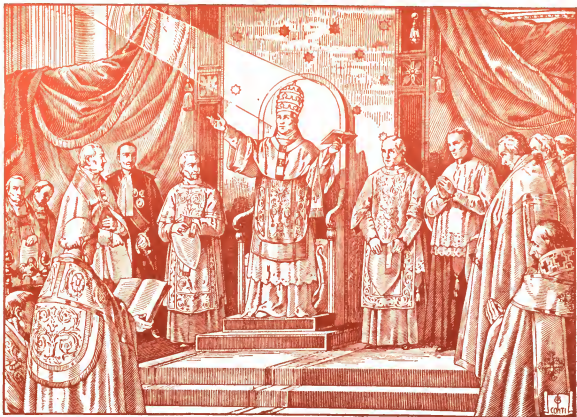
What must a person do who has sinned by detraction or calumny, or has told a secret he is bound to keep?

A person who has sinned by detraction or calumny, or who has told a secret he is bound to keep, **must repair the harm he has done to his neighbor**, as far as he is able.

If the offense was made before others, we must **retract publicly**. If we do not endeavor to repair the harm we have done, we cannot obtain God's pardon or the priest's absolution.

It is very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to **make perfect reparation** for calumny and detraction. *Words once spoken* are not forgotten by those who hear.

A story is told of the saintly Curé d'Ars and a penitent at the confessional, who had confessed having gossiped about an acquaintance. The penitent thought he got off very easily indeed when all the penance he was given was to drop one by one ten blades of straw in the yard before his house, at a distance of five meters apart, and then to go back and pick up the ten blades. Going home, he proceeded to perform the penance. But he realized the lesson the saintly priest wished him to learn when, upon returning to pick up the blades of straw, he could find none; the wind had blown them all away.



Our Lord Jesus Christ gave His Church the power to teach, to sanctify, and to rule its members, in order to lead them to their eternal salvation. And to fulfill these ends, the Church has power to make

laws. Our Lord gave the Apostles full power; He sent them as God the Father had sent Him. Disobedience to the Church is therefore disobedience to God.

119. The Commandments of the Church

WHENCE has the Catholic Church THE RIGHT TO MAKE LAWS?

The Catholic Church has the right to make laws *from Jesus Christ*, Who said to the Apostles, the first bishops of His Church: "*Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven*" (Matt. 18:18).

1. No society can exist without the *power to govern* its members. *No government is possible without laws*. Unless the Church had the power and right to make laws, it could not lead its members to heaven.

Our Lord said: "*If he refuse to hear even the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican. Amen I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven*" (Matt. 18:17-18). This power to bind and loose is called the "*power of the keys*."

2. We are under a rigorous obligation to obey the laws or precepts of the Church. *Disobedience to the Church is disobedience to God* Who gave it full authority.

A bad Catholic once said to a friend, "God will not punish me for not keeping the Church laws on fast and abstinence. I observe all the Ten Commandments, and I do not need to obey the laws made only by the Church." But the friend answered, "Did not God command us to hear the Church? Then if we do not obey its laws, we disobey Him as well."

3. *Authority to make laws* includes *power to enforce* them. Hence *the Church has the right to punish disobedient members* by refusing them the sacraments, denying them Catholic burial, and other penalties.

"He therefore said to them again, 'Peace be to you! *As the Father has sent me, I also send you*'" (John 20:21).

BY WHOM IS THIS RIGHT to make laws EXERCISED?

This right to make laws is exercised *by the bishops*, the successors of the Apostles, and especially *by the Pope*, who as the successor of the chief of the Apostles, Saint Peter, has the right to make laws for the universal Church.

1. *The Pope* can make and unmake laws for the entire Church; *his authority is supreme* and unquestioned. Every bishop, every priest, every member of the Church is subject to him.

This authority comes from *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God, Who *chose Peter as Head of His Church*. The Holy Father is our St. Peter, his direct successor; we must obey him as Christ commanded all to obey Peter.

2. Laws are also made by *each bishop* for his own diocese, and by a general council of bishops for the entire Church. These last have no efficacy without the Pope's approval.

3. A good Catholic shows *obedience* to God by conforming himself *not only to the letter, but to the spirit of the laws* of the Church. He obeys strictly what the Church commands, praises what it praises, condemns what it condemns. *The Church is our Mother*, good and wise, *who looks only to our temporal and spiritual welfare*; let us show our love for her by the obedience we render.

The *Church is our Mother*, given us by Christ Himself, to guide us until He comes again. If we obey this guide we shall have peace on earth, and eternal happiness with God in heaven. The Church can truly say with our Divine Saviour: "My yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Matt. 11:30).

4. *The laws of the Church*, in general, do not command things which are of their nature obligatory. For example, *abstinence* for certain days *is not a natural law*, but a *human law*. Therefore, this being the case, *the Church that made such human laws can also dispense from them*, change them, or abolish them altogether.

This is why bishops can excuse from fast and abstinence when they find good reason; this is why the holidays of obligation are not uniform throughout the entire world. *The Church cannot abolish or change the Commandments of God*, but it can its own commandments. All natural laws are included in the Ten Commandments; *these everybody, everywhere, must obey at all times*.

THE CHIEF COMMANDMENTS, or laws, of the CHURCH are these six:

1. *To assist at Mass* on all Sundays and holydays of obligation.
2. *To fast* and to *abstain* on the days appointed.
3. *To confess our sins* at least once a year.
4. *To receive Holy Communion* during the Easter time.
5. *To contribute* to the support of the Church.
6. *To observe the laws* of the Church *concerning marriage*.

Are there any other commandments, or laws, of the Church, besides these six?

There are many other commandments, or laws, of the Church besides these six; but these are the principal ones, and the ones with which the ordinary life of Catholics is concerned.

1. *A Catholic is bound to observe all* of the precepts of the Church. Some of them forbid:

- (a) *The reading or possession* of bad books, magazines, and other publications.
- (b) *Membership* in Masonic or other *anti-Catholic associations*.
- (c) *Cremation* of the bodies of the dead.
- (d) *The education of Catholic children* in non-Catholic schools; etc.

Laws for the government of the Catholic Church are contained in the CODE OF CANON LAW, which at present contains 2414 canons. From time to time, as necessity arises, the Pope through the different Roman Congregations issues decrees, laws, or regulations for the welfare of the Church. *Catholics are obliged to obey these laws*.

2. The Church, through its rulers, has the *power to dispense* from its precepts. The *Pope, the bishops, and the parish priests may* for weighty reasons *release* or *excuse* the faithful from the observance of particular Church laws.

It may happen that in a certain community the patronal feast may fall on a Friday of Lent. Because of the unusually great number of people, it would be difficult to provide abstinence food for everybody. In such cases the Bishop may grant a dispensation from abstinence, and even fast, locally.



On holydays of obligation, just as on Sundays, we must hear Mass and abstain from unnecessary servile work. If without any grave reason one fails to sanctify the holydays of obligation he commits a mortal sin. Those obliged to work on holydays of

obligation should at least hear Mass before going to their work. Catholic employers have a serious obligation of making it easy for those under them to sanctify holydays of obligation. All are children of the same Eternal Father.

120. First Commandment of the Church

"To assist at Mass on all Sundays and holydays of obligation."

What sin does a Catholic commit who through his own fault misses Mass on a Sunday or holyday of obligation?

A Catholic who through his own fault misses Mass on a Sunday or holyday of obligation commits a mortal sin.

The precept is not binding on one who must care for the sick, or lives rather far from a church, or who has urgent work, or is ill.

1. **The first precept of the Church requires us to sanctify Sundays and holydays of obligation.** Then we render to God and the saints some of the honor due them.

The aim of instituting holydays is to have the faithful remember for all time the important events commemorated, and to have them give praise and thanksgiving to God for them.

This is why we should always try to celebrate holydays in a becoming manner. Some persons unhappily treat holydays as merely days to eat and drink and be merry, without regard for the occasion commemorated.

2. The civil law does not recognize as holydays some of the Church holydays of obligation; factories, offices, and schools keep open on those days. **But even if Catholics must go to work on such holydays, they should at least try to hear Mass.** In many churches, there is Mass at an early hour in the morning, at noon, in the afternoon, and evening.

Persons not obliged to work on holydays of obligation should avoid doing so. But those who must work need remember only Our Lord's words: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28).

THE HOLYDAYS OF OBLIGATION in the United States are these six:

1. *Christmas Day* (December 25).

On this day we commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ in the stable at Bethlehem. "And it came to pass while they were there, that the days for her to be delivered were fulfilled. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:6-7).

2. *Octave of the Birth of Our Lord* (January 1).

When Jesus was eight days old, He was circumcised, according to the custom of the Jews. "And when eight days were fulfilled for his circumcision, his name was called Jesus" (Luke 2:21). In Hebrew, Jesus means "Saviour." The name most commonly given to the Messiah by the Prophets was "Emmanuel," which means, God with us.

3. *Ascension Thursday* (40 days after Easter).

Forty days after His Resurrection from the dead, Our Lord ascended into heaven from Mount Olivet. "Now he led them out towards Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass as he blessed them, that he parted from them and was carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50-51). And when he had said this, he was lifted up before their eyes, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing up to heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white garments, and said to them, "Men of Galilee, . . . this Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you have seen him going up to heaven" (Acts, 1:9-11).

4. *The Assumption* (August 15).

After her death, the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary was reunited to her incorrupt body, and she was taken up to heaven by the ministry of angels. No one has ever claimed possessing any relic of Mary's body; if she had not been assumed into heaven, would not the Apostles, who revered her highly, have kept her relics?

5. *All Saints' Day* (November 1).

On all Saints' Day we honor the memory of all the Saints in heaven and implore their intercession.

6. *The Immaculate Conception* (December 8).

God Himself proclaimed Mary's spotless purity in Paradise (Gen. 3:15); the archangel Gabriel announced it, calling her "full of grace." Christians throughout the ages have called Mary immaculate; the dogma was declared by the Pope in 1854. It is an article of faith to believe that Mary was conceived entirely free from original sin.

There are *four other holydays* of obligation in the universal Church: the Feasts of *Epiphany, Corpus Christi, Saint Joseph, and Saints Peter and Paul.*

With the approval of the Holy See, these four feasts are not holydays of obligation in the United States.

WHAT ELSE does the church OBLIGE US TO DO on holydays of obligation?

The Church obliges us to abstain from servile work on holydays of obligation, just as on Sundays, as far as we are able. (See pages 214-215, *Unnecessary Servile Work.*)

On these days Catholics should keep away from housework like washing and housecleaning.

WHY WERE HOLYDAYS INSTITUTED by the Church?

Holydays were instituted by the Church to remind us of the mysteries of our religion, and of the important events in the lives of Christ and of His Blessed Mother, and to recall to us the virtues and the rewards of the saints.

1. *The Church appoints festivals* in honor of Our Lord, in order that we may recall the principal mysteries of our Redemption, thank God for the graces received through these mysteries, and make them bear fruit in our lives.

The feasts of Our Lord that do not necessarily fall on a Sunday are: Christmas, the Circumcision, and the Ascension. Easter and Pentecost always fall on a Sunday.

2. *Other feasts of Our Lord* that should be properly celebrated are: (a) the *Epiphany*, January 6; and (b) *Corpus Christi*, the Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

The *Epiphany* celebrates the adoration of the newly-born Child by the Magi, the Wise Men from the East,—Melchor, Gaspar, and Baltassar. The feast is called the *Epiphany* (or "manifestation") because it celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

3. *The festivals in honor of Our Lady and the Saints* are prescribed, that we may reverence them as God's friends, and profit by their intercession and example.

Whenever able, we should try to hear Mass on other important holydays, even though they may not be of obligation. Two of these important feasts are: (a) the feast of St. Joseph on March 19, and (b) the feast of Saints Peter and Paul on June 29.

the ecclesiastical year +++



The entire year is divided by the Church into periods and seasons, some of rejoicing, some of penance, and others of ordinary prayer and work. By following the cycle of feasts and fests, and living in the spirit of each time, we shall sanctify the whole year

and make it bear fruit pleasing to God. In observing the seasons, we should look upon the events as actually occurring. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ; she lives over every year the mysteries of His life. Thus we unite ourselves with Christ.

121. The Ecclesiastical Year

What is the ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR?

The ecclesiastical year *is the succession or cycle of seasons*, including all the feasts, celebrated by the Church during the year.

1. The ecclesiastical year is made up of *six seasons* or periods of unequal length: *Advent, Christmastide, Septuagesima, Lent, Paschaltide, and the season of Throughout the Year*. These seasons are regulated in their occurrence by the three principal feasts of the year: *Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost*. The Epistles and Gospels, as well as the Hymns and Sequences of the Mass, are in consonance with the seasons and periods of the ecclesiastical year.

The ecclesiastical year differs somewhat from the civil year. Instead of beginning on a fixed date,

January 1, as the civil year does, *the ecclesiastical year begins with the first Sunday of Advent*, four Sundays before Christmas. (See pages 414-417.)

2. The three *principal feasts* of the year are: (a) *Christmas*, which commemorates the birth of Our Lord; (b) *Easter*, which celebrates His resurrection; and (c) *Pentecost*, which celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit.

All three feasts are prolonged by an "octave"; Christmas and Easter are *preceded by a season of preparation*. *Easter is always the Sunday after the first full moon* following March 21. Its position determines the position of the different seasons and moveable festivals of the entire year.

3. The Church commemorates the different feasts and seasons, *placing the various events of the life of Our Lord before us*, in order that we may ponder over them and imitate the virtues presented.

What is ADVENT?

Advent is the season of *preparation for Christmas*.

"Advent" means coming. It begins with the first Sunday of Advent, and embraces the four Sundays before Christmas. *It is a season of penance in preparation for the birth of the Redeemer.*

The four weeks of Advent represent the long thousand years during which the coming of the Messiah was expected and prepared for. *As a sign of penance, the Church uses purple vestments for the Mass of the season, suppresses the joyous Gloria, omits flowers on the altar, and forbids the saying of the Nuptial Mass, etc.*

What is CHRISTMASTIDE?

Christmastide is the season of *celebration after Christmas*, a season of *joy*. It includes the periods of "Christmas" and that of the "Epiphany."

During this period we celebrate events in the *child life* of Our Lord: the Octave of Christmas when His *Circumcision* took place, the Feasts of the *Holy Name of Jesus*, of the *Epiphany*, of the *Holy Family* and the Feast of the *Baptism of Our Lord* on the 13th of January. Christmastide ends on this day.

What is SEPTUAGESIMA?

Septuagesima is the period of *preparation for Lent*.

The *season lasts two weeks and a half*, from Septuagesima Sunday to Ash Wednesday, and includes three Sundays, respectively called Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima (70th, 60th, and 50th). In the early years of Christianity, many began fasting fifty, sixty, or seventy days before Easter.

What is LENT?

Lent is *the season of penance* preceding Easter. It includes the periods of Lent proper and that of Passiontide.

1. Lent begins with the Wednesday after Quinquagesima. This is called *Ash Wednesday*; on that day the *foreheads* of the faithful are *marked with ashes*.

Ash Wednesday is forty-six days before Easter; *but we say Lent is forty days in length*, because we do not count the six Sundays, on which no fasting is prescribed anywhere throughout the Church.

2. Passiontide, that is, the *last two weeks* of Lent which are called *Passion Week and Holy Week*. During these two weeks the Church follows Christ closely through the last stages of His mortal life.

3. In keeping with the *spirit of Lent*, Catholics are expected to *abstain from worldly amusements*, such as shows, feasting, etc. They should *devote more time to prayer*, penance, and religious exercises. From Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday inclusive, the Church forbids the saying of the Nuptial Mass.

What is the PASCHALTIDE?

The Paschaltide is the time *from Easter* till the *eve of Trinity Sunday*. It includes the three periods of "*Easter*," "*Ascensiontide*," and the "*Octave of Pentecost*."

The forty days between Easter and the Ascension commemorate the forty days Christ spent on earth after His Resurrection.

The three days before the Ascension are called *Rogation days*. On these days processions are held to implore God's blessings upon mankind. *See page 405.*

2. *The ten days* after the Ascension are a *preparation for Pentecost*, the feast commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles.

Paschal Time is a *time of rejoicing*. Its joyful character is shown by the constant *repetition* in the Church liturgy of *the word of joy, Alleluia (Praise ye the Lord)*. During this period, we say the *Regina Coeli* instead of the *Angelus* three times a day.

How long is the season "PER ANNUM," that is, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR?

This season, which is the longest, consists of two periods. *The first period* is from the 14th of January till the eve of Septuagesima Sunday, and *the second period*, from the eve of Trinity Sunday till the eve of the First Sunday of Advent.

This season takes up the *main part* of the year, and is devoted to the festivals of the saints, to Christian work and prayer.

The period after Pentecost represents the time that shall elapse before the Last Judgment. On the last Sunday after Pentecost the Gospel of the Mass is that which speak of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as Judge of the living and the dead.



SPRING
MARCH 20 TO JUNE 20



AUTUMN
SEPTEMBER 23 TO DECEMBER 31



SUMMER
JUNE 21 TO SEPTEMBER 22



WINTER
DECEMBER 22 TO MARCH 19

At the beginning of the four seasons—Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter—the Ember Days are celebrated to implore God's blessings on the fruits of the earth; those days are likewise intended as special occasions for praying for the clergy. The

Ember Days are the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays following December 13, the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost and September 14. Ordinations take place on Ember Saturdays. Ember Days are days of penance, fasting, and abstinence.

122. Liturgical Worship

What is LITURGY?

Liturgy is a *complete system* of forms of prayers, acts, and services in the *public official worship of the Church*.

LITURGY is a bond of union binding the faithful with one another and with God. In it nobody is alone: all take part in the worship of the Creator, as part of a corporate body, with the Son of God as Head, and the Holy Spirit as Soul.

1. The Church is the *Mystical Body of Christ* (see pages 148-149). In its full meaning, *Liturgy is the offering of all the affections to God*, by which that Mystical Body, members united with the Divine Head, continues the *worship of Almighty God* by Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Mystical Body, *members are one with the Head*, offering themselves with Him, united with one another in Him, all one in adoration with the Son of God.

In heaven Jesus Christ continues as Head, Priest, and Victim, offering a *perpetual oblation*, having the merits of Calvary applied to our souls. *That mediation is especially extended to us in the Holy Eucharist, by which Our Lord is with us at any time, anywhere*. And Liturgy is with us in its varied aspects, with rites and ceremonies rich in meaning and beauty, with prayers for every occasion; for adoration, thanksgiving, atonement, supplication.

2. The *essential acts* of Liturgy include: (a) *Holy Mass*, the supreme Sacrifice; (b) the *sacraments*, channels of grace by which we live the supernatural life; and (c) *Divine Office*, the incomparable prayer of homage. These three acts form the treasury of grace daily offered to God in Liturgy by the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.

Liturgy is *perceptible* to the senses, treating man according to his nature, as made of both matter and spirit. It reaches to the spirit by the senses and the heart, thus making everything a handmaid of Faith, as it offers its gift to the Creator.

3. Liturgy follows the *definite program* of the Liturgical, or **Ecclesiastical Year**. In the course of the year we celebrate a succession of sacred seasons and fasts, *with public adoration centered in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.* (See pages 414-417.)

The first part of this sacred drama pictures *the period of hopeful waiting for the promised Redeemer*, as described in the Old Testament. Then the Mystical Body of Christ lives through Advent, waiting for Christmas, praying for the Supreme Gift. The second part of the drama gives us a *panorama of the life of the Son of God made man*, as described in the New Testament. The Mystical Body of Christ then celebrates the different events of His life, from Birth to Ascension. The third act of the sacred drama *unfolds the continuation of Our Lord's life and work* in His Mystical Body, *the Catholic Church*. This period began on that first Pentecost long ago, when the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles. In the Liturgical Year we recall and even now we continue to live in that period, kept in the Liturgical Year from the Feast of Pentecost on back to the beginning of the cycle.

4. We must *participate* in liturgical worship. *Our Lord established Christianity; we must take part in His worship.* He redeemed us as one group, collectively, not as separate individuals. He even taught us *Our Father*, in which we do not refer to God as Father of an individual person.

With Our Lord Liturgy presents a view of perfect *community life*, of one family, the Mystical Body of Christ, all united by the bond of charity, doing all for the common good. By Liturgy we participate in the functions of the Church, making them our ordinary and principal way of common prayer.

Which is the central act of Liturgy?

The central act of Liturgy is the **Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.**

1. By *Holy Mass* the Mystical Body of Christ through its Head, and by the ministry of His priest, offers *sacrifice* to Almighty God. *In the Mass we unite ourselves with the Son of God Himself*, there as Priest and Victim. And in the Mass the Church Militant is one with the Church Triumphant and the Church Suffering, all one in the Mystical Body of Christ. (See pages 213, 288-289.)

Holy Mass is a sacrifice, indeed, *the very sacrifice of our redemption* mysteriously made present on the altar. (See pages 286-287). Holy Mass is not a private devotion; it is not simple adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. *It is the Sacrifice offered by the Redeemer Himself to Almighty God*, in

which offering we as members of His Mystical Body participate. At Holy Mass *we do not so much adore Our Lord, as we offer Him*, the Divine Lamb, in sacrifice to the Most High.

2. **Holy Mass** is supreme Sacrifice, the sacrifice most pleasing to God. It is a holocaust of the Son of God, a *reenactment* of the Sacrifice on Calvary. *No other sacrifice can equal, or even approach it in sublimity or effects.* And in Liturgy the entire Church takes part in this sacred drama, with members all over the world, with Masses at every hour, in all nations. (See pages 286-287, 310.)

Mass is not only invocation; it is also *evocation*, for by the sacred rites God the Son comes down in Flesh and Blood. Somewhere in the world, at any hour of the day or night the Church is offering sacrifice, the Son of God Himself, at Holy Mass. It is a perpetual oblation offered to the Creator.

3. *Holy Mass* is the *chief act* of Catholic worship. *All the grandest functions of Liturgy* — ordinations, consecrations, professions take place during the celebration of this Holy Sacrifice. *All our own important individual undertakings should likewise be commended to God by the offering of Holy Mass.*

Let us join in this offering of the Divine Lamb, Our Lord, the Head of one Mystical Body. Let us sing in this chorus of praise, offering our Sacrifice, receiving the Divine Lamb in Holy Communion, all as one family, united with Our Lord in His Mystical Body the Church. *Then we shall be living a truly Catholic life, and we shall effect our sanctification.*

Which is the great public prayer in Liturgy?

The Divine Office is the great public prayer, as Holy Mass is the great Sacrifice.

Divine Office is a *public prayer* because the priest offering it acts *in the name of the Church*, not for his own individual self. Priests are official intermediaries in the Mystical Body of Christ. *Just as we offer the Sacrifice of the Mass by the hands of a priest, so we offer the Divine Office by his mediation.* Thus in Liturgy we unite ourselves with the *sacerdotal prayer* of the Church, rendering adoration to God. (See pages 350-351.)

A priest is always a *mediator* between God and man. By his hands we offer Sacrifice. By his Divine Office he prays for us, presenting our petitions, begging for us favors from God.



Our Lord Himself fasted often. He fasted forty days and forty nights before He began His public life. By Church law, all baptized persons between the



ages of 21 and 59 years are bound to observe the law of fast, and all baptized persons over 7 years of age are bound to observe the law of abstinence.

123. Second Commandment of the Church

"To fast and to abstain on the days appointed!"

What is A FAST DAY?

A fast day is *a day on which only one full meal is allowed*; but in the morning and evening some food may be taken, the quantity and quality of which are determined by approved local custom.

1. The one *full meal* may be taken either at noontime or in the evening. *Only at this meal may meat be taken.*

"*Meat*" is the flesh of warm-blooded land animals, including birds and fowl. At the principal meal meat may be taken on a day of fast *except on days of complete abstinence like on all Fridays.*

2. *Two other meals*, both meatless, may be taken according to each one's needs; but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating *between meals* is forbidden; but liquids, including milk and fruit juices, are allowed. Wine, coffee, tea, cocoa, lemon-

ade, beer, sherbets, and like preparations are permitted.

WHO ARE OBLIGED to observe the FAST days of the Church?

All baptized *persons between the ages of 21 and 59* are obliged to observe the fast days of the Church, unless they are excused or dispensed.

Persons dispensed from fast must, however, observe abstinence unless they have also been dispensed from abstinence.

When health or the ability to work would be seriously affected, the law *does not oblige.*

For this reason those of weak health, the sick, the convalescent, nursing mothers, the very poor, and those engaged in hard labor are *excused* from the fast; also nurses and teachers. One in doubt as to his duties in this matter should consult a parish priest or his confessor.

What is A DAY OF ABSTINENCE?

A day of abstinence is *a day on which we are not allowed the use of meat.*

Fish, snails, frogs, oysters, shrimps, and crabs may be taken on abstinence days, as well as milk, butter, cheese, eggs, and similar foods. Lard and the fat of any animals may be used in cooking and seasoning. *On an abstinence day which is not also a fast day, only the quality, not the quantity, of food is regulated.*

There are two kinds of abstinence days: complete and partial.

(a) On days of *complete abstinence* meat, and soup or gravy made from meat, may *not* be used at all.

(b) On days of *partial abstinence* meat, and soup or gravy made from meat, may be taken only *once* a day at the principal meal.

WHO ARE OBLIGED to observe the ABSTINENCE days of the Church?

All baptized *persons over 7 years of age* are bound to observe the abstinence days of the Church unless excused or dispensed.

1. The sick and convalescent, those who do extremely hard work, and those too poor to obtain other foods are *excused*.

The law of abstinence binds even those not obliged to fast. One who believes he has sufficient reason to be excused should consult a priest.

2. When there is a great concourse of people, or if public health is concerned, *the bishop can grant a dispensation*, for a particular locality, or even for the entire diocese from the law of fast or of abstinence, or both.

Why does the Church command us to fast and to abstain?

The Church commands us to fast and to abstain in order *that we may control the desires of the flesh, raise our minds more freely to God, and make satisfaction for sin.* It is not because meat and other foods are *in themselves evil*.

"I chastise my body and bring it into subjection lest perhaps after preaching to others I myself should be rejected" (1 Cor. 9:27). *One who cannot fast should do some other penance.*

1. *The forty days' fast* observed in *Lent* is in imitation of Our Lord, Who fasted forty days in the desert. It is a preparation for Easter. *Friday as a day of abstinence commemorates Our Lord's Good Friday.*

Fast and abstinence are pleasing to God only when we also refrain from sin and engage in good works. We should honor Our Lord's passion during Lent by abstaining from worldly pleasures and amusements.

2. *Even from merely natural motives*, fast and abstinence, far from ruining the health as some people claim, on the contrary are a preservation of *health*. Reputable physicians will bear out this fact.

3. *Fast and abstinence* should not be carried to *excess*, to the injury of our health.

HOW CAN WE KNOW the days appointed for fast or abstinence?

We can know the days appointed for fast or abstinence *from the instructions of our bishops and priests.*

A Catholic calendar should be consulted.

1. In most of the dioceses of the United States, the *days of fast* are:

a. The weekdays of Lent, up to midnight of Holy Saturday.

b. Ember days.

These are twelve in number, three per season; namely, the Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays after: the first Sunday of Lent, Pentecost, September 14, and December 13.

c. The Vigil of Pentecost Sunday, Dec. 7th and either Dec. 23rd or 24th, as one may choose.

Pastors have the power of granting dispensation in particular cases, from fast or abstinence, or both, to individuals as well as families.

2. In most dioceses of the United States the *days of abstinence* are:

a. For *complete abstinence*—Fridays, Ash Wednesday, Dec. 7th and either Dec. 23rd or 24th, as one may choose.

b. For *partial abstinence*—Ember Wednesdays and Saturdays, and the Vigil of Pentecost.

3. *There is neither fast nor abstinence* on Sundays and holidays of obligation.

Bishops may grant a general dispensation in their dioceses from fast and abstinence on legal holidays, e.g., Washington's Birthday, Independence Day, etc. Catholics should inquire of their parish priest if dispensation is granted.

4. *In some dioceses* (a) the *days of "fast and abstinence"* are only four: Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Dec. 7th, and Dec. 23rd or 24th, as one may choose. (b) *Days of abstinence*: All Fridays of the year.



The sacrament of Penance was instituted by Our Lord. The Apostles administered it. Thus in their time, as the Bible says, the Christian converts came to them, "confessing and declaring their deeds." (1) Thus they come to St. Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:18).



(2) The first Christians received the Body of Our Lord daily. It is the wish of the Church that if we cannot imitate them, we should at least receive Holy Communion every time we hear Mass, on Sundays and holydays of obligation. We should not need to go to Confession for each Communion.

124. 3rd and 4th Commandments of the Church

"To confess our sins at least once a year."

"To receive Holy Communion during the Easter Time."

What is meant by the commandment to confess our sins at least once a year?

By the commandment to confess our sins at least once a year is meant that *we are strictly obliged to make a good confession within the year*, if we have a mortal sin to confess.

1. *All who have reached the age of reason* generally at the seventh year, are bound by this law, under pain of mortal sin. We may go to any confessor who is lawfully approved, whomever we prefer, in whatever church he may be.

No special time is ordered for the yearly confession, but it is usually made in preparation for the annual Easter Communion. The annual confession and communion is what we call "Easter duty."

2. Although the requirement is only once a year, good Catholics will not be satisfied with such a *meagre partaking* of the sacrament of penance. It need hardly be said that *if anyone has the misfortune to fall into mortal sin, he should go to confession without any delay*. Should this not be possible, he must make an act of perfect contrition, and have the desire to receive the sacrament.

We should strive to go to confession at least once a month. Many Catholics go to confession once a week, to the great benefit of their souls.

3. *When in danger of death*, baptized persons in the state of mortal sin *have the obligation* of receiving the sacrament of Penance.

WHY should we GO TO CONFESSION FREQUENTLY?

We should go to confession frequently because *frequent confession greatly helps us to overcome temptation, to keep in the state of grace, and to grow in virtue.*

1. The *graces* that we receive from confession are given abundantly if we receive the sacrament frequently. *Our soul is like a house undergoing cleaning at confession; the more often the house is swept and scrubbed, the cleaner it is bound to be.*

The devil, expelled from the soul at confession, tries to return again and again; but there will be no danger of his breaking in if the soul is barred and protected by the graces of confession, a strong defense against evil. *"Confess, therefore, your sins to one another"* (James 5:16).

2. *Confession* not only serves to cleanse us from past offenses, but *helps to strengthen us against sin, and increases us in virtue.* It is a potent medicine that not only gives a thorough cleaning, but also injects powerful nourishment.

Converted sinners are generally careful to go to confession frequently, because from confession they obtain strength to resist their former sins that try to tempt them back to the wrong path. *Confession is like the Prodigal Son's father, who is filled with joy upon his return, and who brings out to offer him everything the house contains, in order to make him glad he has returned.*

3. *It is not necessary to go to confession for each Holy Communion*, so long as one has no mortal sin. For prudent advice, one should consult one's confessor.

What sin does a Catholic commit who neglects to receive Holy Communion worthily during the Easter time?

A Catholic who neglects to receive Holy Communion worthily during the Easter time *commits a mortal sin.*

1. *All who have come to the use of reason are bound by this law* of Easter communion. Parents, teachers, and pastors are obliged to see that the children under their care comply with their *Easter duty*. One does not fulfill the duty if his communion or confession is unworthy.

2. *Catholics should not be satisfied with receiving the Body of Our Lord only once a year. The early Christians used to receive Communion at every Mass.*

We should endeavor to receive Holy Communion frequently, as the Church urges. It does not seem very generous to make Our Lord wait one whole year when we may receive Him every day. If we only thought over our faith and realized what a great privilege it is for us to receive God Himself into our hearts, we would not need to be *obliged* to go to Holy Communion.

3. *The Church prescribes annual communion in order that we may comply with the divine command to receive the Blessed Eucharist*, and that the life of grace may be preserved in our souls.

Christ Himself commanded: *"Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you"* (John 6:54). Holy Communion is the food of our souls. Let us not starve our souls by denying them this heavenly food.

When we are sick, we are eager enough to rush here, there, and everywhere, seeking remedies. But *Holy Mass with Communion is the supernatural remedy for sick souls; and how many are there who seek it?*

WHAT IS THE EASTER TIME in the United States?

The Easter time in the United States *begins on the first Sunday of Lent and ends on Trinity Sunday.*

Trinity Sunday, that is, the Sunday after Pentecost is eight weeks after Easter.

1. *It is fitting* to receive Holy Communion at *Easter*, because it was just a few days before Easter, during the Last Supper, that Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist.

In the early days of Christianity, Christians generally received Holy Communion as often as they could hear Mass. The law prescribing the reception of Holy Communion at Easter time was made in the thirteenth century.

2. *As Christ died and rose again in the Easter time*, it is fitting that Christians should at this time *die to sin* by the Sacrament of Penance, and rise to the life of grace through the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, which is a pledge of the future resurrection.

"As Christ has arisen from the dead, . . . so we also may walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

(Note. Full explanations of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist are to be found on pages 310 to 333, inclusive. They explain the manner of going to Confession and receiving Holy Communion.)



To help support our pastors, we can give various things, according to our means, their needs, and the needs of the Church. We can offer money, vestments, furnishings for the Church, food, candles, etc.

We should make a liberal offering every time

the pastor performs some service for us, as at baptisms, funerals, blessing of our houses, marriages, etc. If there is a regular fee charged, we should not only pay it willingly, but, if we are able, give more than what is required.

125. Fifth Commandment of the Church

"To contribute to the support of the Church."

What is meant by the commandment to contribute to the support of the Church?

By the commandment to contribute to the support of the Church is meant that *each of us is obliged to bear his fair share of the financial burden of the Holy See, of the diocese and of the parish.*

As St. Paul says: "What soldier ever serves at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? *Who feeds the flock, and does not eat of the milk of the flock?*" (1 Cor. 9:7-8).

1. We are bound to **support our parishes and those in charge of them**, because justice commands it, and God ordained it. Our pastors are those priests in whose districts or parishes we live.

Pastors and curates are appointed by the Bishop, and charged to give the necessary religious instruction, administer the sacraments, watch over the spiritual welfare of the faithful, etc. "*The Lord directed that those who preach the gospel should have their living from the gospel*" (1 Cor. 9:14). Good citizens never think of grumbling about the taxes they pay the government. They have as great, if not greater, obligation to help support the Church.

2. We are also obliged to **help support our diocese, as well as the Pope**, and to meet all Church needs according to our ability.

If we do not support the Church, we are unfaithful to Christ's command that it "go and make disciples of all nations." *To teach, the Church has need of funds*; our spiritual superiors need material support as much as we do, if not much more on account of their duties. "*The laborer is worthy of his wages*" (1 Tim. 5:18).

3. *Mass stipends* are given, not in payment for the spiritual benefits, but as a means of support for the one who says the Mass. **One cannot buy a Mass.**

The usual stipend for a low Mass has been one dollar. But when you consider that many priests and missionaries depend on stipends for their living, this amount does not go very far. **The cost of living has risen, but the stipend has not increased in amount.**

FOR WHAT PURPOSES does the Church need help?

1. Maintenance of *public worship, education, and charity*, as instruction of the young, relief of the poor, upkeep of the churches, seminaries, schools, colleges, asylums, hospitals, cemeteries, orphanages, etc.
2. Maintenance of *missions* in our country and abroad.

IN WHAT WAYS may WE CONTRIBUTE to the support of the Church?

Some of the most common ways are:

1. By making a liberal and *voluntary offering* to the priest when he performs some religious ceremony in our behalf, such as blessing our houses and children, etc.

In parishes with an established schedule of fees for baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burial, the fee should be paid without arguing or bargaining. More than the scheduled fee should be given by persons of means, as the schedule is for those of ordinary financial ability. **The very poor are not expected to give anything.** Sacraments are administered to them without fee.

2. By not failing to put some offering on the *collection plate* every Sunday and holyday. Even children should form the habit of putting in a few cents.

It is not edifying to see people with diamond rings on their fingers let the plate pass by unnoticed, or put in a dime or a quarter. It certainly does not show much sense of proportion to give a quarter in church, and then to go out and ride in a luxurious car and proceed to a party that costs some ten dollars or more.

3. By contributing to *special funds*, as for the erection of a church or a school, the maintenance of religious establishments, the Mission Day funds for the Propagation of the Faith, for missions and retreats, etc.

We should be especially eager to contribute to funds collected directly for the *Holy Father*, as a proof of our loyalty to and love for the Father of all Christians, the Vicar of Christ on earth. The alms

collected for the Holy Father are called "Peter's pence"; funds collected on Mission Day are sent to Rome, too, for the Propagation of the Faith, the spread of the Faith in mission lands.

4. By *supporting* a student in the seminary, some orphans in Catholic schools, catechists and priests in the missions, etc.

What merit before God it must be to support a student for the priesthood, or a priest in the missions! If we cannot ourselves go to serve Him there, we, as it were, offer Him a representative. If a father has no son for the seminary, he keeps a substitute there! And we remember that such persons as we benefit only naturally feel towards us a special affection, and will devote many of their prayers for their benefactors; what blessings may we not expect from the Masses and prayers of one whom we have helped on the way to the Priesthood!

HOW MUCH SHOULD WE CONTRIBUTE for the support of the Church?

We should contribute *as much as we can*, according to our means.

1. Persons *who are in moderate circumstances* and with large families cannot be expected to contribute as much as those who are rich.

2. *Ordinarily*, if we give each month *one day's wages or revenue*, the needs of the Church will as a rule be taken care of. This is surely not too heavy a burden.

Some people go on year after year without giving a cent to the Church even when they can well do so. These people should remember that **the Church and her ministers cannot subsist on air.**

3. In parishes of some dioceses there is the Scriptural practice of *TITHING*, that is, of *giving 10 per cent of one's income* for Church support and charitable uses (Deut. 14:22-23). *Income* is our yearly earnings from the profits of land, stock, or personal industry.

4. Persons *who are rich* should remember that God gave them their wealth. **They should return some of it to Him in thanksgiving for His generosity**, remembering that He gives wealth only as a trust.

Wealthy Catholics should remember the Church *in their wills*. Many of these Catholics leave funds to some lay institution or other, for the erection of this or that building, and completely forget to leave anything to their Mother Church.

(Sixth Commandment of the Church: **"To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage."** — See pages 360-361, "Church Laws on Marriage.")





PART

III

MEANS OF GRACE:

**THE SACRAMENTS
PRAYER**



The sacraments are "actions of Christ." By them His grace enters our soul to give it divine life and to nourish it.

The sacraments derive their efficacy from Christ,

by Whose merits we pass them. They do not derive any merit from the person administering them. Good medicine is good regardless of the druggist or physician.

126. The Seven Sacraments

What is A SACRAMENT?

A sacrament is **an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.**

Thus there are *three things* absolutely necessary to constitute a sacrament: (1) *institution* by Christ; (2) an *outward sign*, and (3) power to *give grace*.

1. **Only Christ** instituted the sacraments, because only God can endow signs with the power to give grace.

From the teaching of the Church, from tradition, and from Holy Scripture, we know that Christ instituted the seven sacraments. All the schismatic Eastern churches that separated from the Catholic Church in the early years of the Christian era continue to recognize the same seven sacraments that the Church does. *The Church has no power to institute sacraments.*

2. An outward **sign** is something perceived by the senses. The external thing or action is called the **matter**, and the formula of words, the **form**, of the sacrament.

For example, we see the **water** used in baptism; we **hear the words** pronounced as the water is poured. These are **sensible signs** perceived by the senses of sight and hearing.

3. The sacraments *signify* the graces they actually *give*. Thus the **washing in Baptism** signifies the inward **washing of the soul** from sin. **The sacraments always give the graces** they signify, provided the recipient puts no obstacles.

It is principally through the sacraments that we obtain the grace of God. They are channels by which grace enters our souls, *to give them divine life and to nourish them.*

HOW MANY sacraments are there?

There are **seven** sacraments: **Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.**

There are seven sacraments and only seven, no more, no less, for the simple reason that Our Lord instituted seven. These seven sacraments are a gift of love from the Son of God, a gift for which He paid His very life.

1. *A sacrament administered to anyone against his will is invalid, and will have no sacramental effect.*

One of the requisite dispositions for receiving a sacrament is the desire and will to receive it. For infants and those who do not have the use of reason, the intention is supplied by the Church. *We take their consent for granted* or at the word of their sponsors.

2. *Ceremonies, although not necessary for the validity of the Sacraments, are used in their administration, in order to make the occasions more solemn and meaningful, and to increase the devotion of the recipient.*

Our Lord Himself used ceremonies, as when He spat upon clay and moistened with it the eyes of a blind man.

FROM WHOM do the sacraments receive their power to give grace?

The sacraments receive their power to give grace *from God, through the merits of Jesus Christ.*

The sacraments are *actions of Christ*: through the visible rite, *it is He Who sanctifies us*, just as truly as when He said to Mary Magdalen, "*Thy sins are forgiven.*"

1. *Each sacrament possesses the power from God to make the soul of the recipient holy and pleasing to Him. This supernatural power is termed sanctifying grace.*

Sanctifying grace is abiding and permanent and lost only by mortal sin. *The sacrament that first gives this grace is Baptism. The sacrament that restores this grace to those who have lost it by sin is Penance.* The other sacraments give an increase of sanctifying grace.

2. *Each sacrament also gives a grace proper to itself, a special effect on the soul, distinct from the effects of other sacraments; this is called sacramental grace.*

Sacramental grace consists in divine help towards the fulfillment of the duties imposed by the particular sacrament. For example, the sacramental grace of Matrimony gives a right to the assistance of God in fulfilling the duties of the married state.

3. If received *with the proper dispositions*, the sacraments *always* give grace.

They derive their efficacy from Christ; consequently they give grace of themselves, as long as we have the right dispositions.

What is the difference between sacraments OF THE DEAD and sacraments OF THE LIVING?

Sacraments of the dead have for their chief purpose to *give* the supernatural life of sanctifying grace to souls *spiritually dead* through sin; *sacraments of the living* have for their chief purpose to *give more grace* to souls already *spiritually alive* through sanctifying grace.

1. The sacraments *of the dead* are: *Baptism and Penance.* They restore souls dead in sin to the life of sanctifying grace.

These sacraments increase sanctifying grace when received by one already in the state of grace. Thus when a person receiving absolution in the sacrament of Penance only has venial sins, he receives an increase in sanctifying grace.

2. The sacraments *of the living* are: *Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.* To souls already spiritually alive through sanctifying grace, these sacraments give more grace.

It is sacrilege to receive the sacraments of the living if one is in the state of mortal sin. The sacramental grace that should be obtained is suspended until the person recovers the state of grace.

Which are the sacraments that can be RECEIVED ONLY ONCE?

The sacraments that can be received only once are: *Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.*

These three sacraments *confer an official and permanent status within the Church*; they are different participations in the priesthood of Christ.

1. This is because *these sacraments imprint* on the soul a *spiritual mark* or character, which consists in a special dedication to Christ. *This mark is indelible*, and is not effaced by anything, not even mortal sin. *It will be borne by the soul for all eternity*, for its greater glory if in heaven, and for its greater shame if in hell.

A priest will be known as a priest forever, by the mark on his soul, whether he be in heaven or in hell.

2. Holy Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, and Matrimony leave *no indelible mark*, and may be received more than once.

Anointing of the Sick may be received *only once in the same sickness.* *Matrimony* cannot be repeated *until one of the parties dies.* *The more often Penance and Holy Eucharist* are received, *the better* for the soul.



1. The first picture shows Jesus being baptized by St. John the Baptist in the river Jordan, before He began His public life. This baptism was a figure of the sacrament that Christ was to institute later.

2. The Apostles baptized all converts before



they were admitted into the Church. On the first Pentecost, three thousand were baptized. Philip, one of the first seven deacons, after instructing the eunuch whom he had met reading the Scriptures, baptized him in a river they were passing.

127. The Sacrament of Baptism

What is BAPTISM?

Baptism is the sacrament that *gives* our souls the new life of *sanctifying grace* by which *we become children of God* and *heirs of heaven*.

Baptism is the very *first* sacrament we may receive. *Unless we are baptized*, we are forbidden to receive any other sacraments. Baptism has the three essentials of a sacrament: (a) it was *instituted by Christ*; (b) it is a *sensible sign*; and (c) it *confers grace*.

1. The sacrament of Baptism *was instituted by Christ* (perhaps at His own Baptism), and *commanded* at His Ascension.

He said to the Apostles: "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). The Apostles obeyed His command on the very day of Pentecost. In answer to the question of the multitudes,

"What shall we do?" after Peter's first sermon, Peter said, "Repent, and *be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38). About 3000 persons were baptized.

2. *Christ instituted Baptism* as the sacrament of *spiritual rebirth*, making the baptized members of God's family. Baptism infuses grace into their souls, making them supernaturally like to God.

As children of God they are given the right to enter heaven, and to gain merit by their good work, "*Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*" (John 3:5).

3. The *sacramental grace* of Baptism is a regenerative grace that helps those baptized to live well the supernatural life they have begun as children of God.

WHAT SINS does baptism take away?

Baptism takes away *original sin*, and also actual sins and all *the punishment due to them*, if the person baptized be guilty of any actual sins and truly sorry for them.

1. *Baptism is the only* sacrament that can *remit original sin*. It cleanses us from all sin, original and actual, and remits all punishment due.

If an adult receives baptism with the proper dispositions, that is, with faith and contrition, his actual sins are taken away with original sin, as well as all temporal punishment due to his actual sins. Thus if an adult dies immediately after baptism, he goes *straight to heaven*, whatever the sins he may have committed.

2. When Baptism takes away original sin, it gives our souls the new life of *sanctifying grace*. Thus by Baptism we are born again.

What are THE EFFECTS of the character imprinted on the soul by baptism?

The effects of the character imprinted on the soul by Baptism are that *we become members* of the Church, *subject* to its laws, and *capable* of receiving the other sacraments.

By Baptism we become *members of the Church and children of God*. We are given the *right to enter heaven*, and to gain merits by our good works. We assume the obligation to act as *lay apostles* for the spread of the Faith.

Baptism imprints an *indelible sign or character* on the soul. This character marks us as Christians, and cannot be removed by anything, even mortal sin. This character prevents the sacrament from being repeated: *we can be baptized only once*. "For all you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

WHY is baptism NECESSARY for the salvation of all men?

Baptism is necessary for the salvation of all men, *because Christ has said*: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

From the time of Christ this has been the unequivocal teaching of the Church. The reason lies in the fact that *only Baptism can remit original sin*; no one with any taint can enter heaven.

Those who through no fault of their own have not received the sacrament of Baptism can be saved through what is called *baptism of blood or baptism of desire*.

Either baptism of desire or of blood entitles one to the possession of heaven, just as baptism by water. However, only baptism by water imprints a character on the soul, and so entitles one to the reception of the other sacraments.

1. An *unbaptized person* receives the *baptism of blood* when he suffers martyrdom for the faith of Christ.

One who lays down his life for Christ or some Christian virtue is said to have received *baptism of blood*. Our Lord promised, "*He who loses his life for my sake will find it*" (Matt. 10:39). Thus the Holy Innocents whom Herod slew out of hatred for the Infant Jesus received the baptism of blood.

2. An unbaptized person receives the "*baptism of desire*" when he *loves God above all things*, is sorry for his sins, and *ardently longs* for Baptism when it is impossible to receive it; or when not knowing the necessity of Baptism, *sincerely wishes* to do all required for salvation.

WHEN should CHILDREN be baptized?

Children should be baptized *as soon as possible after birth*.

1. If possible, this should be done *within a week*.

Except when in danger of death, *an infant should not be baptized* without the *permission* of a parent or guardian. *Children* who have come to the *age of reason* cannot be baptized *without their own consent*.

2. *Infants* may receive the baptism of blood, but not the baptism of desire, since they have not as yet the use of reason.

Theologians have suggested various ways in which, they believe, babies who die without Baptism might be saved. But *since this is only pious belief*, *parents sin mortally* if they neglect the Baptism of their children.

3. *Since infants* who die unbaptized have committed no sins, they live in a place of *natural happiness* called "*limbo*."

Catholic parents who put off for a long time, or entirely neglect, the Baptism of their children put them in danger of *losing heaven* and the vision of God eternally. Although in limbo infants enjoy complete natural happiness surpassing any on earth, such happiness cannot compare with the bliss of heaven, where souls see God face to face. One is *natural*, the other *supernatural* joy.

	Sacraments	Matter	Form	Minister	
of the Dead	Baptism	Water	"I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."	Ordinary: THE PRIEST Extraordinary: ANY PERSON	☒
	Penance	Sins	"I absolve you from your sins in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."	THE PRIEST	
of the Living	Confirmation	Holy Chrism	"I sign you with the sign of the cross, and I confirm you with the Chrism of salvation. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."	Ordinary: THE BISHOP Extraordinary: A PRIEST	☒
	Holy Eucharist	Bread & Wine	"For This is My Body. For This is the Chalice of My Blood of the new and eternal testament, the mystery of Faith; which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins."	THE PRIEST	
	Anointing of the Sick	Holy Oils	"By this holy anointing and His most loving mercy, may the Lord forgive you whatever wrong you have done by the use of your sight (hearing, speech, etc.)."	THE PRIEST	
	Holy Orders	Imposition of Hands	The words which the bishop says to the candidate upon the imposition of hands.	THE BISHOP	☒
	Matrimony	the Contract	The "I will," by which both spouses indicate the mutual consent to the contract.	THE SPOUSES	

☒ SIGNIFIES INDELIBLE CHARACTER

This chart shows clearly the various matter, forms, and ministers of each of the seven sacraments. In it may be found which are the sacraments of the

living, implying the necessity of being in the state of grace before reception; and which are the sacraments of the dead, not necessitating that state.

128. Form, Matter and Ministers of Baptism

HOW would you give BAPTISM?

I would give Baptism *by pouring ordinary water on the forehead of the person* to be baptized, *saying while pouring* it: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

The "pouring of water" is the *matter*, and "the words" the *form* of Baptism.

1. The *form* must be said *at the same time the water is poured*, and *must be said by the same person* pouring the water, so that everything takes place as one act.

No changes may be made in the wording. For example, the words "of the Holy Trinity" may not be substituted for "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," because *Jesus* explicitly commanded Baptism to be given "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). The word "Ghost" may be substituted for "Spirit."

2. Baptism is *validly administered* whether performed *by total immersion*, *by infusion*, or *by aspersion*. *By infusion*, the water is poured on the head, forehead, or face. In cases of emergency, it may be poured on any part of the body. The water must *flow on the skin*, of the person being baptized, not merely on the hair. *By aspersion*, water is sprinkled on the head.

In the time of the Apostles Baptism was usually, though *not exclusively*, conferred by immersion. The first baptisms on Pentecost could not have been by immersion, on account of the great number, three thousand, baptized. *All these three methods are valid*; but our present practice is by infusion.

3. *The water used for solemn Baptism*, i.e. when a priest confers it with the ceremonies, is called *baptismal water*. It is *natural water mingled with holy oil and chrism*, and *blessed* with special prayers. Ordinary holy water is *not* baptismal water.

Our Lord spoke of "water and the Holy Spirit." Peter baptized Cornelius and his family in water (Acts 10:47); Philip did the same with the eunuch (Acts 8:38). From the Gospel one cannot conclude the use of anything but water in the baptism administered during Apostolic times.

4. In *cases of necessity*, when someone other than a priest administers the baptism, *any natural water*, such as water from the sea, river, fountain, faucet, rain, or even mineral water, may be used. Holy water may also be used.

WHO CAN ADMINISTER BAPTISM?

The priest is the usual minister of Baptism, *but if there is danger* that someone will die without Baptism, *anyone else* may and should baptize.

Because Baptism is a necessary prerequisite *to enter heaven*, when an unbaptized person is *in danger of death*, and no priest is available, *anyone may baptize*. However, it would be *very wrong* to do it *without serious reason*.

In the early days of the Church, religious instruction preceded Baptism; the candidates for Baptism were called *catechumens*. In those days, solemn Baptism was administered on Holy Saturday, on the eve of Whitsunday, and on the eve of the Epiphany. From those early times has come *our practice today of having the water for Baptism* solemnly *blessed* on Solemn Easter Vigil, that is, *on Holy Saturday night*.

1. The *bishop or pastor*, or a *priest* properly delegated, is therefore the *ordinary minister* of Baptism. But in cases of necessity, when there is danger of death and an ordinary minister is unavailable, *anyone*—man, woman, or child, Catholic or non-Catholic, atheist, or pagan—may and should baptize; that person then becomes the *extraordinary minister* of Baptism.

When properly given, lay baptism is as valid as baptism given by a priest. In order to baptize validly, natural fresh water or holy water *is poured, on the head, face, or body* of the person being baptized, and *at the same time* the words are pronounced: *"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."*

2. *If a person baptized by an extraordinary minister* survives, he cannot be baptized again. However, he is taken to the church, and the ceremonies that had been omitted are supplied.

No one may baptize himself. A witness to a lay baptism should be present, but this is not of necessity.

3. *Baptism administered* by a *Protestant* or other minister *is valid if properly performed*: that is, with the use of water, together with the form of Baptism, and having the intention to do what the Church does.

Conditional baptism is given when it is uncertain whether a person has been baptized, or when there is fear of the sacrament having been administered improperly.

4. Children should be baptized *in the parochial church* to which their parents belong, because the registration should be made there.

In case a child is baptized in a hospital, at home, or elsewhere, in some other church, *the parish priest should be notified*.

5. After Baptism, a *certificate* is given containing the names of the child, of his parents, of his godparents, the dates of birth, of Baptism, and the place of Baptism.

This is the *BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE*. It should be very carefully kept, as later it will be *needed for the sacrament of Confirmation*. The certificate is also *necessary for marriage, holy orders, or entrance into a religious community*. Parents should tell their children when and where they were baptized, so that even should the certificate be lost and the parents die, the registration may be traced.

Why is the NAME OF A SAINT given in baptism?

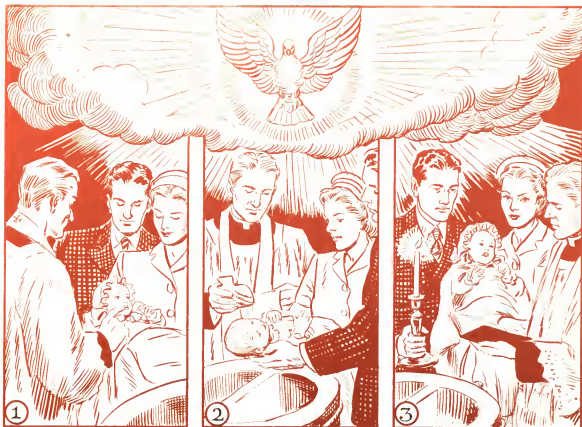
The name of a saint is given in Baptism in order that *the person baptized may imitate his virtues, and have him for a protector*.

1. *The names of angels* are also given, as well as names referring to mysteries or sacred appellations, events, and doctrines.

In certain countries it is a practice, even when another baptismal name is given, to include for girls the name Mary, and for boys the name Joseph; for example: Mary Louise, Joseph Francis, etc.

2. *The Church does not approve* of *heathen* or *fantastical names*, such as combinations taken from a film or novel, or made up from various words.

Christian parents will quite naturally want to give a *Christian name* to their child. At least one of the child's names must be a saint's name, so that the child may have a patron in heaven whose virtues he may imitate and to whom he may look for protection and help. It is permissible to add non-saint names, such as family names, if the parents wish. There are books and pamphlets available in Catholic bookstores which contain lists of saints' names to help parents with their choice.



The essential part of Baptism is the pouring of water (2) together with the saying of the words of baptism. At that moment the godparents must be touching the child. Blessed salt is put in the child's

mouth (1), symbol of the spiritual wisdom received through Baptism. A lighted candle is given to the person baptized, or if an infant, to the sponsors (3), to denote the light of the Holy Spirit received.

129. Ceremonies and Sponsors in Baptism

THE CEREMONIES used in Baptism are here summarized:

1. **Reception of the candidate.** At the church door the priest, in the name of the Church, *welcomes* the candidate, saying: "**Peace be with you.**" Then he questions him as to his purpose in wishing admission into the Church. **He is commanded to keep the commandments**, to love God and his neighbor. The priest then **breathes** three times upon his face to signify the spiritual breath of life that is to be infused into his soul, **signs him** with the cross, **imposes his hand** on him as a sign that the Church takes him as a ward, and then **puts blessed salt** in his mouth.

The exorcisms follow, by which the devil is cast out, with his power over the soul of the candidate. **The priest again signs the forehead with a cross**, as a seal, and commends the soul to God.

2. **Admittance into the church or baptistery.** The priest then lays his stole on the child as a sign of his ecclesiastical powers, and **leads him into the baptistery**, that he may have part with Christ in everlasting life. The godparents and the priest, together with the candidate if he already is an adult, recite the "**Apostles' Creed**" and the "**Our Father**" in sign of acceptance of the Faith.

Prayers of exorcism are recited again to break the power of Satan over the child. The priest touches the ears and nostrils of the candidate with his moistened thumb, to signify that the hearing should be opened to the Word of God, and that the candidate should live in the odor of sanctity.

3. **The baptismal vows.** The candidate's good will is tested in the **baptismal vows**, in which he **renounces Satan** "and all his works and display," that is, all sins and all occasions of sin.

If the person baptized is an infant, his godparents take the baptismal vows for him, in his name. The vows and profession of faith take the form of answers to six questions. Then the candidate is anointed with the oil of catechumens, touched on the breast that wisdom may thrive in his heart, and on the shoulders, that he may patiently bear the yoke of Christ. Then the priest changes his violet stole for a white one, to show that the separation from God of the soul is about to give way to a life of grace. Follows the profession of faith, a reiteration of the Apostles' Creed, and formal petition for Baptism. *Nota Bene:* In some dioceses the ceremonies of giving salt, touching the ears and nostrils, and anointing the breast and shoulders may be omitted.

4. *The main act.* The priest pours the baptismal water three times upon the head of the candidate in the form of the cross, at the same time pronouncing the words: "(Name of candidate), I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

At this actual moment of Baptism, the godparents must touch the candidate, to show that they incur and accept the spiritual relationship.

5. *Anointing with Chrism.* After the pouring of water the person is anointed with Chrism on the crown of the head, to show that he is now anointed of God.

A white garment is placed upon him to show that his soul is now spotless with grace. A lighted candle is put in his hand to impress upon him that he should ever keep burning in his heart the light of faith and virtue. And finally, the newly baptized child of God is dismissed, with the blessings of the Church: "Peace be with you." The garment and candle are kept as souvenirs of one's baptism.

WHAT DO WE PROMISE through our godparents in Baptism?

We promise through our godparents in Baptism to renounce the devil, and to live according to the teachings of Christ and of His Church.

The godparents make the responses for an infant being baptized. These are called the baptismal vows. By them the person renounces Satan and all his works and pomps; that is, sin and all occasions.

1. To the first three questions, we reply through our godparents in Baptism. "I do renounce him (or them)." To the last three questions we reply, "I do believe."

(1) Do you renounce Satan? (2) And all his works? (3) And all his display? (4) Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth? (5) Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was born into the world and suf-

fered for us? (6) And do you believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

2. We should renew our baptismal vows after the blessing of the baptismal font at Easter Vigil service. We should also renew them on our First Communion day, on New Year's Day, and after a mission or spiritual retreat.

What is the DUTY OF A GODPARENT after Baptism?

The duty of a godparent after Baptism is to see that the child is brought up a good Catholic, if this is not done by the parents.

1. In solemn baptism there must be at least one godparent, of the same sex as the one baptized. It is permitted to have two sponsors: a godfather and a godmother.

It is not permitted to have more than two godparents, and these two must be of different sexes. Others who may be present are only witnesses. Godparents should be at least thirteen years of age.

2. A godparent has the duty of looking upon the baptized person as his spiritual child, of providing for him, when necessary, the proper religious education, and of guarding him spiritually even when he is grown.

3. A spiritual relationship is established between the person baptized and his sponsor, as well as between him and the one who baptizes him.

This relationship, called spiritual affinity, forbids marriage between the persons thus related. No spiritual affinity is contracted between the godfather and the godmother of a person, nor between his parents and his godparents.

4. If the person chosen godparent cannot be present at the Baptism, another can act in his place: that is, he can be sponsor by proxy. The absent godparent must, however, have the intention of being godparent.

Who should be chosen as godparents for Baptism?

Only Catholics who know their faith and live up to the duties of their religion should be chosen as godparents for Baptism.

A godparent is supposed to be a practical Catholic. Non-Catholics, Masons, those who married out of the Church, and all other excommunicated persons cannot be sponsors. Neither can the father, the mother, the husband, or the wife of the person to be baptized be the godparent.



The ceremonies of Confirmation begin by the Bishop extending his hands over those to be confirmed (1), invoking the Holy Ghost. He signs with the sign of the cross the forehead of each separately

with chrism (2), pronouncing the words of confirmation. He gives the person a slight blow on the cheek (3) to remind him to be ready to suffer all things, even death, for his faith.

130. The Sacrament of Confirmation

What is CONFIRMATION?

Confirmation is the sacrament through which *the Holy Spirit comes to us* in a special way and *enables us to profess our faith* as strong and perfect Christians and *soldiers of Jesus Christ*.

Christ promised His Apostles the gift of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; John 14:16-17; 16:7, 12). *They understood that the promise was meant for all Christians. Hence after receiving the Spirit on Pentecost Day, they conferred Him on all the baptized:* Acts 2:38 and 8:14-17.

1. *Confirmation* in a very special manner brings us the *Holy Spirit* with His sevenfold gifts. *"Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit"* (Acts 8:17).

Confirmation for the Christians may be likened to the day of Pentecost for the Apostles, when they received the Holy Spirit under sensible signs: tongues as of fire, and a mighty wind. *The Apostles themselves administered the sacrament of Confirmation*, as at Samaria and Ephesus. *"And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them"* (Acts 19:6). *"Laying of the hands"* was the earliest name for *Confirmation*.

2. *Any baptized Christian* may be *confirmed*. Although the sacrament is not necessary for salvation, *it is sinful to neglect it*, as it confers many graces.

3. *We should receive* the sacrament of Confirmation at the age *when we pass from childhood to youth. At that period* all kinds of temptations surround us, and *we need special strength from God to resist them*.

In the early days of the Church, it was the custom to *confirm very young children*. The sacrament of Confirmation is today delayed in order that the recipient may first have a basis of knowledge of the fundamentals of faith. Even when Confirmation is administered to infants and very young children, they truly receive the sacrament. *The age is a matter of discipline in particular dioceses*.

4. *The bishop* is the usual *minister* of Confirmation.

Sometimes, however, the *Holy See gives missionary priests* the power to administer this sacrament. *Pastors and administrators of parishes* in their respective territories are granted the faculty of confirming, as *extra-ordinary ministers*, those who are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age.

WHAT IS NECESSARY to receive Confirmation properly?

To receive Confirmation properly, it is necessary to *be in the state of grace*, and to *know* well the *chief truths* and duties of our *religion*.

1. *For Confirmation*, a knowledge of the chief truths and duties of our religion is required. This is why, if a person who is to be confirmed has reached the age of reason, he is examined.

The Apostles' Creed, the Commandments, the Sacraments and common prayers are the basis of any examination in religion.

2. *Confirmation is a sacrament of the living.* Therefore when *one* who has reached the age of reason is *to be confirmed*, he *must* first go to confession if burdened with mortal sin, in order to *be in a state of grace*.

The person to be confirmed should obtain his Confirmation card. He must go to the church properly dressed. He must go early; when many are to be confirmed, the doors are closed before the beginning of the ceremonies, to prevent the entrance of latecomers. The person confirmed must not leave the church before the whole ceremony is finished.

3. Upon approaching the bishop, the person to be confirmed must *kneel*. Children may stand. The sponsor stands behind, with the right hand on the shoulder of the person to be confirmed. There is *only one sponsor*, of the same sex as the one confirmed.

WHAT DOES THE BISHOP DO when he gives confirmation?

When giving confirmation, the bishop *lays his hand on the head* of the person he confirms, and *anoints the forehead* with holy chrism in the form of a cross as he says: "*I sign you with the sign of the cross, and I confirm you with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*"

1. Holy chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balm, blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday. By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross is meant that the Catholic who is confirmed must always be ready to profess his faith openly and to practice it fearlessly.

The cross marked on our foreheads at Confirmation reminds us never to be ashamed to profess ourselves disciples of a crucified Saviour. We must profess our religion openly whenever we cannot keep silence without breaking some law of God or of the Church; for example, when we are challenged to make profession of our faith, when the Church is being attacked.

2. After the anointing with chrism, the bishop gives the person confirmed a slight blow on the cheek, saying, "*Peace be with*

you!" It is believed that originally it was "*the kiss of peace*" given by the bishop, which in the case of babies was replaced by a caress on the cheek. For centuries, however, the explanation given is that *the blow should remind the confirmed to be ready to suffer for Christ's sake.*

Finally the bishop gives all his blessing. Then those who have been confirmed or their godparents pray the Credo, "Our Father," and "Hail Mary."

3. Those in charge should take care that proper registration takes place after Confirmation. When a person is confirmed outside his own parish, notification must be sent to the parish where he was baptized.

What are the effects of Confirmation?

Confirmation increases sanctifying grace, gives its special sacramental grace, and imprints a lasting character on the soul.

1. Confirmation grants us the special grace by which our faith is deepened and strengthened, and we become concerned not only for our own spiritual needs, but for those of others.

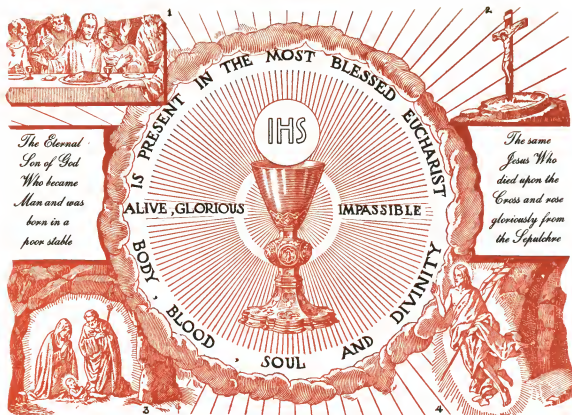
Confirmation makes us sharers with Christ in His role of Redeemer. We participate with Him in the task of extending His Kingdom, by adding new souls to His Mystical Body. Our words and our works are directed not merely to our own sanctification, but also to the purpose of making Christ's truths alive and real for those around us, we are "soldiers of Christ."

2. By Confirmation we also receive that grace Jesus promised to His Apostles: "*You shall receive power* when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and *you shall be witnesses for me*...even to the very ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The confirmed will no longer remain on the defensive fighting for his faith when being attacked. He will go forth joyfully in the fulfillment of vocation of soldier of Christ. He will become restless unless he is doing something worth-while for others—something to make more secure their promise of eternal life. He will join the ranks of Catholic Action, he will start being a real soldier of Christ, he will be "another Christ."

3. The character of Confirmation is a spiritual and indelible sign which marks the Christian as a soldier in the army of Christ.

The confirmed as Christ's soldier will be loyal to his King, Whose cause he serves. He is prepared to undergo any sufferings, even death if necessary. He will do all in his power to expand the kingdom of God. Because Confirmation imprints an indelible character on the soul, it may be received only once.



*The Eternal
Son of God
Who became
Man and was
born in a
poor stable*

*The same
Jesus Who
died upon the
Cross and rose
gloriously from
the Sepulchre*

At the Consecration at Mass, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the Sacrament that Jesus instituted at the Last Supper (1).

In the Blessed Eucharist is the same Person who was born in Bethlehem (3), crucified on Calvary (2), and rose gloriously from the dead on the first Easter morning (4).

131. The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

What is THE HOLY EUCHARIST?

The Holy Eucharist is a *sacrament and a sacrifice* in which our Saviour Jesus Christ, body and blood, soul and divinity, *is contained, offered, and received* under the appearances of bread and wine.

1. *Christ* instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died. The Apostles were present.

EUCHARIST in Greek means *thanksgiving*. The sacrament is so called because when *Christ* instituted it, *He gave thanks*. Today, it is the chief means by which we give thanks to God, through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. The Holy Eucharist is also called the *Blessed Sacrament*, because it is the most excellent of all sacraments. It gives us Christ

Himself. "*My delight is to be with the children of men*" (Prov. 8:31).

It is called the *Sacrament of the Altar*, because it is consecrated and *reserved upon an altar*. It is *offered up on the altar* in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

3. The Holy Eucharist is called *Holy Communion* when it is received, usually in church. It is called *Holy Viaticum* when it is received during a serious illness, or at the hour of death.

HOW DID CHRIST INSTITUTE the Holy Eucharist?

Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist in this way: *He took bread, blessed and broke it*, and giving it to His Apostles, said: "*Take and eat; this is My body*"; then *He took a*

cup of wine, blessed it, and giving it to them, said: "All of you drink this; for this is My blood of the new covenant which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins"; finally, He gave His Apostles the commission: "Do this in remembrance of Me."

1. When Our Lord said, "**This is My body,**" the entire substance of the bread was changed into His body; and when He said, "**This is My blood,**" the entire substance of the wine was changed into His blood.

In the Holy Eucharist, we find the three essentials of a sacrament. The institution was at the Last Supper. The matter is bread and wine; the form consists of Our Lord's words. The grace is a nourishing grace coming from the very body and blood of Christ, helping us to be more closely united to God and our fellowmen in supernatural charity.

2. After the substance of the bread and wine had been changed, only the appearances of bread and wine remained.

By the appearances of bread and wine we mean all those outward forms and accidentals, like color, taste, smell, weight, shape, and whatever else that appears to the senses. This is the double miracle of the Holy Eucharist: the changing from bread and wine into Jesus Christ, and the existence of the appearances of bread and wine without their substance.

WHY DO WE BELIEVE that Christ changed bread and wine into His own Body and Blood?

We believe that Christ changed bread and wine into His own Body and Blood, because:

1. His words clearly say so. At the Last Supper He said: "This is My Body," not "This is a symbol of My Body," or "This represents My Body."

"And while they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed and broke, and gave it to his disciples, and said, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' And taking a cup, he gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, 'All of you drink of this; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins' (Matt. 26:26-28).

2. Previously, on the day after the first multiplication of the loaves and fishes, Our Lord had promised to give His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink. On this occasion, it is clear that the Jews took Our Lord's words literally. Many of the disciples left Jesus and "walked no more with Him," because they could not believe such a thing as He promised. But Jesus, although very sad at their leaving, did not take back His words or explain them differently.

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert, and have died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that if anyone eat of it he will not die. I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."

"The Jews on that account argued with one another, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'"

"Jesus therefore said to them '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. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has life everlasting and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him. As the living Father has sent me, and as I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he also shall live because of me'" (John 6:48-57).

3. The Apostles understood that Christ meant His words at the Last Supper to be literal. St. Paul writes:

"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not the sharing of the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? . . . Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:27).

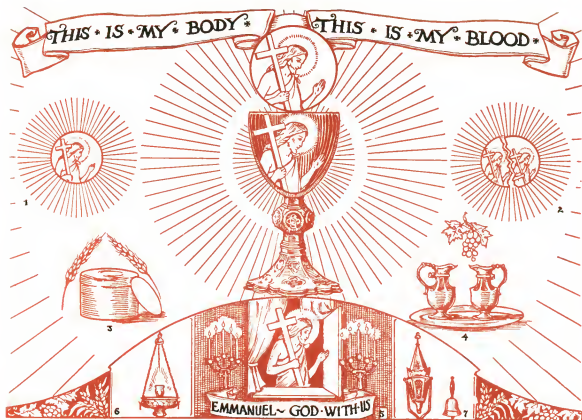
4. It has been the continuous belief of Christians from the beginning of Christianity. St. Augustine said, "Our Lord held Himself in His own hands, when He gave His Body to the disciples." It was only in the sixteenth century that some Protestants, breaking away from the True Church, denied it and introduced a different doctrine.

The churches which separated in the early centuries from the Catholic Church all believe in the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist as being the very Body and Blood of Christ.

How was Our Lord able to change bread and wine into His body and blood?

Our Lord was able to change bread and wine into His body and blood by His almighty power.

If God made the universe out of nothing, He certainly could change bread and wine into His Body and Blood. Christ Himself changed water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana, by a mere act of His Divine Will. Every day we can see the results of God's power in the miracle of growth: people grow, the trees grow; inanimate or dead matter is assimilated as food and continues as living beings or vegetation,—all by the power of God.



In the Holy Eucharist Our Lord is present whole and entire, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. When the

Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle (5), a sanctuary lamp (6) is kept burning before it.

132. The Real Presence

WHEN DID CHRIST GIVE His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood?

Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood **when He made the Apostles priests at the Last Supper** by saying to them: **"Do this in remembrance of Me."**

Thus He commanded them and their successors to renew till the end of time what He had just performed. This change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continues to be made in the Church of Jesus Christ, through His priests.

HOW DO PRIESTS EXERCISE their power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ?

Priests exercise their power to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ **by repeating at the consecration of the Mass the words of Christ:** "This is My body...this is My blood."

Over the bread are pronounced the words: *Hoc est enim corpus meum*, "For this is My Body." Over the wine are pronounced the words: *Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei*, "For this is the chalice of My Blood."

1. **At Mass**, at the words of consecration, **Transubstantiation** takes place; that is, the entire substance of the bread and wine is changed into our Lord's Body and Blood.

After the words of consecration, there is **no longer any bread or wine** on the altar, for they have been changed into Christ's Body and Blood. If it be asked how transubstantiation can possibly be effected, we reply, **"By the almighty power of God."**

2. The **appearances** of bread and wine remain. The **consecrated Host** continues to **look like bread**, tastes and feels like bread; **but it is not bread**, for the entire substance of bread is changed into Christ's Body. The same is true of the consecrated wine.

Is Jesus Christ WHOLE and ENTIRE both under the appearances of bread, and under the appearances of wine?

Jesus Christ is whole and entire both under the appearances of bread and under the appearances of wine.

1. *In the Holy Eucharist* Christ is present wholly, Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

A little child preparing for her first Holy Communion was asked the difference between a crucifix and the Blessed Sacrament. "Why," the innocent child answered, "the crucifix looks like Our Lord, but it is not He. The Blessed Sacrament does not look like Our Lord, but It is He Himself!"

2. *Christ is whole and entire* under the appearances of bread or wine. As Christ's Body is a living body, and a living body has blood, *so Christ's Blood is there wherever His Body is.*

Where Christ's living Body and Blood are, there also must be His soul, for the body and blood cannot live without the soul. *And where Christ's Soul is, there also is His Divinity*, which cannot be separated from His humanity.

3. *Christ is whole and entire in each part* of the Host and in each drop in the chalice. When the Host is broken, the Body of Christ is not broken, but *He exists whole and entire in each fragment.*

In a similar way, even when we break a mirror into many pieces, each piece reflects our face.

4. *Christ's Body and Blood are present* in the consecrated species as long as the appearances of bread and wine remain.

When, therefore, we receive Holy Communion, we bear within us, as long as the appearances of bread remain, the Living Christ, Son of God.

WHY does Christ give us His own body and blood in the Holy Eucharist?

1. *To be* offered as a *sacrifice* commemorating and renewing the sacrifice of the cross.

"For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). In the Mass Jesus offers Himself as a Victim to His heavenly Father.

2. *To be* received in *Holy Communion.*

"I am the bread of life . . . He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me, and I in him . . . He who eats me, he also shall live because of me" (John 6:48, 56, 58). The Holy Eucharist is food to nourish the soul. By this food we are united to Christ, Who nourishes us with His divine life; sanctifying grace and all virtues increase in our

souls; our evil inclinations are lessened. The Holy Eucharist is a pledge of everlasting life: "If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever." Holy Communion needs the Mass to supply the consecrated species; for this reason *Mass and Communion are inseparable.*

3. *To remain* ever on our altars as a *proof of His love*, and to be worshipped by us.

"Come to Me, all you who labor, and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). We say we love Jesus; do we prove our love? When we have a dear friend, we are ever eager to be in his presence; do we show Jesus the same loving tenderness? Or are we so forgetful of Him that we go to see Him only once a week?

Since Christ's Real Presence is in the Eucharist, WHAT HONOR ARE WE BOUND TO RENDER IT?

We are bound to render the Holy Eucharist *the same adoration and honor due God Himself.*

1. *It is a most wonderful privilege* to have Christ actually present every moment of the day and night.

When the Blessed Sacrament is in the tabernacle, it is covered with a curtain or veil, and a sanctuary lamp is kept burning before it. When we enter or leave the church, we should genuflect on the right knee towards the tabernacle, as a sign of adoration.

2. *This is why the tabernacle is the most precious part of a church.* Special care should be taken to keep the altar linen clean; in most parishes there are altar societies of women who devote part of their time to the care of altar linen, vestments, etc.

The Holy Father gives us good example. The chapel of the Blessed Sacrament in the Basilica of St. Peter's is precious, with its unique tabernacle. Dozens of vigil lights burn day and night before Our Lord, as prayers for His people.

3. We can *show Jesus our love* and gratitude by *hearing Holy Mass* every day and *receiving Holy Communion*, by *paying* Him a *visit* in the Blessed Sacrament, by *attending Benediction*, by spending an hour of *adoration* when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, and by other devotions.

When we pass by a church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, we should bow our heads as a sign of respect, and say a short aspiration in honor of Our Lord; *men should raise their hats.* If we are not ill-bred enough to pass by a friend without a word or gesture of greeting, shall we be thus ill-bred towards Our Lord!



From the beginning of man's existence, sacrifices have been offered to God. The children of Adam

and Eve, Abel and Cain, offered sacrifice to God. Abel offered sheep; Cain, fruits of the earth.

133. Nature and History of Sacrifice

What is A SACRIFICE?

A sacrifice is a special kind of *gift-offering, addressed to God*, our Creator and Last End.

1. In ordinary life *we offer gifts to those we love or respect, as a sign of our affection or admiration or reverence*, and as a means of establishing or strengthening friendly relations with them. In this way, for instance, we give Christmas and birthday presents.

In their relations with the Divinity, men have spontaneously adopted a similar practice. God is our Creator, the Giver of all good things, and He is our Last End in whom alone we can find fulfillment and happiness. Men offer Him gifts from among the things they have received from Him, in order to acknowledge Him as the Creator and Giver of all things. *A gift thus offered to God* becomes sacred, the offering of it is called a *sacrifice*.

2. From the very beginning men have acknowledged God's supremacy by offering sacrifice. *The essence of the sacrifice* is a rite which signifies *the transfer of the gift into the immediate possession of the Di-*

vinity. And since *God* is invisible, He is *represented by the altar* which receives the offering: gifts are placed on it, the life-blood of animals is poured on it; *the offering* is sometimes burned on the altar, as part of the symbolism: it *is given up to God*.

Because *men have always* felt their sinfulness and their unworthiness to approach God, they have *offered their sacrifices through the intermediary of priests*, men specially consecrated and set aside for the service of God.

3. Men have often offered the most valuable animals of their flocks. God, of course, does not need anything, and all we have is His. He does not seek our possessions, but ourselves, our free love and self-surrender, and this is what the exterior sacrifice signifies: *the oblation* of the gift is a *symbol of our interior sacrifice*, of the adoration and love by which the soul gives itself completely to its Creator. Without this interior sacrifice the exterior offering is meaningless, insincere, and cannot be pleasing to God. *What matters* therefore is not so much the value of the gift as *the sincerity of the giver's self-gift*.



Because they did not have a knowledge of the true God, the ancient Greeks and Egyptians offered human sacrifices. The Caanonites used to offer human victims to their idol Moloch, heating the

brazen statue of the god red-hot, and casting the victims into its arms. Even today some pagan peoples offer human sacrifices. Thus we see how perversion enters when the true God is not known.

Self-oblation is the finest and most complete expression of true religion; its intensity measures the quality and depth of a man's religious attitude.

Giving requires giving up something. Sincere self-oblation to God implies that we mean to give up self-seeking, to seek God's will and pleasure rather than our own will and satisfaction. *Sacrifice is something great and difficult.*

In common language we speak of *making sacrifices* for a person or a cause, of a mother sacrificing herself for her children. The meaning is that something valuable—time, luxuries, health, life itself—is given up for another, for love of him.

4. The offering of *sacrifice* is an honor reserved to God alone, because it is understood to be an act of adoration, such as can be offered to no creature.

What are the purposes of sacrifice?

The purposes of sacrifice are: to give honor or adoration to God, to offer Him thanks, to beg a favor, or to make propitiation.

In other words, the purposes of sacrifice are: adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and atonement.

It is natural for man to give outward expression to the feelings that move his interior being. For this reason he bursts out in praise when he thinks of the greatness and holiness of God; he must give something up as a sign of gratitude; he must offer a gift when he feels his insignificance in begging a favor; and he tries all kinds of penitential works when he realizes his iniquities.

In what forms is sacrifice offered?

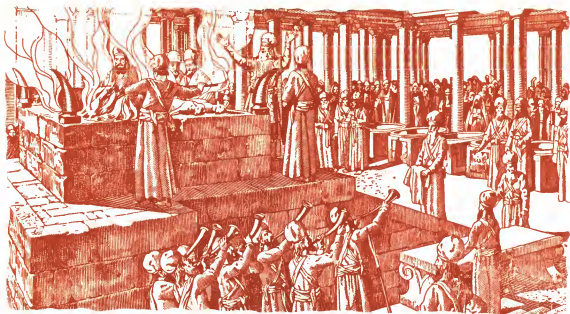
Sacrifice is offered in either the bloody or the unbloody form.

1. A sacrifice of living animals, such as an ox, a lamb, or a dove, is a bloody sacrifice. A sacrifice of some food, such as fruit, wine, or wheat, is an unbloody sacrifice.

Among the Jews, the animals used to be slaughtered, their blood poured out upon the altar, and their flesh consumed by fire or eaten by the priests and those for whom the sacrifice was offered. The unbloody oblation was burned up or eaten by the priests after being offered; the wine was poured out on the altar.

2. Some heathens, with perverted ideas, offered human sacrifices to their idols.

The King of Moab (4 Kings 3:27) offered his own son as a sacrifice, to obtain help against the Israelites.

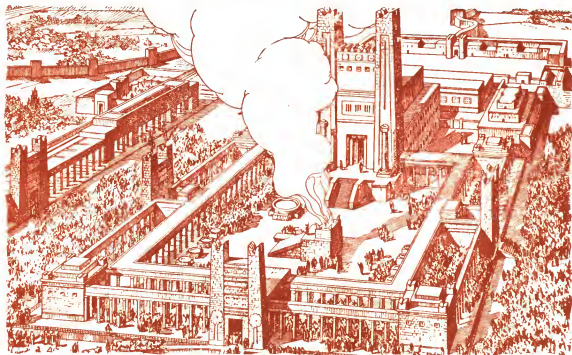


Gad gave to Moses detailed instructions on sacrificial offerings (Lev. 1-7; 16; 22). Among the Jews, their chief feasts were: (a) the Pasch or Passover, which commemorated their deliverance from Egypt; (b) the Pentecost, in remembrance of the

Law received at Mount Sinai; (c) the Tabernacles, to commemorate their wanderings in the desert; and (d) the Expiation or Atonement, in which the priest sacrificed for his own and the people's sins. These sacrifices typified the sacrifice of Christ.

On certain solemn feasts the Jews sacrificed hundreds of animals amidst impressive ceremonies.

Law received an Mount Sinai; (c) the Tabernacles, to commemorate their wanderings in the desert; and (d) the Expiation or Atonement, in which the priest sacrificed for his own and the people's sins. These sacrifices typified the sacrifice of Christ.





Among the Jews there were different ranks or orders of priests, as the high-priest, the priests, and the Levites: These ranks were a figure or type

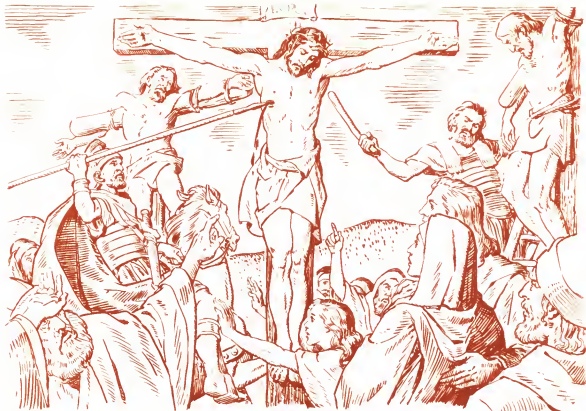
of the different orders that were to be in the Church founded by Jesus Christ. The people faithfully obeyed their priests, and supported them with alms.

The Jewish sacrifices were merely types of the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, and ceased with the passing of the Old Law. In the New Law we have the True Sacrifice, the same that Christ offered on

Calvary by His death. The High Priest is Christ Himself, and Christ, too, is the Victim. St. Paul said, "It is impossible that sins should be taken away with blood of bulls and of goats" (Heb. 10:4).



"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"



The death of Christ on the cross was a true sacrifice. He offered Himself to His heavenly Father to expiate the sins of the world. As a Victim, He suffered first. Then He died, crying, "It is consummated!" thus completing the sacrifice. On Calvary, Christ Him-

self was the Highpriest, and at the same time the Victim. This sacrifice reconciled God with man.

Since the Jewish sacrifices were only a foreshadowing of Our Lord's sacrifice, they ceased when His was offered, as foretold by the prophets.

134. The New Sacrifice

What is THE MASS?

The Mass is the sacrifice of the New Law in which *Christ*, through the ministry of the priest, *offers Himself to God in an unbloody manner* under the appearances of bread and wine.

In the early days of the Church, Mass was called the Breaking of Bread, the Lord's Supper, the Sacrifice, the Eucharist, the Holy Liturgy, the Solemnity of the Lord.

1. In the *Old Testament* the sacrifices were far from perfect; sheep and goats were unworthy offerings to God in acknowledgment of His power and glory. In the time of the Old Law of the Jews, God had expressed His purpose *to institute a new sacrifice*.

2. In the *New Testament*, there is only *one* Sacrifice which *has replaced* the many

sacrifices of the Old Testament era. This is *the sacrifice of Christ*, offered *once in a bloody manner* upon the Cross and *now re-enacted daily* on our altars.

3. *The Church* has always taught that the *Mass is a true sacrifice*. St. Paul implies this when he says: "We have an altar from which they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle (*meaning the Jews*)" (Heb. 13:10).

The prophet Malachia foretold the universality of the sacrifice of the Mass. Since there are Catholic priests and churches all over the world, this prophecy is today accomplished literally, for in all places the "pure offering" Holy Mass, is offered.

4. *The sacrifice of the Mass* is offered to God *alone*. However, it may be offered to God *in honor* of the saints and angels, especially on their feasts.



1

Christ instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the Last Supper. After praying, He blessed bread and wine, and changed them into His Body and Blood, saying to the Apostles: "Take and eat; this is my body . . . All of you drink of this; for this is



2

my blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:26, 28). These words are known as the words of consecration of Mass, by which bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Who offered THE FIRST MASS?

Our Divine Saviour offered the first Mass, *at the Last Supper*, the night before He died.

1. At the Last Supper, *Jesus Christ offered Himself up as a sacrifice to the Eternal Father*, under the appearances of bread and wine.

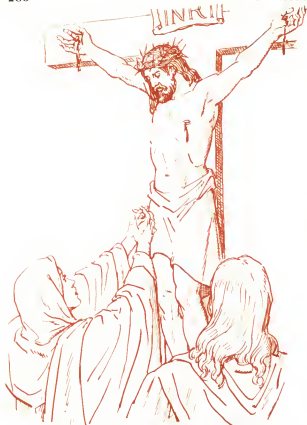
"And while they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessing it, he broke and gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' And taking a cup and giving thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it; and he said to them, 'This is my blood of the new covenant, *which is being shed for many*'" (Mark 14:22-25).

2. *The following day, Jesus Christ freely submitted Himself to His Passion and death* by crucifixion at the hands of his enemies.

After the first consecration, having offered Himself under the appearances of bread and wine, Christ turned to his Apostles and said, "*Do this in remembrance of me*" (Luke 22:19). By those words, He told them to do as He had done, *offer in sacrifice to God His body and blood under the appearances of bread and wine*; he commanded them in those words to offer Mass, *as the perfect sacrifice to God*.

3. The Mass is a *real sacrifice*, for in it a Victim is offered up *for the purpose of reconciling man with God*. It is, however, a unique kind of sacrifice—*the sacrifice of the Cross*, communicated to the Church. (See next two pages.)

At the Last Supper Our Lord evidently meant to *institute a visible sacrifice*. He chose for it the very time when the old sacrifice of the Paschal lamb was celebrated. *The very words used by Christ in instituting the sacrifice of the Mass, the "new covenant" or "new testament,"* were almost identical with those used in the institution of the sacrifice of the Old Law.



The Mass is the chief and central act of Catholic worship, the greatest act of worship that can be



offered to God, an infinite ocean of graces for the living and the dead.

135. The Mass and Calvary

Why is THE MASS the same sacrifice as THE SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS?

The Mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross, **because in the Mass the Victim is the same**, and the principal Priest is **the same**, Jesus Christ.

1. **The Mass** is the very **same** sacrifice which was offered up **at the Last Supper** and **on Calvary**; it is the living **presence** of the sacrifice of the Cross.

On Calvary, Christ offered Himself up by accepting a cruel death out of obedience to the heavenly Father and for our redemption. **At the Last Supper**, He offered Himself for the impending immolation: "*This is my body. . . This is my blood of the new covenant, which is being (or will be) shed for many.*" He added: "*Do this in remembrance of me.*" **At Mass**, the Victim immolated on Calvary is offered anew, by the priest repeating the same words with which Christ offered Himself at the Last Supper.

The Mass does not, strictly speaking, renew the sacrifice of the Cross. Christ has been immolated once for all. **The Church**, by the symbolic separation of body and blood (in the **double consecration**), **represents** the historic sacrifice and **offers it anew** to the heavenly Father. As St. Paul writes: "*For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord, until he comes*" (1 Cor. 11:26).

2. The Mass **is no mere remembrance** or memorial **of Calvary**. **Christ**, the Victim of Calvary, **is really present**, and with Him the permanent power or efficacy of His great sacrifice. Through the new offering that power is now communicated and applied to the Church, to all of us. In this sense, **the sacrifice of the Cross is present** (sacramentally) **in the Mass**.

The priest offering the mass is Christ's minister and representative. He utters the words of consecration **in the name and person of Christ**, saying: "*This is My Body. This is My Blood;*" not, "*This is Christ's Body, etc.*"



The illustration shows the solemn blessing of the grapevines from which the grapes are taken to

prepare wine for the consecration during the Sacrifice of the Mass.

What is the DIFFERENCE BETWEEN the Sacrifice of THE CROSS and the Sacrifice of THE MASS?

The manner in which the sacrifice is offered is different: on the *cross* Christ *shed His blood* and was put to death, while in the Mass there is no new immolation of the Victim, but only a new offering. On the *cross* Christ *gained merit* and satisfied for us, while in the *Mass* He *applies to us the merits* and satisfaction of His death on the *CROSS*.

1. *Christ* was *immolated* on Calvary, once and for all; He is now in glory, and can die no more. How then can we say that *He is continually sacrificed on our altars*? Because, as we just explained, *Christ* the Victim of Calvary *is offered anew*.

It is clear that the Mass is a unique kind of sacrifice—a sacramental sacrifice, essentially related to the Cross and depending on it. It is on the Cross that Christ became the Victim of salvation; now He is glorified, but as the Victim who has offered Himself, has been accepted, and can now apply the merits of His sacrifice.

2. *The sacrifice of the Cross is the fountain* of all grace and salvation. *The Mass*

applies to us the power and merit of that sacrifice.

The sacrifice of the Cross is all-sufficient. The Mass adds nothing to it, but *unfolds its riches*, it brings Calvary within the reach of all men in every clime and age, in order that all men may unite themselves with it and draw upon its infinite treasures.

3. *The sacrifice on Calvary* was offered up by Christ *for us*; while *at Mass* He offers Himself *through us*.

By changing our gifts into His body and blood, *Christ puts*, as it were, *His precious sacrifice into our hands* that we may present it to the heavenly Father. In this act He *“appears before the face of God on our behalf”* (Heb. 9:24).

By offering, we appropriate the treasures of Christ's sacrifice. But if our offering is sincere, it expresses our own interior self-oblation to God. Thus *the Mass becomes the oblation* of the whole Mystical Body, *the Church offering herself through and with Christ*, her Head and Saviour. Thereby she draws upon the treasures of the Cross, in proportion to the fervour of her offering.

Thus *the Mass is the sacrifice of the Cross communicated to the Church*.

MY CATHOLIC FAITH
**THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS
 IS OFFERED FOR FOUR ENDS**



ADORATION



THANKSGIVING



ATONEMENT



PETITION

Holy Mass may be offered to God with a fourfold intention: by way of adoration, thanksgiving, petition, and atonement. It is for the spiritual and

temporal welfare of the living, and for the eternal repose of the dead. Every day of the year Holy Mass is offered, except Good Friday.

136. Ends and Fruits of the Mass

What are **THE PURPOSES** for which the Mass is offered?

1. To **ADORE God** as our Creator.

The Mass is the ONLY worthy gift we can offer God; in it we offer to Him His own Son. Having a perfect sacrifice in the Mass, Christians need, and have, no other sacrifice to offer to God but this one.

2. To **THANK God** for His many favors.

In the Mass Jesus Christ the Son of God speaks for us to His eternal Father; we have an advocate with Him. Can we fail but speak well, having this instrument of thanksgiving?

3. To **ASK God** to bestow His blessings on all men.

Holy Mass may be offered for the living of whatever creed. It may be offered for departed Catholics. The priest may not offer Mass publicly for departed non-Catholics, but the persons hearing the Mass may do so. Persons hearing Mass may have their own private intentions for offering it, aside from the intention of the priest. Mass may be offered for any intention except that which is in itself bad.

4. To **SATISFY the justice of God** for the sins committed against Him.

The Mass reconciles man with God, as we learn from the words of Christ uttered at the Last Supper, "This is my blood, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:28). We are not redeemed over again by the Mass, for we were redeemed once on the cross; but the Mass applies to our souls the fruits of redemption gained for us on the cross. As a perfect propitiatory sacrifice, the Mass satisfies the justice of God.

WHAT FRUITS ARE DERIVED from holy Mass?

By means of the Mass, *the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross are applied to our souls.*

The sacrifice on the cross—the passion and death of Christ—is the gold mine of graces; Holy Mass is the machinery that takes the gold out for us. At Mass a torrent of graces flows from the altar of God to enrich men. God makes use of other means of grace, such as prayer; but in no other means are graces applied to us so generously.



There are different kinds of Masses: (a) low Mass, read or recited by the priest; (b) high Mass, sung by priest and choir; and (c) solemn high Mass, with deacon and subdeacon assisting the celebrant. These are not really different; they differ only in

the elaborateness of the ceremonies used. A pontifical Mass is a high Mass said by a bishop. A bishop puts on his vestments and takes them off before the altar, unlike the priest, who vests himself in the sacristy. Above is a pontifical Mass.

1. **AT MASS** we particularly obtain:

- (a) **Grace** to repent of mortal sin.

It is not necessary to be in the state of grace to hear Mass; the sinner does not commit a fresh sin by doing so; on the contrary he obtains the grace of conversion. *Upon the cross Christ cried:* "Father, forgive them;" *at Mass He utters the same prayer* on behalf of those present.

- (b) **Forgiveness** of venial sins for those who are in the state of grace.

St. Augustine said that one "Our Father" prayed with devotion would expiate the venial sins of a whole day; how much more effective would be *the Mass*, which is *the supreme prayer offered to God!*

- (c) **Remission** of the temporal penalty due to sin.

The penitent thief, who was present at the Sacrifice of the Cross, was quickly admitted into heaven, with the penalties due his sins all forgiven.

2. *At Mass* we are sure that our prayers are heard in the Mass, because in it *Our Lord Himself prays* for us.

The fruits of the Mass are granted to the person hearing it devoutly, not only in answer to his prayers, but directly, *in virtue of the Sacrifice itself*, through which the merits of Christ *are applied to his soul.*

We may obtain eternal rewards provided we are in the state of grace. We also obtain temporal blessings, such as help in our work, and protection.

3. *The whole Church on earth and in purgatory* participates in the general fruits, for the Mass is offered for all. The special fruits **benefit:**

- (a) The **priest** who celebrates the Mass.
 (b) The person or persons **for whom** it is offered.
 (c) Those **who serve** or **assist** at the Mass.
 (d) Those **for whom** the faithful present pray and offer the Mass in union with the priest.



The most impressive of all solemn Masses is the High Mass of the Pope. The Holy Father says Mass facing the people. The Pope is the only one that

can say Mass on the high altars of the four basilicas in Rome: St. Peter's, St. Paul's, St. John's (the Lateran Church), and St. Mary Major.

137. Value of the Mass; Offerings

What is THE VALUE OF A MASS?

A Mass *has infinite value*, because it is the renewal of the sacrifice of the cross.

The value of a gift is proportionate to the dignity of the giver and the cost of the gift. *The Mass*, the only worthy gift for God, is *offered by Christ*, the *Son of God*; it cost Him His very life.

1. Therefore *to assist or offer Mass* is a good work of *greater excellence* than any other.

By other good works we offer to God gifts that are human. *In the Mass we offer Him gifts that are divine*: His own only-begotten Son. There is no more holy and divine act that can be performed on earth than the sacrifice of the Mass.

2. The *efficacy* of the holy sacrifice does not depend on the *worthiness or unworthiness of the priest*; he is only the minister of Christ, Who is both Priest and Victim.

The virtue of the Mass is of itself, quite apart from the worthiness of the priest. For this reason, we do not lose the merits of Mass if it is offered for

us by a priest who is not worthy, since *Mass has its intrinsic value*; in a similar way, a diamond is a diamond, even if the jeweler selling it be a bad man.

3. *However*, as a good work, the graces and favors are *limited*, partly by the will of God, and partly by the dispositions of those to whom the fruits are applied. Therefore, *the more devotion we have at Mass, the greater will be the profit we derive*.

Two young men went to visit Rome. Their schedule limited their stay there to one day. The first young man, upon arrival, immediately visited all the famous portions of the city, finally ending with a visit to the Holy Father and the Vatican. The second young man, being fatigued by the journey, lay down to rest. He fell asleep and awoke only when it was too dark to go anywhere. Both went to the same city, but one did not profit from his journey.

WHY IS AN OFFERING MADE to the priest who says Mass?

An offering is made to the priest who says Mass, *to provide for the things necessary for the Sacrifice*, and to assist in the support of the priest.



The hosts, consecrated at Mass, taken by the priest and people, are made of pure unleavened

wheat flour mixed with water and baked. They are prepared by chosen persons, usually religious.

1. *Since the early years* of the Church *the faithful*, wishing to participate more fully in the oblation, *made offerings* of bread and wine for the consecration.

Today offerings are also made of vases and flowers, candle and candlesticks, altar linens, vestments and sacred vessels as well as monetary donations for the Mass.

2. *Many Catholics* have the laudable custom of leaving a certain amount of property or money in their wills, *in order to have Masses offered for them* after their death.

A *requiem Mass* is said in black vestments, and with special prayers for the dead. Masses said for the dead for thirty consecutive days are called *Gregorian Masses*.

WHAT MATERIALS ARE USED for consecration at Mass?

Bread and wine are used for consecration at Mass; a few drops of water are mixed with the wine, because Christ did so.

1. *The bread for consecration* is made from *pure wheat flour* mixed with water and baked. No other flour may be used.

2. *The wine for consecration* must be the pure juice of grapes fermented.

WHEN IS MASS OFFERED?

Mass is offered *every day of the year* except Good Friday and Holy Saturday, the vigil of Easter.

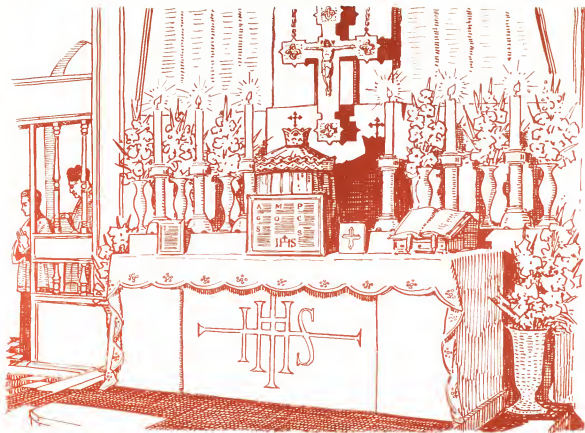
In the first centuries, bishops and priests celebrated Mass together; this is called *concelebration*. Our present Masses, when priests are ordained, and bishops are consecrated, are similar to those early Masses.

1. *Ordinarily* a priest is permitted to say mass only *once a day*. On Christmas and All Souls' Day, however, he may say three Masses.

On Sundays, holydays, first Fridays, etc., a priest with permission may say two, and even three, Masses when the people's needs so require.

2. Mass is usually said in the *morning*; with the approval of the bishop, it may also be said in the *afternoon* and *evening*.

In the early days of Christianity Mass was said *in the evening*, after the example of the Last Supper, when the Mass was instituted. Later it was thought better to have it said in the morning, for a greater respect to the Holy Eucharist. In these our days, *Mass may be said at practically all hours of the day*, in order to facilitate attendance and the receiving of Holy Communion.



The altar cards contain some of the Mass prayers for the priest's convenience. Flowers may be used on the altar except during the penitential seasons, and at Masses for the dead. Along the whole

front of the altar, when ready for Mass, is hung a rich and ornamented cloth called the antependium, with color varying according to the color used for the Mass, in vestments, etc.

138. The Altar

WHERE is the sacrifice of the Mass offered?

The sacrifice of the Mass is offered on a consecrated altar.

1. *The Apostles* offered the holy sacrifice on a table in a dwelling-house.

In the *New Testament*, there are references to meeting places of worship: churches are as old as the Church. For perhaps the first three centuries, Christians who were constantly persecuted used private homes for their meeting-places for worship. A table was used for an altar because it was on a table that Christ instituted the Mass on Holy Thursday. Another reason was that a table could be easily hidden in times of persecution; also because Mass was generally offered in private homes.

2. In *Rome*, during the great persecutions, Mass was celebrated on the tombs of martyrs in the catacombs beneath the city, where the Christians fled for safety. The

catacombs were underground galleries, of which it is said Rome had about 400 miles.

This is the origin of the rule of having Mass said over the relics of saints. At the beginning of the Mass the priest kisses the place. By this, too, we profess our communion with the saints in heaven.

The lights which today we burn on the altar during Mass also had their origin during the times of persecution, when the Christians had to hear Mass in dark passages underground. They may be taken to symbolize divine grace.

3. When the persecutions were over, the Holy Sacrifice was offered in churches upon altars of stone. Stone altars date from the sixth century.

The altar, then as now, was often erected so that the priest and the faithful faced the east, the source of light, as God is the Source. In those days the baptistery used to be a separate building.



In the building and furnishing of the altar everything is laid down by law. The greatest exactness is observed. Above we see the bishop consecrating

on altar; he is placing the holy relics into the center part in front of the tabernacle. It is on this part that at Mass the chalice and host are laid.

HOW is the altar made and furnished?

The altar must be *made of stone, marble, or wood*, and spread with three linen cloths that have been blessed by bishop or priest.

The *three cloths* remind us of the linen cloth in which Our Lord was wrapped for the sepulchre. They are placed on the altar also to absorb any drops of the Precious Blood that may accidentally be spilled from the chalice.

1. *When the altar is of wood*, an oblong slab of stone is set into the top, large enough to hold the chalice and the paten. This *altar stone* is set in the center of the altar, so that *Mass is always offered on stone or marble*.

This *stone* is marked by crosses at the corners and the center; *in it relics of saints are cemented*. It signifies that Christ is the foundation and cornerstone on which the Church rests. The altar or altar-stone is *consecrated by the bishop*, with special ceremonies. In cases when permission to have Mass said outside of the church is obtained, a *portable altar*, blessed by the bishop, is used. It is a square stone slab, large enough for chalice and paten.

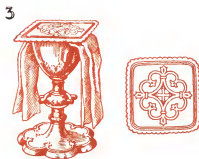
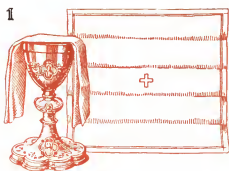
The *credence table* is a table or shelf at the Epistle side of the sanctuary, holding the materials for Mass. *On it are the cruets*, (one with wine and another with water), the *basin*, and the *finger towel* for the priest's hands.

2. *Every altar* must have a *crucifix*, to symbolize the cross on which Our Lord died. Of the *candles* on the altar, two must be of pure wax. At a high Mass, at least six candles must be used. A *sanctuary lamp* is kept burning day and night *whenever the Blessed Sacrament* is in the tabernacle.

3. The *tabernacle* (or "tent") is a kind of safe, made of wood, marble, or metal, having a door with lock and key, *in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved*. Early tabernacles took various forms, such as a silver dove suspended over the altar.

The *tabernacle* is above and behind the center of the altar and *covered with a curtain when the Blessed Sacrament is inside*. It recalls the tent of the Ark of the Covenant. A veil envelops the tabernacle, and is a sign of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Its color is either white or matches the vestments.

Christians who live their Faith *realize that the tabernacle is the heart of the church*, for day and night *it houses Jesus Himself*, the Incarnate Son of God. If we are so eager to give the best we can to our earthly guests, how much more concerned should we be to furnish a suitable dwelling place for our Divine Redeemer, Who comes to live in our midst! *The tabernacle should be as rich and safe as we can afford to furnish, and of an artistic design.*



1. chalice and purificator
2. paten, with chalice

3. pall, with chalice
4. veiled chalice

139. Sacred Vessels and Altar Linens

What are THE SACRED VESSELS used for the altar?

The chief sacred vessels used for the altar are the *chalice*, *paten*, *ciborium*, and *monstrance* or ostensorium.

Once consecrated, *sacred vessels may not be touched* by persons who are not in holy orders, except in cases of necessity. Those given charge of the care of the vessels *should use a small linen cloth when handling them*, so that they do not actually touch them. They are to be handled with reverence.

1. The *chalice* is the *most sacred* of all the vessels. It is the cup which holds the wine for consecration; after consecration, *it contains the precious blood* of Christ.

The *chalice* should be of gold or silver. If this is not possible, at least the *inside must be always gilt*. The *chalice represents* the chalice in which Our Lord at the Last Supper first offered His blood; it also symbolizes the chalice of the Passion; and lastly, it stands for the Heart of Jesus, from which flowed His blood for our redemption.

2. The *paten* is the small plate on which the host is laid. It is made to fit the chalice.

It is of the same materials as the chalice, at least gilt. Both chalice and paten *must be consecrated by a bishop*. In Holy Communion, our hearts become living chalices, our tongues other patens on which the priest lays Our Lord. May He ever find them welcoming Him!

3. The *ciborium* resembles the chalice, except that it has a cover. (See page 298.)

It is used to hold the small hosts distributed for the communion of the faithful.

4. The *monstrance* or ostensorium is the large metal container *used for exposition and benediction* of the Blessed Sacrament. In many churches, it is of gold, and decorated with jewels. (See page 298.)

The *sacred Host used for Benediction* is reserved in a *luna* or *lunette*, which is placed in the glassed portion of the monstrance. (See page 298.)



5. burse and corporal
6. veiled chalice and burse

7. missal with stand
8. cruets and bell

5. Other things, such as the *Missal veil*, *cruets*, and *incense*, are used at the altar.

The *Missal* is the book which contains the prayers and ceremonies of the Mass. The *veil* is a square cloth of the same material and design as the vestments of the priest. It is used to cover the chalice, paten, and pall before the Offertory and after the Ablution. The *cruets* are the vessels from which the acolyte or sacristan pours water and wine into the chalice held by the celebrant. *Incense* is a perfume burned on certain occasions, as at high Mass and Benediction; it is a symbol of prayer.

WHAT LINENS are used for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

The *corporal*, *purificator*, *pall*, and *finger towel* are used.

These linens, except the finger towel, are called the "*holy cloths*." All are made of *white linen*. No special significance is placed on the finger towel. It is of linen, used by the priest after washing his fingers before the consecration.

1. The *corporal* is a square of fine linen, with a small cross worked in the center. Sometimes it has a border of lace. It is

folded in three from both sides, and kept in a *burse*. The *corporal* is the most important of the *holy cloths*. The priest spreads it on the altar. On it he places the chalice and the Host after consecration.

Because of their close contact with the sacred species, *neither purificator nor corporal after use* may be handled by lay people without special permission. The priest first purifies them before others wash them.

2. The *purificator* is an oblong piece of linen, folded thrice, placed over the chalice.

It is used by the priest to *wipe the inside of the chalice* before putting in the wine and after the Ablution; he also wipes his mouth with it after the Ablution.

3. The *pall* is a small square piece of linen starched stiff, *used to cover the chalice*.

Formerly the *corporal* was bigger and could be folded back so as to cover the chalice. When its size was reduced (*about the year 1000*), the *pall* was introduced to cover the chalice.



140. Vestments

WHAT VESTMENTS does the priest use in the celebration of Holy Mass?

The priest uses the *amice*, *alb*, *cincture*, *maniple*, *stole*, and *chasuble*, in the celebration of Mass.

When the priest appears before God at the altar, he is clad in suitable vestments. *God Himself gave directions about the vestments of the priests in the Old Testament* (Exod. 28:4). The chief vestments worn by Catholic priests have come down to us from the time of the Apostles.

Symbolical significances have been attached to the different vestments. *The prayers said by the priest as he puts on each piece of attire show the meaning* attached to them by the Church.

1. The *amice* is a piece of white linen cloth which covers the priest's shoulders.

The vesting prayer is, "Place, O Lord, on my head the helmet of salvation, that I may overcome the assaults of the devil." When putting it on, the priest places it for a moment on his head, then lets it rest on his shoulders.

2. The *alb* is a white linen tunic which envelops the priest's whole body.

As he puts it on, *the priest says*, "Purify me, O Lord, from all stain and cleanse my heart, that washed in the Blood of the Lamb, I may enjoy eternal delights."

3. The *cincture* or *girdle* is the cord which fastens the alb at the waist.

The vesting prayer is, "Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity, and quench in my heart the fire of concupiscence, that the virtue of continence and chastity may remain in me."

4. The *maniple* is a short narrow strip of cloth which hangs from the left arm.

The vesting prayer is, "Let me deserve, O Lord, to bear the maniple of tears and sorrow, so that one day I may come with joy into the reward of my labors."

5. The *stole* is the long silk band that fits around the neck and is crossed on the breast of the priest. It is the symbol of authority in the Church, of all vestments most blessed.

The vesting prayer is, "Restore to me, O Lord, the state of immortality which was lost to me by my first parents, and although unworthy to approach Thy sacred mysteries, grant me nevertheless eternal joy." As a sign of his full priestly powers *the bishop does not cross the stole* in front. *The Pope alone* has the right to wear it *always*.

6. The *chasuble* is the uppermost vestment worn by the celebrant at Mass. It hangs from the shoulders, in front and behind, down almost to the knees.

The vesting prayer at Mass is, "O Lord, Who hast said, 'My yoke is sweet and my burden light,' grant that I may carry it so as to obtain Thy grace." The chasuble, stole, maniple, and veil for the chalice are made as a set of vestments, of the same material, color, and design.

7. The *biretta* is the three-ridged square cap worn by the priest when he enters the sanctuary. (See page 298.)

WHAT VESTMENTS are used by the priest OUTSIDE of Mass?

Outside of Mass, the priest uses the *cassock* or *soutane*, the *cope*, the *surplice*, and the *humeral veil*.

1. The *cassock* or *soutane* is the principal vestment used by ecclesiastics.

It is a robe reaching down to the feet, and buttoned in front. *For priests* it is black, *for bishops* violet, *for cardinals* red, and *for the Pope* white. In some countries ecclesiastics go everywhere in their cassocks.

2. The *surplice* is a short alb, used by the priest outside of Mass, when he preaches, joins a procession, etc.

At High Mass, the deacon wears a special vestment called *dalmatic*, and the subdeacon a *tunicle*.

3. The *cope* is a mantle used for benediction, processions, and other occasions.

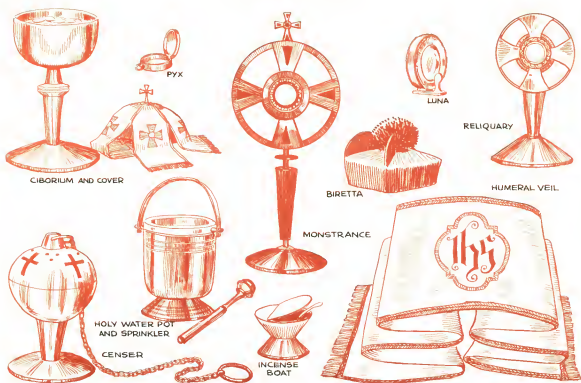
When a priest dies, he is buried dressed in his cassock and surplice, and with the purple stole, the badge of his priesthood. In complete purple vestments, he lies in dignity.

4. The *humeral veil* is the long silk cloth used by the priest when carrying the Blessed Sacrament and giving benediction.

Some of the vestments, such as the *amice*, *alb*, *surplice*, and *benediction veil*, are always white. The *stole* for hearing confessions is always purple.

Catholics spend a great deal of care and money on sacred vessels, vestments, and furnishings for the altar, because it is only right to give what is most precious and beautiful for the service of God.

Nothing is too good for the Lord of heaven and earth. The beauty of God's house also impresses the beholder and helps devotion. Some worldly-minded people are prone to ask, "To what purpose is this waste?" when they see how much care and money Catholics spend on sacred vessels, vestments, and church ornaments. Let us remember that Judas asked that when Magdalene anointed Our Lord.



141. Liturgical Colors

What COLORS are used at MASS?

At Mass various colors are used, according to the season and event being commemorated, these colors being: *white, red, green, purple, and black.*

In the early days of the Church, the vestments were of one color, white, though black was also used for mourning. In our times, not only the priest's vestments, but the tabernacle curtain, veil, and antependium are in the prescribed color.

1. *White* vestments are worn during Christmastide and Easter time, on the feasts of Our Lord and the Blessed V. Mary, the Angels and Confessors.

White symbolizes purity and joy.

2. *Red* vestments are used at Pentecost, in commemoration of the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of tongues of fire; red is likewise used on the feasts of the Apostles and Martyrs, feasts commemorating the Passion of Our Lord and the Sacred Relics, as the feast of the Holy Cross.

Red is the color of fire and blood; hence its use for Pentecost and for martyrs is very appropriate.

3. *Green* vestments are prescribed for the period "*Per annum*"—Throughout the Year—from the 14th of January till the eve of Septuagesima Sunday, and from Monday after Trinity Sunday till the eve of the First Sunday of Advent. However, when Masses are offered in honor of saints, martyrs or for the dead, the proper color is then used.

Green is the symbol of hope and growth; hence its use for the greater part of the year.

4. *Purple*, or *violet* vestments are worn during Advent and Lent, as well as on Rogation Days, on Ember days except those on Pentecost octave, and on the five vigils of the feasts of the Ascension, Assumption, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter & St. Paul, and St. Lawrence.

As *purple* is a penitential color it is fitting to use it during seasons of penance, like Advent and Lent.

5. *Black* vestments are used at ceremonies *for the dead*, and on *Good Friday*. However, *at the funerals of children* who die before the age of reason, *white vestments are used*, to express the joy we should feel at the knowledge that an innocent one is Home.



RED



GREEN



WHITE



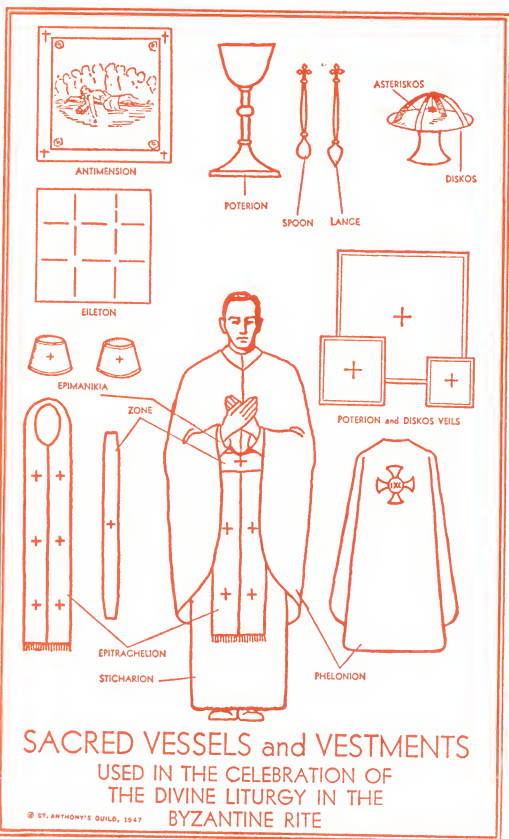
PURPLE



BLACK



GOOD FRIDAY + MASSES AND FUNCTIONS FOR THE DEAD + +



VESTMENTS AND OTHER LITURGICAL APPURTENANCES OF THE BYZANTINE RITE (See pages 120-121)

The **sticharion** is a long, white garment made of linen, having wide sleeves and decorated with embroidery. Formerly it was used as the vestment for the clerics of minor orders, acolytes, lectors, chanters, and subdeacons. It signifies the purity of the priest.

The **epitrachelion** is a stole with ends sewn together, having a loop through which the head is passed. Its several crosses signify priestly duties.

The **zone** is a narrow clasped belt of the same material as the epitrachelion. It signifies the wisdom of the priest, his strength against the enemies of the Church, and his willingness to fulfill his holy duties.

The **epimanikia** are ornamental cuffs, the right a symbol of strength, the left of patience and good will.

The **phelonion** is an ample cape-like vestment, long at the back and sides and cut away in front. It signifies the higher gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The **antimension**, which takes the place of the altar stone, is a silk or linen cloth laid upon the altar at Mass. It bears the picture of the burial of Christ and the instruments of His Passion. Sewn into the center of the front border are relics of martyrs. (During World War II military chaplains of the

Latin Rite in the US armed forces used the antimension.)

The **elleton** corresponds to the corporal used in the Roman Rite.

The **poterion** (chalice), as in the Latin Rite, is the cup used at Mass to hold the Precious Blood of our Lord.

The **diskos**, a shallow plate (sometimes elevated on a low stand), corresponds to the paten of the Latin Rite.

The **asteriskos** is placed over the diskos and covered with a veil. It is made of two curved bands of gold or silver which cross each other to form a double arch; a star depends from the junction, which forms a cross.

The poterion and diskos **veils**. The smallest of these three veils covers the poterion, the next in size the diskos, and the largest covers both.

The **spoon** which is peculiar to the Byzantine Rite, is used in giving Holy Communion to the faithful.

The **lance** is a metal knife used in cutting up the bread which is to be consecrated.

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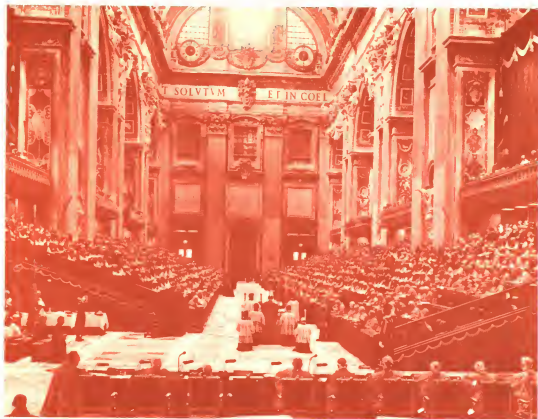
REMARKS

In nearly all large cities there are churches of the Eastern Catholic Rites. We should visit them at least once if we do not care to do it more often. We may take our family and friends. If we intend to fulfil our Sunday Mass obligation and receive Holy Communion, we should make sure that the particular church we are visiting is Catholic, not Orthodox. It will be a pleasant experience to receive Communion under both forms. The priest with a golden spoon will drop upon our tongue a small piece of bread which had been dipped into the Precious Blood in the chalice.

These visits of ours will serve to broaden our understanding of the meaning of the word

"Catholic"—universal, embracing all men and adopted to every culture. We shall realize that the Catholic Church, the one true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, is not inescapably tied down to one language or to one set of ceremonies and customs. We shall know that it is what happens at Mass that matters: the offering of Christ the Divine Victim and not the language, or the different ceremonies.

Such visits will help promote understanding, harmony and brotherly love of the big brother Western Rite with his older brothers Eastern Rites. It will also encourage the Orthodox Churches to re-unite and form the one big Christian Family of Christ.



Kindness of "PONTIFICIA FOTOGRAFIA Fidei," ROMA

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS AT THE II VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Every morning, before the discussion of the bishops started, Mass was celebrated by one of the archbishops or bishops. The position of the celebrant was facing the people as it can be seen in the pic-

ture. Our Lord offered the first Mass at the Last Supper facing His Apostles. St. Peter and the Apostles offered Mass in this same position. It is easier for the faithful to be united with the celebrant.

142. Manner of Assisting at Mass

How can we BEST UNITE with the priest IN OFFERING THE HOLY SACRIFICE?

We can best unite with the priest in offering the Holy Sacrifice *by joining* in mind and heart *with Christ*, the principal Priest and Victim, *by following* the Mass in a *missal*, and *by reciting* or *chanting* the responses.

1. *As the Mass begins* and as it proceeds, *our dispositions ought to be this: "O God, my Father, I am all Yours. Help me to realize more and more that I am Yours and Yours I wish to remain for ever. Give me the light to know Your will and strength to do Your will. I have no other desire but to love You and give You pleasure."*

2. *One of the best ways* of uniting ourselves in offering the Holy Sacrifice together with the priest is *by following the prayers of the Mass from a missal*.

As we pray from our English missal the same prayers which the priest is reciting in Latin at the altar, we become *more conscious of our unity with Christ and with one another*.

We realize the fact that the Mass is an act of corporate worship, of group worship. The idea that we all are in this together—the priest at the altar and the people around us—comes more alive for us. *We are in this together, one Body in Christ.* We support each other with our prayers, we share with each other our graces. The Mass becomes for us what it was meant to be: *a community act, the Christian family prayer.* As we leave the church we can smile and speak to the stranger next to us because we know that he is not really a stranger; he is a brother in Christ with whom we have prayed and sacrificed.

3. *Those using a missal* will find out that it is *difficult* to "keep up with the priest." Latin is more compact than English; besides the priest has all the prayers before him.

We should not try to read every word of every prayer. *It will be more profitable for us to read just a few of the prayers of each major part of the Mass, but to read them thoughtfully and reverently.*

What is DIALOGUE MASS?

Dialogue Mass or "Missa recitata" means that the *entire congregation makes the responses* instead of delegating this privilege to one or two servers at the altar.

The *dialogue Mass and the high or sung Mass give better the sense of community*, especially when all participate, that is, not only the school children or a few in the choir, but the entire congregation, all those in church. The Holy Father and the Sacred Congregation of Rites *urge the faithful to participate in the Mass*, to the degree that they are able. The ideal is that the entire congregation sing or pray aloud those parts of the Mass which, in recent centuries, have been recited by the server or sung by the choir.

It is a great honor and privilege to be allowed to serve Mass. This privilege is reserved to boys and men. Girls and women may answer the Mass prayers, like acolytes, but they are not permitted to enter the sanctuary. *Every boy, young man and man* should avail himself of the opportunity when it offers itself. Parents should see to it that their boys join the Altar Boy Society of the parish.

HOW DID THE PEOPLE ASSIST AT MASS fifteen hundred years ago?

Fifteen hundred years ago in the Roman empire, *Latin was the everyday language of the people.* When the people assisted at Mass they *knew what was happening.* More than that, *they helped to make it happen. They prayed with the priest and they sang with the priest, and they did so with complete understanding* because the Mass was *in their own tongue. In the Offertory and Communion processions* they moved back and forth to the altar, bringing their gifts and receiving the GIFT of God: Christ's Body and Blood, poured out in sacrifice.

As the people spoke and chanted the prayers of the Mass, *they relived with Christ His passion, His death and resurrection.* Theirs was the joyous religion because they were reminded so vividly that Christ had conquered sin and death and by His resurrection had pledged them eternal life. Theirs too was a Christ-centered religion; they went from church conscious of their obligation to share in Christ's work of redemption, conscious of their responsibility to their neighbor.

Then out of the wildernesses of northern Europe came the barbarian tribes. *These pagan peoples* invaded the Roman empire, *bringing their own languages*, out of which *developed the modern languages* of present-day Europe. Little by little *Latin ceased to be the language of the people.* It became a language of scholars only. Gradually the people receded into the background at the offering of Mass. *The Mass became the work of the priest alone*, of the priest assisted by a few servers and by a professional choir. The Mass was no longer so visibly the action of the whole Mystical Body of Christ. *To the people it became more like a spectacle*; something at which they were present and at which they looked, but in which they had no part.

When the people ceased to have an understanding part in the liturgy ("liturgy" is a Greek word meaning "work"), their spiritual life underwent a gradual change. For one thing, *their spiritual life became less Christ-centered and more self-centered.* They became individuals rather than interdependent members of the one Mystical Body.

The loss of intimate participation in the liturgy on the part of the people had another effect. *As the significance of the Mass became obscured, private devotions of all kinds began to flourish.* The human desire to participate in worship found outlet in novena services and other forms of non-liturgical piety. None of this was bad—all prayer is good and pleasing to God—but all too often these private devotions became more important than the Mass itself; *first things ceased to be first.*

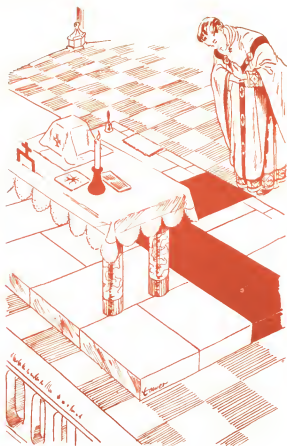
We can be grateful that *Popes of modern times have labored so devotedly to restore the liturgy to its rightful place* as the center of Christian life and worship. *Pope Pius XII laid the groundwork for the liturgical reform* with his wonderful encyclical letters on the Mystical Body and on the liturgy. Then came the *relaxation of the Eucharistic fast* and permission for *evening Masses* that has doubled the number of those receiving holy communion; the *ritual of the sacraments in our own language*; in many dioceses *concession has been granted to read or sing* the epistles and gospels in the *spoken language* as well as to recite in low masses and sing in high masses the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus and Agnus Dei in the spoken language; the *restoration of the Holy Week services* so that the people might take an active and meaningful part in them.

Even now, liturgical scholars are busy at Rome, reshaping the liturgy so that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass may once again exert the fullness of its attraction as the focal point of Christian piety and Christian action. *In the meantime it is for us to enlarge our understanding of the Mass and to deepen our love for the Mass.* It is for us to make more complete the giving of self in union with Christ in the Mass—and to *live the Mass by carrying our self-giving into our everyday activities.*

Nota Bene: This lesson has been taken from THIS WE BELIEVE SERIES "God's Crowning Gift," Chapter XVI, Participation in the Mass, by Rev. Leo J. Tracy, "Vital Object"; Very Rev. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R. October 31, 1958. Copyright, 1959, by Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, N.C.W.C., Washington, D. C.



Entrance of the Priest



Confiteor

143. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The simple ceremony of the Last Supper has been expanded by the Church so as to set out the full meaning of the Mass and to help us to take our part in it.

I. THE FOREMASS

The first part of the Mass is made up of prayers, readings and songs. It used to be called *the Mass of the Catechumens*, because in the early Church the catechumens (*those under instruction before baptism*) were present at it. The rest of the Mass, which is essentially a *sacred action*, was reserved to those already baptized and therefore called *the Mass of the Faithful*.

1. Entrance of the Priest

At a High Mass, during the procession of the priest and ministers from the sacristy to the sanctuary, the *entrance chant* is sung; it consists of a psalm (*mostly reduced to one verse*) and a refrain in keeping with the character of the day's Mass or feast. *At a*

low Mass the priest himself reads this 'introit' anthem after the preparatory prayers.

As the priest enters, *the people stand*, out of respect for the representative of Christ.

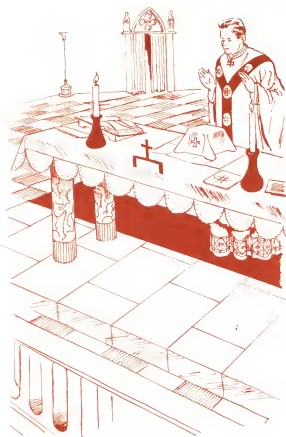
At the foot of the altar, the priest makes the sign of the cross and then says the psalm 42 with the antiphon, "*I will go in to the altar of God.*" It expresses the longing and trust aroused by the thought of the Mass.

It is followed by a *confession of unworthiness*, the *Confiteor*, which is repeated by the server in behalf of the people.

After ascending the steps, the priest *kisses the altar*: it is a sign of reverence for the martyrs whose relics are cemented in the altar stone, but also for *the altar* itself, which is a *symbol of Christ*, the living altar of the New Covenant.

2. Some basic prayer themes

After reading the *Introit verse*, the priest recites the *Kyrie eleison* (*Lord have mercy*)

*Gloria*

alternately with the server or the congregation. This cry of our creatureliness and misery, so frequent in the Gospel (Mt 9:27, 15:22, 20:30, etc.), is repeated nine times.

The priest then intones the *Gloria*, a joyful hymn of praise addressed to God, the Blessed Trinity. (*It is omitted in penitential Masses and in Masses for the dead.*)

A *Dominus vobiscum* (which at Mass is an invitation to attention and fervour) and an *Oremus* (let us pray) introduce the *Collect*, a prayer in which the priest sums up the intentions suggested by the feast or the mystery.

Like all liturgical prayers it concludes with an appeal to the mediation of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through whom all grace comes to us. The server or the people answer, *Amen*. (*Sometimes there are two or even three Collects.*)

3. The Word of God

In the readings that follow, *God speaks to us through Holy Scripture*. The word

*Epistle*

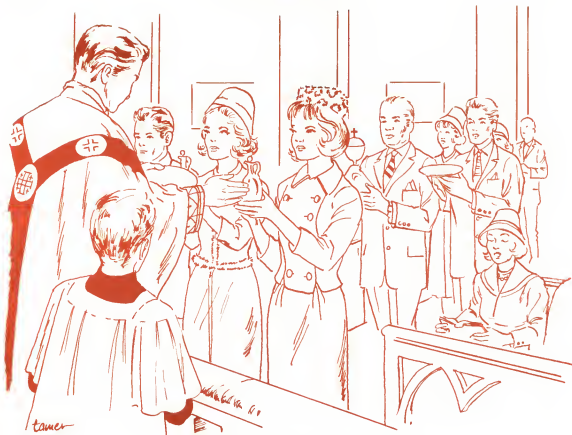
of God nourishes our souls, our faith, hope and charity, before we receive the eucharistic body of the Word made flesh.

The *first reading* is called the *Epistle*, because it is most often taken from the epistles (*letters*) of the apostles. On certain days it is preceded by one or several readings from the Old Testament.

Before passing on to the next reading, the Church has inserted *several chants* which express feelings appropriate to the lesson or the feast. They are the *Gradual* and the *Alleluia*; the latter is replaced by the *Tract* from Septuagesima till Easter. On some occasions a poetical composition called *Sequence* is added.

In the *Gospel* Our Lord speaks to us directly. Out of reverence for Him, *the people stand*.

After the Gospel, the priest may explain the word of God in a *homily* or *sermon*. On Sundays and major feasts, this part of the Mass is concluded by a *profession of faith*, the recitation of the *Credo*.



offertory Procession

II. THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION

The main part of the Mass, sometimes called *the Mass of the Faithful*, is essentially a *sacred action* consisting of three acts: the *bringing* of the gifts, the *offering* of the Christian sacrifice, and *Holy Communion*.

1. The Offertory

The priest offers bread and wine. They are *the gifts* of the Church, of *all of us*, to our heavenly Father. They are of little material value, but have a great meaning. Like the gifts of children to their father on his birthday, they are a way of saying: "I love you, I want to be yours, to do your will always."

Remember what has been said in Chapter 133 on the nature of sacrifice.—Our Christian vocation makes us all "a *holy priesthood*, to offer spiritual sacrifices well-pleasing to God through Jesus Christ...You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, God's own people, that you may proclaim the perfections of him who has called

you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter, 2:5, 9). Our baptismal character enables us to share in the liturgical sacrifice.

The Offertory procession, in its various forms, is meant to bring out the fact that the gifts presented at the altar by the priest are the gifts of the whole community, of each one of us. Whether there be a procession or not, *what matters is that the exterior offering express our interior sacrifice*, our sincere self-oblation.

At one time the presentation of the gifts was preceded by the *kiss of peace* given by those present to each other. This practice was suggested by the words of Our Lord: "If thou be offering thy gift at the altar, and there remember that thy brother has something against thee, leave there thy gift and go first and be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Mt. 5:23). At a later date the kiss of peace was placed before Communion.

The priest offers first the bread, then the wine, with a variety of prayers. The wine is mixed with water, because Christ did so at the Last Supper.

*Lavabo**Sanctus*

After offering the gifts, the priest washes his hands (*Lavabo*), as a mark of the purity of body and soul required for the holy sacrifice. Then, turning towards the people, he invites them to pray for "my sacrifice and yours" (*Orate, fratres, Pray, brethren*).

The last *Offertory prayer* is called the *Secret*. Its conclusion is sung or said in audible tones: *per omnia saecula saeculorum* (forever and ever), to which the server or the people answer, *Amen*.

In all these prayers we confidently offer for all our needs and "for the salvation of the whole world," because we know that our humble offering is going to be transformed into something incomparably more precious.

2. The Consecration

The *Offertory is only the first act*, the beginning of our sacrifice. We bring our gifts, the symbol of our devotion, of our love and self-oblation. Then, at the next moment, something wonderful happens.

Jesus through the priest changes our gifts of bread and wine into His own body and blood. **This most sacred action** is called **the consecration**.

Not only does Jesus become truly *present* on the altar to be our food, but at that very moment His body and blood—our gifts transfigured into the Victim of Calvary—are **offered** to the heavenly Father. By the double consecration the sacrifice of the Cross is represented and offered anew, and its power of praise, thanksgiving, impetration and reparation is communicated to us and to the whole Church, in a measure proportioned to the fervour of our offering (See pages 286-287, *The Mass and Calvary*).

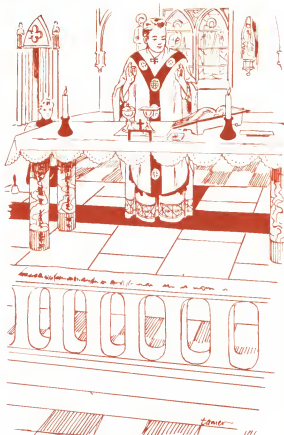
Our devotion is no longer conveyed to God by a lifeless gift, a mere symbol, but by the living Christ who presents to the Father our self-oblation in union with His own wonderful offering by which on Calvary He has redeemed us: **He now "appears before the face of God on our behalf"** (Heb 9:24). The Mass is indeed the great privilege of the Christian.

*Elevation*

The great mystery takes place when the priest, repeating the *narrative of the Last Supper*, pronounces over the bread and wine the words used by Christ Himself when He instituted the holy Eucharist: **"This is my body... This is my blood..."** These words change our gifts into the body and blood of the living Son of God.

After *adoring*, the priest *elevates* first the Host, then the chalice, so that all may see them. Look at them with deep faith and then adore: **"My Lord and my God."**

Immediately after the consecration, which is at the same time the offering of the eucharistic sacrifice, we should offer Christ to the heavenly Father: we now have a worthy gift to offer—the Saviour Himself, glorified through His sacrifice. **And since the gift signifies the interior self-oblation, we should fervently offer ourselves with Christ and through him.**

*Pater Noster*

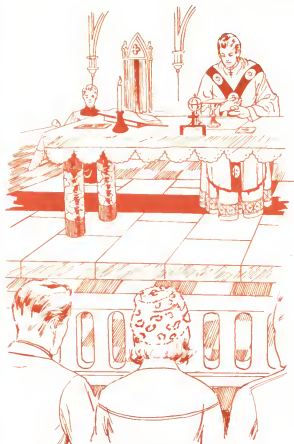
The Canon of the Mass

The part of the Mass which contains the consecration at its centre is called the *canon*, i.e. the fixed norm for the sacred action.

It begins with the *Preface*, a solemn recall of God's gifts to us, which breaks into a hymn of thanksgiving through Christ our Lord. It is followed by the *Sanctus*, the Seraphim's song of adoration (Is. 6:3) and the *Benedictus*, with which the crowd acclaimed Christ as their Messiah (Mt 21:9).

It is but natural, when we offer the sacrifice of the redemption, that we should *remember and intercede* for the whole family of God. After the *Benedictus* we first pray for the Catholic Church, in particular for the *Holy Father*, the *bishop* of the place and all Catholic bishops. We have a special remembrance (*'Memento'*) for certain persons dear to us or in need of prayer.

After the consecration we pray for the *souls in purgatory* (*'Memento' of the dead*) and finally for *ourselves* (*Nobis quoque peccatoribus, To us sinners, also*).



Domine Non Sum Dignus

The *saints in heaven* are remembered both before and after the consecration as shining examples with whom we hope to obtain fellowship.

The concluding prayer of the Canon again gives thanks and glory to God, through Christ the Mediator. It is ratified by the people with a loud *Amen*.

3. Communion

Sacrifice aims at and leads up to friendship and union. At Mass, Communion is God's answer to our offering. Through the offering we have expressed our love, our desire to be His. In response, God invites us to His table, as His family. **Communion** is a *sacristial meal*; partaking of the divine Victim we have offered, seals our union with God. Communion, then, is part of the Mass; and the best way of preparing ourselves for Communion consists in following the Mass intelligently and devoutly.

This part of the Mass begins with the *Pater noster*, the Lord's prayer, which turns our minds towards the heavenly bread of which we are in-



Communion of the Priest

vited to partake. (In a 'missa recitata' the people say it together with the priest.)

Immediate preparation

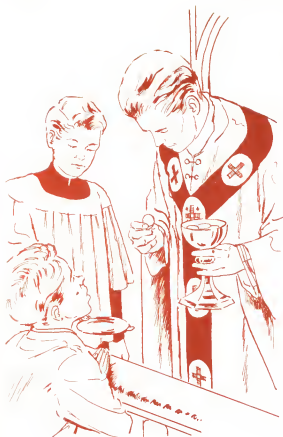
After a symbolical breaking of the consecrated host, the priest recites three times the *Agnus Dei* (*Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. . . grant us peace*).

It is followed by three prayers, the first of which asks for peace and unity in the Church. (Here, at High Masses, the kiss of peace is given; for Communion is the sacrament of love and unity.)

The Communion

Taking the Host and beating his breast, the priest says three times, "*Lord, I am not worthy. . .*" He then receives the body of Christ and, after a short meditation, the precious blood.

If Communion is to be distributed to the people, the priest takes the ciborium and, facing the congregation, elevates a small host, saying: "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world.*" He repeats three times (to-



Communion

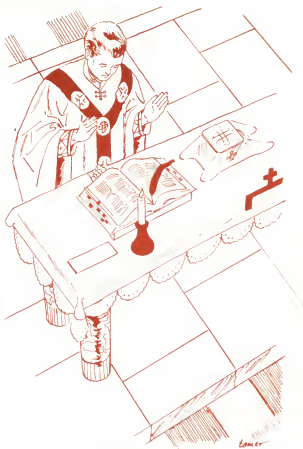
gether with the people, in the 'Missa recitata') an adaptation of the prayer addressed by the centurion to Christ: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof; but only say the word and my soul will be healed."

He makes the sign of the cross with the Host over each communicant and gives him Communion with the words: "May the body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul unto life everlasting. Amen."

Thanksgiving

The priest says two prayers while taking the *ablutions* (the wine and water with which he rinses the chalice). He then reads, on the Epistle side, the *Communion* anthem, which is really a vestige of the processional song formerly chanted during the distribution of holy Communion; and finally, on behalf of all present, he recites the *Postcommunion* prayer (or prayers: as for the Collect, there may be two or three).

Some samples: "May this heavenly mystery restore us in body and mind" (8th Sunday after Pentecost). "May the partaking of your sacrament be for us a source of purity and a bond of unity"



Postcommunion

(9th S. after Pentecost). "Grant, O Lord, that, replenished with your sacred gifts, we may always abide in the giving of thanks" (Sunday after the Ascension). "May this heavenly mystery enkindle in us that ardent love wherewith your virgin Teresa offered herself a victim of charity for mankind" (October 3).

This liturgical thanksgiving is evidently rather short; it ought to be supplemented after the Mass.

Conclusion of the Mass

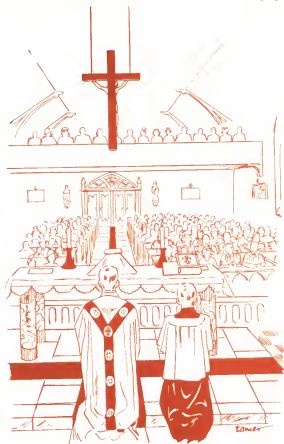
The priest turns towards the people, and, after a last "Dominus vobiscum," says: "*Itē, missa est*" (Go, it is the dismissal).

In Masses for the dead, instead of "Itē missa est," he says: "*Requiescant in pace*" (May they rest in peace).

After blessing the people, he proceeds to read the *Last Gospel*, which is taken from the opening verses of the Gospel of St. John. This wonderful chapter forms an appropriate conclusion to the Mass, where the Word Incarnate has come down again "and dwells among us," to make us ever more perfectly "sons of God."



Blessing



Prayers after Mass

After most Low Masses, the priest kneels at the foot of the altar and recites some prayers first prescribed by Leo XIII, and now, by order of Pius XI, said for the conversion of Russia.

No one should leave before the priest.

Epilogue: the Mass of our life

A Catholic cannot leave church and then do as though there had been no Mass. **The Mass is a beginning** which calls for a continuation. It is an **offering**, and this implies a promise of love and fidelity; the offering

must be carried out throughout the day—we **must live the Mass**.

The Mass is also **communion**, union with Christ and God; with the Lord in our hearts we shall be strong and face our daily task and trials boldly and joyfully.

The Mass is not a mere ceremony; it is meant to make a difference; it **is meant to shape our lives**. It will do so if we participate in it intelligently and sincerely.



A **votive Mass** is one said in honour of some particular mystery or saint on a day not set apart by the Church for the commemoration of that mystery or saint.

No **Requiem Mass** is permitted on great feasts, for our private sorrows must not take precedence over the joy that should reign over the whole Church on such days.

“To me nothing is so consoling, so piercing, so thrilling, so overcoming, as the Mass, said as it is among us. I could attend Masses forever, and not be tired. It is not a mere form of words—it is a great action, **the greatest action that can be on earth.**”
(Cardinal Newman, *Callista*)



In all parts of the world Jesus Christ is truly and substantially present in the most Blessed Sacrament of the altar. Wherever we go, we can pay Our Lord a visit in the Blessed Sacrament. Wherever

we go, we can receive Our Lord corporally in Holy Communion, to refresh and sustain our souls. When we visit a town or city, we should first of all pay a visit to our Eucharistic Lord.

144. Holy Communion

What is HOLY COMMUNION?

Holy Communion is *the receiving of Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.*

1. "**Communion**" means a *uniting or sharing together*. In Holy Communion **Christ and our soul are intimately united**, and we share the banquet of spiritual nourishment at the Lord's table.

When Napoleon the Great was at the height of his power, one of his generals asked him once what had been the happiest day of his life. Expecting to hear the Emperor name a great battle, the general was surprised to hear him say, "My happiest day was the day of my first Holy Communion, for then I was brought nearest to my God."

2. **Christ commanded** us to receive Holy Communion when He said: "**Unless you**

eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you" (John 6:54). It is the food of our souls.

Holy Communion increases in us the life of grace. During the persecution against Christianity, the grace given to the martyrs was noticed by the pagans themselves. The victims were cruelly scourged and tortured, but they continued firm in their faith and professed it openly and fearlessly. The pagans, amazed at such fortitude, said, "Truly, these people have been eating of that Eucharistic Bread which they partake of in their assemblies. It casts a spell upon their souls."

3. **It is not necessary** to receive Holy Communion under *both kinds*; under the forms of **both bread and wine**. It is sufficient to receive Holy Communion under one kind, for **Christ is present** whole and entire **under each form** of bread or wine.

"KNOW GOD BETTER TO LOVE HIM MORE"

As this is a *matter of discipline*, and not of doctrine, the practice of the Church has varied. In the *Eastern rites* both forms are still administered to the laity. The *Western usage* of receiving *only* under the form of bread, seems to be more convenient and practical, specially when there are many communicating.

4. Spiritual communion is a fervent desire to receive Christ sacramentally.

As long as we are not guilty of mortal sin, *God is in our souls with His sanctifying grace*: this is how our souls become temples of the Holy Spirit. *Our Lord remains sacramentally in our body as long as the appearance of bread remains*. Usually it is not for more than ten or fifteen minutes. We are permitted to *communicate sacramentally only once a day*. Hence our desire to be with our Lord *as intimately as we can* and this is done receiving Him sacramentally.

WHEN ARE WE OBLIGED to receive holy communion?

We are obliged to receive Holy Communion *during Easter time each year*, and when *in danger of death*.

1. *Our Lord commanded* us to receive Holy Communion. *The Church enforces this command* by requiring us under pain of grievous sin to *communicate* at least at the *Easter time*.

This is called the *Paschal Communion*, part of our *Easter duty*. However, the Church desires us to go more frequently to Holy Communion.

2. The *obligation of Holy Communion* begins when a child comes to the use of reason. Children generally come to the use of reason in their seventh year.

3. The child should be *properly prepared* to receive the sacrament. He does not need to know the entire catechism. It is sufficient for him to *have a general knowledge of the truths necessary for salvation*, and a becoming devotion.

Pope Pius X is called "the children's Pope" because he revived the custom of the first Christians of allowing children to receive Holy Communion when they came to the use of reason.

4. Those in *danger of death* are bound to receive Holy Communion. If a person is seriously ill, the priest should be summoned at once. Children in danger of death should be given Holy Communion, provided they know the difference between common food and the Eucharist.

WHY is it well to RECEIVE Holy Communion OFTEN, even daily?

It is well to receive Holy Communion often, even daily, because this *intimate union with Jesus Christ*, the Source of all holiness and the Giver of all graces, *is the greatest aid to a holy life*.

1. *We should receive Holy Communion as often as we can*. We should have at least as much desire for nourishing our soul as we have for nourishing our body; no one omits his meals for very long. If we possibly can we should communicate daily.

A young man once was known to be extremely attached to his father. Several times he asserted that there was nothing he would not do for his father. He even said that if necessary, he would die for his father, just to please him. One day, a friend said, "Your father is in the next room, waiting to see you. He has waited there a long time." And the young man answered, "Oh, I am too busy. I just saw him last week. Let him wait a year; then I shall visit him." What would you think of such a *young man*? He is the *type* of many Catholics today, *who receive Communion only at Easter*.

2. Those persons who communicate daily do not need to *go to confession daily*. They may go *weekly*, or *twice a month*, unless they fall into mortal sin, when they should be sorry and go to confession *at once*.

The Holy Eucharist is our guarantee of eternal life. It is our Lord's promise: "He who eats this bread, shall live forever" (John 6:59).

3. *Some persons say* that they are *not good enough* to go to daily communion.

The Holy Eucharist was not instituted for angels, but men. We may be in the state of grace when communicating; we may be making a careful preparation and devout thanksgiving; we may be trying to keep our good resolutions, and still we find ourselves with the same defects, the same faults. We may become discouraged and stop going to communion. However, how much worse we might be if it were not for our frequent communions. *The Holy Eucharist was not instituted for angels, but for men*.

4. *Holy Communion* may be received *only once a day* except when one happens to fall dangerously ill, and receives the *Viaticum*.

Holy Communion is usually distributed at Mass. It may be given at any hour at which it is permitted to say Mass, or when there is a religious function in church, provided one observes the Eucharistic fast.



We should receive Our Lord in the Eucharist with the faith and love of a child. Children receiving Holy Communion ought to think of themselves approaching to take the Child Jesus from the arms of our Blessed Lady. With how much love and



adoration, with what joy we should receive Jesus into our arms, if the Blessed Virgin should appear before us to give Him to us! Yet Holy Communion is really better than that: we not only receive Jesus into our arms, but into our very hearts.

145. Dispositions for Holy Communion

WHAT IS NECESSARY TO RECEIVE Holy Communion WORTHILY?

To receive Holy Communion worthily it is necessary to **be free from mortal sin**, and to **keep the Eucharistic fast**.

The **first** disposition is required for the soul; the **second** is for the body.

To comply with the required disposition for the soul, **WE MUST BE IN A STATE OF GRACE:**

1. **One who knowingly** receives Holy Communion in mortal sin receives the **body and blood of Christ**, but does not receive His graces, and **commits a grave sin of sacrilege**.

The **first bad communion was made by Judas**. He had promised to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Yet he went to the Last Supper, and received Holy Communion from the hands of Our Lord.

2. **One is not required** to go to confession before each communion, but only when he is conscious of grievous sin.

If he only doubts whether he committed mortal sin or not, he may still go to Holy Communion after an act of contrition.

3. **If without a person's fault** he forgets in confession to accuse himself of a mortal sin, it is forgiven with his other sins, and he may go to Holy Communion.

He must, however, mention the sin he forgot when he goes again to confession.

4. **One who commits** a mortal sin after confession, but having forgotten about it, goes to Holy Communion, does not make a bad Communion.

One makes a bad communion ONLY when one is certain and conscious of being in mortal sin, and still deliberately receives Holy Communion.

5. **Venial sins** do not and should not prevent our going to Holy Communion.

6. **Before receiving** Holy Communion, we should try to have an **ardent desire** to be united with Christ, and arouse sentiments of faith, hope, love, and contrition.

Let us try to bring to our Eucharistic Lord some gift, however small. Let us avoid places of amusement shortly before we receive Him in Holy Communion, as a little sacrifice. Let us pray devoutly and continuously, to show Him the joy in our hearts at His coming.

To comply with the required disposition for the body, WE MUST KEEP THE EUCHARISTIC FAST:

1. **The drinking of water** does not break the fast.

We may drink any kind of *water in the ordinary sense of the word*, even if there be a question of certain mineral waters to which gas has been added to create effervescence (*carbonated water*) or natural water that has been purified by addition of chemicals, like chlorine, fluoride, etc. Water, however, to which sugar has been added breaks the fast.

2. We may *drink water any time* we wish, even a few moments before entering the church to prepare for Holy Communion.

Common water, as we have explained above, does not break the Eucharistic fast; we may take *any amount* of it and *at any time*. If an altar boy while serving Mass should happen to go to the sacristy after the consecration of the Mass and should drink water, he could still receive Holy Communion a few minutes later.

3. **The time** for keeping the Eucharistic fast before receiving Holy Communion whether in the morning, afternoon, or night, is limited to **three hours'** abstention from **solid food and alcoholic liquids**, and **one hour's** from **non-alcoholic liquids**.

Solid food is any kind of nutritive substance that does not flow, even if there is no need for mastication—like jelly, ice cream, etc.

Liquid food includes all types of beverages that are drunk in liquid form.

Alcoholic liquids are all those beverages containing any amount of alcohol, such as hard drinks, liqueurs, whisky, wine, beer, etc.

Non-alcoholic liquids may include: coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa, broth (*bouillon* or *consommé*), milk, milk shake, liquid diets, such as Metrecal, soft drinks, and similar liquids. With these *something solid* may even be *mixed*, like wheat meal, ground toast, or a beaten egg, *provided the liquid form remains*.

4. **We must abstain from solid food and alcoholic liquids** for at least **three hours** before Holy Communion, and from **liquid food** for at least **one hour** before Holy Communion.

The hours are to be measured, for the faithful, from the moment the last bite or drink is taken, to the moment of reception of Communion; for priests, to the beginning of Mass.

For example, if we are going to receive Communion at a Mass that begins at five o'clock in the morning or in the afternoon, we must cease eating solid food at 2:15 and drinking liquid food at 4:15, because Communion is distributed about fifteen minutes after Mass has begun.

Even when we receive Holy Communion at midnight, as on **Christmas** or **Easter Vigil**, we must keep the Eucharistic fast, abstaining three hours from solid food and alcoholic drinks, and one hour from liquid food.

5. The **sick** may take **non-alcoholic liquids and medicine** before Holy Communion, **without any limit of time**, whether this medicine be in solid or liquid form.

This rule applies to all those who are sick, no matter what the ailment may be, whether habitual, as stomach ulcers, or **sudden**, as a **headache**. It applies even though they are able to go to church to receive Holy Communion, like **those suffering from asthma**. Expectant mothers are in this category.

By medicine is meant any true and **proper medical preparation**, regardless of its composition. Therefore, even though the **medicine may contain alcohol**, as long as it **remains medicine** according to the common acceptance of the word, it may be **taken by the sick** without any restriction as to time, that is, even a few moments before receiving Holy Communion.

6. Those receiving the **Holy Viaticum** are not bound by the Eucharistic fast.

WHEN RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION one should behave in a devout and recollected manner:

1. **In approaching** the communion rail **one should** have his **hands joined**, and not walk too hurriedly, nor rush ahead of others, nor insert himself between two persons already kneeling close to each other at the rail. **One should** return to his place with joined hands and downcast eyes.

It is unbecoming for women and girls to go to receive Holy Communion not dressed modestly.

2. **When the priest** approaches, **one should** raise his head and **open his mouth**, with the tongue slightly extended over the lower lip.

3. **One should swallow** the host as soon as he can. Jesus stays with us only as long as the appearances of bread remain.

If the host sticks to the mouth, we must on no account remove it with the finger, but moisten it with saliva, and **remove it with the tongue**, then swallow it.



This is how we should kneel at the communion rail. We should not crowd or push. (1) shows how to approach and leave the communion rail, with joined hands and downcast eyes.

(2) shows how to receive Holy Communion. We open the mouth and extend the tongue a little over the lower lip. Meanwhile, let us welcome Jesus Christ into a joyful heart.

146. Graces from the Holy Eucharist

The Eucharist is the SACRAMENT OF UNITY.

The essential effect of Holy Communion is **union** with Christ, with God and our neighbor.

1. *The passing sacramental union with Christ*, who is the fountain of all grace, signifies and **produces an increase** of supernatural life, that is, of sanctifying grace, *of the Christ-life in us*, and therefore a spiritual and lasting union with Christ and the Blessed Trinity.

"He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him" (John 6:57).

By uniting us with Christ, *Communion unites us more closely with all members of Christ*, with our Lady and the saints, with our brethren on earth.

"Though we are many, we are one body, because we partake of the one bread" (1 Cor. 10:17).

2. At the same time *Communion kindles actual love* for God and for neighbor. This

fervour of charity is the "*sacramental grace*" proper to Communion.

This is therefore the fruit we must principally look for in Communion. It *demand*s our active cooperation: *acts of love, of full acceptance of the will of God, of full acceptance of our neighbor*. Why is it that so many communicants are not conspicuous for their charity?...

3. Chiefly through the charity which it kindles, *Communion has other precious effects*: spiritual joy, remission of venial sins, preservation from future sins, weakening of evil inclinations...

What *ordinary food* does for the body, that the *Eucharist* does for the soul: it repairs waste, gives energy and joy. But, while ordinary food is changed into our body, *the Eucharist assimilates us unto Christ* and gradually *transforms us into Him*.

We should not expect Communion to suppress temptations or to weaken our passions automatically. Normally it does not do away with the need for struggle, but, by the light and strength it gives, *it makes us prompt and energetic in overcoming passions and temptations*.

What should we do AFTER HOLY COMMUNION?

After Holy Communion we should *spend some time "adoring" our Lord, "thanking" Him, "drawing" from His Heart a sincere love for God and our neighbor, "offering" ourselves for the task of the day, "asking" Him for blessings for ourselves and for others.*

1. We *should not leave* the church immediately after receiving Holy Communion. *We should pray at least ten or fifteen minutes, thanking our Divine Guest. Our Lord is actually and personally present in us as long as the appearance of bread remains.*

2. *If our work or duties prevent* our staying in church to give proper thanksgiving, let us remain *recollected and in union with Jesus* on our way home; and let us remember Him with love throughout the entire day.

Once St. Philip Neri noticed that a certain parishioner, for no reason, habitually left the church immediately after receiving Holy Communion. In order to correct him, he told two acolytes one day to accompany the man with lighted candles as he walked home. The acolytes did as they were told. Realizing his fault, the man returned and made the proper thanksgiving.

How should we SHOW OUR GRATITUDE to Our Lord for remaining always on our altars in the Holy Eucharist?

We should show our gratitude to Our Lord for remaining always on our altars in the Holy Eucharist by visiting Him often, by reverence in church, *by assisting every day at Mass when this is possible, and by being present at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.*

Wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, a light must always be kept burning before it. Olive oil should be used; in case of necessity the bishop may permit the use of a substitute.

1. Paying *visits* to the Blessed Sacrament *is a loving gesture towards Our Lord* really present there. He is our best Friend; shall we not pay Him a call once in a while?

Cardinal Bellarmine, while still a student, used to pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament every time he passed a church. When he was asked why he did this, he answered, "It would be ill manners to go by a friend's house without a word of greeting." *The church door is always open to admit us, a constant invitation to us to visit Our Lord* Who calls, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28).

2. *Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament* is an act of worship in which the Sacred Host, *placed in the monstrance*, is exposed to the people for adoration, and is lifted up to bless them. *The ciborium* may be used instead of the monstrance.

The Blessed Sacrament is solemnly exposed on *certain occasions*, as in the afternoon services on Sundays and holydays, *on the eves of First Fridays*, on the feast of Corpus Christi, etc. An all-night vigil is kept before the Blessed Sacrament in the Repository on the night of Holy Thursday. In many places an all-night vigil is also held on New Year's Eve. It is usual to pray before the solemnly exposed Sacrament on your knees.

3. The *Forty Hours' Devotion* is a devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, in memory of the *forty hours during which the body of Jesus stayed in the Holy Sepulchre*, after His burial on Good Friday up to His resurrection on Easter. *Relays of worshippers* take turns at adoration, watching and praying. *This devotion* appears to have developed *from the Corpus Christi processions.*

Cardinal Newman said of Benediction, "It is Our Lord's solemn benediction of His people, as when He lifted up His hands over His children, or when He blessed His chosen ones when He ascended up from Mount Olivet." At Benediction, at least twelve candles must be used on the altar.

4. The *Holy Hour* is a devotion in honor of Our Lord. It is often made before the Blessed Sacrament, although this is not necessary to gain the indulgences. *The devotion consists of an hour of mental or vocal prayer* in union with the prayer of Jesus in the Garden of Olives, in honor of His agony.

The Holy Hour may be made either in public or in private. If in public, it must be made in church or chapel any hour of the day or night of any day in the week.

5. *Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.* There are a few churches and chapels where the Blessed Sacrament is *solemnly exposed*—that is, in a monstrance—*day and night 24 hours a day.* In other churches the Blessed Sacrament *is exposed in the morning and towards the evening reserved again in the tabernacle.* When such adoration takes place there should be at least a few people in church to adore. They act as guardians and sentinels of our Eucharistic King. *We should pay visits to such churches* and pay our homage of adoration to Our Lord in the sacrament of His love.



The picture shows Our Lord instituting the sacrament of Penance on the first Easter Sunday night. He breathed on the Apostles and said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20.23).

Our Lord had previously promised Peter the right to forgive sins, saying: "And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19).

147. The Sacrament of Penance

What is the sacrament of PENANCE?

Penance is the sacrament by which sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through the absolution of the priest.

Penance prompts the sinner to detest his sins, and incites him to offer satisfaction for them, and to amend his life in the future.

1. **Penance** has the **three essentials** of a sacrament.

(a) It is a **sensible sign**; i.e., the words of absolution and the act of confession.

Our Lord promised to give Peter the power to forgive sins, saying to him, "And whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19). Christ later made the same promise to the other Apostles, saying, "Amen,

I say to you whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. 18:18).

(b) It was **instituted by Jesus Christ** on the first Easter Sunday night.

On the first Easter Sunday night, Our Lord fulfilled His promise to give His Apostles the power to forgive sins. Jesus appeared to His Apostles and said: "Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you." When He had said this, He breathed upon them and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:21-23).

(c) It **confers grace**. It is the way by which after Baptism sanctifying grace is restored to the penitent who has committed mortal sin.

2. On the part of *the penitent*, the sacrament of Penance includes three distinct acts: (a) contrition or *sorrow* for his sins; (b) confession or *telling* them to the priest; and (c) satisfaction or *performance of the penance* imposed by the priest.

A *penitent is absolved IF* he confesses his sins with sorrow, *makes* a resolution to atone for them, and *promises* to amend his life.

3. The *practice of confession and sacramental remission of sin* has been continuous in the Church from the beginning, though the manner of administering this sacrament has evolved through the centuries.

In the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, in the very first centuries of the Christian era, the faithful are often advised and exhorted to confess their sins. *St. Augustine says*, "It is not enough that one acknowledge his sins to God, from whom nothing is hidden; *he must also confess them to a priest, God's representative.*"

St. John said in encouragement: "My dear children, these things I write to you in order that you may not sin. *But if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just*" (1 John 2:1).

WITH WHAT WORDS does the priest forgive sins?

The priest forgives sins *with the words*: "*I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*"

This is called the "*absolution*," and is *said by the priest over the penitent, with uplifted hand*, when he forgives the sins confessed. It is pronounced while the penitent is saying an act of contrition. It is the *form* of the sacrament.

1. Only those priests *authorized* to do so can *administer the sacrament of Penance*. The power to forgive sins by pronouncing the words of absolution is given to a priest at his ordination. But in order to exercise this power, *the priest must have jurisdiction*. The bishop gives authority (called "the faculties") to hear confessions in his diocese.

A *priest authorized in one diocese* must get the faculties in order to hear confessions in any other diocese. Priests are like civil magistrates, who cannot pass sentence on all cases, but only on those for which they have jurisdiction.

2. The priest *refuses absolution* to a penitent when he thinks the penitent *does not have the necessary dispositions*. He may also postpone absolution to a later confession, if he thinks it best to do so.

The confessor is a judge in the confessional; he must act as judge, looking not only into the sins being confessed, but also into the purpose of amendment, into the sincerity of contrition of the penitent, and the satisfaction to be imposed.

3. *Certain grave sins are reserved* to the Pope or the bishop for absolution. These are called "*reserved cases*": as when one joins Masonry, gets married before a non-Catholic minister, or desecrates a sacred Host. *Every Catholic priest*, however, even if suspended or excommunicated, has power to absolve all the sins of a *dying person*.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS of the sacrament of Penance, worthily received?

1. *The restoration or increase of sanctifying grace.*

The sacrament of Penance *restores* sanctifying grace to the soul that has lost it, and *increases* it in the soul that already possesses it.

2. *The forgiveness of sins.*

The sacrament of Penance remits the guilt of sins. *All sins can be forgiven* in the sacrament of Penance. However many and wicked the sins may be, they are all forgiven if the sinner makes a good confession, even on a deathbed. "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all iniquity*" (1 John 1:9).

3. *The remission of the eternal punishment*, if necessary, and also of part, at least, of the temporal punishment, due to our sins.

"*Unless you repent, you will all perish in the same manner*" (Luke 13:5).

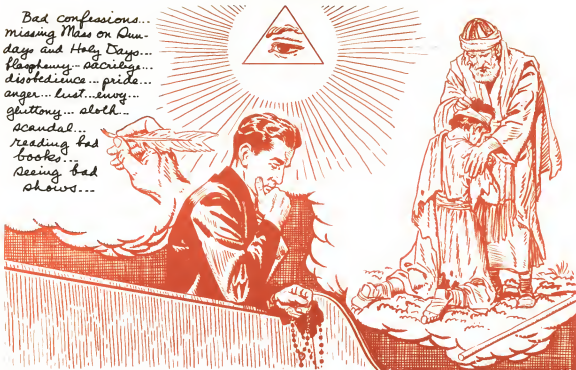
4. *The help to avoid sin in the future.*

The sacrament of Penance gives the penitent actual graces and a special strength by which he may overcome temptation and lead a good life. *Works of penance* are not only for the punishment of past sins, they act *as a medicine, as a remedy* to weaken the power of evil tendencies.

5. *The restoration of the merits of our good works*, if they have been lost by mortal sins.

The sacrament of Penance also gives us the opportunity to receive spiritual advice and instruction from our confessor. Although everybody is free to confess to any authorized priest, each should have a regular confessor.

Bad confessions...
 missing Mass on Sun-
 days and Holy Days...
 blasphemy... sacrilege...
 disobedience... pride...
 anger... lust... envy...
 gluttony... sloth...
 scandal...
 reading bad
 books...
 seeing bad
 shows...



In our examination of conscience, we must make a careful scrutiny, as if we were to appear at that moment before the judgment seat of God. We must not, however, be scrupulous, remembering that God is a just and merciful God, who does

not expect what is beyond our power. By the examination we learn to know ourselves, our weaknesses, our temptations, our sins. During the examination of conscience we should decide how we are to tell our sins, so that we may be clear and brief.

148. Examination of Conscience

WHAT must we do **TO RECEIVE** the Sacrament of Penance **WORTHILY**?

1. *Examine our conscience.*

By the *examination of conscience* we recall the sins committed since our last good confession.

2. *Be sorry for our sins.*

By *contrition*, or sorrow for sins, we express to God our grief that we have disobeyed Him, that we have been His unfaithful children.

3. *Have the firm purpose* of not sinning again.

By this *purpose of amendment* we sincerely promise God not to fall again into the sins we confess.

4. *Confess our sins* to the priest.

The act of telling our sins to the priest is called *Confession*.

5. *Be willing to perform the penance* the priest gives us.

The performance of the penance after confession is called *satisfaction*, for by that act we try to repair the damage our sins have done.

TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF Penance WORTHILY, we must imitate the Prodigal Son:

(1) *He thought over* the evil he had done, and acknowledged it (*examination of conscience*).

(2) *He realized* his ingratitude towards his good father, and *grieved* with all his heart (*contrition*).

(3) *He made up his mind* to return to his father and from thenceforth to change his ways (*purpose of amendment*).

(4) Upon his return, *he fell* at his father's feet, *confessed* the evil he had done, and begged pardon for it (*confession*).

(5) *He implored* his father not to treat him as a son, but as a mere servant (*satisfaction*).

What is AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE?

An examination of conscience is a sincere effort *to call to mind all the sins we have committed* since our last worthy confession.

1. Before our examination of conscience we should ask *God's help* to know our sins and to confess them with sincere sorrow. Without His grace, we can neither know our sins nor feel sorrow for them.

2. The examination of conscience is important, for by it we learn to *know ourselves*, and so find means of improvement.

Self-knowledge is a gift of God, that we implore in prayer. If we have self-knowledge, we shall be sure of avoiding the self-complacency that is the obstacle to a sincere examination of conscience.

How can we make A GOOD EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE?

We can make a good examination of conscience *by calling to mind the commandments of God and of the Church, and the particular duties* of our state of life, and by asking ourselves how we may have sinned with regard to them.

1. *We should* make as careful an examination *as if we were on our deathbed*, considering *in what way we have sinned* in thought, desire, word, deed, or omission. We must recall how often we have committed mortal sins. "I will meditate on your precepts and consider your ways" (Ps. 118:15).

2. *We need not be too anxious* about examining ourselves on *venial sins*, as it is not necessary to confess them; but it is better to do so, in order to amend ourselves, and to obtain greater graces.

In our examination of conscience, let us beware, lest, in searching out small sins we may cover the large ones. Let us not imitate the Pharisees, to whom Our Lord said, "Blind guides, who strain out the gnat but swallow the camel!" (Matt. 23:24).

3. *In our examination*, we should recall all the *circumstances that might change the nature* of the sins we wish to confess.

For example, if a man has stolen a ciborium from the church, it is not enough for him to confess, "I stole." Stealing sacred vessels, besides being theft, is moreover sacrilege.

4. *We should determine* exactly *what* we are going to confess, and *how* we are going to express it, avoiding random talk.

WHEN IS THE EXAMINATION of conscience CARELESS?

The examination of conscience is careless *when we make it too hastily*, and thus fail to remember all our sins.

1. *Some careless* people *rush* into the confessional after one or two minutes preparation.

We receive greater graces from confession the better we know ourselves, our sins, our weaknesses, and the greater is our contrition and the stronger our purpose of amendment. These important dispositions cannot be effected by a *hasty examination*.

2. *One who omits confessing a mortal sin* through deliberate carelessness in examination does not make a good confession.

A good rule is *to prepare for each confession as if it were to be the last* we shall make in this life. The chief reason for our falling into the same sins time and again is our want of earnest preparation for confession, and the resulting lack of conviction of the need of amendment.

WHEN IS THE EXAMINATION of conscience TOO SCRUPULOUS?

The examination of conscience is too scrupulous *when we make ourselves miserable by minute and prolonged* examination, fearing that we may not do it well.

1. *Some scrupulous* persons spend a *half hour* or more examining themselves with the minutest detail for a weekly confession.

This is too long. *A good examination* for a weekly confession can be made in five minutes and for a monthly confession in *ten or fifteen minutes*, especially if one has not neglected to make his daily examination of conscience.

2. *Our Lord* certainly did not institute confession to be a *means of torture*, but a means of forgiveness and relief.

It is unnecessary to count the exact number of our temptations or distractions. It is unnecessary to worry over what we cannot remember. What scrupulous persons need is *good common sense*.

3. *A good rule* is to examine our conscience *every evening*, spending a few moments looking over the day's actions.

Then when the time comes for confession, we have only to recall the sins our nightly examinations revealed to us. *A good examination of conscience is an assurance of a good confession*. We can neither confess nor feel sorry for what we do not recall. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).



Our Lord, speaking about the forgiveness of sins, told the parable of the Prodigal Son, who took his inheritance from his father, and wasted it in one country. But one time came when the Prodigal suffered hardships as a caretaker of swine.

Then, feeling contrition for what he had done, he said to himself: "How many hired men in my

father's house have bread in abundance, while I am perishing here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am no longer worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired men. And he arose and went to his father" (Luke 15:17-20).

149. Sorrow for Sin

What is CONTRITION?

Contrition is *sincere sorrow for having offended God*, and *hatred for the sins* we have committed, with a *firm purpose of sinning no more*. "The LORD is close to the brokenhearted" (Ps. 33:19).

God will not forgive us any sin, whether mortal or venial, unless we have true contrition for it. Without true contrition a thousand confessions will avail us nothing except to add to our sins. *Unless there is sorrow for sin, there is no forgiveness.*

As examples of true contrition, we have *Mary Magdalen*, who fell at the feet of Jesus weeping; *St. Peter*, who wept bitterly for having denied Our Lord; *King David*, who fasted and prayed, crying, "Have mercy on me, O God . . . a heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not despise."

When is sorrow for sin true contrition?

Sorrow for sin is true contrition *when* it is (1) *interior*, (2) *supernatural*, (3) *supreme*, and (4) *universal*.

1. Our sorrow is *interior*, when *it comes from our heart*, not merely from our lips. "A heart contrite and humbled, O God, you will not spurn" (Ps. 50:19).

One day a man bumped into an old woman carrying a basketful of vegetables. Her basket was knocked out of her hand, and the contents spilled on the street, rolling in all directions. The man curtly murmured, "Sorry," and went his way, impatiently saying to himself, "There ought to be a law against old women going out on the streets." Meanwhile, the old woman was left to pick up her vegetables as best she could. This man's sorrow was not interior: it was on his lips alone.

2. Our sorrow is *supernatural* when, with the help of God's grace, *it arises from motives which spring from faith*, and not merely from natural motives. If we are sorry for our sins *because they offend God* Who is so good and perfect, or *because we fear His punishment*, or the loss of heaven, our contrition is supernatural.

A thief was taken to court. He had been caught by reason of a watchdog in the house he had entered. The thief said to himself when he was sentenced to imprisonment: "I am sorry I ever entered that house. Next time I shall be sure and steal only from those houses that do not keep dogs." This man's contrition was not supernatural, but natural. *He was sorry only because he was caught and punished.* Other natural motives are the loss of health, reputation, or goods.

3. Our sorrow is *supreme* when *we hate sin above every other evil*, and are willing to endure anything rather than offend God in the future by sin.

A child said to the priest: "Father, I think I do not have enough contrition for my sins. When I offend my mother, I cry bitterly, because I love her. But when I confess my sins, I do not cry at all." The priest asked: "Would you commit a sin only to please your mother, whom you love so much?" Quickly the child replied: "Father, no!" *This child's contrition is supreme*, or sovereign. Sorrow for sin is not judged by the amount of tears we shed, but by the firmness of our will in resolving to make amends and avoid sin because it offends God.

4. Our sorrow is *universal* when we are sorry *for every mortal sin* which we may have had the misfortune to commit. If we have committed five mortal sins, and are contrite for only four, even if we confess all, *not one* is forgiven.

WHY should we have CONTRITION FOR MORTAL SIN?

We should have contrition for *mortal sin* because it is *the greatest of all evils*, gravely offends God, keeps us out of heaven, and condemns us forever to hell.

Sin is the greatest of evils, because its effects last longest, and it has the most dreadful results. Ill health, poverty, and other material evils last for only a time; at death they will all be ended forever, and we shall have our release from them. But sin? The evils arising from mortal sin, aside from those that bound us in this life, will persecute us unto eternity. As long as one has a mortal sin he cannot be forgiven for his venial sin.

WHY should we have CONTRITION FOR VENIAL SIN?

We should have contrition for venial sin *because it is displeasing to God*, merits temporal punishment, and may lead to mortal sin.

1. *Venial sin* is *displeasing* to God, and keeps us out of heaven, however temporarily. *If we really love God*, we would avoid every sign of sin separating us from Him.

The stains of venial sin may seem very slight to us indeed; but when they are laid against the purity of the Infinite Goodness they become dark blotches. *We can realize how God looks upon the slightest of venial sins* when we remember how severely He punished His saints, as for instance, Moses, for only a very slight sin of thought.

2. *By venial sin* we incur *temporal punishment*, which must be made up either here on earth or in the fires of purgatory.

3. *Venial sin* is a *step* to mortal sin. *It causes carelessness with regard to sins*, and leads us into sloth with regard to good works.

And so, *being careless about venial sin*, we fall into mortal sin "by little and little." No man ever fell suddenly into vice; vice is a habit of sin.

4. *Venial sin* deprives us of many *graces* by which we might merit more help and love from God.

When going to Confession, and if we only have venial sins to confess, we must be *sorry for at least one* of them, or for some sin of our past, which we confess; otherwise the confession is not valid.

What is an ACT OF CONTRITION?

It is a prayer by which *we express to God our sorrow and detestation of sin*.

1. An act of contrition can be *as short as* this: "*O my God, I am sorry with all my heart for having offended You, because You are all good!*"

"Have pity on me, O God; have pity on me, for in you I take refuge" (Ps. 56:2).

2. *An act of contrition* is *sufficient to forgive venial sins*. We may go to Holy Communion without confession if we have no mortal sin. Although not required, it is good to say an act of contrition for our venial sins, if any.

If we are frequent communicants, and have only venial sins, *it is better to go to confession* every two weeks or at least once a month. *Confession gives special graces* not obtained through an act of contrition.



Perfect contrition implies a fervent love of God. We are sorry for our sins because they offend God Who is so good. Mary Magdalen had perfect contrition. Her contrition was so perfect that she never sinned again. She followed Our Lord and

was at the foot of the cross when He was crucified. Her perfect contrition and love were greatly rewarded, for He appeared to her on Easter morning. We should all try to imitate Mary Magdalen's contrition, arising from sorrow at offending God.

150. Perfect and Imperfect Contrition

When is our CONTRITION PERFECT?

Our contrition is perfect *when we are sorry for our sins because sin offends God, Whom we love above all things for His own sake.*

"Wherefore I say to thee, *her sins*, many as they are, *shall be forgiven her, because she has loved much.* But he to whom little is forgiven, loves little.' And he said to her, 'Thy sins are forgiven.' And they who were at table with him began to say within themselves, 'Who is this man, who even forgives sins?' But he said to the woman, 'Thy faith has saved thee; go in peace!' (Luke 7:47-50).

1. *This contrition arises* from a pure and perfect love of God. If we have a *perfect love* of God, our contrition for sins will be perfect. *It ought not be difficult* for us to have a perfect love of God. We generally love our parents not for the food

and clothes they give us, but for themselves, *because we see their self-sacrifice*, their unselfishness, and other good qualities.

Thus *we shall be sorry*, not only because we fear punishment or dread the loss of His gifts, but *because we offend the good God, to Whom nothing is more evil than sin.* If we can love our parents spontaneously, not for any reward we expect or punishment we wish to avoid, why can we not love God, Who is infinitely more lovable than our parents? *If we love God spontaneously, because He is lovable in Himself, our love is perfect.*

2. It is easy to *make an act of perfect contrition* if we sincerely love God. We can excite ourselves to it by thinking of the Passion, of *how good God is*, how many favors He has granted us, and *how ungrateful we have been to Him in return for His goodness.*

3. *If we happen to be assisting at a death-bed*, and no priest is available, we should *help the dying* person make *an act of perfect contrition*.

The father of a family met with an accident and was at the point of death. The youngest child, who had recently made his first communion, saw that his father would die before the priest could arrive. He therefore took a crucifix from the wall, and holding it before his father's eyes repeated aloud an act of contrition. Tears filled the dying man's eyes. *He died before the priest arrived, but his act of contrition washed his soul clean of sin.*

4. We should *form the habit* of making an act of *perfect contrition* as often as possible.

It is only necessary to raise our hearts to God in pure love, and say some such words as: "O my God, I am sorry I ever offended You, because You are so good, and I love You!"

When is our Contrition IMPERFECT?

Our contrition is imperfect *when we are sorry for our sins* because they are hateful in themselves or *because we fear God's punishment*.

1. Imperfect contrition is called *attrition*. The *fear of hell* is a common motive of attrition. It is a *good motive*, but it is *imperfect*, because it arises from fear of God's punishments, and not from pure love for Him.

A mother sent her three young sons to take a big jar of honey to their grandmother. On the way the boys stopped to play. They stumbled over the jar, breaking it and spilling the honey. They all began to weep.

The first said, "Mother *will surely spank us!*" The second cried, "She will be so displeased *she will give us no cookies!*" And the third wept, "Mother *will surely be sad!*"

The *first two* boys had *attrition*: one had the fear of punishment, and the second had sorrow at the loss of reward. The *third* child had *perfect contrition*, for he thought only of the sadness and offense he caused to one he loved.

2. *To receive* the sacrament of Penance *worthily*, *imperfect contrition* is sufficient. However, an act of attrition cannot obtain forgiveness of mortal sin *without the absolution of a priest*.

Even if we feel only attrition for our sins, we can *easily develop* it into perfect contrition by remembering what we should be without God. We should always try to have *perfect contrition* in the sacrament of Penance.

3. A purely *servile fear* of God is not sufficient for imperfect contrition. That is one which *makes a person avoid sin only because of punishment*; so that, if there were no punishment, he would not be sorry, but ready and resolved to sin, regardless of the laws of God. *To receive the sacrament of Penance worthily, purely servile fear would not be sufficient.*

We call this fear "*servile*" because it is the fear of slaves, afraid of a hard taskmaster; they would quickly disobey his commands were they not afraid of his whips. Shall we look upon God thus? Servile fear does not make the sinner turn away from his sin. The "*fear of God*" that produces attrition is called *filial fear*. It is a fear of God's punishments that makes the sinner turn away from his sin and return sincerely to God; it is *the fear that a good son who has offended his father seriously feels when he begs forgiveness.*

How can a person in mortal sin regain THE STATE OF GRACE before receiving the sacrament of Penance?

A person in mortal sin can regain the state of grace before receiving the sacrament of Penance, *by making an act of perfect contrition, with the sincere purpose of going to confession.*

1. *An act of perfect contrition takes away sin immediately.* Our sins however grievous are forgiven before we confess them, although the obligation to confess as soon as we can remains.

Thus, if one *makes an act of perfect contrition* after having committed a mortal sin, *and then dies* before being able to go to confession, *he is saved* from hell by the act he made. Let us remember the penitent thief: "And he said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise.'" (Luke 23:40-43).

2. *If we have the misfortune* to commit a mortal sin, we should ask God's pardon and grace at once, *make an act of perfect contrition*, and go to confession as soon as we can.

With the act of perfect contrition must be our intention to go to confession as soon as we can. If we die without being able to confess to a priest, we shall be saved from hell by our act of perfect contrition.

3. We may *not receive Holy Communion* after committing a mortal sin, if we merely make an act of perfect contrition; *one who has sinned grievously must go to confession* before receiving Holy Communion.



St. Augustine in his youth led a bad life. The prayers of his holy mother, St. Monica, led to his conversion. One day he was in the garden when he heard a voice say, Take and read. He took up the Holy Scripture on a nearby table and read.

From that moment his conversion started. He made a resolution to amend his ways. This firm resolution he never broke; he became one of the greatest Saints. If we should be so unhappy as to sin, let us imitate his firm purpose of amendment.

151. Purpose of Amendment

What is the FIRM PURPOSE OF SINNING NO MORE?

The firm purpose of sinning no more is the *sincere resolve not only to avoid sin, but to avoid as far as possible the near occasions* of sin.

"But when the unclean spirit has gone out of a man, he roams through dry places in search of a resting place, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house which I left'; and when he has come, he finds the place unoccupied, swept and adorned. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first" (Matt. 12:43-45).

1. *This purpose of amendment must accompany the act of contrition*; it is necessary before sin can be forgiven. By it we determine firmly to amend ourselves. "**Behold, thou art cured. Sin no more, lest something worse befall thee**" (John 5:14).

Two young men had fallen into the vice of drunkenness. Every day they went to the saloon, and with other companions drank till they lost their reason. Being reproved by their parents, they promised to overcome their vice and drink no more.

From that day the first young man avoided passing the saloon, and never entered it again. The second young man thought that so long as he did not enter, passing in front of the saloon was harmless. He passed in front on the first day.

The second day, as he passed, his former companions hailed him, and he entered the saloon, thinking to himself that it was harmless, provided he did not touch wine.

After a week of this, he drank a little glass for old times' sake. It was not long before he fell back into his old vice, while the first young man was cured.

The first young man not only avoided sin, but the near occasions of sin. The second young man had no real purpose of amendment; and so he soon returned to his former ways, and fell back into sin.

2. *Our purpose of amendment must have reference to God:* it must be *supernatural*. If we decide to amend only because we should be more popular without bad habits, that is not a supernatural purpose.

In Holy Scripture there was King Antiochus who lamented his sins because worms were eating him up. Today we have criminals, drunkards, evil men, who bewail their wicked deeds because they land in jail or lose their wealth or reputation. For this reason they determine to improve: but not to improve their souls, only their methods, so that they may not be "found out,"—as if God had no eyes to see. Even if such persons determine to amend, their purpose has no merit before Almighty God.

3. *Even if, after confession, we should fall again into the same sins that we have so often confessed, we should not despair,* for by so doing we would become worse. If after confession we relapse into the same sins, our purpose of amendment is weak. We must strengthen our will. *We should go oftener to confession,* examine ourselves carefully, be watchful against temptation.

A young man once came to St. Philip Neri and told him he was the victim of a bad habit. The saint advised him to go to confession immediately after he fell into the same sin. The young man sincerely wished to get rid of the vice, and followed the advice strictly. In a short time he had not only got rid of his vice, but he had formed new virtues.

4. *If we have only venial sins,* the best way is to choose *the one we commonly commit,* and concentrate our efforts to eradicate it. *We should correct ourselves of venial sins one at a time.* Thus we can be sure of contrition, and a steady advance in virtue.

WHAT QUALITIES should our purpose of amendment have?

Our purpose of amendment should be *firm, efficacious, and universal.*

1. *Our purpose is FIRM* when we determine to avoid sin at any cost. Then we do not hesitate back and forth, but with decision cut ourselves off from the bonds which formerly bound us to sin and its occasions.

In one of his military expeditions, Alexander the Great, the conqueror of many lands, arrived in Gordium, Phrygia. In a certain fortress there was what people called the "*Gordian knot*," so well tied that many had tried to untie it but all miserably failed. It was believed that whoever could untie the Gordian knot would be the conqueror of Asia. When Alexander came, he did not waste time, but *drew his sword and cut the knot apart.*

2. *Our purpose is EFFICACIOUS* when we resolve to use all means to carry out our determination to amend, as *by avoiding the occasions of sin,— persons, places, and things that ordinarily led us into sin in the past, and may do so again in the future.* A good resolution is like a nail driven fast into the wall, but the resolutions of too many are like a nail badly placed, which falls out as soon as something is hung upon it.

Bad company and improper amusements and reading are such occasions. If we do not avoid them, we are not truly sorry for our sins. "*He who loves danger will perish in it*" (Sirach 3:25). *People who say they wish to become better, but will not fly away from occasions of sin* are like a housewife who industriously sweeps away cobwebs, but refuses to kill the spider that weaves them.

3. *Our purpose is UNIVERSAL* when we are determined to *keep away from ALL mortal sins.* A wise gardener uproots weeds, and does not merely cut off the top; otherwise they will grow thicker than ever.

St. Sebastian promised to heal the sick proconsul of Rome if he would destroy all the idols. The proconsul destroyed the idols, but did not get well, and complained to the saint about it. The saint told him he had concealed the gold idol inherited from his ancestors, and could not be cured. As soon as he destroyed it, he was healed.

Is it necessary to confess EVERY sin?

It is necessary to confess *every mortal sin which has not yet been confessed;* it is not necessary to confess our venial sins, but it is better to do so.

1. We must confess *all our mortal sins.* *God surely can* forgive us without Confession; *but He has not promised to do so,* whereas He very clearly promised to forgive those whom His priests forgive.

God is free to put whatever conditions He wishes on the reception of His gifts. He is certainly within His justice to impose on us the condition of Confession, that we may have our mortal sins forgiven.

2. It is well to confess *venial sins,* though we are not obliged to do so. Many Christians do not commit mortal sin; they would have only venial sins to confess.

Venial sins do not exclude from heaven. *Without confession* they may be forgiven in many ways, such as by prayer, good works, and the frequenting of the sacraments. It is advisable, when confessing only venial sins, to accuse ourselves of some *sin of our past life,* even in general terms, such as: "I also accuse myself of the sins of my past life, especially those I committed against the Fourth Commandment."



1. One makes a bad confession who wilfully conceals a mortal sin. For from being forgiven any of his sins, he thus commits a new mortal sin, sacrilege. If one is ashamed to confess his mortal sins before his ordinary confessor, he is always at liberty to go to another priest, one who does not know him. But by no means must he conceal a



mortal sin. "He that hides his sins shall not prosper" (Prov. 28:13).

2. If we make a good confession, our souls are cleansed, and we are restored to sanctifying grace, to the friendship of God. We also receive actual graces which help us in our struggle against evil.

152. Sacramental Confession

What is CONFESSION?

Confession is *the telling of our sins to an authorized priest* for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.

"If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). "Is any one among you sick? Let him bring in the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him . . . and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him" (Jas. 5:14, 15).

WHY must we CONFESS our sins?

We must confess our sins *because Jesus Christ obliges us to do so*, in these words, spoken to the Apostles and to their successors in the priesthood: "*Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.*"

1. *These words of Christ oblige us to confess our sins*, because the priest cannot know whether he should forgive or retain our sins unless we tell them to him. In order to be able to give a just decision the priest must know the facts of each case. *Thus the penitent must tell his sins.* He is his own accuser and his own witness.

Even in a civil court, the judge makes no decision without knowing the facts of the case. A trial is conducted with accusers and witnesses against the person accused. *The priest is the judge*, and he must learn from the penitent himself whether he should give absolution, and what would be a just penance to impose.

2. *The power to forgive sins* was not given to the Apostles alone, *but also to their successors*, the bishops and priests of the Church, *until the end of time.*

The forgiveness of sins was surely not granted only to those people living at the time of the Apostles, but for all who, to the end of the world, should need forgiveness.

3. *The Church* commands us to confess *at least once a year*. All Catholics, including *cardinals, bishops, priests, etc., are subject to this law*. Good Catholics confess at least once a month, or even once a week. If we are so unfortunate as to have committed a mortal sin, *we should go to confession at once*.

What would you think of a person who met with an accident at New Year and is near death if he says: "No, do not call the doctor. I shall go to him at Easter"?

4. In the sacrament of *Penance* the priest acts as *physician* to the soul. He tells the penitent *how to avoid sins and how to amend his life*.

Just as we tell our doctor about all our bodily pains, in order that he may cure us, so do we tell our sins to our confessor in order that he can give or suggest spiritual remedies.

THE CHIEF QUALITIES of a good confession are three: it must be *humble, sincere, and entire*.

When is our confession HUMBLE?

Our confession is *humble when we accuse ourselves of our sins with a conviction of guilt for having offended God*.

Our confession is *humble* when we show by our manner that we are truly sorry, and listen meekly to the priest's correction and advice. One who continually interrupts the priest with, "But you do not know me, Father! I am not like that!" would give the impression that he does not make a humble confession. One who complains that the penance imposed is too heavy for his sins is not humble.

When is our confession SINCERE?

Our confession is *sincere when we tell our sins honestly and frankly*.

1. Our confession is *sincere* when we tell our sins just as they are, without excusing or exaggerating them.

One who confesses that he stole because his companions told him to, or that the temptation was too strong, is excusing himself.

2. *We should confess* exactly as if we were telling our sins to *God Himself*; He knows them perfectly, including all the circumstances.

Our confession must be clear, so that the confessor may not waste his time asking us questions. We should also be very careful *not to mention by name* anyone in confession.

3. In confession we are to *tell our own sins*, not those of others. The confessional is not a place for gossiping about the faults of others.

The story is told of a woman who went to confession and complained bitterly of the faults of her son. In giving the penance, the priest said, "Say two Hail Marys for your sins and ten rosaries for those sins of your son which you have confessed." He was trying to teach her a needed lesson.

When is our confession ENTIRE?

Our confession is *entire when we confess at least all our mortal sins, telling their kind, the number of times we have committed each sin, and any circumstances changing their nature*.

A story is told of an old farmer who came into the confessional quaking and quivering with nervousness. He said, "Father, I have stolen a rope!" and stopped. Sensing that the confession was not entire, the priest asked, "How long was the rope?" The farmer answered, "About three yards long, Father!" But he was still very nervous, and so the priest asked, "Was there anything else you stole?" The farmer trembled, and finally gasped: "There—there was a—a cow at the end of the rope, Father!"

1. *We must* tell the exact *nature or kind* of the mortal sins we have committed.

For example, it is not enough for one to accuse himself of grievous lying. He should specify what kind of lie he told, whether it was to protect himself or to tell a calumny.

2. *We must mention the circumstances that change* the nature of our sins.

For instance it is not enough to say merely, "I stole a dollar," if it was stolen from a blind beggar, or from the collection plate at church. Ordinarily taking a dollar from your rich father may be a venial sin. From a beggar, it becomes mortal; from the church it is a sacrilege.

3. *We must* tell *how many times* we committed a mortal sin. The more often it has been committed, the greater the guilt. *If we cannot remember the exact number of times* we should tell it *as nearly as possible*, by telling how long a habit has lasted.

However, *we must not waste time unnecessarily* in this, but be as simple as possible. Instead of saying: "I was disobedient to my father twice, to my mother three times, and to my teacher five times," a young person should merely say: "I was disobedient ten times."



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE



SACRAMENTAL CONFESSION

1. Before confessing to the priest, we must first make a very good examination of conscience. Then we should repent of our sins, say an act of contrition, and kneel in the confessional for our confession.

2. In Confession, we tell our sins to the priest as clearly as possible. We speak in a low voice, and avoid any waste of time in random talk. We must tell all mortal sins; we may also mention whatever venial sins we wish to state.

153. How to Make a Good Confession

HOW SHOULD WE PREPARE ourselves for a good confession?

We should prepare ourselves for a good confession *by taking sufficient time* not only to *examine our conscience*, but especially to *excite in our hearts sincere sorrow for our sins*, and a firm *purpose not to commit* them again.

When hearing confession, the priest uses a purple stole. The color purple signifies sorrow and penance. In former days priests used the stole continually as part of their habit, but today they use it only when on duty; the Pope alone uses the stole continually. It is the badge of the priesthood.

1. *After we have made* a good examination of conscience and excited ourselves to true repentance, *we should say* an act of contrition. The act of contrition should

precede the confession. We should make it after the examination of conscience, before going into the confessional. *The priest cannot pardon us if we are not repentant*.

An act of contrition made any time during the day on which we go to confession is sufficient. *We should renew* the act of contrition *at the moment that the priest is giving us absolution* after our confession.

2. *We then approach the confessional to await our turn*. We should never crowd and fight to get first place. *Some persons are so eager to be first that they even go up near the one actually confessing*. This is a serious fault, especially if by so doing the person hears the confession going on.

Roger Brooke Taney was one day awaiting his turn to confess, in line with some Negro workmen.

He was *then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court* of the United States, a position second only in dignity to that of the President. Seeing him, the priest came out and said, "Come in next, Mr. Taney: the time of the Chief Justice is too precious to spend waiting." But the Chief Justice replied, "*Not Chief Justice here, Father, only a prisoner at the bar.*" And he kept his place in line, awaiting his turn.

3. *When our turn comes*, we kneel in the *confessional* and wait till the priest leans towards the opening.

HOW SHOULD WE CONFESS our sins to the priest?

1. *Making the sign* of the cross, we say to the priest: "*Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It is a week*"...and then we tell how long it has been since our last confession.

We must speak distinctly, but not so loudly that persons near the confessional can hear.

2. *We then state our sins* as clearly and briefly as possible, *telling all mortal sins*, including those that may have been forgotten in previous confessions, with the nature and number of each; *we may also confess any venial sins* we wish to mention. We must not waste time at any random talk.

If we cannot remember the exact number of our mortal sins, we should tell the number as nearly as possible, or say how often we have committed the sins in a day, a week, a month, or a year. *When we have committed no mortal sin since our last confession*, we should confess our venial sins, or some sin told in a previous confession, *for which we are again sorry, in order that the priest may give us absolution.*

3. Having finished, we say: "*For these and all the sins of my past life I am truly sorry, especially for . . .*"; and then it is well to tell one or several of the sins which we have previously confessed, and for which we are particularly sorry.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO AFTER confessing our sins?

After confessing our sins, we should answer *truthfully* any question the priest asks, *seek advice* if we feel that we need any, *listen carefully* to the spiritual instruction and counsel of the priest, and *accept* the penance he gives us.

If we do not understand the penance, we must ask the priest to repeat it. If we cannot perform that particular penance, we should state our reasons to the priest, and have him change it.

1. *When the priest is giving us absolution*, we should say from our heart *the short act of contrition* in a tone to be heard by him, and *make the sign* of the cross.

The words of absolution are said in Latin: "*I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*" We must not leave the confessional until the priest gives some sign, as by saying, "*God bless you,*" or "*go in peace.*" It is best to wait till he has closed the little window.

2. *After leaving* the confessional, we should return *thanks* to God for the sacrament we have received, and promptly and devoutly perform our *penance*.

WHAT are we to do IF without our fault WE FORGET to confess a mortal sin?

If without our fault we forget to confess a mortal sin, *we may receive Holy Communion*, because we have made a good confession and the sin is forgiven; *but we must tell the sin in confession if it again comes to our mind.*

A *doubtful sin* is one of which we are not sure whether it is a sin or not a sin. *We are not obliged to confess a doubtful sin, but it is better to do so.* The confessor can then advise us and we shall have greater peace of mind.

What is a GENERAL CONFESSION?

A general confession is a *repetition of all previous confessions*, or at least of some of them.

Housewives sweep and dust the house every day; nevertheless they also give it a thorough general cleaning once or twice a year. A general confession is the equivalent of this general housecleaning.

1. It may be good to make a *general confession* of the whole year once a year, especially after a retreat or mission. These are called confessions of devotion.

Scrupulous persons, however, who only torture themselves, *should avoid general confessions*. Even if mortal sins are omitted purposely in a general confession of devotion, it is worthy, provided those sins have previously been confessed and absolved.

2. *It is usual to make a general confession of our whole life when we are about to change our state of life*, as before marriage or before entering the priesthood or a religious order. *A general confession is necessary* when one has been making unworthy confessions.

A general confession may be advised as conducive to greater self-knowledge, to more genuine humility, and increased peace of mind.



Theodasius the Great, Roman Emperor, although a just ruler, once ordered the massacre of about 7000 people of Thessalonica in revenge for a tumult that they had caused in the year 390. St. Ambrose, then Archbishop of Milan, thereupon forbade the emperor's entrance into the church.

Theodasius acknowledged his sin, and humbly stated that King David had likewise sinned. St. Ambrose rebuked him, answering that the emperor must then imitate David in his penance. Theodasius made reparation to the Thessalonians and did an eight-months' severe canonical penance.

154. Satisfaction for Sin

WHY does the priest give us A PENANCE AFTER CONFESSION?

The priest gives us a penance after confession, *that we may make some atonement to God for our sins*, receive help to avoid them in the future, and make some satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to them.

1. *The penance* is satisfaction for sin, some *penitential work* imposed by the priest as a *reparation to God* for the offense offered to Him by sin.

In the early days of the Church, public or canonical penance was imposed for public sins. One who apostatized for fear had to do penance for seven years, during which time he was excluded from Holy Communion, and was required to fast on certain days.

2. *Justice* requires that an injury done to another should be repaired. One who steals must restore the stolen property. *God forgave Adam's sin, but his penance lasted his whole life.* In confession, our *eternal punishment* is forgiven, but not our temporal. *Temporal punishment* is the punishment or penance that we have to suffer for our sins either here on earth or in Purgatory.

One who breaks the civil law is not let off even if he is sorry. He is given a *penalty* imposed by the judge.

3. *Today the most common form of satisfaction* is the saying of certain prayers imposed. If the sin calls for material reparation, restoration of property or a public apology is also sometimes imposed.

One should not complain if the penance given by the confessor is more than other confessors usually impose. One should instead thank God for the opportunity to make some satisfaction here on earth, thus shortening his purgatory.

4. *If the penance consists of prayers*, we should say it if possible as soon as we leave the confessional. It is *wrong to put off* the performance of a penance too long. *One who intentionally omits the penance commits sin, although the sins that were forgiven do not return.* To omit a penance for venial sins would be a venial sin; a serious penance for mortal sins, would be grievous.

If we cannot perform the penance imposed, we may request our confessor to change it. *We may not on our own authority substitute* another penance for the one imposed.

WHAT KINDS OF PUNISHMENT are due to sin?

Two kinds of punishment are due to sin: *the eternal punishment of hell*, due to unforgiven mortal sins, and *temporal punishment*, lasting *only for a time*, due to venial sins, and also to mortal sins after they have been forgiven.

1. *Even if Our Lord* by His death fully atoned for all our sins, *we need to do penance for them.* He made salvation available, on condition that we do our part.

In a similar way, a physician prescribes medicine. If one refuses it, he is not cured.

2. *If there were no need of penance*, the most hardened sinners would receive *the same treatment* as the most saintly men, a condition impossible to the justice of God. *Christ Himself* wills that as we are to share in His glory, we must first share in His sufferings.

"Heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ: yet so, if we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified with Him" (Rom. 8:17).

3. *The punishment for sin* prescribed by God is clear:

(a) *For mortal sin, eternal punishment in hell.* This punishment we can escape by the sacrament of Penance, or, at the moment of death, if we are not able to receive the sacrament of Penance, by an act of perfect contrition.

(b) *For mortal sins which have been forgiven*, and venial sin not completely atoned for, *temporal punishment.*

4. *The sacrament of Penance*, worthily received, *always takes away* all eternal punishment; but does *not always take away* all temporal punishment.

WHY does GOD REQUIRE TEMPORAL PUNISHMENT for sin?

God requires temporal punishment for sin to *satisfy His justice*, to *teach us the great evil of sin*, and to *warn us* not to sin again.

1. *Temporal punishment is due* even forgiven sins, because human contrition if often imperfect. This temporal punishment is *an atonement* made to divine sanctity and justice. After confession, *our contrition generally requires more satisfaction than the few prayers given as penance.*

"Nathan said to David: 'The Lord hath taken away thy sin, thou shalt not die; nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die'" (2 Kings 12).

2. *Temporal punishment*, as the word implies, *lasts for only a time.* It has a definite end. Holy Scripture furnishes us many examples of temporal punishment having been imposed by God.

Mary, the sister of Moses, was pardoned the sin she committed by murmuring against her brother. Nevertheless, *God inflicted on her the temporal penalty of leprosy*, and of seven days' separation from the people (Num. 12:9-15).

3. *We pay the debt* of our temporal punishment *either in this life or in purgatory.*

THE CHIEF MEANS OF SATISFYING the debt of our temporal punishment, besides the penance imposed after confession are:

- (1) Attending Mass, (2) prayer, (3) fasting,
- (4) alms-giving, (5) the works of mercy,
- (6) the patient endurance of sufferings, and
- (7) indulgences.

"Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, I give one-half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold'" (Luke 19:8-9).

We should do *voluntary works* of charity and mortification, in atonement; we should, besides, bear patiently all ills sent by God.

The penance we perform, and the sufferings we bear patiently, not only reduce the temporal punishment due our sins, but also contribute to the increase of our eternal happiness. This is what we call *gaining merits* for heaven.



1

1. Before a man is ordained priest and permitted to hear confessions, he must go through a long period of careful study and preparation. The present rule is to have a four-year preparatory course after the intermediate course, three or at least two years of Philosophy, and four years of Theology, Canon Law, Ecclesiastical History, and Sacred Scripture. This long and detailed preparation would usually not attract a low class of men.



2

2. After one is ordained priest, he is continually reminded of his duties not only by his superiors, but by his daily meditation and prayer. Every priest is obliged to say the Breviary every day. These spiritual duties bring down the grace of God on the priest, and serve to strengthen him to be faithful to his sacred duties, one of the most important being to keep the seal of the confession, the sacramental secret.

155. The Seal of Confession

What is the "SEAL OF CONFESSION"?

It is *the most solemn obligation of a priest to keep secret what has been revealed to him in confession.*

1. *The priest may not break this seal of confession even to save his own life, or to avert a great calamity.* He must act as if he had not heard anything in confession. This is why a sense of shame or fear of telling our sins should never lead us to conceal mortal sins in confession.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century, Wenceslaus, King of Bohemia, ordered St. John Nepomucene to be drowned in the river Moldau. The king had tried to make the Saint reveal to him what the queen had said in confession, and the saint had firmly refused, in spite of inducements and threats. Hundreds of years after, during

the process of canonization, the saint's tongue was found *incorrupt*, and looked like a living tongue.

2. *The seal of confession* must be observed even in a court of justice, for the divine law is higher than human law.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, a Jesuit priest of New York, Father Kohlman, was called into court to testify. A couple were on trial for having received stolen goods. Father Kohlman was supposed to have knowledge of the matter through the confessional, for he had restored the stolen goods to the rightful owner. At court, the priest refused to testify, and was thereupon tried for contempt of court. However, he was not punished, and soon after a New York law was passed exempting priests from revealing in court any knowledge obtained in confession. Such a law, nevertheless, is far from universal, and the position of a priest who refuses to reveal confessional matter in a court of law is not secure.

Would it be A SIN FOR A PRIEST TO DIVULGE what he knew through someone's confession?

Yes, *it would be a mortal sin for a priest to divulge even a venial sin* which he knew through confession.

1. *The penalty for violating the seal of confession* is excommunication reserved to the Pope, besides severe ecclesiastical penalties. From time to time *we hear of priests who apostatize*, but *never has anyone fallen* so low as to break the seal of confession.

This incident happened in France during medieval times. The chaplain of a castle one night heard a knock at his door, and opening it saw a man, who said that he wished to go to confession. The chaplain heard the confession during which the man revealed that that same night he was to lead an assault against the castle, having been chosen to execute a plot. The chaplain tried to dissuade him, but in vain. Absolution having been denied him, the man departed.

The chaplain passed the night in an agony of dread. However, he remained at the castle, and told no one of what he had heard in the confessional, but prepared himself for death. At dawn he heard a knock, and admitted the man of the night before. The man said: "I wished to be convinced that priests really observe the seal of the confessional, for I am a great sinner. All night I watched to see whether you would inform others, or leave the castle to save yourself. Now I no longer doubt the secrecy of the confessional, and I want to confess all my wicked deeds."

2. *The penitent*, however, *may give the priest permission to make use of* what he has revealed in confession. In that case the priest may do so, although *he is advised to be most careful*, in order to prevent unjust accusation concerning the secrecy of the confessional.

Enemies of the Church have constantly tried to attack the seal of confession, to break this rule of the Church. So far, by the grace of God Who watches over His Church, these enemies have failed.

ARE PENITENTS BOUND by the seal of confession?

Penitents are in no way bound by the seal of confession; *but they are advised to refrain from talking* about what the priest tells them in the confessional.

1. *Penitents* should *avoid speaking* about the advice given, the penance, etc.

One reason for this is that if we misunderstand or misrepresent what the priest told us, *he has no*

way of defending himself. Besides, each penitent is *different from the others*. Advice or penance given to one may not be good for another.

2. *If we overhear something being told in the confessional, we are strictly bound to secrecy*.

ARE WE FREE to choose our confessor?

Yes, we are absolutely free to choose the confessor we like.

1. *It is advisable* to have a *regular confessor*. In this way he becomes well acquainted with our character and state of conscience, thus enabled to direct us better.

A confessor is like a physician. If a sick man consults a different physician every week and follows the directions of none, he cannot expect much improvement in health. Similarly, a penitent who moves from one confessor to another can hardly get the advice he needs.

2. *We should choose a skilled confessor*, and *follow his directions* faithfully. However, for the peace of our conscience, we should not hesitate to change confessors.

If we change confessors, we should never without necessity mention to the new one what our old confessors advised us. It might work an injustice to the previous confessor, who cannot defend himself.

3. *Some, out of a false sense of shame* before their *ordinary confessor*, are tempted to conceal a mortal sin. If they cannot overcome such shame, they *should go and confess to another priest*.

One should also remember that the priest, who represents Christ Himself, is bound by the seal of confession never to reveal anything told him in the confessional.

4. *Those who are ashamed to confess to any priest must remember that one day they will have their sins revealed*, to their eternal confusion, before all mankind. "I will show your nakedness to the nations, to the kingdoms your shame" (Nahum 3:5). Is it not better to reveal our sins now to only one man, who need not know the penitent, and is furthermore bound by the sacramental secret? *Is it not better to confess them now to the priest, than burn in hell for all eternity?*

God Himself said, "There will be joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, more than over ninety-nine just who have no need of repentance" (Luke 15:7).



During the time of the great persecutions, the confessors and martyrs remained constant and were cost into prison. Many were put to death. Others denied their faith to escape persecution; on these the Church imposed severe penances. However, if the

confessors and martyrs interceded in behalf of the apostates, their time was shortened by the bishop. In other words, an "indulgence" was granted to them by the proper authority, in view of the superabundant merits of those who interceded for them.

156. Indulgences

What is AN INDULGENCE?

An indulgence *is the remission granted by the Church of the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven.*

1. *Our Lord* gave the Apostles and their successors the power to *deliver* men from every obstacle that might separate them from heaven. Thus *He said to St. Peter: "And whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"* (Matt. 16:19).

An indulgence does not take away sin. Neither does it take away the eternal punishment due to mortal sins. An indulgence can produce its effects in the soul only after sins are forgiven and, in the case of mortal sins, only after their eternal punishment is taken away. Many who are not Catholic wrongly understand an indulgence to be a permission to commit sin, or a pardon for future sin, or a

guarantee against temptation. By an indulgence the Church *merely wipes out or lessens the temporal punishment* due to sins already forgiven.

2. *Since Christ gave the Apostles the power and right to forgive sins*, free men from hell, and lead them to heaven, *He certainly also gave them the lesser power to free sinners from the temporal punishment* due to sin, and save them from purgatory.

A civil ruler who has the right to pardon criminals is empowered to choose in *what manner* he will grant the pardon.

3. *An indulgence is not a permission or license to sin. One who is not in the state of grace cannot gain an indulgence.* It is simply a forgiveness or release from temporal punishment.

HOW does the Church BY MEANS OF INDULGENCES remit the temporal punishment due to sin?

The Church by means of indulgences remits the temporal punishment due to sin *by applying to us* from her spiritual treasury *part of the infinite satisfaction of Jesus Christ* and of the superabundant satisfaction of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the saints.

1. *In the Church there is a SPIRITUAL TREASURY* made up of the superabundant merits of Our Lord, the Blessed Mother, and the saints. *The merits of the passion and death of Our Lord are infinite, for He is God.* All these He left to His Church.

2. *When the Church grants an indulgence,* it does *not really cancel any expiation* due to God. It *only supplies for our deficiencies by drawing on the spiritual treasury of the Church,* exercising the power of the keys given by Christ.

A mother had many sons and daughters. Some of them acquired great riches; before dying, they bequeathed their possessions to their mother, to be used as she pleased. She also had younger children who needed support and education. Once in a while, therefore, she withdrew money from the bank, where she had deposited the riches left her, and used it for her other children.

3. *Divine justice* requires an *exact reparation* for all sins we have committed. Usually the small penance of a few prayers imposed by the confessor is not sufficient to make satisfaction for our sins, which have outraged the holiness of God.

Besides, *we are often careless, and have only imperfect contrition for our sins.* Therefore, even after our sins are forgiven, there *usually remains some temporal punishment* which we have to suffer either here or in purgatory. *If we make use of indulgences,* we draw upon the spiritual treasury of the Church, and thus *balance our account* with God.

THE CHURCH ALWAYS EXERCISED its right to grant indulgences to the faithful:

The practice of granting indulgences has evolved in the course of history. The present discipline *has developed from the early practice of granting a shortening of the public penance* imposed on certain sinners.

1. *During the time of the great persecutions, the confessors and martyrs remained constant* and were cast into prison, and many were put to death. *Others denied their faith* to escape persecution; on these the Church imposed severe penances.

However, *if the confessors and martyrs interceded in behalf of the apostates,* their time of penance was shortened by the bishop. In other words, an "*indulgence*" was granted to them by the proper authority, in view of the superabundant merits of those who interceded for them.

2. *As the centuries passed, the Church moderated its severe penances.* There was danger that, if penances continued to be very severe, many would be unable to fulfill them. *In order, therefore, to save as many souls as possible, the Church made the penances lighter.* Public penances ceased to be imposed; the penitent was permitted to make atonement by means of alms-deeds, crusades, or pilgrimages.

Hence the wider use of indulgences came about; and they were granted for works comparatively easy of accomplishment.

3. More and more *indulgences* came to be granted, as today they are granted, for reciting certain prayers, for visiting certain holy places, for fasting and almsgiving, for using certain sacred objects.

Thus, when the Holy Land came into the power of the Turks, and pilgrimages could no longer be made to Jerusalem, Pope Boniface VIII granted a plenary indulgence to all who, during the year 1300, should for 15 successive days visit the basilica of the Apostles in Rome. This was the origin of the *jubilee indulgence.*

What are SOME OF THE ADVANTAGES of indulgences?

1. *They cancel or lessen our temporal punishment.*

Thus those who neglect the practice of gaining indulgences may be likened to a traveler who prefers a long and difficult road although a short and pleasant one is offered to him.

2. *They console us in our fear of God's judgment* for our past sins, and give us hope for the future.

When we sin, they encourage us to make our peace with God, for *a state of grace is necessary* before we can gain any indulgence.

3. *They encourage us to go frequently to the sacraments,* and to do good works.

They enable us to practice charity towards the holy souls in purgatory.



In the early Church, the canonical penances were severe. Grave sins, such as apostasy, were punished with a penance of seven years. During all this time the penitent was excluded from the company of the faithful. He knelt at the entrance of the church, asking for the prayers of those that entered. He

heard only the first part of the Mass, and was not permitted to receive Holy Communion. On fixed days during the period of his penance, he was obliged to fast on bread and water. But if those faithful interceded, the penitent was granted an indulgence; his penance was shortened.

157. Grant of Indulgences

What is a PLENARY INDULGENCE?

A plenary indulgence is the remission of all the temporal punishment due to our sins. It requires that one be actually free from all sin, even venial sin.

1. *One who dies immediately* after gaining a plenary indulgence goes *straight to heaven*, without having to pass through purgatory.

The good thief was granted by Our Lord a plenary indulgence, because of his perfect contrition of heart. To the other thief he said that they were receiving what their deeds deserved. "And he said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in paradise'" (Luke 23:42-43).

2. *If we should be unable to gain a plenary indulgence fully*, by failure to fulfill all conditions exactly, we shall nevertheless gain the indulgence *partially* according to our dispositions.

Unless otherwise expressly stated, a plenary indulgence can be gained only *once a day*, even if the prescribed work be performed a number of times.

What are the "USUAL CONDITIONS" ordinarily prescribed for gaining a plenary indulgence?

The "usual conditions" ordinarily prescribed for gaining a plenary indulgence are (1) "confession," (2) "Communion," (3) "a visit to a church" or "public chapel," and (4) "prayer for the intentions of the Pope."

1. The "*confession*" required can be made *within the eight days* immediately preceding the day to which the indulgence is appointed. The "*Communion*" may take place on the previous day. *Both conditions, "confession" and "Communion," may be satisfied on the day itself or within the following eight days.*

Any number of indulgences may be gained by the application of the same "confession" or "Communion," provided the other works prescribed are accomplished severally.

2. *Persons who* are accustomed to go to confession at least *twice a month* can gain all indulgences, even without the actual confession prescribed. *Daily communicants* have the same privilege, even if Communion may by chance not be received once or twice during the week.

3. *The condition of "visiting a church" or "public chapel" is fulfilled by entering the church or chapel with the intention of honoring God Himself or His saints and reciting the prescribed prayers.*

The visit may be made *from noon of the previous day up to midnight of the day appointed.* Religious and those communities living like religious with their boarding-school students and personnel may make the visit in the chapel of the institution.

4. The "*intentions of the Pope*" usually refer to the welfare of the Church and religion. Unless otherwise stated, they include: (a) the *exaltation of the Church*; (b) the *uprooting of heresies*; (c) *peace among Christian nations* (d) the *propagation of the faith*; and (e) *conversion of sinners.*

The requirement of "*prayer for the intentions of the Pope*" must be vocal, not mental, prayer. It is readily fulfilled by saying, in addition to the other works prescribed, *one Our Father, one Hail Mary, and one Glory be to the Father.*

What is a PARTIAL INDULGENCE?

A partial indulgence is *the remission of part of the temporal punishment* due to our sins.

1. *A partial indulgence is reckoned,* like the public penitential discipline of old, in *days and years.* These periods of time must not be taken to mean a certain length of time in purgatory. *They only mean that as much temporal punishment is remitted which, in God's sight, would have been remitted in the early Church by a canonical penance of so many days or years.*

For instance, *when an indulgence of 300 days is granted,* it does not mean to free a soul from 300 days' suffering in purgatory. It merely indicates that as much temporal punishment may be remitted as would have been remitted in the early Church *by a canonical penance of 300 days.*

2. *As no one knows* how much the penances of old *satisfied God's justice,* so we *cannot now know* how much temporal punishment is remitted by the corresponding partial indulgence.

WHAT MUST WE DO TO GAIN an indulgence?

To gain an indulgence *we must "be in the state of grace," have at least a general intention of gaining the indulgence," and "perform the works"* required by the Church.

1. *To gain an indulgence* a person must "be baptized," and "in the *state of grace*" at least at the end of the prescribed works.

2. We must "*have the intention,*" at least in a general way, of gaining the indulgence. *We do not gain an indulgence by accident,* without wishing to gain one.

It is well in our morning prayers to make a *general intention to gain all the indulgences possible* during the day. It is not necessary to express the intention each time an indulgence is to be gained.

3. We must *perform the works* required by the Church. *We must comply exactly with the particular conditions* required, according to the prescribed *time, place, and manner.*

When vocal prayers are prescribed as a condition, the words must be pronounced *with the lips,* and not merely read or said mentally. However, indulgences attached to invocations or ejaculations can be gained by reciting them merely mentally.

Who has power to grant indulgences?

The *Pope alone* has the power to grant "*plenary indulgences*" as well as "*indulgences for the whole Church applicable to the living and in suffrage for the dead; archbishops and bishops* can grant "*partial indulgences*" for the living *only in their own dioceses.*

Bishops and priests with special faculties *from the Pope* may attach indulgences to objects they bless. These objects thus blessed are *as if they had been blessed by the Holy Father himself.*



WAY OF THE CROSS



THE ANGELUS

The Way of the Cross and the Angelus are two

common and profitable prayers richly indulgenced.

158. Indulgenced Prayers and Objects

What is the RACCOLTA?

The Raccolta or "Manual of Indulgences" is *the authentic collection of prayers and devotional practices* in English which have been *indulgenced by the Sovereign Pontiff*.

1. Each prayer or practice is numbered. Reference to the Manual found at the end of indulgenced prayers and devotions is indicated by the abbreviation "Rac." and the number of the prayer or devotional practice: e.g., *Rac. 679*. There are nearly eight hundred prayers and practices listed.

2. The name of the official edition of the Raccolta in Latin is "*Enchiridion Indulgentiarum Preces et Pia Opera*." This is why in some devotional books the indulgenced prayers are indicated by "Enchiridion" or "*Ench. 679*," instead of "Raccolta" or "Rac. 679."

3. The Raccolta is indeed a *precious prayer book* and no Catholic home should be without a copy. Published by Benzinger Brothers, New York, N.Y., it can be purchased at any Catholic book store.

Why does the Church grant indulgences?

The Church grants indulgences *acting*

towards us *as a loving mother* with her children. She knows that in spite of our good will, we often fail in our good resolutions. With the grace of God we may not be committing numerous grievous sins, but *daily we contract more debts with God* through our negligences, our countless venial sins and imperfections. *The gaining of indulgences will enable us to pay off*, at least, part of our debts with God, and shorten our purgatory.

Moreover, the *Sacrifice of the Mass with Holy Communion* is the greatest source of our spiritual life. Mother Church, by inciting us to gain many and valuable indulgences—treasure for our future life, *leads us* to their attendance, putting as condition of gaining the indulgences, that of "*confession*" and "*Communion*." It would be a *great mistake to believe* that such devotions as "the Stations of the Cross," "recitation of the Rosary and litanies," "attending Novena prayers and benedictions," are *more efficacious and meritorious* than the offering of *Mass* and receiving *Holy Communion*.

PLENARY and PARTIAL INDULGENCES

may be granted (1), with no limitation as to the number of times we may gain them: (2), once a day; and (3), on specific days of the Ecclesiastical Year.

1. *Indulgences* that are granted *with no limitation* as to the number of times they may be gained are called "*toties quoties*"—as often as you recite the prayer or do the practice.

Nearly all partial indulgences are gained as often as we repeat the prescribed prayers or practices. For instance, the two shortest and most beautiful ejaculations: *Jesus! Mary!* By pronouncing with devotion either one of them we may gain 300 days of indulgence every time we do it (Rac. 113, 292). There are, however, a few plenary indulgences that may be gained "*toties quoties*"—as often as you do it. The pious practice of the Stations of the Cross, the visitation of a church on All Souls' Day, are samples of plenary indulgences that can be gained "*toties quoties*."

2. *Indulgences* that can be gained *only once a day* are mostly Plenary indulgences with the four "usual conditions," specially that of "confession" and "Communion." Sample of such an indulgence is the "Prayer before a Crucifix" said after receiving Holy Communion (See page 421).

3. *Indulgences granted on specific days*, as on the First Fridays of the month, on August 2nd and the Portiuncula Indulgence, and the "Jubilee Indulgences" once every 25 or 50 years.

EXAMPLE FOR GAINING the Plenary Indulgence of the Stations of the Cross.

This practice is given a *Plenary indulgence as often as it is performed* without the "usual conditions," especially of that of "confession" and "Communion." It can be performed as often as we wish. *If Holy Communion is received on the day itself* we make the Stations, we gain an *extra plenary indulgence*.

To gain the indulgences of the Stations of the Cross, it is not necessary to say any vocal prayers. One must go from station to station meditating with a contrite heart on the sufferings of Christ. For example, as we give a glance to the stations representing the falling of Jesus under the weight of the cross, we think that He was suffering because of our repeated sins. It does not matter if we spend *only a few minutes* or half an hour to make the rounds of the stations; it is sufficient to meditate on the Passion and Death of our Lord, to gain the indulgences.

There are very many plenary indulgences that can be gained on specific days of the year, or by the recitation of certain prayers for a week, or a month, under the "usual conditions." They can be found in the *Raccolta* or in approved prayer books. Most partial indulgences for prayers are made plenary if such prayers are recited daily for a month, on the "usual conditions."

WHAT OBJECTS are commonly indulgenced?

Indulgences may be attached to *crucifixes, medals, rosaries, statues*, and similar objects, provided they are not made of very fragile material.

1. The object must be *blessed* by the Pope, or by a bishop or priest possessing the powers. *The indulgence is lost if the object is more than half destroyed, or if it is sold*, but not if the object is lent or given away.

2. *More than one* indulgence may be attached to the same rosary or crucifix. However, one and the same prayer will not avail to gain all the indulgences attached to any one object, unless expressly declared.

A rosary beads may have the following indulgences attached to it:

a) The "*Crozier*" blessing which grants an indulgence of five hundred days for each *Our Father* and *Hail Mary* that we say on the beads, even though we say only a few *Hail Marys* on it, instead of the whole rosary.

b) The "*Dominican*" blessing which enables us to gain another one hundred days on each bead.

c) The "*Apostolic Indulgences*" which are given also to crucifixes. One who is dying and has such a rosary or crucifix, and tried his best to confess and receive Communion, and if this was not possible, is sorry for his sins and with a contrite heart invokes the *name of Jesus*, may gain a plenary indulgence at the hour of death.

Can we gain indulgences FOR OTHERS?

We cannot gain indulgences for other living persons, but we can gain them for the souls in purgatory, since the Church makes most indulgences applicable to them.

1. An indulgence for the living means for the person who performs the good work. We cannot gain an indulgence for another living person.

2. The Church can grant indulgences for the dead, as an *offering to God* by way of suffrage, as an intercessory prayer for the departed souls. As we cannot know how much temporal punishment is remitted by any indulgence, still less can we know what value the indulgences we gain have, when applied to the *souls in purgatory*.

It is wrong, for instance, to say that we have freed a particular soul from purgatory by the recital of a certain prayer with a plenary indulgence. The efficacy of such indulgences depends on God's response to the intercession offered. But can we doubt that He will listen to the entreaty of His Church, with the infinite treasury of merits that He Himself has made available?



CONFESSION

By this holy anointing and His most loving mercy, may the Lord forgive you whatever wrong you have done by the use of your sight, hearing - - - -



HOLY VIATICUM



ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Thousands die every year without the benefit of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. We should

see to it that the very sick receive the Anointing of the Sick, to help them face their journey.

159. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

What is Anointing of the Sick?

Anointing of the Sick is *the sacrament which, through the anointing with blessed oil by the priest, and through his prayer, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age.*

This sacrament is called "ANOINTING OF THE SICK" because it is the sacrament of the sick. It is also called *Extreme Unction* (*extreme* = *last*; *unction* = *anointing*) not because it heralds death, but because the "anointing" of this sacrament is ordinarily "the last of the four anointings" we can receive at Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Orders and at last "Extreme Unction."

1. It was to *cure the sick and console the afflicted that Our Lord worked many of His miracles.* The Gospels give us vivid pictures of Him as *He went about doing*

good, preaching and "healing every disease and every sickness among the people" (Matt. 4:23).

"Now when the sun was setting, *all who had sick with various diseases brought them to him. And he laid his hands upon each of them and cured them*" (Luke 4:40). So today, *Christ comes to us in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, and, if it be for the good of our soul, cures us of our sickness, saying to us, as He did to so many long ago, "Arise, be thou made whole."*

2. *When Our Lord first sent out the Apostles, they "cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many sick people, and healed them"* (Mark 6:13).

These words from Holy Scripture foreshadow the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Then, before His Ascension, Our Lord promised His disciples *certain wonderful signs* that should accompany and follow them that believed in Him: *In My Name they shall cast out devils; . . . they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.*"

3. *It is a certainty* that the *Apostles* conferred *Anointing of the Sick*, as directly recommended and promulgated for the use of the faithful in the Epistle of St. James.

"Is any one among you sick? Let him bring in the *presbyters* of the Church, and *let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord.* And the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and *if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him"* (James 5:14-15).

4. The *outward sign* is the *anointing with blessed "oil"* (the *matter*), at the same time that the *"words"* (the *form*) are pronounced: *"By this holy anointing and His most loving mercy, may the Lord forgive you whatever wrong you have done by the use of your sight — hearing — smell — taste and speech — touch — power to walk.*

(a) The oil used is called *"Oil of the Sick."* It is the first of the three Holy Oils blessed by the bishop in the cathedral church on Holy Thursday morning. The other two are: *"Holy Chrism"* and *"Oil of the Catechumens"* used in Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. The *"Oil of the Sick"* is pure *olive oil.* As "water" in Baptism symbolizes "washing," in Anointing of the Sick "oil" does "healing."

(b) *The priest anoints* with blessed oil in the *form of a cross* the five sense organs: *eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands and feet.* The *anointing of the feet* or of any other organ may be omitted, if there is any special reason.

(c) *In case of urgent necessity,* the anointing is made *on the forehead alone,* using the short form.

5. *Only a priest* can administer the Anointing of the Sick, ordinarily the parish priest.

WHO should receive the Anointing of the Sick?

All Catholics who have reached the use of reason and *are in danger of death from sickness, accident, or old age,* should receive Anointing of the Sick or Extreme Unction.

1. *As the primary purpose of the sacrament is to "restore" the soul* weakened by sin and temptation, those who have never been capable of sinning cannot receive it. Hence *idiots and children* under the age of reason *cannot receive the Anointing of the Sick.*

As the danger of death must arise from within, soldiers going to battle, prisoners about to be executed, passengers on a ship about to sink, etc., cannot receive the sacrament. However, a soldier, if wounded in battle, can receive Holy Anointing.

2. The sacrament is ordinarily received *only once* in the same illness. If the person recovers, and falls sick once more, he may receive the sacrament again, even if the illness be the same disease.

The sacrament should be administered as soon as there is danger of death. Those attending sick persons should not wait till the person is actually dying before calling the priest. Generally, the restoration to health often worked by Anointing of the Sick is not produced miraculously, hence the reception of the sacrament must not be delayed.

3. *Anointing of the Sick* is a *sacrament of the living.* Hence the person *must be in the state of grace.* Before its reception, therefore, it is customary to go to *confession* unless unable to do so.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS of the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick?

1. *An increase of sanctifying grace.*

Anointing of the Sick acts spiritually, as oil does materially: it strengthens, heals, and aids the soul.

2. *Comfort in sickness and strength against temptation.*

It gives one graces to console him and strengthen him against *temptation.* He obtains resignation to God's will, fortitude to suffer, and trust in God's mercy.

3. *Preparation for entrance into heaven by the remission of our venial sins and the cleansing of our souls from the remains of sin.*

When the person does not recover, if he receives the sacrament with perfect dispositions, *part, and even the whole, of the temporal penalties* may be forgiven him.

4. *Health of the body when this is good for the soul.*

Anointing of the Sick frequently restores to health. Very often the peace of mind that follows confession, and the knowledge that Anointing of the Sick has reconciled one with God, react beneficially upon the body of a sick person and cause the restoration of his health.

5. *Takes away mortal sin when the sick person is unconscious or otherwise unaware that he is not properly disposed, but has made an act of imperfect contrition.*

An *unconscious person* may receive Anointing of the Sick. If he is guilty of mortal sin, and has attrition for it and falls unconscious before the arrival of the priest, Anointing of the sick will restore him to sanctifying grace. However, should he recover, he is bound to confess his sins thus forgiven.



A GOOD DEATH

1. A good life is usually an assurance of a happy death. One who has lived all his days in an effort to please God is not likely to turn an impenitent sinner at the last moment.



A BAD DEATH

2. A wicked life is usually a forecast of a bad death. A hardened sinner refuses the Last Sacraments. Let us all pray God to deliver us from a bad death.

160. The Last Sacraments

What are the LAST SACRAMENTS?

They are the sacraments administered to a person dangerously ill, and include "Confession," "Holy Communion" called "Viaticum," "Anointing of the Sick," and, if not received before, "Confirmation."

(a) "Holy Communion" when given in danger of death is called "Viaticum," a Latin word which means "something for the journey" like a traveling companion. When the priest administers Communion as "Viaticum," he says: "Receive, my brother (sister), *this food for your journey*, the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that He may guard you from the malicious enemy and *lead you into everlasting life.*"

(b) *It is the wish of the Church that all her children, regardless of their age (babies as well as adults), may receive the sacrament of Confirmation when they are in danger of death, if they have not received it before. If a bishop is not available to administer Confirmation (he seldom would be), the Church grants this faculty to the*

parish priest of the patient or to the one in whose territory the patient is dwelling. Some chaplains of hospitals have this faculty.

(c) It is likely that *the priest*, before taking leave of the patient, *will give* "The *Apostolic Blessing*," called Papal, because given in the *name of the Pope* for the hour of death, by which the patient may gain a plenary indulgence.

1. *The sick person first makes his "confession," then receives the "Holy Eucharist" in the Viaticum, and finally is given "Anointing of the Sick."*

2. It is advisable to call the priest to *visit the sick* in any serious illness, even though there be no apparent danger of death. It is the priest's duty to visit the sick and administer the sacraments they need.

"My son, when you are ill, delay not, but pray to God, who will heal you" (Sirach 38:9).

3. **When a person is dangerously sick**, we should **call the priest** to administer the Last Sacraments to him. **It is very wrong to delay** calling the priest till the person is already on the point of death. **While his mind is clear**, he can prepare for the Last Sacraments better, profit more from them.

When Anointing of the Sick is given while the person is still strong, there is more likelihood of his recovering. **We have a serious obligation**, if we are taking care of a sick person, **to call the priest** the moment there is danger of death. To delay to call him is **a great mistake**, for actual observation has proved that a sick person is always more calm and peaceful after the visit of the priest. **Except in cases of emergency**, the **pastor of the parish** to which the sick person belongs, or the pastor's curates or assistants, should be called to administer the Last Sacraments.

4. **We can help a sick person by nursing and consoling him.** Every day we should make with him and for him **acts of faith, hope, and charity.** Above all, we should help him feel absolute resignation to God's will.

How should we HELP A SICK person prepare for the Last Sacraments?

We should help a sick person prepare for the Last Sacraments **both spiritually and corporally.**

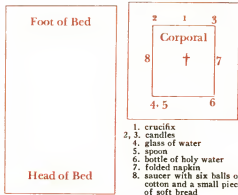
1. **Before the priest arrives** we should help the patient **get ready** for his Confession.

2. The patient's face, hands, and feet should be **sponged** with a wet towel.

There should be ready towards the foot of the bed, to the right, a table with a clean white cloth. On it should be a crucifix, two lighted candles, some holy water, and a glass of fresh water with a tablespoon. There should also be a clean napkin, a saucer with six balls of cotton, and a piece of soft bread, or one or two slices of lemon for the hands of the priest, for wiping off the anointing. A basin of water and a towel should be near by, so the priest can wash his hands after the anointing.

The following is a diagram showing the placing:

Small Table



3. **Upon the priest's arrival, if he is carrying the Blessed Sacrament**, we should meet him with a lighted blessed candle, **in silence.**

There are available in all Catholic book stores prayer books with instructions and **the prayers for assisting the priest** while administering the Last Sacraments.

HOW can we help a dying person?

We can help a dying person **with prayer.**

1. We should kneel near the patient's bed and recite the **prayers for the dying**, which may be found in most prayer-books. **We should suggest to him short ejaculations that he can easily repeat, at least in his mind.**

It is a mistake to try to help a dangerously sick person by **conversing on worldly topics** or retailing gossip, or **holding out false hopes of recovery.**

2. The following prayer is **enriched** with a plenary indulgence **at the hour of death:** "**O my God, I now at this moment readily and willingly accept whatever kind of death You may wish to send me, with all its pains, penalties, sorrows.**"

A person in good health, who recites this prayer in the state of grace, after confession and communion, **may gain a plenary indulgence to take effect at the hour of death.**

3. **During the agony**, we should sprinkle the bed and the dying person with holy water. Those around should pray, instead of fussing, or showing too extreme grief.

The first thing which we can offer immediately to God in relief of the soul of a loved one is **an act of resignation** to His holy will. Let us humbly say, "**Lord, Your will be done!**" In those places where the beautiful custom is practiced, the "passing bell" should be ordered rung, in order that other Christians may pray for the departed soul.

IN CASE of sudden or UNEXPECTED DEATH, should a priest be called?

In case of sudden or unexpected death, **a priest should be called always**, because absolution and Anointing of the Sick **can be given conditionally** for some time after apparent death.

If a person is apparently dead and has not received the Last Sacraments, we should immediately call the priest. **A person may continue to live two or three hours after death has apparently taken place**, especially if it is sudden. In that case Anointing of the Sick will avail his soul.



1. The ceremonies for burial include services in the church. They vary from the very elaborate to the simplest. Holy water and lighted tapers express our desire to see the departed cleansed and admitted into the kingdom of light. Incense symbolizes our wish to have prayers ascend to God.



2. The body of the departed Catholic is borne in procession to the cemetery. At a funeral it is wrong to laugh or converse; we should pray for the repose of the departed. The small cord announces the best offering one can make to a bereaved family: Holy Masses for the soul departed.

R.I.P.
With sincere condolences
Mr. Joseph Murphy
offers ten Masses
for the eternal repose
of the soul of
Mr. Robert Jones.

161. Christian Burial

How should the BODY OF A DEAD person be prepared for burial?

For burial, the body of a dead person should be washed, dressed modestly, and laid out neatly.

1. Lay out the body in a dignified and becoming manner, but leave out all worldly vanity. Remember that *that body* is sacred; it was the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Many a Catholic in his last will requests his relatives and friends to abstain from extravagant expenses for his burial. He begs them to offer masses for the suffrage of his soul and be generous towards charitable institutions.

2. After the body is washed and clothed, place a crucifix between the folded hands on the breast. Set one or two lighted candles at each side of the coffin. The room should be as quiet as possible, in order that friends who can call may be able to pray.

It is well to ponder on the truth, as we look at a dead face without cosmetics, that we too will some day have to arrive at our journey's end, and stand before the throne of God divested of all worldly decorations and masks.

How should funerals be conducted?

Funerals should be conducted with dignity and devotion; they should not be extravagant and beyond the family means.

1. *Some* have the tendency to have **pompous funerals** for dead members of their families, asserting that it is *the last thing they can give for their dead*. This feeling is understandable; but it certainly **shows a lack of proportion** if this generous feeling results in the payment of large amounts of money for expensive caskets and grand funeral coaches, *while the offering of prayers and especially of Masses is neglected*.

If a family has means, suitable offerings should be given to the priest who attended the deceased during his illness, and adequate fees paid for the funeral services. Donations should be made to the Church and alms given to the poor, for the repose of the soul of the deceased; *charity and Masses will avail the dead person's soul more than gold caskets and truckloads of wreaths*.

2. *There are very solemn services* accompanied by many ceremonies. *There are also very simple services. God will hear the prayers* during the simple as during the elaborate ceremonies, *according to the devotion of those who pray*.

The body should be taken to the church for the blessing, and if possible should be present at a Requiem Mass. The ceremonial of the Church for funerals is touching and significant, and rightly understood will benefit the living as well as the dead. It is not an empty show designed to glorify the dead and express sympathy to the living; it is a devotion calculated to help the departed soul attain its eternal reward, as well as to teach salutary lessons to those left behind.

3. *Those who accompany a funeral to the cemetery should observe great recollection, and a serious demeanor*. The playing of "jazz" pieces by a band during the funeral is to be condemned.

Unfortunately some people follow funerals as if they were in a worldly function, talking aloud and gossiping. A salutary thought would be to reflect that they might be the next to go that way to the cemetery.

4. *Catholics* should be buried in a *Catholic cemetery*, if there is one; *at least the grave should be blessed*. Some day the bodies will rise in glory, and be united with their souls in heaven; is it befitting their high destiny to bury them like animal carcasses in unconsecrated ground?

Over the place of burial a cross should be erected or marked. Generally, the letters *R.I.P. (Requiescat in pace: May he (she) rest in peace)* are engraved on the headstone. And here a word about graves and mausoleums. The holy St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine, said: "Bury this body wherever you

please. One thing only I ask of you, and that is, remember me at the altar of the Lord."

A simple grave, an elaborate mausoleum,—it is all the same to those departed. It is of course natural for those who can afford it to build mausoleums where all the members of the family can be buried together. What is to be avoided is the erection of ostentatious structures that appear more like gaudy showhouses than sepulchers of Christians. The cross should be prominent; the inscriptions, should be liturgical, not taken from popular songs or sentimental rhymes.

5. Non-Catholics, Freemasons, those excommunicated as deliberate suicides, duellists, and those who ordered their bodies cremated, *are denied Catholic burial*.

Let us remember: to spend money on showy mausoleums while holding the purse strings tight against charity would be contrary to right reason. Living relatives must not forget to pray, to have Masses said, to give alms to the poor, as an offering for the departed soul.

FROM WHOM should we seek consolation when someone dear to us dies?

When someone dear to us dies, *we should seek consolation from God, Who is our eternal Healer, Comforter, and Father*.

1. *Nothing on earth* can give *lasting comfort* to bereaved hearts. But *if we live our faith*, the death of a beloved one should not drive us into despair; for one who goes in God's grace, "to die is gain," *to die is to attain eternal union with God*. For the just who die, death is truly no more.

As Our Lord assures us: "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, even if he die, shall live; and whoever lives and believes in me, shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

2. *To the bereaved*, God in His infinite mercy extends, through our Mother Church, the *consoling assurance of Purgatory*. This knowledge bridges the chasm yawning between us and our dear departed; it makes us feel that *death has not cut the bonds of love uniting us with them*. Instead of desolation for our loss, we find surcease for sorrow, and a practical expression of our affection in prayers and good works offered to God in behalf of our beloved dead, who may still be in purgatory.

This is one reason for the necessity of understanding thoroughly the doctrine of purgatory (see pages 156-159). As St. Paul said, "*We would not, brethren, have you ignorant concerning those who are asleep, lest you should grieve, even as others who have no hope*" (1 Thess. 4:13).



Ordination to the priesthood takes place during the celebration of the Mass. After the deacons have prostrated themselves before the altar for the recitation of the Litany of the Saints, they individually kneel before the Bishop who imposes both hands on the head of each without saying any words. This "imposition of hands" is "the matter of the sacrament." After the imposition, the Bishop sings or recites a prayer that contains "the form of the sacrament." The words of the form, which are always recited, are: "We beseech You, Almighty Father,

invest these Your servants with the dignity of the priesthood. Renew in their hearts the spirit of holiness, that they may hold the office, next to ours in importance, which they have received from You, O Lord, and by the example of their lives point out a norm of conduct." After this, they are no more deacons, but priests. The other ceremonies, such as touching the chalice and paten, the lost imposition of hands, etc., are a liturgical dramatization of the powers conferred by the Bishop by the imposition of hands and the above form.

162. The Sacrament of Holy Orders

What is HOLY ORDERS?

Holy Orders is the sacrament through which men receive the power and grace to perform the sacred duties of bishops, priests, and deacons.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament. At the Last Supper He gave the Apostles and their successors the power to say Mass. He said, after consecrating His Body and Blood: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Thus He gave the Apostles the power to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. On the day of the Resurrection Our Lord gave the disciples power to forgive

sins. He breathed on them and said: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you.... Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (John 20:21-23).

3. Finally, before the Ascension, Christ gave His disciples the mission to preach the Gospel and dispense the sacraments.

"All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

The Apostles consecrated Paul and Barnabas bishops, *with prayer and the imposition of hands*. In the same way St. Paul ordained Timothy. When the Apostles established churches, upon their departure, *they ordained and appointed successors (bishops)* to whom they gave full powers, and other ministers (*priests and deacons*) to whom *they transmitted part of their powers*. "For this reason I admonish thee to stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the laying on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6).

What are SOME of the preliminary SIGNS of a vocation to the priesthood?

First, that a boy or young man *be capable of living habitually in the state of grace*.

Those who are called by God to be priests ordinarily receive no special revelation to this effect. God expects all to use the gifts of reason and of grace in determining their state of life.

Second, that he *be attracted to the priesthood and manifest the attraction by (a) a virtuous life, (b) a love of serving Mass, (c) frequent confession and Communion, (d) teaching catechism, (e) helping others to be good Catholics*.

An aspirant to the priesthood will avoid such worldly affairs that may be unbecoming of the holiness of his vocation. He will *not go to entertainments* that priests do not attend, as noisy and late hour dances, and shows that are not approved. He will usually go out with companions of the seminary, or members of his family. If a seminarian during vacation should indulge in *alcoholic drinks*, or should start *dating a girl*, it would be a sign that he no longer intends to become a priest. All of us wish to have good priests to take care of our souls. It should be our concern to safeguard our young future priests. *Many girls and young women*, by their virtue and good example, have been the inspiration of a number of worthy sacerdotal vocations; unfortunately some others have been the devil's instrument of vocations going on to the rocks . . . when there is such a great need of priests.

Third, that he *has a right intention to save his soul and the souls of others*; that he has *good health and sufficient ability* to succeed *in the studies* of the seminary; and that his qualifications *be accepted by the bishop*.

What are some of the requirements, that a man may receive Holy Orders worthy?

That a man may receive Holy Orders worthy, *it is necessary*:

1. That *he be in the state of grace and be of excellent character*. "Excellent char-

acter" implies *good will and virtuous conduct*, as well as *good sense*.

Good sense is needed if a priest is to do good to souls. The delicate functions exercised by a priest, especially as a judge of souls, *would exclude from priesthood a person of an unbalanced disposition, or one who is wanting in prudence*.

2. That *he have the prescribed age and learning*. To be ordained a priest, one must have completed his twenty-fourth year of age. The *prescribed learning* for the priesthood ordinarily consists of *four years of college after high school, and four years of theology* completed in a seminary.

A man must have a *good mind* in order to make successfully the studies for the priesthood. Besides, here in our country as elsewhere, the priest is almost always compelled to defend the doctrines of the Church from attacks of its enemies.

3. That *he have the intention of devoting his life to the sacred ministry*. This includes *willingness* to bear whatever burdens and difficulties Holy Orders may bring, for the love of God. It *presupposes sincerity in the intention* to devote his entire life.

No one should enter the priesthood because his parents have forced it on him. On the other hand, *no one should abandon a desire to become a priest just because other people oppose it*. *One must enter the priesthood of his own free will*, because he loves God and believes it is the best way to save his own soul, and other souls for Christ. *It would be very wrong to become a priest just to assure oneself of a living*.

4. That *he be called to Holy Orders by his bishop*. *The bishop must be satisfied that the applicant* has the virtue and the physical as well as mental fitness required and that he is free from all canonical irregularity. In general *if a young man has good will, good health, a good mind, good sense, and a sincere desire* to dedicate himself to the service of God, *he has the qualifications necessary for the priesthood*.

If the candidate's will is good, it is likely that *with the blessings of God* he will lead a useful life in His service, *as His priest*.

5. There are *parents who oppose the vocation of their sons* to the priesthood. *Such parents are responsible before Almighty God* for this opposition.

There have been cases where a boy who had a vocation to the priesthood *was prevented* from realizing his desire because of the *opposition of his parents*; later, the boy turned out badly, even living an immoral and criminal life.



As an introduction to Holy Orders, a candidate receives the tonsure. The minor orders follow: porter, lector, exorcist, and acolyte. Then come the major

orders: subdeacon, deacon, and priest. Finally, at his consecration, a bishop receives the fullness of the priesthood.

163. Minor and Major Orders

Which are the MINOR ORDERS?

The minor orders are *the lower ranks of the clergy, through which aspirants are prepared to receive the holy priesthood: porter, lector, exorcist, and acolyte.*

1. *Minor orders were instituted by the Church in the early days when men of outstanding merit performed certain offices. They are not a sacrament, but only preparatory steps to major orders.*

For the minor orders the symbols of office are handed over to the aspirant, with accompanying words constituting the form. Given to the (a) PORTER is a key, with the right to guard over the church doors; (b) LECTOR, a book with the right to read certain passages of Holy Scripture when ordered by priest or bishop; (c) EXORCIST, the book of exorcisms, with the right to exorcise evil spirits; and (d) ACOLYTE, a candlestick, with the right to carry lights and give wine and water at Holy Mass.

2. *Before minor orders, a man is constituted a member of the clerical state through*

the ceremony of *tonsure*, in which *hair is cut from his head in the form of a cross, while he recites a verse from the Psalms to signify that he is dedicating himself to the service of God.*

By the TONSURE a cleric is incardinated or assigned to the diocese to which he will belong upon his ordination. He may not change to another diocese without the consent of his bishop and the bishop of the diocese to which he wishes to transfer.

Which are the MAJOR ORDERS?

The major orders are the higher ranks of the clergy: *subdeacon, deacon, and priest.*

1. The *SUBDIACONATE* is still a *preparation* for the sacrament of Holy Orders, and is of ecclesiastical institution. A *subdeacon* is pledged to *perpetual celibacy* and the daily recitation of the Divine Office.

2. The *DIACONATE* is the first or lowest degree in the sacrament of Holy Orders. *The deacon receives sacramental grace.*

The deacon, if available, with permission from the bishop, *may preach*. He gives immediate assistance to the celebrant at *High Mass*. He may also *expose* and *repose* the *Blessed Sacrament* at Benediction, and in case of necessity, *distribute Holy Communion* and *baptize* like priests do. However, *nowadays seminarians* after being ordained *subdeacons* and *deacons*, spend in the seminary only a few months preparing themselves for their ordination to the priesthood.

3. *The priesthood* is the second or *middle degree* in the sacrament of *Holy Orders*.

By his ordination, *the priest* has the *greatest power on earth*, that of *offering* the Holy Sacrifice of the *Mass*, when he speaks Christ's words: "This is my Body . . . This is my Blood." With the approval of the bishop he may administer solemn *Baptism*, *Extreme Unction*, and upon receiving the necessary jurisdiction, he can administer the sacraments of *Penance* and *Matrimony*, and also *Confirmation* to those in danger of death from serious illness.

4. *The episcopate*, the highest degree in the sacrament, is the *fullness of the Holy Orders*, which gives the power of *administering the sacrament of Holy Orders*.

A *new bishop* is consecrated by a bishop assisted by two other bishops, called "co-consecrators." *The essence of the order of bishop* consists in the power to *ordain* priests and to *consecrate* other bishops. Abbots and some priests may be given the faculty to administer *Confirmation* and give minor orders, but only and exclusively a bishop can ordain deacons and priests and consecrate a bishop.

WHO IS THE MINISTER of the sacrament of Holy Orders?

The minister of the sacrament of Holy Orders is the *bishop*.

The sacrament is administered by means of *ceremonies* that vary with the kind of orders conferred. *It consists* in the sign of the *imposition of hands* by the bishop, together with the accompanying *words of ordination*, varying with each respective order being conferred.

THE EFFECTS of the sacrament of HOLY ORDERS are:

1. An increase of *sanctifying grace*.

One of the purposes of God for calling a man to the sacred ministry is to *have him offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*. This is a most high office, for the accomplishment of which God surely gives grace, and more grace.

2. *Sacramental grace*, by which bishops, priests, and deacons *have God's constant help* in their sacred ministry.

The duties of God's ministers are *innumerable* and difficult; they must have sacramental grace. And God, Who knows this well, certainly *furnishes all necessary graces* by the sacrament of Holy Orders.

3. *A character*, lasting forever, which is a sharing in the priesthood of Christ, and which gives special supernatural powers.

Once a man is ordained deacon, priest, consecrated bishop, he is a *deacon, a priest, a bishop forever*. The sacrament *imprints an indelible mark* in the soul; it cannot therefore be repeated.

THE NEED FOR PRIESTS

"Jesus was going about the towns and villages, preaching the gospel and curing the sick. And *seeing the crowds*, He was moved with compassion, because they were dejected *like sheep without a shepherd*. He said to His disciples: 'Indeed, *the laborers are few. Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into His harvest*'" (Matt. 10:35-37).

1. *The laborers (priests) still are few*. Christianity is not possible without priests. Chiefly because there are not enough priests, *less than a third of the world is Christian*.

Many good Catholics who know their religion cannot receive the sacraments because there is no priest to administer to them. Insufficient instruction for *lack of priests* causes others to become *indifferent*. Such traditionally *Catholic areas* as Latin America, the Philippines, and even Italy *suffer from a scarcity of priests*.

2. *In the United States* there are 825 counties, exceeding the combined areas of France, Germany and Great Britain, which *are entirely without priests*. Nearly 100 cities with 5,000 population or more *have no resident priest*. And in the missions? In vast India there is but *one priest for every 80,000 people*. In other countries there are still fewer.

3. *What can we do about it? Our Lord said*, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers." We have His assurance that He will be with us always, and that we have but "to ask and it shall be given us." So if we *lack priests the fault is ours*. We are not *praying in the right way, or not using the means God provides*, or both.

It would be false to say that young men do not become priests because of the many temptations of modern life. It would be equivalent to say that God is not fulfilling His promises. *God will send us priests if we pray with absolute confidence and cooperate with Him*. Perhaps we are not using the right methods according to our times to recruit more candidates to the priesthood. *It must be a combined effort of all of us*. Prayer, work and sacrifice. "Lord, increase our faith. Send us priests. Hear us, O Lord!"



Rubrics are rules for the proper execution of the services of the Church, for the exact conduct of any liturgical function. The rubrics of the Church are contained in the Missal, Breviary, Ritual, Pontifical, and Ceremonial. In books, rubrics are printed in red, for clearness and distinction. The chief liturgical books of the Western Rite are six:

The MISSAL contains all the prayers and ceremonies used for Mass, for each day of the year.

The BREVIARY is the priests' prayer book, containing the Divine Office without chant.

The RITUAL contains all the services needed by a priest which are not in the Missal or Breviary, such as the administration of the sacraments.

The PONTIFICAL and CEREMONIAL are the Bishops' books. They contain the rites for episcopal functions such as Pontifical Mass, Confirmation, ordinations, consecration of altars, etc.

The MARTYROLOGY is an enlarged calendar giving names and short accounts of the lives of the principal saints commemorated on each day of the year, in different parts of the Catholic world.

164. Powers and Duties of Priests

What are THE CHIEF SUPERNATURAL POWERS of the priest?

The chief supernatural powers of the priest are: to *change bread and wine* into the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and to *forgive sins* in the sacrament of Penance.

1. The *Eastern Orthodox priests* have received their orders *from validly ordained bishops*.

Therefore, even though they are not united to the Catholic Church, they have the power to say Mass. If they should return to the unity of the Church, they are not re-ordained.

The priests who apostatize, or are suspended or excommunicated *still remain priests*. They retain the power, although not the authority and jurisdiction, of priesthood. *For example, they have the power of saying a true Mass*, although they would sin grievously if they do so. However, *they cannot forgive sin, except in the case of the dying; absolution is a judicial power, and needs jurisdiction*.

2. *Unlike the Orthodox and Old-Catholic churches*, no Protestant denomination has validly ordained bishops or priests.

A number of these denominations call some of their ministers "bishops," but they are so only in name—unless some individual minister obtained valid orders from a schismatic bishop.

WHAT are the chief duties of a priest?

The chief duties of a priest, besides *living in celibacy*, and *reciting the Divine Office* daily, vary in accordance with *the position held*.

A priest is ordained for the exclusive service of God, that is, for the *salvation of souls*: his talents, his time, his very life belong to His service. St. Paul says: "*He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God*. Whereas he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided" (1 Cor. 7:32-33).

1. *The priestly vow of celibacy* is taken when a man is received into the subdiaconate. Catholic priests of the Western Rite are *not married*, in imitation of Christ Himself. *The Apostles*, after they were called to the ministry, left all they had. *Elias, Elishus, Jeremias*, and *St. John the Baptist*, lived in celibacy.

Celibacy is the glory of the Catholic Church. It is an *ecclesiastical law* and this is why the Church may and in fact does grant a dispensation, as it does with priests of some of the Catholic Eastern Rites, and in very special cases, with priests of the Western Rite.

2. *The duties of a parish priest* are many, varied, and of great responsibility.

As shepherd of his flock, he is responsible to God for the souls committed to his care. *Preaching and teaching Christian doctrine is a primary duty of his*. He must visit his parishioners in order to know them and their spiritual needs. He must find out if any new Catholics have moved into the limits of the parish, if all his parishioners have been married in Church, if the children go to a Catholic school or at least receive religious instruction and if the faithful come to Mass on Sundays and holidays. He hears confessions and is always ready for a sick call and the administration of the last sacraments. *The parish priest must promote the various parochial organizations*, like the Holy Name Society, Catholic Action, Legion of Mary, Sodalties of Our Lady, etc. *The temporal administration is also part of his duties*; he must see that the church, school, convent buildings, the cemetery if there is one, are properly cared for. One of the duties closest to his heart should be the *custody of the Most Blessed Sacrament* of the Altar.

3. *Priests who are "not parish priests"* assist pastors in their manifold duties and works, *teach in seminaries, schools and convents*. Following the instructions of their bishop, they *attend to all sorts of undertakings* that have as their end the *glory of God and the salvation of souls*.

The parishioners knowing of all the duties and responsibilities of their priests, should love them all the more, pray for them and assist them in

the performance of their difficult task. *Different sodalities and organizations should take care of the church and sacristy, of the choir, altar boys, of the poor and needy, of the sick and aged, of the unemployed. Parishes are the backbone of the Church.*

What is THE DIVINE OFFICE?

The Divine Office is *the service which all priests and certain other clerics, as well as many religious, are obliged to recite in private or chant in choir daily*. It constitutes *the official public prayer* of the Church.

1. It is contained in the *Breviary*, and includes *prayers, psalms, hymns, canticles, extracts* from Holy Scripture, *lives of saints, passages from writings* of the Church Fathers, and the most important prayers. *The 150 Psalms* of the Bible, usually recited within a week, make up the substance of the Divine Office.

Every priest is obliged to say the entire Office of the day within the 24 hours of that day. Matins may be anticipated after 2 p.m. of the previous day, but no part may be put off for another day. In prescribed and fixed order, the Breviary is usually printed in one, two, or four volumes, and adapted to the four seasons of the year.

2. *Divine Office is divided into eight parts called canonical hours*. Daily about three quarters of an hour is spent by priests, clerics and religious to say it, and also by some of the laity who laudably recite it in the vernacular.

The canonical hours are arranged in such a manner as to sanctify the different hours of the natural day. *This is why it is recommended to recite them as close as possible at their own hour*. Such is done in many monasteries and Cathedrals, an act of public homage solemnly chanted in choir.

These are the *Canonical hours*:

Matins, the longest hour, usually of nine psalms and three lessons, originally recited before dawn, and now with just reason, anticipated the evening before.

Lauds, the morning prayer.

Prime, said at the "first hour," at sunrise, 6 a.m.

Terce, said at the "third hour," at 9 a.m.

Sext, said at the "sixth hour," at noon.

None, said at the "ninth hour," at 3 p.m.

Vespers, said as the evening service.

Compline, meaning "completion," said at bedtime.

Changes in the recitation of the Divine Office have been discussed at the first session of the Ecumenical Council. The result of these discussions will be known during the second session. *What an edifying sight* it will be to see priests and people together, reciting in the spoken language the official prayers of Mother Church before the *Blessed Sacrament* at least on some occasions!



Priesthood is the highest dignity on earth. The dignity of a priest surpasses that of emperors, and even of angels. No angel can convert bread into the Body of Christ by the mere power of his word; nor can any angel forgive sin. The priest stands between

God and man. He is God's representative, God's ombassador. Therefore whatever honor we pay to the priest, we render to God Himself. St. Francis of Assisi said that if he met an angel and a priest at the same time, he should salute the priest first.

165. Dignity of Priesthood

WHY should Catholics SHOW REVERENCE and HONOR to the priest?

Catholics should show reverence and honor to the priest *because he is the representative of Christ Himself*, and the dispenser of His mysteries.

1. *The dignity of a priest* is higher than any earthly dignity, for he is the *representative of God*. He has power that the most powerful civil rulers do not possess. *The humblest priest* by his word can *call down God upon the altar* and convert bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. *He can say to the sinner, "I absolve thee," and the sinner's soul is saved from hell.* Not even the Blessed Virgin possessed the power to forgive sins, to grant absolution that erases the very guilt of sin.

2. *We owe the priest reverence due to his dignity as representative of Christ.* Even if a *priest's life* does not correspond with the requirements of his office, we should give respect; this we offer to his office.

The priest is "alter Christus"—another Christ. Our Lord calls him "a city built upon a hill," the "salt of the earth." He is in the world, but not of it. *St. Francis of Sales said of priests: "I will close my eyes to their faults, and only see in them God's representatives."*

3. *When we meet a priest, we should salute him: women and girls should bow, and men and boys should raise their hats.*

We should not gossip about the priest, even if we should notice something we do not like in him; to calumniate a priest is sacrilege. One who lays violent hands on a priest is excommunicated.



Bugia (Candlestick)

Basin and ewer



Mitre

Pallium

Stockings

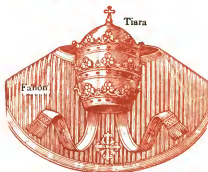
Sandals



Pectoral Cross

Crosier

Ring



Tiara

Faxon

The bugia is the candlestick a bishop uses of Mass. He uses a special basin and ewer for washing his hands of the altar. He wears a pectoral cross and uses the crosier on solemn occasions, such as when administering Confirmation. His ring, on an emethyst stone, is kissed by the faithful in sign of respect. He wears the mitre at Pontifical Masses, as well as gloves, silk stockings, and sandals to

match his vestments. The pallium is sent by the Pope to an archbishop after he has taken possession of his metropolitan see. It is worn on the shoulders.

The faxon is a shoulder cape which the Pope alone may wear. It has a gold cross embroidered in front, and is used when the Holy Father says solemn High Mass. He is the only one that is entitled to use the tiara, a triple crown surmounted by a cross.

What is the Pontifical Work FOR PRIESTLY VOCATIONS?

It was established by Pope Pius XII in 1941 under the auspices of the Roman Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities for the following purposes:

a) To intensify among the faithful, by every means, but particularly through the lay organizations in the dioceses, the desire of **promoting, safe guarding, and assisting ecclesiastical vocations**;

b) To disseminate the **right knowledge** of the **dignity and necessity of the Catholic priesthood**;

c) To unite the faithful of the whole world in communion of **prayers and pious practices for priestly vocations**.

Many **indulgences and spiritual favors** are granted to all the members of this Pontifical Work.

What are the "Serra Clubs?"

The "Serra Clubs" are organized **groups**

of **Catholic business and professional men** with two main purposes: 1) , to **foster and assist in the education of young men for the priesthood**; and 2) , to **further Catholicism** through enduring friendships among Catholic men.

These two purposes are **vital for the Church**. The Serra Clubs constitute the "**Serra International**," now formally **aggregated** to the Pontifical Work for Priestly Vocations. Catholic business and professional men who are able should become members of a Serra Club in their locality. There are more than 200 clubs in the United States. Its **name was taken from Father Junipero Serra**, the noted Spanish Franciscan missionary in the West.

How can we help TO HAVE MORE PRIESTS?

First, by prayer. Our Lord commanded us to "pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest." **Second, by joining** at least one of the various **associations of the diocese to promote priestly vocations**. **Third, by assisting** at least one young man **to become a priest**.



1. Christian marriage unites one man and one woman for life. Every couple should imitate the peace and love that reigned in the home of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph, the models of Christian spouses.



2. Christ raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament. It was at the wedding feast of Cana that He worked His first miracle, thus honoring the occasion, and proclaiming the holiness of the married state.

166. The Sacrament of Matrimony

What is THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY?

Matrimony is the sacrament *by which a baptized man and a baptized woman bind themselves for life in a lawful marriage, and receive the grace to discharge their duties.*

1. *God instituted matrimony in the Garden of Eden, when He created Adam and Eve. "For this reason a man leaves his father and mother, and clings to his wife, and the two become one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).*

Before the coming of Christ, matrimony was a sacred contract, but not a sacrament. Our Lord raised matrimony to the dignity of a sacrament.

At the marriage feast at Cana Christ worked His first miracle, thus manifesting the holiness of the married state. In the marriage contract, God has made a natural relation a means of grace for Christians. Our Lord instituted special sacraments for two states of life: the Priesthood and Matrimony; from this fact we may deduce the importance He attached to these states of life. By the sacrament of Matrimony God grants the contracting parties grace to bear the difficulties of the married state, and to sanctify their common life for God's glory and the salvation of their souls.

2. *The sacrament of matrimony consists in the mutual expression by both contracting parties of their free consent to take each other as husband and wife.*

This is the main act in the marriage ceremony. Without it, no marriage takes place. After this mutual consent is expressed, even if something should interrupt the rest of the ceremonies, the couple are validly married.

3. *The ministers* of the sacrament of matrimony *are* the contracting parties themselves, *the bridegroom and the bride*. The priest is the witness authorized by the Church to be present and bless the union.

This is because *marriage is a contract*, and *they who make the contract* therefore must perform the marriage. In Baptism, the one who baptizes, and in the other sacraments, the bishop or priest, is the minister; but in *Matrimony the bride and groom are the ministers*, one conferring the sacrament on the other.

God created Eve's body from the body of Adam. This was to show the *perfect equality and union* that should exist between husband and wife, who *by marriage* become "two in one flesh."

WHY is every TRUE MARRIAGE between a baptized man and a baptized woman A SACRAMENT?

Every true marriage between a baptized man and a baptized woman is a sacrament, *because Christ Himself has raised every marriage of this kind to the dignity of a sacrament*.

1. *A marriage* between *baptized non-Catholics*, if contracted in a valid way, *is always a sacrament*, and is so recognized by the Church. *It can be broken only by the death of one of the parties*.

The Church does not recognize the "marriage" of divorced baptized non-Catholics whose previous partners are still alive. Such unions are a sin, and not true marriage.

2. *A marriage* between two *unbaptized* persons, although not a sacrament, if contracted validly, *is recognized valid by the Church, and is indissoluble*. In the case of a marriage between two unbaptized persons, if one were later baptized in the Church, the marriage can be dissolved by the "Pauline privilege."

The conditions are: if the unbaptized party refuses to live with the Catholic, or to dwell peacefully with the Catholic, the baptized one may have the marriage dissolved and be free to marry a Christian. *This power of the Church is based on St. Paul:* "If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she consents to live with him, let him not put her away. And if any woman has an unbelieving husband and he consents to live with her, let her not put away her husband. . . . *But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart. For a brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases*" (1 Cor. 7:12-15).

WHAT IS NECESSARY to receive the sacrament of Matrimony worthily?

To receive the sacrament of Matrimony worthily, it is necessary (a) *to be in the state of grace*, (b) *to know the duties of married life*, and (c) *to obey the marriage laws of the Church*.

1. *The parties* to a marriage should be *in the state of grace*, because matrimony is a *sacrament of the living*. They should receive *Holy Communion at their Nuptial Mass*, to implore God's blessing on their union.

2. *The contracting parties* should understand well the *purpose* of the state which they are about to enter. *The first purpose of God* in instituting matrimony was *to populate the earth, and raise up souls who would fill heaven with saints*. He said to Adam and Eve: "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28).

In matrimony a man and his wife *take part in the work of the Creator, giving life to a deathless soul*. If the married would ponder this fact, they surely would not neglect their duties towards their children, to "rear them in the discipline and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). "As the sapling is bent, so is the tree inclined." *Even wild beasts take the utmost care of their young*, but certain modern parents in the pursuit of amusements neglect the proper upbringing of their offspring.

What are THE CHIEF EFFECTS of the sacrament of MATRIMONY?

1. *An increase of sanctifying grace*.

Matrimony is a sacrament of the living and must be received in the state of grace. But it increases the *sanctifying grace* already possessed by the recipient, so that he becomes more pleasing to God.

2. *The special help of God* for husband and wife (a) *to love each other faithfully*, (b) *to bear with each other's faults*, and (c) *to bring up their children properly*. This is the *special sacramental grace* obtained from the reception of the sacrament of Matrimony.

Besides the aim of bringing children into the world, *God also instituted marriage* for the *mutual support of husband and wife*. Before Eve was created, God said: "It is not good that the man is alone; I will make him a helper like himself" (Gen. 2:18). *In Matrimony grace is needed—and grace given—for the proper exercise of its many functions:* the begetting and bringing up of children, mutual exchange of love, fidelity, and comfort, maintenance of the family. For all these and other duties of the married, *Matrimony is an unending source of grace*.



1. Every Catholic family should have the Holy Family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, as their model, and live in holiness and mutual love.



2. Every family should preserve the custom of having family prayers in a unity of worship. The family that prays together stays together.

167. Duties of Married Life

What IS THE CHIEF DUTY of husband and wife in the married state?

The chief duty of husband and wife in the married state is *to be faithful to each other*, and *to provide* in every way for the *welfare of the children* God may give them.

1. *Husband and wife* must *comfort and support each other* in the activities of their common life, in the fulfillment of their duties individual as well as mutual, *in all important matters, both spiritual and material*. "Now they are no longer two, but one flesh" (Matt. 19:6).

The *wife* needs the *husband* to lean upon; the *husband* needs his *wife* to comfort and care for him. *The man* is the breadwinner and the head; *the wife* is the queen and mother. *In true Christian marriage* there is *no question of selfishness, competition, or superiority* between the spouses, for they two are "one flesh."

2. *Husband and wife* must be faithful to their marriage vows; they *owe fidelity to each other*. They ought very carefully to *avoid even the appearance of unfaithfulness*, for where jealousy is awakened, conjugal felicity ends. They should bear with each other's faults and infirmities, and not ruin their home life by dissensions.

The wife will influence her husband for good more effectually by silence, meekness, and prayer, than by nagging and scandalous scolding. *The husband* should remember that his wife also needs companionship; he should not be away long.

3. *The spouses* should *always live together*, and have a real *Christian family life*. They must however remember that *all marital relations* must be *in accord with divine and natural law* in the "faithfulness of chastity."

Their affection should not be purely human, but *holy and supernatural*, in accordance with the pur-

pose of their state, which was instituted by God. "For we are the children of saints: and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God" (Tob. 8:5).

4. For its *type and model*, marriage has the Mystical Union between Christ and His Church. *The husband should love his wife as Christ loves the Church*, with a holy and supernatural love, as his own self. *The wife should love and obey her husband as the head of the family.*

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the Church" (Eph. 5:25). "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is becoming in the Lord" (Col. 3:19). In explaining the meaning of this latter passage, *Plus XI* in his Encyclical on *Christian marriage* says: "This subjection does not take away the liberty which fully belongs to the woman both in view of her dignity as a human person, and in view of her most noble office as wife and mother and companion; or does it bid her obey her husband's every request, even if not in harmony with right reason or the dignity due her as a wife. . . . But it forbids that exaggerated liberty which cares not for the good of the family; it forbids that in this body which is the family, the heart be separated from the head, to the great detriment of the whole body, and the proximate danger of ruin. For if the man is the head, the woman is the heart, and as he occupies the chief place in ruling, she ought to claim for herself the chief place in love."

WHAT are the DUTIES of the married AS PARENTS?

It is the grave obligation of parents to provide for their children and to train them in the love and fear of God. (See also pages 218-219, "Duties of Parents.") The best legacy they can leave their children is the love of God.

The religious training of the child depends mostly on the mother. A mother who spends her time gossiping with her neighbors, going from one social function to another, or engrossing herself in useless amusements to the neglect of her children, has much to answer for before God.

The primary purpose of marriage is the begetting and rearing of children in the fear and love of God, in order that they may join Him in heaven some day.

Is artificial BIRTH CONTROL immoral?

Artificial birth control is immoral, contrary to both natural and divine law.

Artificial birth control is the prevention of conception and birth by the use of drugs, medications, instruments, devices, cleansings and other means to prevent the normal performance and fulfillment of the act of sex. Since it is against natural law and contravenes the primary purpose of marriage, it is morally wrong not only for Catholics, but for every one.

Although the primary purpose of marriage is the procreation and education of

children, the obligation is an affirmative one and an individual couple may be excused from it temporarily or permanently for proportionate reasons. After *Pope Pius XII* affirmed the obligations of spouses in the state of matrimony to provide for the conservation of the human race, he continued in his "Allocution to Midwives" . . . "Serious motives, such as those which are frequently present in the so-called 'indications'—medical, eugenic, economic, and social—can exempt from this positive, obligatory prestation for a long time, even for the duration of the marriage. Hence it follows that the observing of the sterile periods can be licit from the moral viewpoint." When reasons exist in married life for family limitation, the only morally acceptable course is continence, periodic or permanent. There is a vast difference between frustrating nature in contraception and not using one's marital rights in the exercise of continence.

Therefore, a married couple capable of practicing rhythm and with mutual consent, may do so for serious reasons. The act is normally performed. The failure of conception, in any particular instance, is attributable to a condition of nature. Excusing causes have relieved the couple of their affirmative obligation to procreate. At times it may be advisable to seek competent spiritual and medical advice.

Is ABORTION evil?

Direct abortion is evil, a grave sin, contrary to the law of God; indirect abortion may be permitted.

1. Direct abortion is committed when the fetus is intentionally removed from the mother's womb before it is able to lead a separate life, even if this were done in the very earliest period of pregnancy. Direct abortion is equivalent to murder; those guilty of it, or who cooperate either physically or morally, incur excommunication.

Direct abortion cannot be permitted even to save a mother's life. If the fetus or the baby is killed purposely because by not doing so the mother might die, that is direct abortion.

2. Indirect abortion may occur when although not intended, the death of the fetus follows some operation or other treatment performed on the mother. Such treatments and operations are permitted only when it is certain that both mother and child would otherwise die. In such cases the child must receive Baptism.

In order to be certain of circumstances, a conscientious Catholic physician should be consulted.



Henry VIII, king of England, asked the Pope to grant him a divorce from his lawful wife, Catherine of Aragon, so that he might marry Anne Boleyn. The king had rendered valuable services to the Church. If the Pope refused, England would surely be plunged in heresy.

But Pope Clement VII stood firm. Not even to

save England for the Church could he break God's law. The only reply he gave was: "Non possumus; I have no authority to set aside the divine law."

As a result, Henry VIII abandoned his abedience, and intent on his evil desires and yielding to his passions, he revolted from the Church. This was the beginning of the Protestant Church of England.

168. Divorce

WHY does THE BOND of the sacrament of Matrimony LAST UNTIL THE DEATH of husband or wife?

The bond of the sacrament of Matrimony lasts until the death of husband or wife, because Christ has said: "What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder."

1. *Christian marriage* is a union between only *one man and one woman*. God created only one man and one woman in the beginning; *there was unity in marriage*.

Under the Mosaic Law divorce was in some cases permitted, to avoid greater evils, because after the Fall the primitive revelation had become obscured to men. But *when Christ came*, He withdrew this permission absolutely, and *restored marriage to its original unity*, saying:

"Have you not read that the Creator, from the beginning, made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? Therefore now they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder. . . . Moses, by reason of the hardness of your heart, permitted you to put away your wives; but it was not so from the beginning" (Matt. 19:4-8).

2. *Christian marriage* is a sacred and holy state pleasing to God. *St. Paul* compares it to the *mystical union between*

Christ and His Church. As Christ is one, and the Church is one, so marriage is between one man and one woman. *As Christ and the Church are inseparably united, so marriage is indissoluble*. It makes the contracting parties "two in one flesh."

St. Paul said: "This is a great mystery—I mean in reference to Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5:32). *Christ is the head of the Church*; so is the *man the head of the wife*. *The Church is subject to Christ*; so must the *wife be obedient to her husband*. *Christ never abandons the Church*, and the *Church is always faithful to Christ*; so a *man and his wife must be faithful to each other*.

3. *The important object of marriage is to provide for the proper upbringing of children*. This could not be attained if divorce were permitted.

What would become of children if parents were free to separate at their leisure? Court records show that many youthful criminals come from the broken homes of divorced parents. *Divorce destroys the family* and will some day, if not arrested, *destroy the State*.

4. If the *indissoluble character of Matrimony is well understood*, even should—as may often happen—*husband and wife* disagree, their tendency *would be to make up, not to rush to the divorce court*.

The preservation of the sacred character of marriage is vital to society; give in to divorce, and destruction of all social life will come. Divorce is a breach in the wall of civilization, a destructive force in morality. Today two out of five marriages in our country end in divorce. Beginning with causes of adultery, now in many places divorce can be obtained on almost any grounds; it has become only an excuse to change partners. Is that Matrimony?

What is DIVORCE?

Divorce is a legal separation of married persons; as generally understood today, it is a complete severance of the marriage bond giving the parties the right to marry other persons.

1. *Our Lord* lifted marriage from the natural to the supernatural level, *making of it a holy sacrament*. And this *consummated sacramental marriage can never be dissolved, except by the death* of one of the parties; *there can never be* such a thing approved by the Church as *divorce*.

The marriage of unbaptized persons is not sacramental, though it *may be valid*. *The valid marriage of two baptized persons is always sacramental*, whether they be Catholics or non-Catholics. For this reason *the valid marriage of two baptized non-Catholics performed in the authorized manner is always a sacrament*. This is easily understood when we remember that neither pastor nor official is the minister of the sacrament of Matrimony; they do not really confer the sacrament. *The contracting parties are themselves the ministers, and confer the sacrament upon each other*.

2. *Christ* definitely and strictly *forbade* the cutting, *the breaking of the marriage bond*. Nobody can misinterpret His meaning: *"Everyone who puts away his wife and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries a woman who has been put away from her husband commits adultery"* (Luke 16:18).

3. *The bond of the sacrament of matrimony lasts until the death* of husband or wife. Christian marriage is *indissoluble*, except by death. *Divorce*—that is, the breaking of the marriage bond, with the right to *remarry*—is *never permitted*. By the law of God, the bond uniting husband and wife can be dissolved only by death.

"And he said to them: *Whoever puts away his wife and marries another, commits adultery* against her; and if the wife puts away her husband and marries another, *she commits adultery*" (Mark 10:11-12).

NO POWER ON EARTH CAN BREAK A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

1. *The indissolubility of marriage is not a law ordained by the Church, but by God*. The Church *cannot and will not tamper with the laws of God*. As St. Paul said:

"To those who are married, not I, BUT THE LORD, commands that a wife is not to depart from her husband, and if she departs, that she is to remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not a husband put away his wife" (Cor. 7:10, 11).

2. *Not even to avert* the most serious *calamities* can the Church sanction divorce.

When Nicholas I was Pope, the King of Lorraine, Lothaire II, had the Emperor Louis send an army to Rome to frighten Pope Nicholas into giving him a divorce from his wife. But the Pope did not grant the divorce.

Napoleon the Great appealed to Pope Pius VII to annul the marriage which his brother Jerome had contracted with Miss Patterson of Baltimore. The Pope sent the following reply after minute investigation: *"Your Majesty will understand that upon the information thus far received by Us, it is not in Our power to pronounce a sentence of nullity*. We cannot utter a judgment in opposition to the rules of the Church, and We could not, without laying aside those rules, decree the invalidity of a union which, *according to the Word of God, no human power can sunder*."

3. A *non-consummated marriage* between two baptized persons or between one baptized and another unbaptized, *is dissolved* either *by the solemn religious profession* of either party, or *by papal dispensation* for very grave cause.

In contrast to the attitude of the Popes on divorce was the action taken by the Protestant "reformers," Luther, Melancthon, etc., when Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, wished to have two wives at the same time. For sixteen years Philip had been married to Christiana, daughter of the Duke of Saxony, and the couple had been blessed with several children. Soon after the Protestant outbreak, *Philip* became attracted to Margaret Saal, a maid of honor in his household. He did not, however, apply for a divorce from the Protestant leaders, but *wished them to sanction another marriage, so that he might have two wives*, Christiana and Margaret, *at one and the same time*.

The Protestant "reformers" gave this answer to Philip: "If Your Highness is resolved to marry a second wife, we judge that it should be done privately. . . . Thus all opposition and scandal will be avoided. Still, we ought not to be anxious about what the world will say, provided the conscience is at rest. Thus *we approve of it*, and Your Highness has, in this writing, our approbation."



The illustration (1) shows a couple being married before a priest, with two witnesses. This is the only true marriage for Catholics; if it is a sacrament, (2) shows a bad marriage; for Catholics it is not a sacrament, but a mere contract before civil

authorities. If one or both of the parties are Catholics, a marriage contracted only in accordance with the civil laws is invalid, null and void. The State cannot make Catholics man and wife, it can only register them as such.

169. Church Laws on Marriage

Why has the Catholic Church alone the **RIGHT TO MAKE LAWS** regulating the marriages of baptized persons?

The Catholic Church alone has the right to make laws regulating the marriages of baptized persons, because **the Church alone has authority over the sacraments, and over sacred matters affecting baptized persons.**

1. **The Church alone** has authority over holy matters. The Church is the guardian, the custodian of the sacraments, the means of grace for men. On this account, **the Church must safeguard these sacraments.**

God assigned to secular governments the duty to administer material things; but to His Church He gave power and authority over spiritual matters. "Render, therefore, to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

2. **Marriage is not only a sacrament**, but also a contract. **The Church, therefore, may interfere with this contract, by laying down laws;** just as the civil government rules certain civil contracts binding, or null.

What authority has THE STATE regarding the marriages of baptized persons?

Regarding the marriages of baptized persons, **the State has the authority to make laws concerning their effects that are merely civil.**

1. **The State may make laws** about the aspects of marriage that are purely material, such as laws regarding the filing of the marriage contract, **laws about the conjugal property, laws about income tax exemptions** according to the number of children a married couple have.

"What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6). By these words *Christ Our Lord restored marriage to its original unity and indissolubility*; so that there is no power on earth that can dissolve a marriage that has been validly contracted and consummated. The *civil divorces* granted by the State to Christians, giving them a right to remarry *cannot be recognized* by the Church. *The State has no right to legislate in contradiction to divine law.*

2. *Catholics should, however, obey the State laws* on marriage as long as these do not *contradict* laws of God or the Church.

But if some laws are not exactly according to Catholic principles, *Catholics should work to have better laws*, suited to the full exercise of their religious obligations.

What is the ORDINARY LAW of the Church to be observed AT THE WEDDING of a Catholic?

The ordinary law of the Church to be observed at the wedding of a Catholic is this: *A Catholic can contract a true marriage only in the presence of an authorized priest and two witnesses.*

1. The laws of the Church require a Catholic to be married in the presence of the *parish priest*, or the bishop of the diocese, or a priest delegated by either of them, and before *two witnesses*. Catholics are absolutely prohibited from contracting marriage except before a priest of the Church and two witnesses.

(a) *In danger of death marriage may be contracted validly and licitly before two witnesses*, if the parish priest or his delegate cannot be had without grave difficulty; even if there is no danger of death the same may be done, provided it is foreseen that the above condition will last *for a month*. Thus the couple are truly married and receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.

The action should be written down, signed, and the documents given to the bishop or pastor when he comes. So Catholics should take this unusual step except for an extraordinarily grave reason.

(b) *If any other priest is available*, even if he is not the pastor or the coadjutor, he must be called to assist at the marriage; but the marriage is valid even if contracted before the two witnesses alone.—(Canon 1098.)

2. No Catholic can be married *outside the Church*. *Catholics who go* through the form of marriage *before a civil official*, such as a justice of the peace *are not married.*

They have merely made a civil contract. Therefore, if they live together as man and wife, they sin against the Sixth and Ninth Commandments. *Their legal contract may save them from jail, but it will not save them from hell*. If they have children, these are registered as *illegitimate* in the baptismal records.

3. *If Catholics attempt to marry before a non-Catholic minister*, they not only commit sin, but they *are excommunicated* from the Church. They are *not married.*

They are excluded from the sacraments, may not be godparents for baptism and confirmation, and may not receive Christian burial. *Their excommunication lasts until they go to confession*, receive absolution from the bishop, and *get married before a Catholic priest, if they are to live as spouses.*

4. A priest in his own diocese may perform the marriage ceremony *outside his own parish* only with the permission of the parish priest or bishop of the place.

A Catholic who has dwelt within the limit of a certain parish for a month is considered as belonging to it; also if he has a real place of abode in it, with the intention of remaining.

When does the Church declare a separation of a validly married couple?

The Church declares a separation of a validly married couple *for very grave cause, such as adultery, heresy, threats on the life of either*, etc.

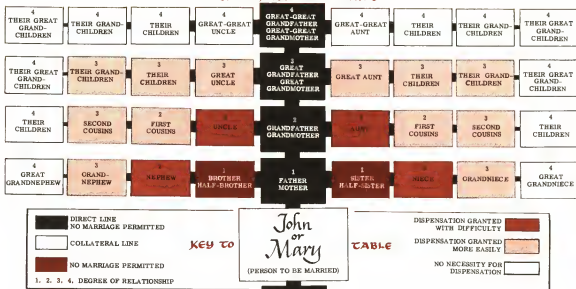
1. *The separation* declared by the Church *does not cut the valid marital bond*; neither of the parties may marry again till the death of the other. *Should the cause cease, they must live together again.*

The wronged party should obtain the sanction of the bishop before separation. *The need of separation will rarely arise when both husband and wife are good practical Catholics* who seriously considered the responsibilities of matrimony before embarking upon it, and who did so with prayer and the blessings of the Church. Who has trusted in God and found Him deaf to supplication?

2. *The only "divorce" permitted* in the Catholic Church *is a separation*, with no right to marry anyone else.

Not that the Church forces a couple who cannot agree in peace to continue living together. *As far as separation includes property rights, Catholics are required to obtain ecclesiastical permission to start proceedings for a civil divorce*. Once the divorce is granted, if the marriage had been a consummated sacramental bond, the contract remains in every other way; and *neither of the parties can enter into marriage with another person.*

TABLE OF RELATIONSHIPS



This table shows the line, and degree of relationship in connection with the person to be married, John or Mary. In the direct line (represented by the vertical rectangles) are all persons descended from or from whom descended the persons to be married, as grandson, father, etc.

In the collateral line (represented by the

horizontal rectangles to right and left of the direct line) all other relatives belong, as cousins, uncles, etc.

The degrees of relationship are indicated by the numbers. For instance a niece is in the second degree collateral; a grandson in the second degree direct, etc.

170. Impediments to Matrimony

What are impediments to matrimony?

Impediments to matrimony are *obstacles to the validity or lawfulness of a marriage.*

1. *Impediments* to matrimony are certain restrictions imposed by the law of God or of the Church which render a marriage contract invalid or unlawful if such restrictions are violated when entering into the marriage. Such obstacles are called "*impediments.*"

Whenever circumstances incompatible with the sacrament or contract of Matrimony exist, the Church has established impediments for the welfare of society and the protection of the matrimonial bond.

2. When impediments exist, the Church either completely forbids the administration of the sacrament, or requires special assurances that the dangers may be reduced as far as possible; in this latter case, a matrimonial "*dispensation*" is granted.

Non-Catholics can marry validly among themselves, since the Church enforces its laws only among those under its care. If baptized non-Catholics marry validly, their marriage cannot be dissolved.

Two Kinds of Impediments:

1. *DIRIMENT* (also called *annulling* or nullifying) *impediments* render an attempted marriage altogether null and void, invalid. Dispensations are only rarely granted for diriment impediments. Should an attempt at marriage be made without dispensation there is *no marriage.*

Such an invalid marriage must be either dissolved, or the impediment removed by a dispensation, and the marriage performed validly. If a marriage is dissolved, the contracting parties are free to marry other partners, if they so wish.

2. *PROHIBITIVE* (also called impediment or hindering) impediments render a marriage unlawful, illicit, but valid. The marriage cannot be dissolved.

3. *It is important* to distinguish "illicit" from "invalid." *Diriment impediments* make an attempted marriage invalid, of no effect, not true; in short, *no marriage*. *Prohibitive impediments* make a *marriage illicit*, unlawful, forbidden; but it is valid, a *true marriage*, and cannot be dissolved.

As an example of the difference between "invalid" and "illicit": Except in case of necessity a Catholic lay person is forbidden to baptize a baby. If he does so, the Baptism is illicit, but it is valid; and the baby is *truly baptized*.

The Chief DIRIMENT Impediments are:

1. *An existing marriage*. One who is already married *cannot marry again* while the other party is still living. *This impediment is never given a dispensation*.

Should someone, believing his spouse dead, contract another marriage, he must immediately leave the second spouse if the first be discovered living.

2. *Coercion*. In marriage, the contracting parties must *give their consent freely*. If either party is forced to marry against his will through abduction, violence, fear, etc. *the impediment is annulling*, and there is no marriage.

Parents and others who use coercion to force someone into a marriage against his will are grievously guilty before God. However, the marriage is valid if in spite of his dislike for the other party a person freely consents to marry, for other motives.

3. *Lack of age*. Boys under sixteen and girls under fourteen cannot enter into marriage (See page 223, 2nd column, No. 3. "We are bound to obey civil just laws . . ." Legal age is considered one, if above the canonical age).

4. *Blood relationship* or consanguinity.

The Church forbids the marriage of close relatives in order to enforce the respect due to blood relations, and to prevent the birth of physically and mentally defective children, often found resulting from such marriages.

5. *Close affinity*. This means *relationship by marriage*. The survivor cannot marry the blood relations of his dead spouse.

In the direct line, as a stepdaughter or mother-in-law, no dispensation is granted. In the collateral line the impediment extends to the second degree, and may be dispensed.

6. *Holy orders or solemn vows*. Men who have received major orders, monks

and nuns who have taken a solemn vow of chastity, cannot contract a valid marriage.

7. *Disparity of worship*. This is marriage between a Catholic and an unbaptized person.

If a Catholic attempts to marry an unbaptized person without a dispensation, his marriage is null. Examples of the unbaptized are: Hindus, Mohammedans, Jews, Buddhists, Shintoists.

8. *Spiritual affinity*. Without dispensation, sponsors in Baptism cannot marry their godchildren. A lay person cannot marry the person to whom he administered lay baptism.

9. *Legal relationship*. Those who by civil law are incapable of contracting marriage by reason of a legal relation arising from adoption are incapable, by Church law, of a valid marriage.

This impediment partakes of the nature of the civil impediment which conditions it: it is prohibitive, where the civil impediment is prohibitive, and diriment or annulling, where the civil impediment is diriment.

10. *Other impediments*. There are other impediments which those who wish to get married should know. They should inquire from their pastors or confessors about these.

Among other diriment impediments are crime, error, impotency, public propriety, imbecility, and clandestinity.

The Chief PROHIBITIVE Impediments:

1. *Forbidden times* (see page 365).

2. *Simple vows*. Simple vows of virginity, chastity or celibacy, a vow to enter a religious order or become a priest, are impediments.

3. *Mixed religion*. The marriage of a Catholic to a baptized non-Catholic, is a prohibitive impediment which, without dispensation, renders the marriage valid, but illicit, unlawful. Such a marriage, being valid, cannot be dissolved.

For example, without a dispensation, a Catholic man marrying a baptized non-Catholic (such as a member of the Orthodox Church), before his parish priest contracts a valid but illicit marriage. Being valid, his marriage cannot be dissolved. But to make the marriage lawful and not a sin, a dispensation must be secured. This kind of marriage must be clearly distinguished from Disparity of Worship (see above), which is a diriment impediment, making an attempted marriage void.



The contracting parties should go before the priest for instruction before a projected marriage. Should there be any impediment, arrangements should be

made for a dispensation. This should be done at least a month before the ceremony, to allow time for the marriage preparations.

171. Dispensations from Matrimonial Impediments

Does the Church have **THE AUTHORITY TO EXCUSE or GRANT DISPENSATIONS** from all impediments?

The Church can grant dispensations only from such impediments as arise from its own laws, but not from such as arise from divine or natural laws.

1. **Impediments** of the natural law, which is only part of the divine law, are unchangeable, and **cannot be given any dispensation**. An example is the marriage of *parent and child*, or of a *married person whose spouse is still living*.

2. **Dispensations are granted** when there is *sufficient reason or need*. The bishop and the parish priest have the authority to investigate each case.

3. **Not all impediments are granted dispensation with equal ease**. Prohibitive impediments are more easily granted dispensations than diriment ones. **Very rarely can a dispensation be obtained** from solemn vows or from major orders, when one of the contracting parties is unbaptized, or when the proposed **marriage is between** such close blood relations as **uncle and niece, aunt and nephew**.

4. **In order to discourage** unnecessary seeking after dispensations, **a fee is required**. These fees help to maintain the matrimonial courts established to safeguard marriage.

Matrimonial dispensations are granted (a) in favor of a contemplated marriage, or (b) to legitimize one already contracted. **The poor** are granted dispensations *without charge*.

MIXED MARRIAGES

1. A marriage *between a Catholic and a non-Catholic baptized Christian*, and a marriage *between a Catholic and a non-baptized person* are both called "mixed marriages."

2. For a marriage *between a Catholic and a non-Catholic baptized Christian* there is a "prohibitive impediment."

For a marriage *between a Catholic and a non-baptized person* there is a "diriment impediment." The differences between these two kinds of impediments are explained on pages 362 and 363.

3. *The Church forbids* its members to marry non-Catholics because such marriages may bring family discord, neglect, indifference and even loss of faith on the part of the Catholic. It also happens that the religious training of the children is neglected.

The non-Catholic *may wish* to practice "birth control" or is liable to a "divorce" and *contract another marriage* according to his or her church principles.

4. The Church grants a *dispensation for a "mixed marriage"* under these conditions:

a) the non-Catholic *has to promise not to endanger the faith* of the Catholic. *Divine law forbids mixed marriages as long as there is danger* to the faith of the Catholic or of the children;

b) the Catholic has to promise to give good example and pray that God bring them closer together in one faith;

c) the Catholic and non-Catholic *must promise* to have *all children* born of the marriage *baptized and reared as Catholics*.

5. *The Church shows its disapproval* of "mixed marriages" *even after a dispensation* has been granted. The *banns are not published*, the *Nuptial Blessing at Mass not given*, a *permission is needed* to have the ceremony in the church.

Does the Church allow Catholics to marry during LENT and ADVENT?

The Church allows Catholics to marry during the so-called "closed seasons" of Lent and Advent, *provided they do so quietly* and refrain from pomp.

It is an error to think that the Church prohibits the contracting of marriage on any day of the year. It *merely prohibits celebrations* or signs of rejoicing that do not harmonize with the spirit of the *penitential seasons*, that is, during Lent and Advent.

1. (a) *MARRIAGE can take place any day of the year.*

(b) *NUPTIAL MASS* is not permitted on all Sundays and on liturgical days of 1st class. There are about thirty such days.

(c) *NUPTIAL BLESSING AT MASS* may be given on any day except on "All the Faithful Departed Day" November 2nd and during the Sacred Triduum, i.e., Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. *The nuptial blessing is given during Mass* by the priest who offers it; it is omitted if the spouses are not present or have already received it.

The "closed season of Lent" is from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday inclusive, and the "closed season of Advent" from the 1st Sunday of Advent to Christmas inclusive. *During* these two *penitential seasons* the *Church wishes the faithful to avoid* setting a date for the *celebration of their marriage*. However, if there should be "a just reason" for it, she expects the parties to *refrain from* too much pomp. Thus, noisy banquets, balls and dances would be out of place.

2. *During "closed seasons" the permission of the bishop is required* for the celebration of a solemn marriage, that is, with nuptial Mass, or at least the nuptial blessing during Mass.

WHEN does the Church DECLARE A MARRIAGE NULL?

The Church declares a marriage null *when, after detailed investigation, the facts prove that from the very beginning there had been no marriage*; there had been no validity.

NULLITY declares that no marital bond had ever existed; this is *not to be confounded with divorce*, which is a juridical act cutting an existing and valid marital bond.

When a marriage is annulled, since therefore there has been *no real matrimony, the parties to the invalid contract are set free to marry other partners*; or they may regularize the marriage by a valid ceremony. When the Church annuls a marriage, declaring it invalid, the parties may apply for a civil divorce, with the permission of the ordinary.



It is a sin for parents to discourage, oppose, or prevent their child's lawful desire to choose a state of life for himself. The first picture shows the father of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, giving her his blessing before she entered Carmel. Parents whose children have a religious vocation should



imitate this good father. And those whose children choose to enter the married state should bless them likewise, as Our Blessed Mother must surely be blessing the newly-wedded pair above, who offer the bridal bouquet of her feet. Their preparatory period of courtship was ruled by prudence.

172. Courtship and Engagement

What is the purpose of COURTSHIP?

Courtship is a time of preparation for marriage, *the time of choosing a life partner*; it requires prudence and wisdom.

1. *It is only when persons have reached the proper age and are so situated as to be able to bear the responsibilities of the married state, that courtship should engage their attention.* Then the man and women may frequent each other's company, in order to discover whether they would make suitable companions for life.

Boys and girls still in school should devote their time to their studies and such things appropriate to their age, as games and innocent entertainments. It is altogether out of place for young people to neglect their studies in order to waste their time in boy-and-girl affairs.

2. *It is proper for a man to pay his attentions to several women at the same time, and for a woman to receive such attentions from several men at the same time.*

This is precisely because *courtship* is the *time of choosing*, to discover who will make the most suitable partner for life.

Adolescents of high school age cannot expect to marry for several years. By "going steady" they place themselves in a proximate occasion of sin. No Catholic boy or girl is so virtuous as to be free from any danger of sin. Parents who consent their children to go out unchaperoned, as to an open-air theatre and other such places, and those who go, are certainly guilty before God. Courtship or "dating" should be carried on without secrecy; young women should beware of men who keep their "love affairs" a secret.

3. *The length of the period of courtship* should be between six months and two years, no longer. *Marriage* is a serious and sacred responsibility, and *should not be rushed* into under the influence of a physical attraction or passion. *But courtship*, when the prospective partners are so often in each other's *company*, *should not be greatly prolonged*, to avoid possible serious consequences.

"*Marry in haste, repent at leisure*," says a wise adage. Runaway marriages are generally scandalous, even sinful; at any rate they are *strong temptations to sin*. And so are *prolonged courtships*.

WHAT SHOULD GUIDE THE CHOICE during courtship?

One should make sure that the person he or she wishes to marry is a *practical Catholic*, and *possess the character to make a good companion and helper in life*.

1. *The person chosen* should have the mental and spiritual *qualifications* necessary for the *permanent partnership*, the dispositions to harmonize with the prospective partner's.

The only way to make sure of marrying a Catholic is to have dates with no others but Catholics. This rule must have no exception. If Catholic young men date only Catholic young women, and Catholic young women only Catholic young men, the *problem of "mixed marriages" will be solved*. We are very careful before buying a new house or a new car and even a suit of clothes. Should we be less wise in choosing a companion for life? "*A wife is her husband's richest treasure, a helpmate, a steady column*" (Sirach 36:24).

2. *One can better judge* the character and virtues of a future spouse *at church and in the home than on the floor in ballrooms*. The advice "*Choose your partner at the communion rail*" is very sound.

An accomplished young lady was engaged to marry a prominent young man. The day before the wedding, a party was given at the house of the young lady. The conversation turned towards religion; *the young man spoke with open contempt of all beliefs*, boasting that he was an "open-minded" person of the 20th century and free from all "medieval notions" and "priest-invented" ceremonies.

The young lady, shocked beyond measure, *gently protested*, begging him not to speak in such a manner. *But he laughed at her*, saying that he meant

every word he said and more, and that she would soon enough unlearn her "religious nonsense."

The young lady then said, "*I cannot marry a man who does not respect God and religion, for he surely will not respect his wife*." Thus *the engagement was broken*, and a worthy young lady freed from a life that would have been an agony and a danger for her.

3. *It is wrong and foolish to marry for beauty, riches, or honors* alone. We should rather seek, and chiefly seek, the *quality of the person's soul*.

After all, *beauty, riches, and honors pass quickly*. They may even be lost on the day of the marriage. But a *good soul* is beautiful in the sight of God and *lives forever*.

What is ENGAGEMENT, or betrothal?

Engagement, or betrothal, is a *mutual promise of marriage, implying marriage at an early date*.

An engagement should not last longer than a few months. *As soon as the promise to marry is made, a definite date for the wedding should be set*.

1. *It is the duty of young people to consult their parents about their wedding*. In cases where parents are extraordinarily unreasonable, young people should consult their confessor about the matter. *Generally, the parents are right* about the good or bad prospects of a proposed marriage.

2. *The engagement may be formally entered into by a contract* in writing signed *by both parties*, with the parish priest or Bishop, or two others, as witnesses. *Such a formal engagement should be encouraged, especially in cases where hasty alliances are feared*.

3. *During both the courtship and the engagement, the couple should respect each other's virtue, and avoid undue familiarities*; this is a pledge of a chaste and happy married life. *The best preservative of virtue is God Himself*; and so those preparing for marriage should frequent the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist.

Everything between an engaged couple should be aboveboard. *They should reveal to each other frankly everything* pertaining to their financial status, social relations, and matters related to health. In this way *they prevent future quarrels and misery*.

If after some time either party becomes seriously convinced that the marriage would be a mistake, *the engagement should be broken off*. Human respect or other considerations *should not be permitted to jeopardize future happiness*.



3. TOBIAS AND SARA



1. CONFESSION IS A GOOD PREPARATION FOR MATRIMONY



2. PRAYERS AND HOLY COMMUNION ARE GOOD PREPARATIONS FOR MARRIAGE

Those who enter matrimony should imitate the good dispositions of Tobias and Sara (3), who began their married life with prayer, and lived each day in the presence of God.

Before receiving the sacrament of matrimony,

the couple should make a very good confession (1), in order to be in the state of grace. At the Nuptial Mass, they should receive Our Lord (2), so that He may honor their wedding with His Divine Presence.

173. Preparations for Marriage

WHAT SHOULD A COUPLE DO who have decided to get married?

A couple who have decided to get married *should separately appear*, with baptismal certificate, *before the parish priest of the bride*, for the *canonical examination*.

1. *This should be done not less than a month* before the projected marriage, *to allow time for the calling of the banns*. With hand on the Gospels, the contracting party swears that the truth is being told; he then replies to the questions asked by the priest.

The main questions concern dispositions for the reception of the sacrament: the Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation of the contracting party, and impediments. A careful interrogatory is

made to find out *if both parties are free from marriage bond; and to make sure they intend to enter a permanent marriage*, one that cannot be dissolved by divorce or any other way *except by death. Should there be any impediments*, a dispensation, if possible, has to be arranged. Should there be diriment impediments that *cannot be given a dispensation*, the marriage cannot take place.

2. The *canonical examination* makes sure that the contracting parties know what they are doing, and do it of their own free will. In this way the Church shows its solicitude for its members; *every possible precaution is taken in order that all may enter the state of matrimony fully prepared* and safeguarded.

After the canonical examination *the marriage license* should be secured, and *other requirements of the State complied with*, such as blood tests, etc.



Christian marriage is a holy union, blessed by God, between one man and one woman. It is an indissoluble and pure relation, like the union between Christ and His Church.

As the priest says to the man at the end of the Taledana marriage ritual, "I give you a companion, not a servant; love her as Christ loves His Church." The union is for life, for better or worse.

What are the "BANNS OF MATRIMONY?"

The bans of matrimony are a *public proclamation of an intended marriage*, made at the principal Mass on three successive Sundays or festival days, *in the church or churches of the bride and groom*.

1. The *purpose of the bans* is to discover impediments, *to avoid secret marriages*, and to furnish those interested an opportunity to intervene, should they wish to do so. *Dispensation from bans is granted* for urgent reasons.

2. *If either party has lived*, after reaching canonical marriageable age, *for six or more months away from the community in which the marriage is to be celebrated*, the bishop may also require the publication of the bans in the other place or places.

With the approval of the ordinary, *the bans*, instead of being read out, *may be posted at the church door*, or *published in the parish weekly bulletin*.

3. *If anyone knows of any impediment* to a proposed marriage, he is *bound in conscience to make it known to the pastor*; otherwise he is guilty of sin.

Ordinarily, the marriage is not performed till three days after the last ban.

WHAT does THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY INCLUDE?

In its fullness, the marriage ceremony includes: the *nuptial contract*, the *nuptial Mass*, and the *nuptial blessing*.

1. *Matrimony is both a sacrament and a contract*. In all other sacraments the ordinary minister is of the clergy; *in Matrimony*, because it is a contract, *the ministers are the parties concerned, the bride and groom*.

When the man and woman first offer themselves to each other for marriage, the first condition of a contract is fulfilled. When the offer is accepted, the second condition is fulfilled. And in the ceremony of Matrimony, when the man and woman give free and mutual consent, the contract is sealed. The contract is consummated when the rights mutually exchanged are first exercised.

2. *The words in the marriage ceremony* by which the man and woman express *mutual consent* to take each other as husband and wife *constitute the essential part of the sacrament*; they seal the marriage contract.

The priest is present only as the representative of the Church, a necessary witness for the safeguarding of the marital contract, and to implore God's blessing on the pair. He is really only the most important of the witnesses, the intermediary of Mother Church.

"WHAT THEREFORE GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER"



The main act of the sacrament of matrimony is the expression of mutual consent. After this act the couple join hands (2), and the priest blesses them with holy water (1). The contracting parties hear the Nuptial Mass, receiving Holy Communion. By this

act of uniting themselves with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, they invite Him to their wedding, to bless them, as the couple in Cana did long ago. During the Mass the Nuptial Blessing (3) is given. "May this her yoke be one of love and peace."

174. Rite for the Sacrament of Matrimony

HOW can Catholics BEST OBTAIN GOD'S BLESSING on their Marriage?

Catholics can best obtain God's blessing on their marriage by *being married at a Nuptial Mass*, and by *receiving Holy Communion devoutly*.

Marriage rites are not the same throughout the Church; the following is the ceremony now used in our country.

1. Entrance into the church and access to the altar.

The *bridegroom* and *bride* go to the altar with their parents or friends simply or in solemn procession. All participants should be aware of the presence of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and behave accordingly. *If Mass is to be said*, the *bridal party* take their proper places in specially prepared pews. This is the only occasion when lay people are permitted to *remain in the sanctuary*.

2. Prayer and Instruction before Marriage.

The priest stands at the foot of the altar, while all kneel, and *prays a short invocation* asking for the blessing of God. He then *delivers a sermon*, or reads the instruction before marriage.

3. The Sealing of the Marriage Bond.

All stand facing the priest. The bridegroom stands to the right of the bride.

Addressing the man by name, the priest asks, "*N., will you take N., here present, for your lawful wife according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church?*" He replies, "*I will.*"

Turning to the bride, the priest asks: "*N., will you take N., here present, for your lawful husband according to the rite of our holy Mother, the Church?*" she replies, "*I will.*"

Having understood the mutual consent of both parties, the priest instructs the *couple* to join hands. He then places the end of the stole around their hands and, turning first to the *groom* and then to the *bride*, says: "Say after me, 'I, N. N., take you, N. N., for my lawful wife (husband), to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.'"

4. Confirmation of the Marriage Bond.

The priest, in Latin, pronounces the words of sanction and blessing: "*I join you in matrimony: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*" As he speaks, he makes over the couple the sign of the cross. Then he says: "*I call upon all of you here present to be witnesses of this holy union which I have now blessed. What God has joined together, let no man put asunder.*" After this he sprinkles them with holy water.

5. Blessing and Giving of the Wedding Rings.

The priest saying a short prayer blesses the rings, symbol of faithfulness, and sprinkles them with holy water. He then addresses the groom and bride: "*Now that you have sealed a truly Christian marriage, give these wedding rings to each other, saying after me:*

The *groom* accepts from the hand of the priest the ring for the bride, puts it on the third finger of the *bride's* left hand while repeating the words of the priest: "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Take and wear this ring as a pledge of my fidelity.*"

The *bride* likewise receiving the other ring, repeats the same words while putting the ring on the third finger of the *groom's* left hand.

6. The Blessing of the Groom and of the Bride.

The priest recites "Psalm 127", the "Our Father", some "versicles and a prayer". Then extending his hands over the bride and groom, he says five beautiful "invocation prayers of blessings." At the end he adds: "*Through our Lord Jesus Christ His Son, Who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end.*" R./ "Amen."

7. The Nuptial Mass and Blessing.

The priest offers the *Nuptial Mass* for the married couple. The *Nuptial Blessing* is given during the *Canon of the Mass*, after the "Pater Noster." It is directed to the *woman*, rather than to the man. On *only one other occasion* (when the bishop blesses the holy oils at the *Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday*) is the *Canon of the Mass* thus interrupted at its most solemn part. This is part of the prayer for the bride: "*May this yoke that she is taking on herself be one of love and peace.*"

8. The Farewell.

After the *Mass*, the priest says to the spouses: "*Go in peace, and may the Lord be with you always.*" They reply: "Amen."

9. Kissing the Wedding Ring.

The married couple may now kiss together the wife's "wedding ring," reciting devoutly: "*Grant us, O Lord, that loving You we may love one another and live in accordance with Your holy law*" (300 days indulgence).

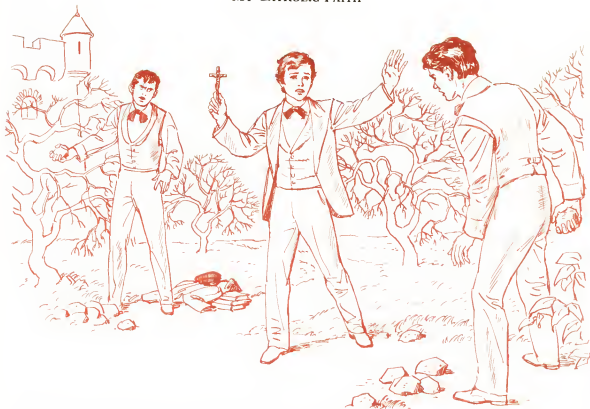
MASS OF THANKSGIVING for the 25th and 50th Wedding Anniversary

Married couples should consider their *Wedding Day* as one of the most important and cherished in their lives.

It is a refreshing custom for both on every anniversary of their wedding, to go to *Mass* and receive Holy Communion together in thanksgiving of the graces received. If possible, they should keep that day all for themselves, as if they had just been married: a "one day honeymoon."

The Church approves of such a celebration. For the occasion of the Silver and Golden (25th and 50th) Wedding Anniversaries, there is a "Mass of Thanksgiving."

This *Mass* is of the same class than that of bishops and priests celebrating their consecration or ordination anniversary. The *Mass* may be either in honor of the Most Holy Trinity or of the Blessed Virgin Mary. If so desired, the couple with their children, families and friends, may walk together to the sanctuary. The pastor or celebrant may address a few words for the occasion followed by the *Mass*. After the last Gospel, special prayers of thanksgiving are recited by the priest and the blessing given. At the end, as on the *Wedding Day*, the priest says: "*Go in peace, and may the Lord be with you always.*" They reply: "Amen."



On his First Communion Day, when seven years old, St. Dominic Savio made some resolutions. Frequent confession and Holy Communion, friendship with Jesus and Mary, death rather than sin were among them. Stepping-stones to Christian perfection, they enabled him, by heroic example, to lead others to love God and neighbor. His pledge to die rather than sin was put to the test when he pre-

vented two youths from offending God by anger which gave vent to stoning each other. Crucifix in hand, Dominic offered himself as their victim. Moved to contrition by his courage and piety, the two enemies were reconciled. The virtuous example of his short life shows us that we should start from childhood to strive for Christian perfection, and to help others to shun sin and love God.

175. Christian Perfection

SHOULD WE BE SATISFIED MERELY to keep the commandments of God?

We should not be satisfied merely to keep the commandments of God, but *we should be willing to follow Our Lord's invitation to all men: "You therefore are to be perfect (holy), even as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Perfection is the summit—the highest degree of holiness.*

The commandments of God state the minimum requirements for salvation. They should be kept not merely according to the letter, but also according to the spirit; this obliges us to strive for greater perfection.

1. The model of Christian perfection is *Our Lord*. The saints, who imitated Him

steadfastly, are also patterns of perfection. *This aiming "to be holy as our heavenly Father is holy," this seeking to be like Christ—"another Christ," is to strive towards Christian perfection.*

No one can ever be as perfect as Our Lord. *But having Him for a model inspires us to strive for greater and greater sanctity.* He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6). And in reply to the young man who wished to become perfect, Jesus said, "Come, follow me" (Matt. 19:21). *We should try to make progress every day, so that we are better today than yesterday.* "He who is just, let him be just still, and he who is holy, let him be hallowed still" (Apoc. 22:11).

2. *If we only give God what He commands us to give, we would be doing only what is absolutely necessary.* In such a case

we would go to church *only once a week*, plus six holydays of obligation a year; we would go to Confession *only once a year*, an receive Holy Communion *only during the Easter Time*. By doing these things and avoiding all serious violation of the Commandments, we would still be obeying God and keeping ourselves from mortal sin and saving our souls.

What would you think of a child who gives to his parents only what is demanded of him? What would you think of him if he never showed them any affection, never did anything extra for them to show his love and gratitude?

3. *We say that we love God*, our Creator, Father, and Friend, our Saviour, the Source of all our graces. *Love is proved by deeds*, by the amount of sacrifice we would be willing to make for the beloved person.

Can we ever serve God sufficiently, to show our affection? He does not command us to go out of our way to help the poor; but can we consider anyone a good Christian who does not do so? A Christian should not only obey the commands of Christ, but should follow His counsels. We go to Mass on weekdays, because we love Him, and wish to visit Him in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the altar, to receive Him into our very hearts. *We should think up extra things to do for God, as we think up extra things to do for the person we love most.* Our parents do not command us to buy gifts for them on their birthdays; but if we do so, are they not delighted at our show of affection?

In what does CHRISTIAN PERFECTION CONSIST?

Christian perfection consists *in union with God by the practice of virtue*; it requires love of God and our neighbor, and detachment of the heart from the things of this world. *By striving after true Christian perfection*, we make clearer and clearer in ourselves the true image of God.

1. *Christian perfection* is nothing else but *sanctity*, holiness, the love for God. Lest those who call themselves "*ordinary mortals*" be afraid to aspire to this sanctity, we must make it clear that *it does not require extraordinary works*. It only requires deep, abiding love, for "*Love is the fulfilling of the law*," the fulfillment of it to its very foundation and depths, not merely on the surface.

Did our Blessed Mother do any extraordinary works, judged by normal standards of the world? Let us imitate her perfect submission to the will of God in all things. "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word*" (Luke 3:38).

2. *The spirit of Christ* obliges us to strive for greater perfection. *All states of life can be sanctified* by those who wish only to live for God. Saints are found in every class. *Love of God is in everybody's power.*

As there are different degrees of love, so also there are *different degrees of perfection*, according to the capacity of each individual. But all can practice virtue. From other good works we can excuse ourselves, saying: "*I cannot fast, for I am sickly*," etc. But no one can say, "*I cannot love*." However, *religious and pious practices should be adapted to the occupations and duties of an individual*. A mother of twelve young children would do wrong to spend half the day in church praying. One who works in an office should not stay so long at daily Mass that he is habitually late for his work.

3. *We should begin from youth to strive after perfection.*

Saint Dominic Savio on his First Communion day, when *only seven years old*, made some resolutions to which he was faithful till his death. *These resolutions helped him towards perfection*, so that at the age of fifteen he died a holy death. Among his resolutions were: (1) *frequent confession and communion*; (2) *Jesus and Mary as friends*; and (3) *death rather than sin*.

4. *Every one should choose* for his model a saint whose position and calling are similar to his own.

Schoolboys will find among the best models Saint Aloysius, St. Dominic Savio; *schoolgirls*, the Little Flower, Saint Agnes, St. Mary Goretti, and always the Blessed Virgin; *married men*, St. Louis of France, St. Thomas More; *married women*, St. Monica, St. Elizabeth; *religious*, the canonized founders of their order; *priests*, the Curé d'Arz, St. John Bosco, St. Philip Neri; *bishops*, St. Charles Borromeo and St. Francis of Sales.

5. *In order to attain the state of Christian perfection*, we must have a *spirit of detachment towards the things of this world*. Let us remember that *the eternal is what counts*; the temporal is given us by God *only to help us fulfill our end* of praising, of serving Him, and thus saving our soul.

By the spirit of detachment is not meant actual dispossession. A rich man can be completely detached from riches, if he uses them only for the end God gave them to him, if he does not love his riches for the sake of riches or for other worldly purposes, but uses his wealth for God and his fellowmen. *A man in a high position of honor and power is detached from such honor and glory* if he knows they all come from God, and uses them for God's purposes. On the other hand, *even the poorest of men and the most despised can violate the spirit of detachment* if he desires to possess what he does not have, for the sake of such possession.



The Little Way of St. Therese of the Child Jesus is the way of spiritual childhood, which means becoming spiritually as a little child in the arms of a tenderly loving Father. An ordinary person as well as a great saint can practice **The Little Way** simply by placing absolute confidence in God. Because He loves us we love Him. One who loves does all things, great and small, to please the beloved. The illustration shows St. Therese, while glancing at the

statue of the Child Jesus, making her sister's bed as an act of love.

As she grew older she carried her **Little Way** to heroic perfection. "Not a word, not a look, if not to give pleasure to the good God" became her guiding principle. We also can imitate the Little Flower. By making it our sole aim to please God, we can follow **The Little Way** to Christian perfection.

176. General Means of Perfection

What are the GENERAL MEANS OF PERFECTION?

After the observance of the Commandments of God and of the Church, the general means of perfection are: (a) **Holy Mass with Communion**; (b) **habit of prayer**; (c) **self-control and self-denial**; (d) **faithfulness in small things**; (e) **order and regularity**; (f) **spiritual reading and meditation**; and (g) **recourse to solitude**.

These are general means of perfection, because they are *suius* to every one in every state and condition of life.

1. God instituted the **sacraments** as effective **means of grace**. Can we get more grace than from **God Himself**, coming in Holy Communion?

2. **Habit of Prayer**. Without God we can do nothing. We should especially make a habit of **ejaculatory prayers**.

We should sanctify our every action by offering it to God. A good plan is to make a general offering every morning, with our morning prayers. In this way, **all we do—work, prayer, and even sleep—becomes a prayer to God.**

3. **Self-control** and **self-denial** are acts of mortification: keeping down anger, and abstaining even from things which are permitted, but above all **avoiding even the least yielding to what is forbidden**. **Self-control is the mark of the true Christian**. If we deny ourselves some things which are permitted, we shall find it easier to avoid what is forbidden. **Self-control gives us a strong will**. Self-denial is the mark of the

human being made to the likeness of God; *a beast does not say "No" to himself.*

Christ said: "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him deny himself" (Mark 8:34). One may deny oneself by avoiding what is not necessary, such as splendid dress, rich food, costly houses and cars, excessive entertainments, curiosity, etc., and above all, by doing cheerfully whatever duties come, and accepting with resignation all trials.

4. By *faithfulness in small things*, we obtain greater graces and avoid grave sins more easily. As in the natural order, so in the spiritual, *great things come from apparently insignificant things.* We should *be careful to avoid venial sins* in order to be saved from mortal sins.

"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in a very little thing is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). Our Lord promises to reward those who are thus faithful, saying: "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many" (Matt. 25:21).

5. We observe *order and regularity* by having a *fixed time for everything*: for rising, retiring, eating, work, recreation, etc.

We should imitate the order that God has placed in the whole universe, regulating everything by law. *Recreation* is not against the practice of Christian perfection; it is a need that God wishes us to satisfy in the proper manner. It should however, not interfere with our duties, or take up too much time.

6. We should have some regular *spiritual reading and meditation*, even if for only ten minutes every day, as food for our souls.

Meditation on the truths of faith, the life of Christ, and the lives of the saints, *will inflame our hearts to virtue.*

7. *Solitude* helps us grow in virtue. The noise and bustle of the world are distractions. *We should once in a while imitate Our Lord and withdraw* into solitude, to see our faults better, and go closer to God.

Catholics who are able, spend a few days every year in a spiritual retreat, *to resort to this valuable solitude.*

THE LITTLE WAY

WHICH IS one of the most practical means of perfection recommended for the ordinary person living in the world?

For the ordinary person living in the world, one of the most practical means of perfection is that called the Little Way of St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

This *Little Way* can be followed by *ordinary mortals* who cannot undergo heavy mortifications like fasting, flagellation, and hair shirts, by people who are not possessed of mystical graces, *who cannot do great works.*

1. *The Little Way* is the way of *spiritual childhood.* Its *ESSENCE* is simple:

(a) *God Almighty* is our most loving and tender *Father*; *we, His* tiny little children who can do absolutely nothing without *Him.*

(b) Because *we* are tiny little children and entirely helpless, *we* put all our trust in *God. He*, the loving Father, takes *us* in *His* fatherly arms.

(c) *We* in gratitude for *His* fatherly care, give *Him* all that a tiny little child is able to give, *our LOVE.*

Our Lord Himself taught us to call and consider God "Our Father" (Matt. 6:9-13). He urged, "*Unless you turn and become little children, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven*" (Matt. 18:3). He declared, "Whoever does not accept the kingdom of God as a *little child* will not enter into it" (Mark 10:15).

2. *The characteristics* of "the Little Way" are the characteristics of *a tiny little child*:

(a) *Littleness and weakness.* This means *meekness and humility.* Making ourselves as humble as we can, let us be ever aware that *without God we can do nothing.* Whatever we do, however great, is only a *gift that our loving Father* in heaven sees fit to *grant us.*

(b) *Poverty and simplicity.* Without God we possess nothing. Doing His holy will, we can be sure that He will provide for us. Simplicity personified, *an innocent tiny child should be our model in our attitude*, in all our actions, *towards God.*

(c) *Absolute confidence in his father.* *In full trust*, let us abandon ourselves to *God* and His infinite mercy.

(d) *LOVE. A tiny little child gives love.* This is exactly the only thing we can give to God, *our love.* We show our love for God *by doing all things*, small and great, to *make Him happy*, to give Him pleasure.

St. Therese of the Child Jesus, called "the Little Flower," said, "Not everybody can fast, or wear hair shirts, or spend hours in prayer. *But everybody can love.*"



Those who follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience give up the pleasures of the world in order to serve and love God more fully. They put into practice the idea

behind these words of Holy Scripture: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" God gives more weight to the Counsels than to riches.

177. The Evangelical Counsels

What does OUR SAVIOUR especially RECOMMEND that is not strictly commanded by law?

Our Saviour especially recommends *the observance of the Evangelical Counsels*—voluntary *poverty*, perpetual *chastity*, and perfect *obedience*.

1. "*Evangelical*" here means contained in the *Gospels*; these *counsels of perfection* are clearly set forth in Holy Scripture.

They are called *counsels*, because they are an invitation and not a command; all are *invited*, but no one is *forced*. "*Not all can accept this teaching; but those to whom it has been given*" (Matt. 19:11).

2. *By means of the evangelical counsels* the three chief evil tendencies of man—*avarice, sensuality, and pride*—are subdued, enabling him to rise more freely to God.

Good works are mild remedies for these evil tendencies. Prayer cures *pride*; fasting cures *sen-*

suality; and *almsgiving* cures *avarice*. But the evangelical counsels are a *radical remedy* for these three evils. *Obedience* subdues *pride*; *chastity* destroys *sensuality*; and *poverty* blots out *avarice*.

3. *The evangelical counsels*, however, are *not in themselves* perfection. They are only the best means for attaining perfection. If we adopt the counsels, but do not follow them we are far from perfect.

What is VOLUNTARY POVERTY?

Voluntary poverty is *the renunciation of all earthly possessions, for the love of God*.

1. *Christ* counseled voluntary poverty: "*If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor*" (Matt. 19:21).

Our Lord Himself was extremely poor. *A stable* was His birthplace; *a poor woman* was His Mother; *a carpenter* was His foster-father. *He had nowhere to lay His head*.

2. *To give alms* according to one's means is the duty of every Christian. **But voluntary poverty** means the *giving up*, for the love of God, of not only part, but of **all our earthly property**, and suffering the hardships of poverty.

What is PERPETUAL CHASTITY?

Perpetual chastity consists in abstaining from marriage and all unclean desires.

1. **Christ** counseled perfect chastity: "**Let him accept it who can**" (Matt. 19:12). **Christ Himself** was perfectly chaste and virginal. **His mother** was a virgin. He loved children, who are virginal.

He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. Whereas he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife; and he is divided. And the *unmarried woman, and the virgin, thinks about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy in body and in spirit.* Whereas she who is married thinks about the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. 7:32-34).

2. *The sixth and ninth commandments* of God *oblige us* to live chaste lives, and to avoid impurity. But lifelong and **perfect chastity** means besides the *sacrifice of something lawful: marriage.*

Is perfect CHASTITY especially PLEASING to GOD?

Yes, perfect chastity is *a virtue most pleasing to God.*

1. *When God wished to give a mortal Mother to His Son*, God chose the purest of the daughters of Juda, a **virgin**, Mary. *When He wanted a protector* for the Blessed Virgin and her future Child, God chose a virgin, **Joseph, the most chaste of men.** Christ Himself was a virgin, and **the Apostle He loved best**, the one who leaned on His breast at the Last Supper, and to whom He confided His Mother from the cross, was also a **virgin, St. John the Evangelist.**

2. **Priests and members of religious communities**, both men and women, are bound to celibacy and **perfect chastity.** Celibacy is the state of **being unmarried.**

St. Paul commended the state of celibacy: "I say to the unmarried, and to widows, it is good for them if they so remain, even as I" (1 Cor. 7:8).

3. **Even the heathen recognize and honor the virtue of virginal chastity.** If the heathen respect those who prefer virginity to the married state, **how much more should Christians respect those who, from a supernatural motives, choose to live a life of chastity!**

In pagan Rome six virgins, called the Vestal Virgins, were appointed to keep the so-called sacred fire burning on the altar in the temple of Vesta. These virgins usually came to the temple at the age of ten years, and remained there for thirty years. During that time they were forbidden to marry.

The Romans believed that the Vestal Virgins brought them good fortune and obtained for them the protection of their gods. They treated the Vestal Virgins with the greatest respect. They were accorded military honors in public. If a criminal, on his way to execution, happened to meet a Vestal Virgin, he was immediately pardoned. The virgins were given the best places wherever they went; they were clad in white robes. If a Vestal Virgin broke her vow of chastity, she was buried alive.

What is PERFECT OBEDIENCE?

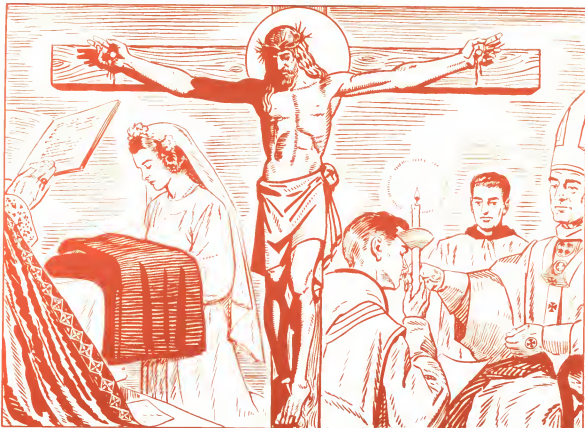
Perfect obedience is *the complete subjection of one's will to that of a superior.*

1. **Christ** counseled perfect obedience. He said to His Apostles: "**Follow Me.**" He said to the rich young man: "**If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast, and give to the poor... and come, follow me**" (Matt. 19:21), *i.e.*, "Come and be guided by Me in all things."

Christ was perfectly obedient to His heavenly Father. He never sought His own will, but always the will of the Father Who sent Him. He was obedient to His Mother and to St. Joseph.

2. **All men** are bound to render Christian obedience to their superiors *according to their state.* **Children** must obey their parents; **citizens** must obey the civil authorities; all must obey their spiritual superiors. But this obligation leaves us free in many things; it does not bind all our actions. **Perfect obedience** on the other hand requires us to **obey in everything. It is the greatest sacrifice we can give to God.**

If we fast, give alms, or lose our reputation for God's sake, we only give a part of ourselves. But if we give perfect obedience, we sacrifice our will; we give all we have. We have nothing more to give.



The illustration shows a young man and a young woman making their offerings to Jesus Crucified,

to live in the religious state bound by the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

178. The Religious State

What is THE RELIGIOUS STATE?

The religious state is a *permanent way of community life*, by which the faithful bind themselves to observe the *evangelical counsels* by *vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience*.

The first religious order developed under St. Anthony the Great, who assembled around him in the desert a number of disciples living in separate cells. In the year 348 A. D. St. Pachomius gathered the anchorites under a common roof, and gave them a fixed rule; this was done on an island near the mouth of the Nile River in Egypt. From there the monastic life spread to Palestine and Syria, and thence to Asia Minor. In the 5th and 6th centuries, the monastic life was propagated in the West by St. Martin of Tours and St. Benedict.

1. The religious state is called the *state of perfection*, because those who embrace it have the obligation, through faithfulness to their vows, of aiming at *evangelical perfection*.

Those who are in the state of perfection are not necessarily all perfect; but they are expected to aim at perfection. Many people in the world are actually more holy than some in the religious state. It is however easier to strive after perfection in the religious state, where there are more aids and means than in the world with its distractions.

2. The call to the religious state is an invitation: "Not all can accept this teaching, but those to whom it has been given" (Matt. 19:11).

Members of religious orders or congregations are bound by the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They are devoted to the exclusive service of God, "without distractions" (1 Cor. 7:35).

WHO MAY BE ADMITTED into the religious state?

Any Catholic who is free from impediment, and who has a right intention, and who is fitted to fulfill the duties of the religious life may be admitted into the religious state.

1. *The principal impediments to admission to the religious state are:* an existing marriage, lack of **age** (being less than 15 years of age), debts that must be paid, **parents** who need one's support.

The mere opposition of parents who do not need one to support them **is not an obstacle**. Many Saints had to meet parental objections firmly before they could join religious orders.

2. *If one has a firm desire* and resolution to enter a religious community out of a good motive, **to serve God better**, he or she has the right **intention** for the religious state.

One who may intend to join a religious congregation in the hope of obtaining honors or of having an easy life, has not the right intention.

3. *Among the things needed* to fulfill the duties of a religious life are: **virtue, sufficient health, and adequate education** for the work of the particular congregation to be joined.

In general, the qualifications for a vocation are **good will, good health, and good sense**.

WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN in embracing the religious state?

Before any definite decision is made, **a competent spiritual director should be consulted**, regarding both spiritual and practical matters.

One need not be strongly attracted to the religious state before deciding to embrace it. Feelings generally have nothing to do with the matter; what is most needed is **will**. Feelings pass, but day after day one needs a strong will to remain faithful to the vows taken in a religious congregation.

1. *One should apply* for admission into the religious community chosen. If one is refused and has to return home, he or she should not feel disgraced. **The novitiate is precisely a trial, to find out one's qualifications.**

Those who are sent out should recognize the trial as permitted by God, and offer it up to Him. It is the practice of many religious congregations to **refuse candidates who have been novices or even postulants** in other congregations.

2. *Once accepted and permitted to take the vows*, all one has to do is **to persevere**, to live according to the vows, and try day to day to attain to the highest perfection.

How SHOULD PARENTS behave if their child chooses a religious vocation?

Parents should give special praise and thanksgiving to God for the blessing, if their child chooses a religious vocation.

Mrs. Colonel Vaughan, an English mother, **prayed every day that all her children** might become **priests and nuns**. In time, of her eight sons one became a **cardinal**, a second an **archbishop**, another a **bishop**, and **three priests**; all of her **five daughters** became **Sisters**.

1. **As no one should be forced, so no one should be prevented** from becoming either a priest, brother, or a sister. It is **a sin for parents to oppose or prevent** their child's religious vocation.

Our Lord promised, "Everyone who has left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, **shall receive a hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting**" (Matt. 19:29).

2. It is a **great honor** for a family to have even one of its members **dedicated to the special service of God**, as a priest, a brother or a nun.

Our Lord said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). By this "hate" does not mean to break God's commandment of love; it means only to give up for God's sake, to detach oneself from what is good, in order to be fully attached to the one infinitely Perfect Good, God. **"Every one of you who does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be my disciple"** (Luke 14:33).

What is THE DOWRY?

The dowry is **a sum of money required by congregations of women**, payable upon the profession of a novice as member of the community.

1. *The purpose of the dowry is to provide the person with some support* should she leave the community at the end of her temporary vows, or after a dispensation, or upon dismissal.

In case one leaves the community, the dowry is returned to her intact. Meanwhile, during her stay in the community, the interest on the dowry is used for her maintenance.

2. *Those who cannot give a dowry may be dispensed* with the consent of the Holy See. **Applicants who have completed their education** are more easily dispensed.



1. "SEE THE STOLE I'LL WEAR SOME DAY!"



2. "THE HARVEST INDEED IS ABUNDANT, BUT THE LABORERS ARE FEW" MATT. 9:37.



3. "SOME DAY I'LL BE A SISTER LIKE YOU AND TEACH."

"The harvest indeed is abundant, but the laborers are few!" Jesus calls to his special service, far workers in His harvest. A boy and a girl hear the call. The boy (1) says to his parents: "See the stole I'll wear some day!" And the girl (3) dreams

of the day when she will be teaching school as a religious Sister. If one feels, as these two young people do, that he should like to serve God fully, let him hasten to consecrate himself to God in the priestly or religious state.

179. Religious Communities

HOW MAY religious communities BE CLASSIFIED?

Religious communities may be classified as *orders* or *congregations*.

1. *Religious "orders"* are those institutes in which the *members take solemn vows*; they are chiefly the old orders of monks and nuns.

Among the *religious orders* for men in the United States are: Augustinians, Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Trappists and others.

2. *Religious "congregations"* are those in which the *members take only "simple public vows"*; most religious communities are of this kind. The Jesuits, after a number of years in simple vows, may also take solemn vows.

For men among the largest communities are: Divine Word Fathers, Jesuits, Passionists, Redemptorists, Salesians, Salvatorians and others. For women we have too many to be able to enumerate them.

3. *Religious institutes* may also be classified as *clerical* or *lay*. The "*clerical communities*" are those in which a great proportion of the members are priests. The "*lay communities*" are those with the great majority of their members not ordained priests.

For men, these last are what we term *brotherhoods*, such as the: De la Salle Brothers, Marist Brothers, St. Francis Xavier Brothers, Sacred Heart Brothers.

4. *Some communities* follow "*the manner of life of religious*," living together under the government of superiors and with approved constitutions. But *their members* do

not *take* "public" but *only "private" vows*, or *make only a "pledge"* to live in community life. However, under many aspects, the *Code of Canon Law likens them to religious institutes* and their members to religious. *The difference* between them and the religious *proper is hardly noticed.*

Among the most well-known of such societies we have the Vincentians, Maryknoll Fathers, Oratorians of St. Philip Neri, and Fathers of the Precious Blood.

5. A new development in the life of the evangelical counsels is the *Secular Institutes*, whose members *have neither public vows nor common life*, but follow a profession in the world.

In what KINDS OF WORK are the religious communities engaged?

They are engaged in *all kinds of work*, ranging from the *purely contemplative* life of prayer to the *active life* of missionaries.

1. Members of *contemplative "orders"* are *strictly cloistered*, and devote their life chiefly to prayer and penance. *This prayer is* not for the individual alone, but *for the greater honor and glory of God*, the well-being of the *Mystical Body of Christ*, the *reclaiming of all into the Fold of the Good Shepherd.*

Among *contemplative orders* we may mention the Carthusian and Cistercian monks, and the Carmelite, Poor Clare and Perpetual Adoration nuns.

2. Members of *semi-contemplative* communities observe the *"mixed life;"* they *superimpose the active on the contemplative life.* They seldom leave their houses, and engage themselves in teaching, caring for penitents and orphans, etc.

Among *semi-contemplative congregations* we may mention: the Assumption Sisters, Dominican Sisters, and Good Shepherd Sisters.

3. The religious communities of *active life* are dedicated to teaching, hospital work, mission work, etc. *Active life* does not refer to mere bodily activity, but to *external activities carried on outside the religious house.*

Thus Cistercians who farm their land do not pursue an active life. *Most of the religious institutes in the United States are engaged in the active life.* Among them we may mention: Jesuits, Franciscan Tertiaries, Vincentians, Passionists, Redemptorists, Salesians, and Brothers of Christian Schools.

WHICH religious community SHOULD ONE CHOOSE who wishes to dedicate his life entirely to God?

One who wishes to dedicate his life entirely to God should choose the religious community *best suited to his inclination and ability.*

Besides priests, *religious are needed, both men and women*, for the schools, the hospitals, the teaching of religion, care of the poor, and of the missions.

Women cannot become priests, but they can be *very useful as religious Sisters.* Many a soul has been converted to the Faith because of the example, the prayers, or the influence of a Sister. *Sisters are most useful too in the missions;* they are the auxiliaries of the missionary priests in their difficult work of winning souls for Christ.

How can one HELP INCREASE the number of priests and religious?

1. *Every one should pray* steadfastly and sincerely for priests and religious.

2. *Those who are financially able* should support poor candidates in seminaries and religious houses of formation.

3. Lastly, *he who is earnest about the service of God should decide whether he is willing to consecrate himself entirely to that service.* Such as have the will and necessary qualifications should either enter the *priesthood* or one of the *religious congregations.*

It is the opinion of many bishops and priests that there would be more vocations to the religious life if the orientation towards a more pastoral and apostolic life, advocated by *Pope Pius XII and Pope John XXIII*, would be accelerated. This means that some changes should be made. *Prolonged prayers and non-liturgical devotions should be abbreviated* or not held at a time when the religious should be engaged in apostolic work. *Pope John XXIII wrote in 1962* to the religious: "...Remember that it is not by prayer alone but also by works that we shall obtain a new orientation of society based on the Gospel." *The regulations of the enclosure should be modified*, so that religious sisters may do their apostolate also after sunset. In older days, after sunset, women in general remained at home. Times, however, have changed. Therefore, sisters should be with their charges when most needed. *Habits of the religious should be simplified* by cutting off useless ornamentations and starched, unhygienic and antiquated trimmings. *Pope Pius XII told the Superiors General (1952)* that "certain customs which, though they formerly had some meaning in a different cultural context, no longer have any," and that in such customs, "a young, fervent and courageous girl would find nothing but fetters inhibiting her vocation and her apostolate."



The Church has blessings for persons, places, and things. A mother after childbirth is blessed. Anybody may ask a priest to bless him. Houses and places of business, fields and crops, may be

blessed. Devotional articles, such as medals, rosaries, crucifixes, images and holy pictures, may be blessed. All these blessings and objects blessed are sacramentals.

180. Sacramentals

What are SACRAMENTALS?

Sacramentals are *holy things or actions of which the Church makes use to obtain for us from God*, through its intercession, *spiritual and temporal favors*.

1. *These holy actions and objects* are called *sacramentals* because in some ways they *resemble the sacraments*. The term is applied to whatever the Church uses for the promotion of devotion in the worship of God: *consecrations and blessings, the objects consecrated or blessed, prayers and ceremonies*.

As in the sacraments, *visible signs* are used in the sacramentals, such as *holy water, sacred oils, the sign of the cross, etc.*, together with a *formula of words*. By these visible signs God's benediction is invoked on persons, places, or things.

2. *Our Lord sanctioned the use of sacramentals: He blessed the loaves and fishes, the young children, and the Apostles before the Ascension. He gave the Apostles power over evil spirits, to cast them out and to heal all kinds of diseases.*

In the Old Testament we read of *God's blessing* our first parents, of Noe blessing his two sons, of Isaac blessing Jacob, of Jacob blessing his twelve sons, of Moses blessing the tribes of Israel. The Jewish priests blessed the people every day. "*Cleanse me of sin with HYSSOP, that I may be purified*" (Ps. 50:9). "*Therefore I disown what I have said, and repent in dust and ASHES*" (Job 42:6).

3. *In sacramentals* the Church makes use of *ceremonies*, in imitation of Our Lord and the example of the Old Law, in which *God Himself prescribed ceremonies*.

In working miracles, *Our Lord used His breath, made clay, used gestures*, when He could have worked them as easily by a mere act of His will. Our Lord gave the Church power to instruct men, and therefore the implied power to do whatever is necessary to help out the purpose. *Ceremonies* without doubt *add solemnity to religious acts*, and increase devotion.

Which are THE CHIEF KINDS OF SACRAMENTALS?

1. BLESSINGS given by priests and bishops.

(a) *Priests* are authorized to *give the blessings for sacramentals*, with the exception of those especially reserved to the bishops.

The laity can bless, but not in the name of the Church. Thus we have the custom of parents blessing their children when they leave the house, at the Angelus, or when they go on a journey. In these private blessings, the more pious the person giving the blessing, the greater its effect.

(b) *Several acts of consecration* appertain solely to *bishops*, and may be performed only by priests with the necessary faculties. *Examples are:* the consecration of *churches, altars, sacred vessels* for Mass, and *bells*; and blessing of the *holy oils* (done on Holy Thursday in the cathedral church).

Church bells are principally used to summon the faithful to divine service, and also to invite them to pray, as at the ringing of the *Angelus*.

These are the *principal ceremonies* at the *blessing of a bell*: The *bell* is raised, *washed* inside and out with water mixed with salt, and then dried carefully with towels. *Psalms* are recited, and prayers are said begging God to bless the faithful every time the bell rings. The *exterior of the bell* is *anointed* in seven places, with the holy oil for the sick. Then the *inside* is *anointed* in four places, with holy chrism. *The bell* is *named* in honor of and after one of the saints. Then the censer containing lighted incense and myrrh is placed under the bell, to incense and perfume the interior. The elaborate ceremony *ends with the singing of the Gospel describing Our Lord's visit to Mary and Martha*.

2. *EXORCISMS* against evil spirits.—The exorcism of possessed persons or things consists in having the minister of the Church *command the evil spirit to depart from the person or thing*. In modern times cases of possession are comparatively rare; this we can gratefully attribute to the blessings and grace of Christianity. *Nevertheless such cases still occur*; should we hear of any, let us notify the priest.

"Then having summoned the twelve Apostles, he gave them power and authority over all the devils" (Luke 9:1). He declared, "In my name they (the Apostles) shall cast out devils" (Mark 16:17). The Apostles and disciples exercised this power: "The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy name'" (Luke 10:17). Our Lord Himself commanded many devils to depart from possessed persons of His time. (Matt. 8:28-34; Mark 1:23-28; Luke 9:37-44).

3. *BLESSED OBJECTS* of devotion.—Of these *we may make mention of*: holy oils, holy water, candles, ashes, palms, crosses and crucifixes, scapulars, medals, Agnus Deis, rosaries, images, holy pictures, bells, and blessed dresses.

All objects used in divine service, such as sacred vessels, linens, vestments, are specially blessed. Mother Church has special blessings for everything we use: for radios, automobiles, airplanes, fields, libraries, etc. *We should ask the priest to bless everything we use and have.* As St. Paul said: "*Whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God*" (1 Cor. 10:31). By sacramental blessings, we consecrate to God all we are and have, and make use of the intercessory prayer of the Church.

Common sacramental BLESSINGS FOR PERSONS AND PLACES:

1. *Blessings for persons*.—Of these *the most common* are the blessing at the end of Mass and other liturgical occasions, the blessing for communicants, the nuptial blessing, the blessing for mothers before and after childbirth, the blessing for the sick, the last blessing for the dying, the blessing of the remains of the dead, the consecration of kings, abbots, monks and nuns.

2. *The consecration of kings, abbots, monks, and nuns*, consists in having them formally set apart by the Church through its minister so as to be dedicated to its special service.

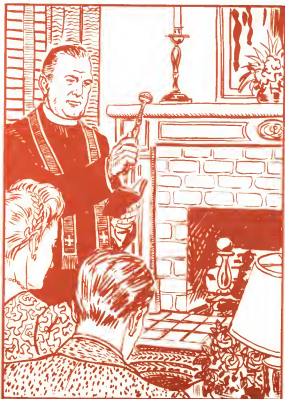
The consecration of bishops and ordination of priests is a *sacrament*.

The ceremonies of "*Religious Vestition*" (clothing) and "*Profession of Vows*" are considered *sacramentals*. They may take place during Mass. There are *votive masses* for the occasion.

3. *Blessings for places*.—Among the *most common places blessed* are: churches, chapels, altars, cemeteries, dwelling-houses, places of business, farms, crops.

The home of every Catholic, as well as his place of business, should be blessed.

(For consecration of churches, see page 412).



1. EVERY HOUSE SHOULD BE BLESSED

1. Every new house should be blessed. The blessing should be renewed every year during the Easter time. In its ritual the Church prays that God may sanctify the house, and that angels may abide within its walls, and protect all living therein.

2. Holy water is one of the principal sacramentals of the Church. In blessing holy water, the



2. HOLY WATER IS A SACRAMENTAL

priest first blesses salt, then water, and then mixes both with special prayers. The water symbolizes purity of soul; the salt stands for prudence; the combination is a symbol of purity and immortality. As often as possible, we should make the sign of the cross, first dipping the fingers in holy water. Seven years' indulgence is gained each time.

181. Use and Value of Sacramentals

How should we make USE OF THE SACRAMENTALS?

We should make use of the sacramentals *with faith and devotion, and never make them objects of superstition.*

1. *If we use sacramentals, as they should be used, in acknowledgment of our faith in the efficacy of the blessing of the Church which God Himself founded, our act will be pleasing to God, and the sacramentals will profit us. If we wear a crucifix or medal on our persons, hoping that by God's grace it will preserve us from evil, we are not superstitious.*

We must remember however that of themselves sacramentals have no power. They only have power through the prayer of the Church which uses the authority given by Christ.

2. *If one uses sacramentals in the spirit of those who look upon them as powerful in themselves, with no reference either to God or to the Church, or his own state of grace, he is superstitious.*

This is the case with the "charms" which certain ignorant persons use. They sometimes take a crucifix, a prayer-book, a medal, etc., and use it on their persons, believing that it is a charm which will make them immune to bullet-shots, wounds, etc. These charms are used by such persons without any reference whatever to their original purpose of sanctification; therefore, their use of no effect at all.

3. *We should use sacramentals constantly. Every Christian home should have holy water and blessed candles.* Every Christian should receive as many blessings as he can. *Every mother should take her newly-born infant to church* to receive the blessing of the Church. *Every Christian house or building should be blessed.*

Some take an attitude of contempt towards sacramentals as fit only for women. They have as much need of prayer and faith as women. *Christians reverence and make use of sacramentals, and have firm confidence in the prayer of the Church to make them effective.* They know that everybody, however holy, has need enough, in this vale of tears, of all the help he can obtain from God.

4. *A Catholic home should have a private altar* before which the family assembles for prayers. It should have *blessed images and a crucifix.* *Every room should have a crucifix.*

Many homes have the laudable custom of keeping burning an oil or electric *votive lamp* on their family altar. In many homes it is the custom to sprinkle the beds with holy water before retiring at night.

5. *Whenever we are in trouble,* pain, danger, or temptation, the use of sacramentals is of great benefit. Every Catholic should own a *blessed rosary*, and use it. *Every Catholic,* man, woman, boy, girl, or child should wear *on his person* a *blessed crucifix* or *medal* or *scapular*. It serves to remind the wearer in times of danger that there is a God Who cares what happens to his soul.

6. *The Church, by the use of sacramentals, teaches the faithful the truths of religion,* aside from exciting good thoughts and increasing devotion. The truths of our faith are taught by sacramentals through the faculty of sight, as explanations teach them through hearing. *Thus sacramentals are like picture books that are used as aids in the teaching of religion.*

One, however simple and unlettered, who kneels before a crucifix and knows about the death of Our Lord on the cross, will better be able to realize His love and sacrifice, than if the catechist merely repeated over and over again that Jesus suffered and died for us.

HOW DO THE SACRAMENTALS OBTAIN FAVORS FROM GOD?

The sacramentals obtain favors from God *through the prayers of the Church offered for those who make use of them,* and through the devotion they inspire.

1. Unlike the sacraments, *sacramentals* were instituted *by the Church,* not by Christ; *they are not necessary to salvation.*

The blessing in a sacramental consists in this: the minister of God, praying in the name of His Church, invokes the divine benediction upon the person, place, or object concerned.

2. Unlike the sacraments, *sacramentals* of themselves *have no power to confer grace.*

The divine blessing averts earthly ills and promotes temporal welfare, whereas the divine grace beautifies the soul. The first is chiefly temporal, and the second particularly spiritual, in effect.

3. *The effect of sacramentals depends on the pious dispositions of the person* using them.

Sacramentals increase devotion by fixing our thoughts on particular virtues, and helping us appreciate them. *For example, upon looking at a crucifix we think of the love of Christ for us; we remember what He suffered to prove that love; we become sorry for the sins that caused such tortures.*

THE CHIEF BENEFITS obtained by the use of the sacramentals are:

1. Actual graces.

If we use them with proper dispositions, that is, while in the state of grace and with firm faith and confidence, sacramentals can profit us greatly.

2. The forgiveness of venial sins.

Sacramentals excite good thoughts and inspire devotion and greater love of God as well as greater sorrow for sin; this devotion and sorrow bring grace, and the grace thus obtained in turn obtains the forgiveness of venial sins. *Contrition always remits sin, and sacramentals are an aid to true contrition.*

3. Remission of temporal punishment.

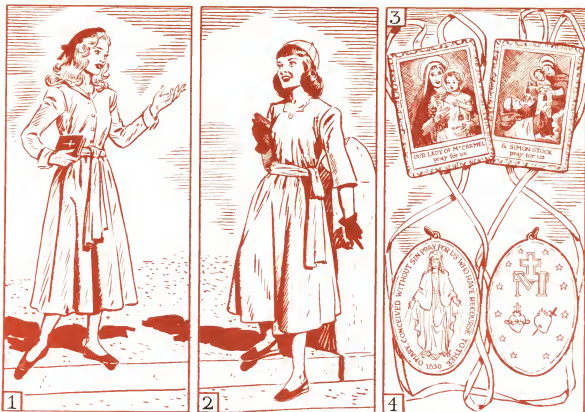
In the old times the Israelites were granted numerous graces through the use of certain objects. If that was there in the Old Law, *spiritual results must be obtained in the New Law.*

4. Health of body and material blessings.

The Apostles anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed them. Innumerable are the examples in modern times of the extraordinary effects of sacramentals.

5. Protection from evil spirits.

We need the protection of sacramentals against the devil, that goes about seeking souls to devour.



The illustration (1) shows a girl wearing the blessed dress of Our Lady of Lourdes. It is white, with a blue sash tied in front. (2) shows one wearing the blessed dress of Our Lady Mary, Help of Christians. It is coral pink, with a powder blue sash tied in a bow at the left side. All blessed dresses must

be modest, with long sleeves and closed necklines.

The illustration (3) is a scapular of Our Lady of Carmel. After being imposed, it may be substituted by a properly blessed scapular medal. (4) shows the two faces of the Miraculous Medal. Our Lady herself revealed the design for it.

182. Blessed Objects of Devotion

Which are the blessed OBJECTS of devotion MOST USED by Catholics?

The blessed objects of devotion most used by Catholics are: *holy water, candles, ashes, palms, crucifixes, medals, rosaries, scapulars, and images of Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints.*

1. **Holy Water**, through the blessing received, brings on us the intercession of the whole Church. However, as the other sacramentals, **it has no magic power**—its efficacy depends on our devotion.

Holy water is placed at the doors of all churches and chapels, for us to use when we go in and out. We should also have it at the doors of all our rooms in our homes. Holy water is used in many blessings of the Church, for the dead, for the consecration of churches, etc.

2. **CANDLES** and other lights are used in the Church as much as holy water. They stand for Christ, the "**Light of the World.**" Candles are blessed on the Feast of the Purification or Candlemas Day, in memory of Holy Simeon's words, calling Christ the "**light of revelation to the Gentiles**" (Luke 2:32).

When we burn lights by the corpses or graves of our dead, we pray that they may be admitted soon into the light of heaven, the sight of God. We burn lights before images of the saints, as a symbol of the virtues with which they were endowed, and as a supplication for help through their intercession.

The candle lighted at our Baptism denotes the light of the Holy Spirit, which we then receive, and recalls the words of Christ, "So let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). On the altar, the lights signify the

presence of Christ, the Light of the World, Who comes down on it at the consecration.

3. **ASHES** are blessed on Ash Wednesday, and marked on the foreheads of the faithful, to remind them of the words of God to Adam: "In the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, since out of it you were taken; for dust you are and unto dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19).

In crossing our foreheads with ashes on Ash Wednesday, the priest says: "Remember, man, that you are dust, and to dust you will return."

4. **PALMS** are blessed on the Sunday preceding the Feast of Easter, in commemoration of the entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem before His Passion, when He was received with joy and acclaimed with Hosannas.

During the blessing of the palms, the priest prays that those who receive and keep them may be preserved from sin and danger. It is customary to hang up in some part of our homes the blessed palms we receive on Palm Sunday. The palm is a symbol of victory over sin, of triumphal entry into heaven.

5: No church, altar, cemetery, or Catholic institution is without the cross or **CRUCIFIX**; no home should be without it.

No Catholic dies without the crucifix; and no one should live without carrying it somewhere on his person. When we look at it we remember the infinite love of God for us; with the cross of Christ He proved this love. (See page 201.)

6. The most commonly-worn medals are the **SCAPULAR MEDALS** and the Miraculous Medal. The *scapular medals* are substitutes for the cloth scapulars. The *Miraculous Medal* was revealed by Our Lady to Sister Catherine Laboure, a Sister of Charity. The Blessed Virgin appeared to her in the posture now shown on the medal, with the ejaculation, "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee" around her. The Blessed Virgin bade Sister Catherine have a medal made according to that model, promising those who should wear it great blessings.

The reverse of the medal, also revealed by Our Lady, has the letter M surmounted by a cross, the two Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and twelve stars. The many cures, temporal blessings and spiritual graces received in a few years by those who first wore the medal caused it to be known as the Miraculous Medal. The feast of our Lady of the Miraculous Medal is celebrated on November 27.

7. Most commonly worn **SCAPULARS** are the brown scapular and the blue scapular.

(a) The *brown scapular* is the badge of the Confraternity of Carmel. The members are supposed to say the office, but for lay people this may be changed to three Hail Marys, which may be part of their daily prayers. Only priests with the proper faculties can impose the brown scapular.

The original scapular was designed to hang over the head, in front and behind, as many religious still wear it, forming part of their habit.

(b) The *blue scapular* is a devotion in honor of our Lady's Immaculate Conception. It requires the wearers to live a life of chastity according to their state, to pray for the conversion of sinners.

There are besides other scapulars as those of the Seven Dolours, of the Holy Trinity and of the Passion. All these five scapulars may be substituted by a properly blessed medal one face of which has the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the other face Our Lady's image under whatever title. The medal can substitute only after the cloth scapular has been imposed.

8. An **AGNUS DEI** is a disk of white wax stamped with the image of a lamb and cross (standing for Christ); it is solemnly blessed by the Pope and distributed in Rome on the Saturday after Easter.

Formerly the *Agnus Dei* was given only to the newly baptized who carried it on their persons, in honor of the "Lamb of God."

9. The most commonly used *blessed dresses* are those in honor of our Lady of Lourdes, of our Lady of Sorrows, of the Immaculate Conception, of Carmel, of Mary Help of Christians, of St. Anthony, and of St. Joseph. These dresses are worn as a promise, or to obtain some special favor. Their use is not binding under pain of sin.

The use of these blessed dresses should be encouraged, as a reminder to our girls to dress modestly always. The formula for blessing a dress is in the Roman Ritual: "Benedictio Vestis et Cinguli." Even if one who has promised to wear a blessed dress fails to fulfill her promise, she commits no sin. She merely loses the graces that otherwise she would have received by the faithful fulfillment of her promise.



The following illustrate the qualities of prayer: "He who serves God willingly is heard; his petition reaches the heavens" (Sirach 35:16). "Let my prayer come like incense before you; the lifting up of my

hands, like the evening sacrifice" (Ps. 140:2). "The Lord is near to all who call upon him" (Ps. 144:18). "Ask, and it shall be given you;...knock, and it shall be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7).

183. Objects and Qualities of Prayer

What is PRAYER?

Prayer is *the lifting up of our minds and hearts to God*.

1. Prayer is *loving conversation* with God, our *loving Father*. The mere thought of God is not prayer: *devils think of God, but they do not pray*.

Is it not an honor to be allowed to talk to the President of our country? But at any moment we can talk to God Almighty in prayer; He has no hours of appointment; He has no secretaries to forbid our entrance into His presence.

2. *God not only permits, but commands* us to pray. Prayer is a privilege and a duty.

"And he also told them a parable—that they must always pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1). *God wants us to talk to Him at any hour of the day and night, and even of the most trifling things.* The more often we speak to Him, the better is He pleased. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

3. *Prayer* includes every kind of *divine worship*: reception of the sacraments, offering Mass, attending sermons, Benediction. *All devotions of the Church are prayers.*

Prayer is a means by which we obtain God's help. *No man can be just who does not pray.* Prayer is a recognition of the Creator and His power.

WHY DO WE PRAY?

1. *To adore God, expressing to Him our love and loyalty.*

This is the prayer of *praise*. We ought to praise God, Our Lord and Master, for his infinite perfections. *The Church praises Him unceasingly.*

The *Gloria* and *Sanctus* in the Mass, the *Te Deum*, and the *Gloria Patri* are *all prayers of praise*. The Blessed Virgin praised God in the *Magnificat*. We must adore God as becomes reasonable human beings. Chain prayers are foolish.

2. To thank Him for His favors.

This is the prayer of *thanksgiving*. All we have comes from God, and we are obliged to render Him thanks. *Too many take His favors for granted, and neglect to thank Him.*

Christ Himself complained when He healed ten lepers, for *only one returned to give Him thanks* (Luke 17:12-19). If somebody picks up a pencil we have dropped, we hasten to thank him with a smile; *but for God* Who made us and keeps us in health and happiness, *we are not polite.*

3. To obtain from Him the pardon of our sins, and the remission of their punishment.

This is the prayer of *contrition*. *It is a form of petition, for by it we ask God to forgive us.*

The good thief prayed: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" (Luke 23:42). And how well and quickly he was rewarded! *God never forgives our sins without contrition.*

4. To ask for graces and blessings for ourselves and others.

This is the prayer of *petition*. God wishes us to ask Him for all that we need, spiritual or temporal. He knows our needs better than we do, but *He prefers to have us ask Him*; thus He obtains our cooperation *in the dispensation of His gifts.*

Christ Himself used a prayer of petition in the Garden and on the Cross. The Christians prayed for the deliverance of Peter when he was in prison. *"Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"* (Rom. 10:13).

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

1. With attention.

We should remember to Whom we are talking, and *avoid deliberate distractions*. Let us prepare ourselves before prayer and assume a reverent posture.

To be properly attentive, we must pay attention to the words we say, and to God Who hears. In order to be pleasing to God, we must pray *in the name of Jesus* and in accordance with His will. We must therefore pray for whatever is for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The Church prays always in the name of Christ: "Through Christ our Lord." Our Lord promised: *"If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you"* (John 16:23).

2. With a conviction of our own helplessness and our dependence upon God.

We should humbly *acknowledge our nothingness*, our unworthiness, and God's greatness.

"The prayer of the lowly pierce the clouds" (Eccli. 35:17). Remember how Christ praised the publican who humbly struck his breast and prayed: *"O God, be merciful to me a sinner."* We are entirely dependent on God our Creator; whatever He refuses us, we cannot have. *"Without me, you can do nothing"* (John 15:5).

3. With a great desire for the graces we beg of Him.

It is *far from polite* to a fellowman to ask him for something and at the same time *to act as if we did not care whether he granted our request or not*. How much more reprehensible such an action would be before Almighty God!

To prove our great desire for the favor we ask, *we must be sure to possess a pure heart*, to be in the state of grace. Even the prayer of sinners is profitable, especially when they are sorry for their sins; but the purer our heart is, the better is God disposed to hear our petitions.

4. With loving trust in His goodness.

We should have confidence, filled with *a firm belief that God will grant our prayer* if it is for our good. God loves to see faith, confidence, and trust in our hearts. At the same time, we should be *resigned to God's will*. We must leave to God's good pleasure the granting or withdrawing of our wish, how and when He would grant it.

"Amen I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Arise, and hurl thyself into the sea,' and does not waver in his heart, but believes that whatever he says will be done, it shall be done for him" (Mark 11:23). God knows best what is for our good. We ought not to dictate to Him how and when to answer our prayers.

5. With perseverance.

Even if our petition is not immediately granted, *we should not stop praying*. "We must always pray, and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1).

Our Lord Himself told the parable of the man who continued knocking, and thus actually forced his friend to give him what he wanted. St. Monica prayed for eighteen years for the conversion of her son; after that he became a Doctor of the Church and a great saint—St. Augustine. *Our Lord* also gave us the example in this; after having labored all day, He *frequently passed the night in prayer.*



1. GRACE AT MEALS



3. PRAY WITH THE FAMILY



2. NIGHT PRAYERS



4. PRAY WHEN TEMPTED

We should make prayer a part of our life, and pray on all occasions. In particular we must not neglect to pray before and after meals (1), upon

arising and retiring (2), before and after our work, and (4) when we are tempted. It is a beautiful custom to hold family prayers (3).

184. For Whom, When, and Where to Pray

FOR WHOM should we pray?

We should pray especially for ourselves, for our parents, relatives, friends and enemies, for sinners, for the souls in purgatory, for the Pope, bishops, and priests of the Church, and for the officials of our country.

1. We should pray for *ourselves*, for all our needs of soul and body.

We should particularly pray for those whom we love: our parents, brothers and sisters, friends and relatives, benefactors and superiors. We must also pray for our enemies and for all whom we may have injured.

2. We should pray for the *Church*, for all its spiritual and temporal needs, that it may be established in all hearts, that pagans, heretics, and sinners may be converted.

We must pray for our departed brethren, the souls in purgatory, that they may see God soon.

3. We should pray for our *country* and our temporal rulers, that their power may be used for the good of the people and the glory of God.

We should always pray that God's will may be done by all, that virtue may flourish everywhere. "Pray for one another, that you may be saved. For the unceasing prayer of a just man is of great avail" (James 5:16).

HOW DO WE KNOW that God always hears our prayers if we pray properly?

We know that God always hears our prayers if we pray properly, *because Our Lord has promised*: "If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you."

"Amen, amen, I say to you: if you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John 16:23). "Ask whatever you will, and it shall be done to you" (John 15:7).

1. **God never forgets a promise**, and how often has He promised to answer prayer!

Our Lord promised: "Ask and it shall be given you" (Matt. 7:7). "All things whatever you ask for in prayer, believing, you shall receive" (Matt. 21:22).

2. **God answers our prayers more quickly if** they are accompanied by some *sacrifice* or mortification, *to show our humility and earnestness*. A prayer is more powerful with God if several *join* in the petition, and if those who pray are just.

"If two of you shall agree on earth about anything at all for which they ask, it shall be done for them by my Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19).

WHY DO WE NOT ALWAYS OBTAIN what we pray for?

We do not always obtain what we pray for, either *because we have not prayed properly*, or because God sees that what we are asking would not be for our good.

In the latter case, God will grant us something better. *No prayer is offered in vain*. God is like a kind and wise father, who gives his child fruit instead of the knife he is crying for. *"Everyone who asks, receives" (Matt. 7:8).*

If we pray for favors or help, we must also do all we can to carry out our wishes. *For example, if we pray for the recovery of a loved one, we must get the best medical help we can.*

How many KINDS OF PRAYER are there?

There are *two kinds* of prayer: *mental* prayer and *vocal* prayer.

1. **MENTAL PRAYER** is that prayer by which *we unite our hearts with God* while thinking of His holy truths.

This kind of prayer is also called *"MEDITATION"*; in it we spend the time thinking of God or of certain truths He has revealed, and by such meditation we make resolutions to become better. *There are suitable books for a good short daily meditation.*

2. **VOCAL PRAYER** is that *which comes from the mind* and is *spoken by the lips*.

We can also pray in SONG, by means of hymns and other religious music. The public prayers of the Church are vocal. Vocal prayer is both useful and necessary. *Our body, as well as our soul, must give homage to God*. But praying with the lips alone, without the spirit, is worthless. That is *"lip service."*

Our Lord said, "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me" (Matt. 15:8).

MAY WE USE OUR OWN WORDS in praying to God?

We may use our own words in praying to God, and *it is well to do so often.*

In prayer, we may use authorized forms that we have learned, or we may speak to God in our own words according to the dictates of our heart. *We should often speak to God in our own words*, for they are more fitted to our needs and feelings than set forms. *We should speak to Him like a child to its father*. It is not necessary to say long prayers. *God regards not the length, but the fervor*: not the time spent, but the love. *There are no "MAGIC PRAYERS."* *A prayer is powerful depending on the love and confidence with which we say it.*

Are DISTRACTIONS in our prayers always DISPLEASING to God?

Distractions in our prayers are *not displeasing to God, unless they are willful.*

A busy mother, even at prayer, may have an undercurrent of thought about the children's lunch. *A businessman* who has several important decisions to make would very likely be distracted in prayer.

Prayers said with willful distractions are of no benefit to us. *They are like a phonograph record we play at God*. Since with such "prayers" our hearts and minds do not go up to God, and our will is not in God, they cannot be true prayers.

WHEN and WHERE should we pray?

We should pray *always*, and *in all places*.

St. Paul said: *"Whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God"* (1 Cor. 10:31). *"Pray without ceasing"* (1 Thess. 5:17).

1. *Even when we are not on our knees*, we should pray *while we work*. Even if it is mental work, we can stop once in a while to raise our hearts up to God. We should offer our work as a prayer to God, by directing our intention, and often renewing it.

Ejaculatory prayer, using short exclamations, is *most helpful*. Some good ejaculations are: "Blessed be God"; "All for Thee, my Jesus"; "My God and my all"; "Jesus, Mary, Joseph!"

2. *We can pray* at home, at work, in the company of others, even on the street. The *best place* to pray is *in church*, because it is the house especially consecrated to prayer.

We ought to say especially our *morning* and *night prayers, grace at meals*, and the Angelus three times a day. *We should also pray* when we are tempted, in misfortunes, danger, or need, and at the beginning of every important undertaking.



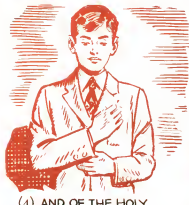
(1)



(2) IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER ...



(3) AND OF THE SON...



(4) AND OF THE HOLY...



(5) SPIRIT



(6) AMEN

To make the sign of the cross (1) join the hands in preparation, putting yourself in the presence of God. (2) Lay the left hand on the breast, and with the extended fingers of the right hand touch the forehead, saying, "In the Name of the Father."

(3) Touch the breast, saying: "And of the Son." (4) Touch the left shoulder, saying: "And of the Holy . . ."; then (5) the right shoulder, saying: "Spirit." Finally, (6) join the hands and say: "Amen."

185. The Sign of the Cross

HOW do we usually BEGIN and END our prayers?

We usually begin and end our prayers *with the sign of the cross.*

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14).

1. *Nothing in the Church* is begun, carried out, or completed, *without the sign of the cross.* It is used in innumerable blessings and ceremonials of the Church. *At Mass* alone it is used fifty-one times.

The sign of the cross is the most common way of confessing our faith. By it we can know Catholics from non-Catholics. It is believed that it *had its origin in apostolic times.*

2. *We make the sign of the cross* by touching with the outstretched fingers of the right hand the forehead, then the breast, and then the left and right shoulders, saying, "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*"

The sign should be made slowly, with great respect, as it is the sign of our salvation. *The left hand* should be laid *across the breast.*

3. *Another way of making the sign of the cross* is used at the two Gospels of the Mass. Then small signs of the cross are made with the thumb of the right hand on the forehead, on the lips, and on the breast. *This same sign* with the thumb alone *is made* on the forehead *at Baptism.*

4. In some countries a *double sign of the cross is made* in the following manner:

With the thumb of the right hand a *small cross is made on the forehead*, meanwhile saying: "By the sign of the holy Cross"; then a *small cross is made on the lips*, while saying: "from our enemies"; then a *small cross is made on the breast*, while saying: "deliver us, O Thou Lord our God"; and finally with index and middle fingers a *large sign of the cross is made*, touching forehead, breast, and shoulders, saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." *All these words are from the Roman Missal.*

5. *We should make the sign of the cross especially upon arising* in the morning and *retiring* at night; *before and after* our prayers, meals and principal actions; and *whenever* we are *tempted* or *in danger*. *Whenever* we are *blessed*, at Mass, at Benediction, or elsewhere, we should make it.

It is customary to ask for a *priest's blessing* when he visits our home. We should then kneel and make the sign of the cross. An *indulgence* is attached to the sign of the cross. *Every time* we make it we gain three years' indulgence; *if made* with holy water, seven years' indulgence.

WHY do we make the sign of the cross?

We make the sign of the cross *to express two important mysteries* of the Christian religion, the *Blessed Trinity* and the *Redemption*.

1. When we say, "*In the name,*" we express the truth that there is *only one God*; when we say, "*of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,*" we express the truth that there are *three distinct Persons* in God. And when we make the *form of the cross* on ourselves, we *express* the truth that the *Son of God, made man, redeemed us* by His death *on the cross*.

By this sign we confess that we *belong to the religion* of the crucified Saviour. By it a Catholic makes a clear confession of faith; by it he is known.

2. *By means of the sign of the cross* we obtain *God's blessing* and protection from dangers both spiritual and physical.

Of itself the sign of the cross is a blessing, besides a prayer for God's blessing. Since it is a sign of God and His crucified Son, the devil fears it, and it is a shield against temptation. The saints used to make the sign of the cross when evil thoughts assailed them; *many Catholics today follow their example*, and we should do the same. In doing so, we put a seal on our foreheads that proclaims, "*I belong to Christ, the King of all.*"

3. *The Church holds the sign of the cross in great reverence and honor*. All our churches, schools and other institutions, altars, graves, and sacred vestments *bear this sign*. Churches are usually built in the form of the cross.

St. John Damascene said: "The sign of the Cross is a seal, at sight of which the destroying angel passes on, and does us no harm." It is the Christian counterpart of the blood of the lamb marking the doorposts of the Israelites. It is the sign of Christ, the symbol of our redemption.

What are the prayers that every Catholic should KNOW BY HEART?

The prayers that every Catholic should know by heart are the *Our Father*, the *Hail Mary*, the *Apostles' Creed*, the *Confiteor*, the *Glory be to the Father*, and the *acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition*.

In addition, every Catholic should know the "*Angelus*," the "*Hail Holy Queen*," "*grace before and after meals*," a prayer to the guardian angel, one to St. Joseph, and Our Lady's *Memorare*.

1. *The "Gloria Patri"* (Glory be to the Father) is a prayer in *honor of the Blessed Trinity*. It is a prayer of praise, as well as an act of faith in the mystery of the Trinity.

We should repeat the "*Glory be to the Father*" every time we receive a benefit from God, and in times of suffering and temptation. We should repeat it often, in acknowledgment of the *chief mystery of the Catholic Faith, of the Blessed Trinity*.

2. *The acts of faith, hope, and charity* are special prayers said in adoration of God. The *act of contrition* also honors God, because in asking for the pardon of sins, we acknowledge His power to condemn and to save. The "*Confiteor*" is the long form of the act of contrition, and is used at Mass.

Even when we are in the midst of work, we can often send up to God the adoration we feel by making very short acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. We might say, for instance, "*Dear God, I believe in You; I hope in You; I love You with all my heart. I am sorry that I have offended You, because You are so good.*" For other occasions, we should also know by heart the longer forms.

3. *By the grace before and after meals*, we ask *God's blessing on our food*, and we *thank Him* for having given it to us.

One would think that *everybody would be eager to give God this act of courtesy*. Sad to say, many neglect to thank God for their daily food. *These prayers are on pages 418-421.*



"And it came to pass as he was praying in a certain place, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray'" (Luke 11:1). Our Lord therefore taught His disciples the "Our Father."

Jesus continued: "And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened (Luke 11:9-10).

186. The "Our Father"

Why is the "OUR FATHER" the best of all prayers?

The Our Father is the best of all prayers because it is the Lords Prayer, taught us by Jesus Christ Himself, a prayer of perfect and unselfish love.

1. The "Our Father" was taught by Christ Himself to us through His Apostles at their request. It has an introduction and seven petitions for all the needs of soul and body. It is at one and the same time a prayer of praise, petition, and contrition.

2. In the "Our Father" we not only pray in the name of Jesus, but in His own words. It is suited to every class and condition of men, from the simplest to the wisest.

Of this prayer more than of any other Our Lord's promise holds good: "If you ask the Father anything in my name, he will give it to you" (John 16:23).

3. In saying the "Our Father" we offer ourselves entirely to God and ask from Him the best things, not only for ourselves, but also for our neighbor. *No prayer means so much in so few words.*

Why do we address God as "Our Father Who art in heaven?"

We address God as "Our Father Who art in heaven," because we belong to Him, our loving Father, Who created us and watches over us, Who adopts us through sanctifying grace as His children and Who destines us to live for ever with Him in heaven, our true home.

1. "Our Father Who art in heaven" is the introduction. In it Our Lord taught us to be as little children, calling God "Father."

Thus we show our love of and confidence in Him. We say "Our" and not "My" because we pray not only for ourselves, but for all men. "We are sons of God" (Rom. 8:16).

2. We say, "Who art in heaven" to remind ourselves that *in heaven is God's throne, and there also is our true Home. "In my Father's house there are many mansions"* (John 14:2).

For what do we pray when we say "hallowed be Thy name?"

When we say "hallowed be Thy name," we pray that God may be known and honored by all men.

This is the first petition. It is placed first to teach us that we should put the glory of God first above all things else. "Praise the name of the Lord" (Ps. 112:1).

For what do we pray when we say "Thy kingdom come?"

When we say "Thy kingdom come," we pray that the kingdom of God's grace may be spread throughout the world, that all men may come to know and to enter the true Church and to live as worthy members of it, and that, finally, we all may be admitted to the kingdom of God's glory.

This is the second petition. We here acknowledge God to be the King and Lord of creation. We ask that all may recognize Him as such, that He may extend His care and providence to all.

For what do we pray when we say "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven?"

When we say "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we pray that all men may obey God on earth as willingly as the saints and angels obey Him in heaven.

This is the third petition. By it we pray for help to fulfill God's will and by being patient and resigned under trials, for no pain can befall us without God's permission. "He who does the will of my Father shall enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

For what do we pray when we say "Give us this day our daily bread?"

When we say "Give us this day our daily bread," we pray that God will give us each day all that is necessary to support the material life of our bodies and the spiritual life of our souls.

This is the fourth petition. The word "daily" shows that we are expected to ask every day, for the "bread" we ask for is only for one day. We are permitted to ask for temporal favors, provided they are not contrary to God's will.

For what do we pray when we say "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us?"

When we say "and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us," we pray that God will pardon the sins by which we have offended Him, and we tell Him that we pardon our fellow men who have offended us.

This is the fifth petition. We cannot expect God to forgive us if we do not forgive others. "If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offenses. But if you do not forgive men neither will your Father forgive you your offenses" (Matt. 6:14-15).

For what do we pray when we say "and lead us not into temptation?"

When we say "and lead us not into temptation," we pray that God will always give us the grace to overcome the temptations to sin which come to us from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

This is the sixth petition. Temptations come to us (1) from the world, other people and things of this earth full of vanities; (2) from the flesh, that is, from our own weak and corrupted nature; and (3) from the devil, the evil one whose only joy is in dragging souls to sin. We must do our part in resisting temptation by being vigilant against it, and by avoiding the occasions of sin. "Pray, that you may not enter into temptation" (Matt. 26:41). "God is faithful, and will not permit you to be tempted beyond your strength" (1 Cor. 10:13).

For what do we pray when we say "but deliver us from evil?"

When we say "but deliver us from evil," we pray that God will always protect us from all harm to soul and body, especially from sin.

This is the seventh and last petition in the Our Father.

What is meant by the word "Amen" with which we end the "Our Father?"

By the word "Amen" with which we end the Our Father, is meant "So it is," or "So be it;" the word expresses our confidence that all our petitions will be granted.



1. "The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And . . . he said, Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:27-28).



2. Mary went to visit her cousin Elizabeth: "And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Luke 1:41-42). When we pray the "Hail Mary," these two beautiful events came to mind.

187. Prayers to Mary

THE PRINCIPAL PRAYERS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

The "Hail Mary," the "Hail Holy Mary," the "Angelus," the "Rosary," and the "Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary."

What is the first part of the Hail Mary?

The first part of the "Hail Mary" is: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

1. *The first part of the "Hail Mary" is a prayer of praise. It is composed of (a) the words of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary; and (b) the words of St. Elizabeth to Mary. Because the prayer begins with the words of the Angel, the "Hail Mary" is in English*

termed the "Angelical Salutation." It is called "*Ave Maria*" in Latin.

The angel Gabriel said: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:28). The words of St. Elizabeth are "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb" (Luke 1:42).

2. *The first two words, "Hail Mary," mean: I salute thee. By this we testify our reverence for our Blessed Mother and congratulate her on her privileges.*

"He has regarded the loveliness of his handmaid; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:48).

3. *"Full of grace" means that Mary is the most holy and exalted of all creatures, possessed of all graces and gifts of God.*

She is the only one of all mortals that was conceived free from all stain of original sin. This is why we speak of Mary's *Immaculate Conception*. "You are beautiful, my beloved, and there is no blemish in you" (Cant. 4:7).

4. "The Lord is with thee" signifies that although all good persons are united with God, Mary in a special manner is more closely united with Him in love and power.

Mary was united with God even on earth in the closest union; she was like a tabernacle containing God, except that while the tabernacle only shelters Our Lord, her spirit and His were one, and even her blood and His were one.

5. "Blessed art thou among women" means that Mary has been privileged among all women, being the Mother of the Son of God. She is therefore higher in holiness, grace, and glory than any other woman.

Mary was blessed because the Son born of her brought her blessings. She is blessed as one who cooperated in the salvation of men; even on earth, she received the homage of angels and men.

6. "And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus" means that Mary is blessed because of her Son. All her glory and power come from Him, God who became her Son.

Mary is like a tree that bears good fruit; can any fruit be better than the Son of God? So touched was a woman by the holiness of that Son that she raised up her voice in praise: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that nursed thee" (Luke 11:27).

What is the SECOND PART of the "Hail Mary"?

The second part of the "Hail Mary" is: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death."

1. The second part of the "Hail Mary" is a prayer of petition, and was composed by the Church. In it we entreat Mary's intercession.

Mary, of all human beings, shared most in the bitter sufferings of her Son for the salvation of men. She cannot be deaf to our petitions to help us attain eternal salvation. She knows what her Son suffered for us.

2. "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners." We call ourselves sinners, for no man, except the Blessed Virgin, can be free from all sin. Knowing what power a mother, and especially the Mother of God, has over her Son, we beg Mary to pray for us.

There is no sinner fallen so low that Mary will refuse to entreat mercy for him if he is contrite.

3. In the words: "Now and at the hour of our death" we ask of Mary to obtain for us during life the gift of the love of God, and at the hour of death that help we shall need to enable us to save our soul.

The hour of death is the time above all times when we need help most. At that hour we may probably be racked by physical suffering which tempts us to forget God; we may very likely be attacked by the devil, by temptation when we are weakest. We may be overwhelmed by a fear of God. And so we plead with Mary to obtain for us the graces we shall need.

What is the "Hail Holy Queen"?

The "Hail Holy Queen" or "Salve Regina" is one of the most common prayers to Mary, composed in the eleventh century and attributed to the Benedictine monk Herman the Lame (*Contractus*).

What is the "Angelus"?

The "Angelus" is a prayer recited morning, noon, and evening, in honor of Mary and of the mystery of the Incarnation.

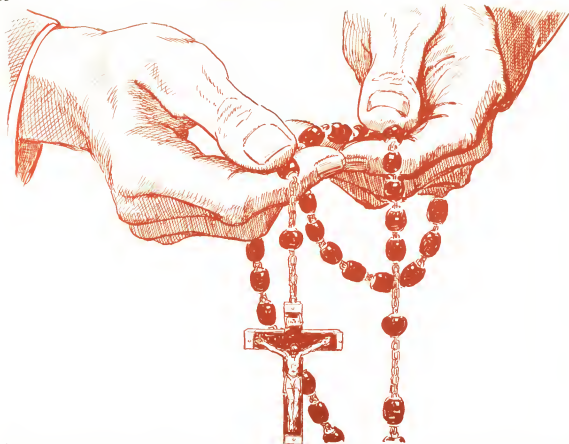
1. This prayer is called the *Angelus*, because its first word in Latin is "Angelus" meaning Angel. In the Easter season, the "Regina Coeli" is substituted for the *Angelus*.

The custom of ringing the bell for the *Angelus* dates from the eleventh century, during the Crusades, to admonish the faithful to pray for the victory of the crusaders.

2. For the "Angelus," the bell is rung thrice three separate times, with an interval of about half a minute each, while "the verse" and "an Ave Maria" are being said. Then, for "the longer prayer," the bell is rung continuously.

The words of the "Angelus," with explanations, are as follows: (1) *The Angel of the Lord* (Gabriel the Archangel) declared unto Mary (announced to Mary the birth of the Son of God). And she conceived of the Holy Spirit (and she became, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Mother of Jesus). Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word. (By the consent Mary gave in these words, God the Son came from heaven and became incarnate in her womb). And the Word (God the Son) was made flesh (became man). And dwelt among us (and lived on earth for thirty-three years, our Saviour and Lord).

The faithful who at dawn, at noon, and at evening, or as soon thereafter as may be, devoutly recite the *Angelus*, or at Eastertide the *Regina Coeli*, with the appropriate versicles and prayers, or who merely say the *Hail Mary* "five times," may gain an indulgence of ten years each time. (Racc. 331).



The Rosary is divided into the joyful, the sorrowful, and the glorious mysteries. In the joyful mysteries, we meditate on: (1) the Annunciation; (2) The Visitation; (3) The Birth of Jesus; (4) The Presentation; and (5) The Finding in the Temple. In the sorrowful mysteries we meditate on (1) The Agony

in the Garden; (2) The Scourging; (3) The Crown of Thorns; (4) The Carrying of the Cross, and (5) The Crucifixion. In the glorious mysteries we meditate on (1) The Resurrection; (2) The Ascension; (3) The Descent of the Holy Spirit; (4) The Assumption; and (5) The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin.

188. The Rosary

What is THE ROSARY?

The Rosary is a *prayer in honor of the Blessed Virgin*, consisting of *one hundred and fifty "Hail Marys"* and fifteen "*Our Fathers*" accompanied by meditation on the life, passion, and glory of Christ.

1. It is said that in the *Middle Ages* there were *hermits who could not read the psalms* in the psalter. So they used to substitute "*one Our Father*" and "*one Hail Mary*" for each psalm. To note the number, they made use of stones, or seeds strung on a cord.

The word "*rosary*" means a garland or wreath of roses. Each prayer said in the Rosary is a spiritual rose offered to our Blessed Mother.

2. *The Rosary* is a powerful prayer to obtain the grace of God through the *intercession* of the Blessed Virgin. *Pope John XXIII* in his encyclical letter (1959) on the Rosary tells us that the Rosary is an excellent means of prayer and meditation. As in his younger years, the holy Rosary continues to be very dear to his heart, so much that he never fails to recite it every day as an act of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In times of danger and calamity, the Rosary has been the means by which miraculous aid has been obtained. This was the case in the victory of Lepanto (1571), and the deliverance of Vienna (1683). It was in thanksgiving for these victories that the Holy Father instituted the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the Rosary on October the 7th.

3. *The very simplicity* of the Rosary makes it a prayer for children. For this reason it is the prayer of the little and the humble, and most pleasing in the eyes of God.

However, we must pray with devotion, attention and slowly. "Prayer is a loving conversation with God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints." There are "no magic" prayers. God will pay no attention to the prayers of a phonograph or of a parrot.

4. *At the same time the rosary is a prayer of contemplation;* the truths discovered from meditation on the mysteries presented can never be exhausted by even the most learned.

Pope Pius XII in his encyclical letter (1951) on the Rosary encourages the Christian people to realize "the dignity, the power, and the excellence of the Rosary."

"But it is above all in the bosom of the family that We desire the custom of the Holy Rosary to be everywhere adopted, religiously preserved, and ever more intensely practiced. In vain is a remedy sought for the wavering fate of civil life, if the family, the principle and foundation of the human community, is not fashioned after the pattern of the Gospel."

"To undertake such a difficult duty, We affirm that the custom of the family recitation of the Holy Rosary is a most efficacious means. What a sweet sight—most pleasing to God—when, at eventide, the Christian home resounds with the frequent repetition of praises in honor of the august Queen of Heaven! Then the Rosary, recited in common, assembles before the image of the Virgin, in an admirable union of hearts, the parents and their children, who come back from their daily work. It unites them piously with those absent and those dead. It links all more tightly in a sweet bond of love, with the most Holy Virgin, who, like a loving mother, in the circle of her children, will be there bestowing upon them an abundance of the gifts of concord and family peace."

The family that prays together stays together.

HOW IS the Rosary SAID?

Ordinarily, only one-third of the Rosary is said: fifty Hail Marys and five Our Fathers prayed on a string of beads slipped through the fingers.

The Rosary combines vocal with mental prayer. It is a summary of the most important parts of the Gospels, a most useful and powerful prayer. Catholics should not fail to say at least five decades of the Rosary each day.

1. *Ordinarily, we begin the Rosary by saying the Apostles' Creed.* Then we say one Our Father, three Hail Marys, and one Glory be to the Father for the increase of faith, hope and charity. *This is the introduction, but it is not necessary for the gaining of the indulgence.*

For every third part an indulgence of five years may be gained; if recited in company with others once a day, an indulgence of ten years (Rac. 395).

2. *We say the "Our Fathers" on the large beads* and the "Hail Marys" on the small beads. One Our Father, and the ten Hail Marys following, are called a decade. Five decades make the chaplet of beads. It is customary to close each decade with a "Glory be to the Father."

While reciting the Rosary, everyone should hold his own rosary in his hand. If several are saying the Rosary together, only one need have a rosary in his hand and regulate the number of prayers.

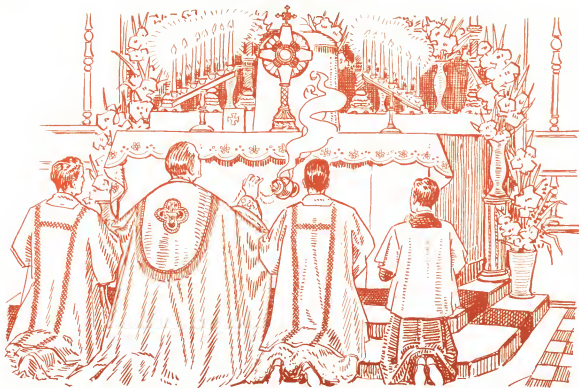
3. *While we say each decade, we should meditate upon one mystery of our faith.* The Rosary is divided into the joyful, the sorrowful, and the glorious mysteries, each honoring respectively the life, the passion, and the glorification of Our Lord.

The objection is often made that the Rosary is not a praiseworthy prayer because in it one prayer, the Hail Mary, is repeated so often. In reply to this objection we would say that one who has a feeling much at heart generally repeats over and over certain words that give expression to that feeling. Note a child begging for something. Besides, this practice has Holy Scripture itself, and even Our Lord, for a model: in the Psalms, the words "His mercy endureth forever" are repeated in only one psalm as many as twenty-seven times; the angels intimate that their song of "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts" is unceasing; in the Garden, Our Lord repeated His prayer.

What is the LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN?

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin is a prayer in which the most glorious titles are given to the Mother of God, as her intercession is invoked.

The LITANY is a succession of glorious and symbolic salutations. In it we call her *Mystical Rose*, because the beauty of her soul fulfilled the prophecy, "I am raised aloft, ... like a palm tree in En-gaddi, like a rosebush in Jericho" (Sirach 24:14). We address her as *Tower of David* and *Tower of Ivory*, because she rises up above all men in beauty and strength of soul. She is called *House of Gold* because God Himself dwelt within her as in a Temple. She is the *Ark of the Covenant*, because as it contained the tables of the Mosaic Law, so she contained the Lawgiver of all, God. She is invoked as the *Gate of Heaven*, because we beg her to intercede for us "now and at the hour of our death" so that we may enter the heavenly kingdom.



1. When we pass before an image of Our Lord, our Lady, or the Saints, we should show our reverence by bowing before it.

2. Upon entering or leaving the place where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, or while Holy Communion is being distributed, we should make a double genuflection, that is, kneel on both knees

and bow, in adoration of God, there before us.

3. When we enter or leave the church, or pass before the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, we should genuflect on the right knee as an act of adoration to our hidden Lord. In genuflecting, the knee should touch the floor, and not merely be bent.

189. Religious Practices

What kinds of religious practices are observed in the Church?

There are two kinds of religious practices observed in the Church: the ordinary and the extraordinary.

1. The ordinary practices take place at regularly appointed times. They are the regular services held on Sundays and holidays, and weekdays.

On Sunday and holidays, in all parish churches one or more Masses are offered in the morning, afternoon and evening, according to the number of priests and the size of the parish. At each of those Masses a sermon is preached. In many parishes, there are special services, such as the recital of the Rosary, or benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. On weekdays one or more Masses are said. Especially in May, June, and October, there is usually exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and the recital of the Rosary. As it should be, wherever possible, the Mass is taking the place of such devotional practices.

2. The extraordinary or special devotions take place only on special occasions. Some of them are: "Benediction," "exposition of the Blessed Sacrament," the "Way of the Cross," "processions," "novenas," "missions and retreats," "congresses," "devotion to the Sacred Heart," etc.

In what does THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS consist?

The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is meant to honor His love, human and divine, and to arouse men's love and self-surrender in return.

1. Since Jesus Christ is both God and man, His humanity, being inseparable from His divinity, is worthy of adoration. This adoration is not aimed at the human nature, but at the divine person of Christ. In a

similar manner, *when we kiss our mother's hand, we do not pay our respect to her flesh, but to her, as our parent.*

Although devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was known in ancient times, it became widespread as a result of the revelations Our Lord made to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, towards the end of the seventeenth century. Through her, He made twelve promises to those who should practice the devotion to His Sacred Heart.

2. Among the *twelve promises* of Our Lord in favor of the devotees of His Heart is: "I promise in the excess of the mercy of My Heart, that its all-powerful love will grant to all those who *receive communion on the first Friday of every month for nine consecutive months* the grace of final repentance, and that they shall not die under My displeasure, nor without the sacraments, and that My Heart shall be their secure refuge at that last hour."

The "First Friday" devotion arose from this promise of Our Lord, especially the devotion of the nine First Fridays. When we venerate the Sacred Heart, we should remember His great love for us, flowing out of that Heart, and try to make some return for that love.

3. *In order to make this devotion of the nine First Fridays well, we should make a good confession and receive Holy Communion, offering all that we are and all that we have to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Everybody should make this devotion at least once, for himself.*

The whole month of June is consecrated to the Sacred Heart. In many churches every day in June, there are special devotions.

Other devotions to Our Lord Jesus Christ are: those to His Passion, to the Holy Name, to the Five Wounds, and to the Precious Blood.

What is a EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS?

A Eucharistic Congress is a *gathering of Catholics which convenes for the purpose of giving public adoration to the Eucharist.*

The first Eucharistic Congress was held at Lille, France, on June 21, 1881.

1. These congresses aim to *promote devotion* to our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, to honor Him in the memorial He left us. They aim to discuss means by which to

make known Christ's gift to men. *They may be local, provincial, diocesan, national, or international.* National Congresses are held in a number of nations every few years.

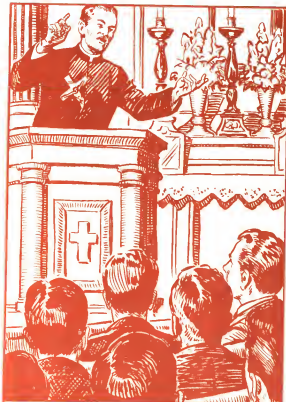
The exercises of the congress include daily Masses attended by all the participants, daily communions, conferences, etc. Sometimes the participants are divided into various sections for better discussions and organization.

2. *The most important of these congresses is the International Eucharistic Congress. It was started in 1881 and at present is taking place every four years. The place is selected by a permanent committee with the approbation of the Holy Father. It is customary for the Pope to appoint a Legate, usually a Cardinal, to International Congresses; he presides over the most important functions as the representative of the Holy Father.*

These international congresses, attended by hundreds of thousands, are most pleasing to Our Lord in the Eucharist. This satisfaction He shows by the fruitful result of such congresses. The spiritual life of the participants is renewed, and not rarely many who have become indifferent to the Faith renew their fervor. The spectacle of the devotion and piety of so many adoring the Sacrament is an edifying spectacle to non-Catholics, thousands of whom are converted. The nation selected for the congress is specially blessed.

3. The latest International Eucharistic Congresses have been: Rome in 1922, Amsterdam in 1924, Chicago in 1926, Sydney in 1928, Carthage in 1930, Dublin in 1932, Buenos Aires in 1934, Manila in 1937, Budapest in 1938, Barcelona in 1952, and Rio de Janeiro in 1955, and Munich in 1960. The next one is to be held in Bombay, India, in 1964.

The 28th International Eucharistic Congress, held in Chicago in June 1926, was one of the greatest religious events in the history of our country. The Congress was held in Soldiers' Field, an immense stadium with a capacity of 350,000. Twelve Cardinals, over 500 Archbishops and Bishops, six thousand Priests, ten thousand Sisters, and hundreds of thousands of people gathered in Chicago for four days to honor Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist. On the last day the solemn procession took place on the grounds of the large Seminary of Mundelein. Over 900,000 faithful gathered to honor Our Eucharistic Lord. The Cardinal Legate of the Holy Father carried the sacred monstrance. This Congress of devotion and prayer struck a contrast to the usual commercial and busy life of that great city. Even the President of the United States sent his personal representative.



1 A RETREAT FOR YOUNG MEN

During the sermons of a mission or retreat (1), we should listen attentively, avoiding all kinds of noise such as coughing, fidgeting, whispering, etc. We should remember the motive for the mission, and act accordingly.



2 THE PAPAL BLESSING AFTER A MISSION

At the end of a mission or retreat the Papal blessing is given, by which all who attended the exercises gain a plenary indulgence. As the priest gives the blessing, the people should kneel and make the sign of the cross (2).

190. Practices of Devotion

What is the WAY OF THE CROSS?

The Way of the Cross is a kind of pilgrimage, in which we visit in our mind the most important scenes of Our Lord's Passion in Jerusalem.

Tradition says that the Blessed Virgin originated this devotion by often walking in the steps of her Son to Calvary, pausing at the spots marked by some special incident. This devotion is called *Via Crucis*, Way of the Cross, or Stations of the Cross.

1. *The Way of the Cross* is made by stopping at fourteen stations indicating the path followed by Our Lord, bearing His cross, from the palace of Pilate to Calvary.

The fourteen stations erected according to the prescriptions of the Holy See are marked by fourteen wooden crosses. Pictures and inscriptions are usually added, but the indulgence of the devotion are attached to the crosses.

2. *In making the Way of the Cross*, we visit the stations consecutively, pausing at each one, and meditating on the scene which is represented by the station.

It is advisable and usual to go from station to station in the church. It is enough to meditate on the Passion, without saying any set prayers, although it is usual to recite one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be to the Father* at each station. A favorite ejaculation said at the beginning of the meditation before each station is: "We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee. Because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world."

3. *The Way of the Cross* is a most profitable devotion. Meditation on the Passion of Our Lord leads us into contrition and the practice of virtue. A plenary indulgence is attached to this devotion (Racc. 194).

If we are prevented by sickness, long distance from the church, or any other hindrance of sufficient nature, from making the way of the cross, we can gain the indulgence by reciting twenty times the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father, —(once for each station, five times for the sacred wounds, and once for the intention of the Holy Father)—holding meanwhile a crucifix properly blessed for the stations. The very sick gain the indulgence by just holding the crucifix and making an act of contrition, or a sign of sorrow.

What are NOVENAS?

Novenas are public or private *devotions carried on for the space of nine days* in honor of God or the saints or angels.

1. *The first novena of the Church was held by the Apostles and disciples with our Blessed Lady awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit after the Ascension.* Following the example of the Apostles, the *faithful* make novenas directly to God or to Him through one of the saints, to obtain spiritual or temporal favors.

Any suitable prayers may be used in making a novena. *The best way, however, is to hear mass and receive Holy Communion daily* as practices for the novena.

2. Novenas are commonly made in *preparation* for a specified feast.

The novena most often made are: for Pentecost, for Christmas, for Corpus Christi, for Christ the King, for the feasts in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for St. Joseph, for the Guardian Angels, for the patron saint of the community. The "Novena of Grace" in honor of St. Francis Xavier's canonization has been productive of innumerable and extraordinary favors. It is made from March 4 to March 12.

What is a MISSION?

A mission is *a series of sermons and other spiritual exercises* conducted under the leadership of a competent priest or priests *for the purpose of renewing fervor in the spiritual life.*

Missions effect an immense amount of good. Because of their rare occurrence, they make a great impression on the people. Missions are seasons of grace for a community or parish; sinners are converted and the just are incited to progress in virtue. This is because they are a sort of general check-up of the spiritual status of the community and of the individuals.

1. *In most places* Missions are held at least *once a year.* They usually last a week, including daily sermons, meditation, and congregational singing and end in a general communion.

2. *During the Mission* we should as far as possible *withdraw ourselves* from worldly amusements and *spend as much time as we can with Our Lord,* meditating on spiritual things, especially on the topics brought up in the sermons.

Again and again we should think over the words of Holy Scripture: "*For what does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?*" (Matt. 16:26).

3. *The Mission serves to remind us* that our destiny is *heaven,* and that therefore we should not be too much immersed in earthly distractions to the exclusion of our spiritual progress.

It serves to remind us that worldly honors and riches and pleasures are nothing, and that *the only true riches* are the love and service of God alone.

4. *During the Mission* we should *examine ourselves* very carefully, including our conduct during the whole year, to see where we can make improvements, and where they are most needed. Then we should make a good confession, *with a firm determination to amend, and serve God better.*

The Mission is a good chance for those who are bashful about confessing to their parish priest, who knows them. During the Mission several priests from elsewhere are usually present to hear confessions. Many confess more freely to a priest who is a stranger than to their parish priest or curates.

What are RETREATS?

Retreats are *a series of spiritual exercises and religious services held in "Retreat Houses,"* in convents, schools, and similar institutions, for a certain class of persons, whether priests, nuns, schoolchildren, laymen or laywomen.

1. *The retreat is similar* to a Mission, and has about the same effect. *It is better than a Mission* in the sense that the retreat-master can particularize his discourses, as those present are supposed to belong to only one class of individuals having similar tastes and similar problems.

Those taking part remain day and night in the retreat house, leaving for the period all occupations and worldly amusements.

2. *More and more religious houses, colleges and schools organize special retreats* for the accommodation of those in the world *who wish to go in retirement for their annual spiritual exercises.*



One of the most famous places of pilgrimage is the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes, France. In 1858, the Blessed Virgin, proclaiming herself the Immaculate Conception, appeared there to a little peasant girl named Bernodette. From then on a spring has flowed out of the grotto, the water of which has been the means of curing hundreds

of thousands. Pilgrims from the remotest parts of the world going to the shrine number about a million a year. The cures are certified by a bureau of eminent physicians, most of whom are non-Catholic. At Lourdes physical cures are not the only ones made; there are also many conversions.

191. Processions and Pilgrimages

What is the PURPOSE of processions?

Processions are held to set before us forcibly events in the life of Christ and doctrines of our faith, or to implore the mercy of God, or as a public act of thanksgiving.

1. Processions are held in honor of God or the Saints. It is by way of an open profession of faith that Mother Church has instituted processions like those of Corpus Christi, Rogation Days, Christ the King, etc. Processions are also held in times of calamity, to offer united prayer to God.

Our Lord promised that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, He would be in the midst of them. He also required us to profess Him publicly before our fellowmen.

2. In a procession, a cross is always carried in front. Banners or standards may also be carried, and candles borne.

Images are usually carried, except when the Blessed Sacrament is taken in procession. In this latter case it is the practice not to carry images. The prayers recited or hymns sung vary according to the object of the procession.

PROCESSIONS REGULARLY HELD

1. The PROCESSION of the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, February 2nd. This feast, considered in honor of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is also called *Candlemas*. On this day, before Mass, candles are blessed and after carried in procession.

The wax tapers carried during the procession symbolize Christ, the Light of the World, whom Holy Simeon called "a light of revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32).

2. The PROCESSION of Palm Sunday. Blessed palms are carried, in memory of Our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Although *Holy Week* begins with *Second Passion Sunday* or *Palm Sunday*, the priests and ministers use red vestments and sing joyous hymns during the solemn procession, to symbolize the triumphal entry of Jesus into the city.

3. **The PROCESSIONS on Rogation Days.** The greater Rogation Day is on April 25, and the lesser Rogation Days on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before the feast of the Ascension of Our Lord.

According to local customs, on these days a procession is held, in which the Litany of the Saints is said, followed by Mass. If a procession cannot be held, the bishop will give the directions as to what is to be done. He may also transfer the lesser Rogation Days to other days more suitable to the region. The purpose of the procession and special prayers is to beg for God's mercy and ask blessings on the field and crops.

4. **The PROCESSION of Corpus Christi,** the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. It is most solemn, the Blessed Sacrament being carried and placed on two altars specially built for the purpose, for the adoration of the people.

The feast of *Corpus Christi* (*Body of Christ*) was instituted about six centuries ago as a special memorial of love of Christ for us. In the 13th century Pope Urban IV instituted the procession of *Corpus Christi*. The feast of *Corpus Christi* is a holiday of obligation in many countries. Where the procession is not made on Thursday, it is transferred to the following Sunday.

5. **The PROCESSION of Christ the King,** celebrated on the last Sunday in October. In this the Blessed Sacrament is usually carried as for *Corpus Christi*. It is usual to permit only men to walk in the procession, the women standing along the way. It ends with the prayer of consecration to Christ the King and Benediction.

When the Blessed Sacrament is carried in procession, it is taken in a monstrance under a canopy, and incense is burnt. It is the custom to ask important civil officials who are good practical Catholics to hold the posts of the canopy during the procession.

What are PILGRIMAGES?

Pilgrimages are journeys made to holy places with the object of giving honor to God or His saints, and as a means of devotion and penance.

1. **Pilgrimages were made in the Old Law.** On the three principal feasts of the year, all the men had to go up to the Temple at Jerusalem. Thus we read in the Gospel how *Joseph and Mary took Jesus to the Temple* when He was twelve years old.

"And his parents were wont to go every year to Jerusalem, at the feast of the Passover" (Luke 2:41).

2. **The chief places of pilgrimage** are: the *Holy Land* where Our Lord lived and died, *Rome* with its sacred places, shrines of the Blessed Virgin, and spots sacred to the Apostles. Those on a pilgrimage must not act like curious tourists simply bent on sight-seeing.

In the "*Holy Land*" the chief places of pilgrimage are the scene of the *Crucifixion* and the *Holy Sepulchre* on Mount Calvary in *Jerusalem*, the place of the *Nativity* at *Bethlehem*, and the place of the *Annunciation* at *Nazareth*.

3. **In Rome,** City of the Prince of the Apostles, the principal places visited are the four basilicas: *St. Peter's*, where the body of Peter rests; *St. Paul's* outside the walls, where one can pray at the tomb of Paul; *St. John Lateran*, and *St. Mary Major*.

A pilgrimage is usually undertaken to obtain graces, in thanksgiving for graces received, or in fulfillment of a vow. Pilgrimages are made to Rome every jubilee year. God shows His approval of pilgrimages by granting many spiritual and temporal favors to the participants.

4. **Shrines of pilgrimage in honor of the Blessed Virgin** are scattered all over the world, and are so numerous as to be almost countless. But the most famous are: *Lourdes* in France, *Loretto* in Italy, *Zaragoza* in Spain, *Czestochowa* in Poland, *Fatima* in Portugal, *Guadalupe* in Mexico, *Lujan* in Argentina, etc.

(a) **At Lourdes** every year a million pilgrims offer their love to *Mary Immaculate*, and profit by her intercession; many miraculous cures have taken place there.

(b) **In the United States** there is the new *National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception*, Washington, D.C. The Blessed Virgin *Mary* under the title of the *Immaculate Conception* is the Patroness of the United States. The feast is on December 8th.

(c) **In Mexico** the most extraordinary Sanctuary of the *Blessed Virgin Mary of Guadalupe*.

(d) **In Canada** there is *Beauport*, where pilgrims seek the blessings from *St. Anne*.

For other shrines of saints we may mention *St. Patrick's* at *Donegal, Ireland*; *St. James'* at *Compostella* in Spain; *St. Benedict's*, *St. Francis'*, *St. Anthony's* and *St. John Bosco's* in Italy; *St. Stephen* in Hungary; *St. Boniface's* in Germany; *St. Rose* of *Lima* in South America; *St. Francis Xavier's* in *Goa*; *St. Therese's* of the *Child Jesus* at *Lisieux* in France; "and elsewhere many other holy martyrs and confessors and holy virgins" (*The Roman Martyrology*).



1

CONFRATERNITY OF
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

2

SODALITY OF
OUR LADY

3

APOSTLESHIP
OF PRAYER

The illustration (1) shows a young man, member of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. This important society should be established in every parish. In the Sodality of Our Lady (2) the members honor the purest of all mankind and strive

to imitate her virtues, especially that of chastity. Their activities in the parishes include the teaching of catechism. A member of the Apostleship of Prayer (3) aims to help promote the glory of God in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

192. Religious Associations

What are RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS for the laity?

Religious associations for the laity are *societies under ecclesiastical direction, established for the purpose of personal sanctification, for works of charity, and Catholic Action.*

Religious associations are generally classified into: (1) *secular third orders*; (2) *confraternities and pious societies*; (3) *councils, organizations, movements and societies* fostering Catholic enterprises.

Secular Third Orders

Secular Third Orders are *societies of lay people affiliated to organized religious orders*, and founded for some devotional or active work for God's greater honor and glory.

The object of Third Orders is to have the religious life of the religious orders penetrate into the

homes, so that, in imitation of their brethren of the First and Second Orders, lay people in the world may strive after greater perfection, although not bound by any vows under pain of sin.

Third Orders are like religious orders, being branches of these to which they are affiliated. They have a probation similar to a novitiate, a rule, and a habit. The rule is not binding under pain of sin. The habit is not worn in public without permission.

In the United States the principal Third Orders are the: Augustinian, Benedictine, Carmelite, Dominican, Franciscan, etc. Members of Third Orders are "brethren," sharing in the merits and spiritual life of the first and second orders of religion.

Confraternities and Pious Societies

Confraternities are *associations of lay people erected by ecclesiastical authority for the furtherance of works of piety and charity.*

The rules of confraternities are not binding under pain of sin. However, if the rules are not observed, the special graces, and *indulgences* attached to them are not granted. Confraternities with the right to affiliate similar associations to themselves are termed *archconfraternities*. We here list a few examples of our largest confraternities.

1. The *Confraternity of Christian Doctrine*, by order of the Holy See, is to be instituted in every parish, *to promote greater knowledge* and more assiduous *practice of the Catholic Faith*.

The means used are: instruction classes, study and discussion clubs, home instruction, and religious education of non-Catholics.

2. The *Apostleship of Prayer (League of the Sacred Heart)* promotes the glory of God and the sanctification of its members by the performance of *all prayers and good works in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus*.

To become a member, one only need to have one's name registered in an affiliated center and receive the certificate of admission. There are three degrees of members, with corresponding spiritual duties. *The most common devotions of this association are the morning offering and the First Friday devotion.*

3. The *Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary* is a religious association for the purpose of *promoting the devotion of the Rosary*. Members are required to recite fifteen decades of the rosary every week; this does not bind under pain of sin.

4. The *Holy Name Society* aims to promote due love and reverence for the Holy Name of God and Jesus. (See page 209.)

5. The *Legion of Mary* is an association open to all the laity. *Its purpose is the sanctification of its members* and all with whom they can come in contact.

They go from house to house to intensify Catholic Life, bring back to the fold those who have fallen away, and secure new converts. *The Legion is not concerned with material relief*. Through an intense devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary the *Legionnaires have become leaders of Catholic Action*.

6. The *Sodality of Our Lady* aims to develop full Catholic life *by devotion to Jesus through Mary*; it is for personal holiness and active Catholicity.

The Sodality has a monthly communion day and a monthly or weekly meeting. In the parishes sodalists generously help out in Catholic Action and social welfare activities.

Various Catholic Organizations

1. The *Knights of Columbus* is the best known and *largest fraternal benefit society of Catholic men* with over a million members in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Panama, and the Philippines. Loyal serving the Church, it promotes the Catholic Press, radio and television, the Legion of Decency for good moving pictures, the Organization for Decent Literature, Catholic Welfare drives, Catholic instruction and education, etc.

2. The *Society of St. Vincent de Paul* is established *for the relief of the poor and neglected*; its works are a living embodiment of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. *Each member is assigned a poor family for weekly visits.*

Honorary members have no poor families under their special care; but they make an annual offering of a fixed sum for the work of the Society. In the United States the Society spends around \$5,000,000 a year for the poor.

3. The *Apostleship of the Sea* is an international Catholic Organization *for the religious, educational and charitable welfare of Catholic seamen*. It strives to provide seamen with facilities for assisting at Mass, receiving the sacraments, training them to promote Catholic Action among other seamen.

National Organizations directly or indirectly under the auspices of the "National Catholic Welfare Conference"

1. Catholic Youth Organization CYO
2. National Catholic Educational Association
3. Catholic "Boy Scouts of America"
4. Catholic "Girls Scouts of America"
5. Catholic "Camp Fire Girls, Inc."
6. St. Dominic Savio Class Room Club
7. National Newman Club Federation
8. Nat'l Federation of Catholic College Students
9. Catholic Students Mission Crusade
10. International Federation of Catholic Alumnae
11. National Council of Catholic Men
12. National Council of Catholic Women
13. National Council of Catholic Youth
14. National Council of Catholic Nurses
15. National Catholic Rural Life Conference
16. National Catholic Conference on Family Life
17. National Catholic Home and School Association
18. National Catholic Laymen's Retreat Movement
19. Nat'l Catholic Laywomen's Retreat Movement
20. National Catholic Music Educators' Association
21. National Catholic Social Action Conference
22. National Catholic Theatre Conference
23. Catholic Association for International Peace
24. The Liturgical Conference

(See pages 132-133 "The N. C. W. C.")



It is not possible for all to go to distant missions to win souls for Christ. But one can always help by prayers and alms. Those who thus assist missionaries in their apostolic labors will be rewarded.

Holy Scripture says: "Equal shall be the portion of him that went down to bottle and of him that obode of the boggage; and they shall divide alike" (1 Kings 30:24).

193. Propagation of the Faith

How can WE HELP the missions?

1. By *praying for the missions*, home and foreign, *and for missionaries* that they may fulfill the command of Christ: "*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.*"

We should include in our particular petitions each day a fervent prayer for missions and missionaries; they are the vanguard of God, making Christ known in regions darkened by paganism. "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest, to send forth laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:2).

2. By *knowing the missions and making them known* to others.

We learn about the missions by reading mission magazines and other periodicals, by joining mission societies, by contributing to missionary appeals, by taking active part in missionary work. Let us love the missions, for it is only by them that the approximately one billion souls still unbaptized may know and love Christ our Lord.

3. By *making sacrifices* for the missions; that is, *by helping* to support them, and *by personal service.*

This is best done through mission societies that we should join as members, as well as through missionaries personally known to us.

4. By *fostering vocations* of self-sacrificing young people for the missions.

Many good Catholics support or help support students in seminaries, destined for the missions. Others support priests and religious serving in the missions. If we cannot imitate these good people, on account of our financial situation, we can always offer up fervent prayers and sacrifices.

WHICH are the different official Church ORGANIZATIONS intended TO PROMOTE and to collect means for the propagation of the Faith?

The following are the most important organizations:

1. The *Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith*.

This society is under the direction of the Sacred Congregation "De Propaganda Fide" in Rome. Its purpose is to further the evangelization of the world by the united prayers of the faithful, and by the collection of alms for the distribution to the missions in the Western Church territories.

Conditions for membership: a) *Daily prayers* of our "Our Father," one "Hail Mary," and invocation, "St. Francis Xavier, pray for us"; and

b) *An offering:*

Individual yearly memberships	\$ 1.00
Individual perpetual memberships	40.00
Family perpetual memberships	100.00

Deceased persons are also eligible for membership.

All members share not only in 15,000 Masses that are offered annually for their intentions, but in all the prayers, sacrifices and apostolic works of the missionaries.

Mission Sunday is the next to last Sunday in October. This is designated as a "*Day of Prayer and Propaganda for the missions.*" In addition, the offerings of the faithful are received to aid the missions.

2. The *Pontifical Association of the Holy Childhood*.

By this organization Catholic children throughout the world make their contribution of prayer and alms for the welfare of children in mission fields; thus our children become little Apostles. The conditions are:

- (a) *Daily prayers* of one *Hail Mary* and the ejaculation: "*Holy Virgin Mary, pray for us and for the poor pagan children,*" and
(b) *Almsgiving* to the Association.

Members gain numerous merits: sharing in those of missionaries and of the children benefited, in Masses offered by missionaries everywhere, in the prayer of all members, etc.

3. The *Pontifical Society of St. Peter the Apostle*. This association was organized to help in the formation of native clergy in mission lands. This aim is accomplished in three ways:

(a) By prayers for the formation of new priests, holy and pleasing to God;

(b) By furnishing the material aid necessary for the maintenance of major and minor seminaries in the missions; and

(c) By supporting poor seminarians in their studies for the priesthood, in territories under the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith.

The importance of this society's work is well illustrated in the words of the Vicar of Christ: "If you do not work with all your might to accomplish 'the building of a native clergy,' We maintain that your apostolate will be not only crippled, but it will prove to be an obstacle and an impediment for the establishment and organization of the Church in those countries." "*Rerum Ecclesiae,*" Pius XI in 1926.

4. The *American Board of Catholic Missions*. This Board is composed of the United States hierarchy.

An Episcopal Committee annually distributes to the missionary dioceses of the United States and its dependencies 40% of the annual Mission Sunday collection of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

5. The *Catholic Church Extension Society*. This is a home organization, established for the purpose of building chapels and schools, supporting mission churches, distributing Mass stipends to missionaries, and educating priests for the home missions.

The official organ of this society is the monthly "*Extension Magazine,*" with a circulation of 400,000 copies.

6. The *Catholic Near East Welfare Association*. This association does for the missions of the Eastern Church what the Society for the Propagation of the Faith does for those of the Western Church.

Conditions for membership: a) *A daily prayer;*
b) *an offering:*

Individual yearly memberships	\$ 1.00
Family yearly memberships	5.00
Individual perpetual memberships	20.00
Family perpetual memberships	100.00

7. *Commissariat of the Holy Land*. This organization collects and distributes funds for the support of the Holy Places, as well as of educational and charitable projects in the Holy Land.

8. *Commission for Catholic Missions among the Colored People and Indians*. This Commission is engaged in furnishing aid to Indian and Negro missions.

9. *Catholic Students' Mission Crusade*. It is engaged in promoting missionary knowledge among Catholic students, by means of a national magazine, textbooks, lectures, plays, and similar methods. Its activities include spiritual, educational, and missionary aid.

The *Mission Crusade* has a membership of approximately 1,000,000 in 3,100 educational institutions. The National headquarters are at: Crusade Castle, 5100 Shattuck Ave., Cincinnati 26, Ohio.



194. Church Symbolism



What is SYMBOLISM?

Symbolism is the giving of a rather hidden meaning to external things, particularly in order to express religious ideas.

By symbolism man apprehends reality; art in all its forms is the symbolical expression of inexpressible ideas, the positive manifestation of absolute Beauty. This is why ceremonial, which is but a symbolical representation, is vital to the life of man, whose highest desires concern a grasping at the ultimate.

1. Symbolism is invaluable, because it expresses ideas otherwise utterly inexpressible. For instance, can we express the idea of eternity in either word or picture? Yet how easily the idea is depicted by the symbol of the circle,—something without beginning without end.

Similarly we cannot explain in however numerous volumes the definiteness of One God in Three Persons; we cannot draw a picture of that idea. And yet let us draw an equilateral triangle, and by that symbol the idea is definitely conveyed: Three Persons co-equal, co-eternal, yet only One God.

2. By a familiar sign a symbol tells a story; it is a mark of identification. It expresses with exactness and beauty certain religious truths. It is not an end in itself, but a means to an end: a symbol uses art for the purposes of religion.

A symbol must not be a representation of something, but rather a representative. For example, a man is not symbolical of Our Lord; but a lamb with a banner lying on a book with seven seals is. And true symbolism must always be understood as representative. For when the symbol is taken as the very thing represented, then we have idolatry, a sin against God's commandment. If we worship the lamb itself, and not Jesus Christ, then that is idolatry. It should however be clearly understood that the commandment outlaws worship of the symbol, not the symbol itself.

3. Symbolism is essential to all kinds of religious worship. The Old Testament is full of it, forming the basis of our Christian symbolism, by which we apprehend through our senses a God-given and absolute beauty and truth.

The purpose of symbols is educational, to help man lay hold of the Infinite. Few knew how to read; books were expensive and lettered by hand. Preaching in the enormous cathedrals was not very easy, without our modern devices. The people loved God;

but they could not learn about Him by oral or written instruction. And so symbolism came to the rescue, and the great churches became beautifully illustrated textbooks, for everybody to read and understand. The medieval Christian read into common objects carved, cast, painted, embroidered, or woven, a religious and mystical meaning; that was his culture, his art.

We must not, however, mistake types, or even pictures, for symbols. If we confine ourselves to animals and inanimate objects, and avoid historical characters, we are safely in the realm of symbolism. Moses on Sinai is not a symbol, but a type, of Our Lord on the Mount and similarly, Samson is a type of strength; they are not symbols.

4. From earliest times the Church has made use of symbols, to foster devotion, or to stand for some mystery of the Faith that needed to be kept secret from pagans. For instance: the early Church used a fish to stand for Christ; a town, a ship, or a woman with uplifted arms to stand for the Church.

The Most Common Catholic Symbols:

1. For the Most Blessed Trinity: the equilateral triangle to depict equality as well as unity; a combination of the triangle with the circle, to depict in addition the idea of eternity; the interwoven three circles of identical size; the interwoven triangles, one with apex upward and the other with apex downward, thus forming a six-pointed star, which is a symbol of creation; two interwoven triangles combined with a circle; the trefoil, which is a variation of the interwoven circles; the trefoil with triangle, another development of the three circles with an equilateral triangle; the trefoil with three points, another development



Other symbols for the Holy Trinity are: the triquetra, with equal arcs of the circle symbolizing equality, unity, eternity, and indivisibility; the triquetra with a circle; the triquetra with a triangle; the three fishes arranged in the form of a triangle.

2. For **God the Father**: a hand coming out of a bank of bright clouds; an eye in an equilateral triangle; a six-pointed star, termed the Creator's star; the Hebrew letters for the word Jehovah (God), inside a triangle, and surrounded by rays; the Hebrew yod inside a triangle, or two yods within rays of glory.



3. For **God the Holy Spirit**: the descending dove, though this must not be too realistic, and must be with the three-rayed nimbus; the cloven flame of fire, or seven flames; the scroll, to show the seven gifts; the seven lamps, seven doves, seven-fold flame, seven-branched candlestick; the star with seven points, or with twelve points, to depict the seven gifts or the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit.



4. For **God the Son**, our Blessed Saviour. These are almost too numerous to mention, the most important being the cross, with some fifty forms in use. Our Lord is represented by: the Lamb of God on a book with seven seals, or with a banner of victory, or

with both; the Good Shepherd; the five-pointed star; the fish; the pelican feeding her young with her blood; the cross on an orb; the vine; the rock; the unicorn; sacred monograms.



The "Chi Rho" symbol is an abbreviation of the word **Christ**, with the Greek letters X and P, the first two letters of the word in Greek. Like other monograms for **Jesus**, it has various forms. At times the Chi Rho is combined with the Alpha and Omega, or with the Greek cross, or with the letter N (Nika, meaning conqueror). The IHC symbol is an abbreviation of the Greek word for **Jesus**. Today IHS is also used. Another variation is IC XC, to stand for **Jesus Christ**. INRI means "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."



ΙΧΘΥΣ



5. For the **Blessed Virgin**: the lily, symbol of virginity and purity; the fleur-de-lys in various forms; the rose, white or pink; the pierced heart; the crescent moon; the crown with stars; a star; her monogram, the flowering almond, the closed gate, the sealed book.



The symbols for the four Evangelists are: a human head for St. Matthew, because his Gospel starts with a relation of the human ancestry of Christ; a lion for St. Mark, because the beginning of his Gospel relates the story of St. John the Baptist in the desert, the home of wild beasts; an ox for St. Luke, because this animal was a symbol of sacrifice, and St. Luke's Gospel begins with a relation of the priest Zachary in the Temple; an eagle for St. John, because the opening verses of his Gospel carry the reader on a flight to the Infinite.



Other symbols are: for the Sacraments — the font, a dove, a chalice, a whip, an oil stock, clasped hands and a stole; for the Word of God, an open Bible, a burning light, a candle, two scrolls; for Penance, a prie-dieu; for Matrimony, two clasped hands; for Holy Orders, a stole, or a chalice on a Bible, with folded stole; for prayer, a censer with smoking incense; for sacred music, a lectern; for the Epistle and Gospel, a double lectern; for benediction, an upraised hand without nimbus. A banner symbolizes victory; a flaming sword, God's authority; a crown, sovereign authority; two tables of stone, the Commandments; a book or scroll, the Law; crossed keys, the power of the Pope.

6. For the **Church** we have the symbols of: the ark, the ship, the ark of the covenant; the vine; the woman with dragon underfoot; the crowned woman; the bride with chalice and book; the house on a rock; the city on a hill; the candlestick; the wheat and tares; the net.



7. Symbols still commonly used are: the olive branch for peace; the palm for martyrdom; the lily for purity; the halo for sanctity; the rose for love and beauty of soul. Faith, hope, and charity are represented by a cross, an anchor, a heart.





These are the chief ceremonies in the consecration of churches, a solemn occasion. The bishop prostrates himself near the entrance, and recites the Litany of the Saints. Rising, he encircles the church building outside, meanwhile sprinkling the walls with holy water. Then he marks the threshold with the sign of the cross, using his crozier; after this he enters the church, kneels down, and invokes the Holy Spirit.

He goes around the interior of the church sprinkling the walls with holy water; then he goes up and across the center of the building. Then follows

the anointing of the walls in twelve places, where tapers are set. Finally the altar is consecrated.

The effect of these ceremonies and prayers is to set the building apart for the exclusive service of God. The sign of the cross after the knocking at the door signifies the strength of the cross of Christ whom none can resist. The going up and across the interior of the church signifies honor paid to the Blessed Trinity and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The twelve lighted tapers stand for the twelve Apostles, who spread abroad the light of Christ's Gospel.

195. Conclusion: Why I Am a Catholic

HOW does OUR REASON point out the truth of the Catholic religion?

Our reason points out the truth of the Catholic religion *by these principles:*

1. *There is a God* (see pages 14-37). We need only to look about us and contemplate the heavens and the wonders of nature, to be sure that *all this order and beauty could not have come into existence* except by the almighty power of an intelligent Being, God.

Who made the heavenly bodies and set them in fixed places, and traced the paths they should follow from age to age? Who made the trees, and commanded particular plants to spring from certain seeds? Who made life? Who, if not God?

2. *The soul of man is immortal* (see pages 42-46). A man can reason, make abstract conclusions, distinguish between right and wrong. *These are acts of a spiritual faculty, and the soul to which this faculty belongs must be spiritual and independent of matter, and being so, is not subject to death.* A man can say *No* to himself.

No other being on earth can do the spiritual things man can do. In this world man alone has intelligence and free will, therefore he alone has an immortal soul. Animals act only from instinct and sense, which are organs of the body; animals therefore cannot be immortal.

3. *All men are obliged to practice religion* (see pages 10-11, 180-181, 196-197). Man, with his intelligent and immortal

soul, can know God according to the limits God has set. **He knows that he owes to God his very existence, that he is entirely dependent on Him.** From this origin and dependence arises man's duty to give his Creator due honor and adoration, in other words, his duty to practice religion.

To be faithful to God, we must serve Him by obeying His commandments and carrying out His wishes; by believing in Him, hoping in Him, and loving Him with all our hearts. All these things we learn about when we study our religion; all these we do aright when we are faithful in the practice of our religion.

4. **The religion God revealed through Christ is worthy of belief** (see pages 22-29, 64-67, 74-80). Our Lord announced Himself the Son of God, and as such preached His doctrines that He required us to believe. **To prove that He was truly God, Our Lord worked numberless miracles.**

God alone can work miracles, and He cannot work them to approve what is false. The miracles therefore worked in favor of the teaching of Jesus Christ are manifest proofs that His teaching is true.

5. **Christ established a Church with which all must be connected,** at least in desire, in order to be saved (see pages 102-109).

Our Lord gathered about Him a group of disciples, and called it His Church; He promised that

this Church would last forever. "He who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16). "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, . . . and behold I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. 28:19-20).

6. **The only true Church of Christ is the Catholic Church.** Only the Catholic Church possesses the marks of **unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity,** marks of the Church established by Jesus Christ. (See pages 110-117, 142-155).

The history of the Catholic Church gives incontestable evidence of miraculous strength, permanence, and unchangeableness, thus showing the world that it is under the special protection of God. Who said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

Let us thank God for His gifts. We can best show our gratitude to God for making us members of the only true Church of Jesus Christ by often thanking God for this great favor, **by leading edifying and practical Catholic lives, by trying to lead others to the true faith,** and by helping the missions.

We thank God for the graces He showers on us in prayer and by our good lives. **By following the commandments of God and the Church, and doing good works, we lead practical and edifying Catholic lives; such lives are the best way of leading others to our Faith,** if we have no more direct means. By such lives we say, "*Deo gratias!*"



"Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

THE CHURCH YEAR

See page 254 for an explanation of the different periods and seasons.

Holydays of obligation are marked with a cross †.

THE CHIEF FEASTS OF THE YEAR

† The Immaculate Conception,
December 8.

On this feast we honor the unique privilege by which the Blessed Virgin Mary was exempted from original sin. It is the first important feast of the ecclesiastical year. It is a holyday of obligation. It is also the patronal feast of the United States, which is especially consecrated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

† Christmas Day, December 25.

This, one of the most beautiful feasts of the year, is celebrated in remembrance of the Nativity of Our Lord. On this day priests are allowed to say three Masses in memory of the triple birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ; a midnight Mass to commemorate His eternal generation as God in the bosom of the Father; a Mass at dawn, to honor His temporal birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Bethlehem; and a Mass at daytime, in memory of His spiritual birth, as our Redeemer, in the hearts of the faithful.

For Christmas a crib is built in churches, schools, and many homes, to commemorate the crib at Bethlehem. Little children are specially encouraged to help build the crib. The crib was popularized by that great saint, Francis of Assisi.

The Holy Innocents, December 28.

The feast honors the children murdered by order of King Herod, as recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel.

† Octave of the Birth of Our Lord,
January 1.

On this day we honor the first shedding of blood by our Divine Lord for the salvation of our souls. The feast was also instituted to implore the blessings of Almighty God on the new year. The rite of circumcision, a symbol of Baptism, was imposed by Moses on all male children, and was undergone the eighth day after their birth, to distinguish them from the Gentiles. For us Christians, Baptism took the place of circumcision. On this Feast, the ceremony of the renewal of baptismal vows may take place.

Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus
(Sunday between the Octave of Christmas and the Epiphany, or, if there is none, January 2).

This feast is to give special honor to the Holy Name of Our Lord. Every time we pronounce the Name of Jesus, we should bow our heads.

The Holy Name Society was founded by Gregory X in 1274 to combat the growing evil of cursing, swearing, and irreverence. It is a society for men.

The Epiphany, January 6.

This feast celebrates the manifestation that Jesus Christ the Messiah made to the nations of the world represented in the persons of the Magi.

Feast of the Holy Family (First Sunday after Epiphany).

This feast was instituted in order to hold up as the model of Christian families the holy Family of Nazareth, composed of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord,
January 13.

Septuagesima Sunday.

Septuagesima Sunday, and the two following Sundays, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, mean respectively seventieth, sixtieth and fiftieth, because they fall near the 70th, 60th, and 50th days before Easter. Quadragesima Sunday, near the fortieth day, is the first Sunday of Lent.

In the United States, the period in which Catholics may fulfill their Easter duty of Confession and Communion begins with the first Sunday of Lent, and lasts till the Feast of the Most Blessed Trinity, on the Sunday after Pentecost.

Octave for the Unity of the Church,
January 18 to 25.

The Purification of the B. V. M.,
commonly called Candlemas Day (February 2).

By undergoing the ceremony of purification after childbirth, imposed on all Jewish women, Our Lady, who needed no purification, gave an example of obedience and humility to the whole world. This day the Church celebrates the blessing of candles, which symbolize Christ the Light of the World, entering the Temple to be presented here to God His Father. This is the reason why this feast is considered as a feast of Our Lord.

The day following Candlemas is the feast of St. Blaise, patron for ailments of the throat. Then it is the practice to have throats given a special blessing by being touched between two crossed candles.

Our Lady of Lourdes, February 11.

This feast celebrates *the apparition of the Immaculate Conception in the town of Lourdes, France.* (See page 404.)

Feast of the Chair of St. Peter, Apostle, February 22.

Ash Wednesday.

This day opens the Lenten season. Catholics go to church to receive the ashes which the priest marks on their foreheads with the words: "Remember, man, that you are dust, and to dust you will return." The ashes are from the palms blessed the previous year. They symbolize penance.

First Passion Sunday.

From noon of the day previous to Passion Sunday, the crucifix and the statues on the altar are wrapped in violet, as a sign of mourning. During Passion Week and Holy Week, the Church follows closely the last scenes of Our Lord's life; on the last three days of Holy Week, she even reproduces, in a kind of sacred drama, the very acts of His Passion, death, and burial.

Commemoration of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Friday in Passion Week).

This Commemoration is made to recall the great sorrows of our Lady during the Passion of her Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Feast of St. Joseph, March 19.

This is celebrated in honor of *the Spouse of the Blessed Virgin*, in whose care were placed Our Lady and Jesus Himself.

Second Passion Sunday, or Palm Sunday.

This is the first day of Holy Week. It commemorates the entrance of Our Lord for the last time into Jerusalem, when the multitude, bearing palm and olive branches, went out to welcome Him, with cries of "Hosanna!" Before the Mass begins on this day, palms are blessed, and a solemn procession held, in remembrance of that triumphal entry of the Lord. The palms are kept in homes as a sign of blessing.

Holy Thursday.

This day especially commemorates *the institution of the Holy Eucharist* by Jesus at the Last Supper. After Mass the Blessed Sacrament is taken to the Altar of Repose, or Repository, to remain there until the Communion service in the afternoon of Good Friday.

During the night of Holy Thursday and on to the service of the following day, good Catholics devote an hour or two to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the Altar of Repose. Where there is more than one church in the community, the faithful go from one to another, praying before the Blessed Sacrament.

Holy Mass is held in the afternoon or evening. On Holy Thursday—as on Good Friday and Holy Saturday—private Masses are forbidden. After the Gospel takes place the washing of the feet of twelve men by the celebrant of the Mass; this is in memory of Our Lord, Who washed the feet of His Apostles just before the institution of the Holy Eucharist. After Mass the altar is stripped, to show the inter-ruption of the Holy Sacrifice, and the spirit of mourning for Good Friday.

Besides the evening Mass, in cathedrals there is celebrated in the morning a pontifical Mass, the Chrism Mass, at which the holy oils are blessed. These are the oils used in the administration of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Extreme Unction, and Holy Orders, as well as for the consecration of churches, altars, chalices, bells, etc.

Good Friday.

On this day as well as on Holy Saturday, the vigil of Easter, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is not offered. The entire time is devoted to mourning, in memory of the stay of Our Lord in the tomb.

The Good Friday service in the afternoon is a memorial of Our Lord's passion and death. It consists of four parts: (1) the Lessons, with reading or singing of the Passion; (2) the solemn Collects or Prayers; (3) the veneration of the cross; and (4) Holy Communion, of which all may partake.

The veneration of the cross is a main feature. The unveiling of the crucifix, which has been covered with purple cloth during the Passiontide, is symbolic of Christ being stripped of His garments. The anthems and responses sung during the veneration are the "Impropria," or Reproaches,—words addressed by Our Lord to the Jews. They are a striking and dramatic feature of the Good Friday service. The devotion of the Stations of the Cross is generally practiced throughout the day.

Holy Saturday.

The service normally starts at such a time that the last part, *Holy Mass, should begin at about midnight, Easter Day. For grave reasons the bishop may permit a church to begin sooner, but not before sunset.* The first part of the service is the *blessing of the new fire. The Paschal candle is blessed and taken in solemn procession inside the church. The hymn of praise, Exsultet, is sung.*

Four Lessons are read, with a Prayer after each Lesson. Then follows the first part of the Litany of All Saints. In parish churches the baptismal water is blessed, before the major altar if possible, so that all may be able to see. The water is taken to the baptismal font; the solemn renewal of baptismal vows takes place. After the second part of the Litany, the solemn Mass begins.

Easter Sunday.

This feast, the "greatest solemnity" of the Christian year, the feast of feasts, is in honor of the Resurrection of Our Lord from the dead. The Mass is full of allusions to the Resurrection of Christ and to Baptism, which is a spiritual resurrection.

Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon of the spring; it may occur any Sunday between March 22 and April 25.

The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, March 25.

This day commemorates the coming of the Angel Gabriel to Our Lady, announcing to her that she was to become the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rogation Days.

The "Greater Rogation Day" or "Greater Litanies" are on April 25th; but if Easter Sunday or Monday occurs on this day, they are transferred to the 26th or 27th.

The "Lesser Rogation Days or Litanies" are the three days before Ascension Thursday. For the singing or recitation of the Litanies which may be in the vernacular, the procession and other prayers, see page 405.

† Ascension Thursday (40 days after Easter).

This feast celebrates *Our Lord's going up into Heaven* forty days after His Resurrection. The extinguishing of the Paschal candle after the Gospel on Ascension Day symbolizes the departure of Our Lord from earth. It is a holyday of obligation and it always falls on a Thursday.

Pentecost Sunday.

The chief object of this feast is the commemoration of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the assembled Apostles. It is one of the three chief feasts of the year, considered second only to Easter. This feast is preceded by a novena, historically the first novena celebrated in the Church.

May, the Month of the Blessed Virgin.

In nearly all churches the month of May is celebrated with daily devotions, usually consisting of the recitation of the Rosary and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Often a sermon is given on the Blessed Virgin. Special indulgences are attached to these devotions.

At homes and in schools small altars are built in honor of the Blessed Mother; flowers are offered to her. During the month of May devout Catholics attend Mass daily.

St. Joseph, the Worker, May 1.

In the history of the Church we find that she often christened pagan festivals, making use of dates and ceremonies, and endowing them with an entirely new and Christian significance. In accordance with this tradition she has now placed the observance of Labor Day under the powerful patronage of St. Joseph, the humble and saintly worker whom God chose as the head of the Holy Family. St. Joseph is proposed as the model of all working men.

Trinity Sunday (Sunday following Pentecost Sunday).

This feast specially honors the Most Holy Trinity.

Corpus Christi (Thursday after Trinity Sunday).

This feast is consecrated to the Holy Eucharist. It was established in order to celebrate most solemnly and with all pomp the institution of the Most Blessed Sacrament, since it is not possible to do so on Holy Thursday on account of the other Holy Week celebrations. On this day or on the following Sunday a great procession with the Blessed Sacrament is held.

The Queenship of the B. V. Mary, May 31.

As Christ is our Divine King, Mary is our heavenly Queen.

Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (Friday of the following week after Corpus Christi).

On this feast the Church honors the Sacred Heart of Jesus and makes reparation for the poor way men repay His great love. For this purpose the prayer "Act of Reparation" to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is ordered to be said.

Birthday of St. John the Baptist, June 24.

This feast is in honor of Our Lord's Precursor.

Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul, June 29.

This feast is in honor of the two great Apostles especially commemorating St. Peter, Christ's Vicar on earth, the first Pope of God's Church.

The Most Precious Blood, July 1.

In honor of the Holy Blood of Our Lord, shed in His circumcision, agony, passion, and crucifixion, this feast is celebrated.

The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, July 2.

This feast is to commemorate the visit made by Our Lady to her cousin Elizabeth, before the birth of St. John the Baptist. It recalls the charity of Our Lady.

Commemoration of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16.

All Catholics should wear the brown scapular or "scapular medal" of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, enriched with many indulgences.

The Transfiguration, August 6.

This feast commemorates the day when Our Lord took Peter, James, and John up to a mountain apart, and there was transfigured before them. His face shining as the sun, and His garments becoming white as snow.

† The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15.

On this feast is commemorated what happened after the death of God's holy Mother: *her body and soul were taken up into Heaven*, where she was crowned by her Divine Son Queen of all Angels and Saints. *It is a holyday of obligation.*

In the earliest days, the Church commemorated only the deaths of the martyrs, calling this their birthdays, *as then they are born to heaven*. Then an appeal came for the celebration of feasts in honor of Saints who were not martyred. Naturally, Mary the Mother of God here took first place. *By the sixth century such a feast in honor of Mary on August 15 was observed throughout the universal Church.* The dogma was proclaimed in 1950.

Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 8.

This feast honors the birth of our Mother the Blessed Virgin. Among all the Saints, *John the Baptist* is the only one who shares *with Mary* the honor of *having a birthday feast celebrated by the Church.* This is because *John* was freed from original sin *before his birth*, as *Mary* was free from the moment of her conception.

The Most Holy Name of Mary, September 12.

Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14.

The Emperor Constantine had two churches built on Calvary, and in one the relic of the True Cross was kept. Later, the king of Persia, *Chosroes*, carried away the relic to Persia; but the Greek emperor *Heraclius* waged war, defeated Chosroes, and returned the True Cross to the basilica on Calvary, in the year 629. From the eleventh to the fourteenth century, it was the thought of the True Cross that inspired the Crusaders in their battles for the Holy Places of Palestine.

The Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, September 15.

This is the second celebration to honor the sorrows of Our Blessed Mother, the first one being on the Friday of Passion Week. *The seven sorrows* thus honored are: *Simeon's prophecy* (Luke 2:15), the flight into Egypt, the three days' loss of the Child Jesus (Luke 2:42-46), the way to Calvary, the Crucifixion, the taking down of Our Lord's Body from the cross, and the burial of Our Lord.

Feast of the Guardian Angels, Oct. 2.

Feast of the Blessed Virgin of the Rosary, Oct. 7.

It was on the 7th of October 1571 that the Christians defeated the Turks at Lepanto, gaining the victory through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. *Catholics are recommended to pray daily five decades of the Holy Rosary.* The feast is often celebrated on the first Sunday of October.

Mission Sunday

(Sunday before the last in October).

This Sunday is set apart in a special manner for the missions. On this day *the sermons and the instructions are about the work that is being done by the missionaries* for the spread of the Catholic faith; *a collection is taken up for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. All Catholics are urged to become members of that Society* and thus help in that work so dear to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord.

Feast of Christ the King (Last Sunday in October).

On this day the Church invites all her children to join in offering *public and solemn homage to Jesus Christ, our King*, acknowledging His spiritual kingship over the Church, and *proclaiming the rights and benefits of His reign over families and nations.* Christ is our King not only by reason of His divine nature, but by reason of His human nature as well, since He was appointed King by His heavenly Father and redeemed mankind by His death on the Cross.

† Feast of All Saints, November 1.

On this day the Church honors the Angels and Saints in heaven. It is a holyday of obligation.

This day is a great family feast. It has its origin in the year 610, when Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon of Rome to the Blessed Virgin and all the martyrs. *It is in special commemoration of the millions of Saints in heaven who have not been officially canonized by the Church,* and thus have no special commemoration during the year.

All Souls' Day, November 2.

This day commemorates *all the souls in Purgatory.* It is a day for *pious remembrance of the dead*, and for offering of Masses and prayers for them. On this day as on Christmas, priests are allowed to say three Masses, for the souls of the departed, that they may be free from Purgatory.

From noon of All Saints' Day till midnight of the next day (All Souls' Day), all those who have confessed and received Holy Communion on either of the two days may gain the "toties quoties" indulgence: *a plenary indulgence* applicable to the souls in Purgatory *every time they visit a church or public chapel,* and pray "six Our Fathers," "six Hail Marys," and "six Glorias" for the intention of the Holy Father. *It is to be noted here that those who are accustomed to go to confession at least twice a month, or to communicate daily in the state of grace and with an upright and holy intention, and even though they do not go to communion once or twice during the week, may without confession gain all the indulgences for which confession is prescribed as a necessary condition.* If the "toties quoties" indulgence is not gained on All Saints' and All Souls' Days, *it may be gained on the Sunday following.* When November 2 falls on a Sunday, All Souls' Day is celebrated on the Monday following, November 3.

The Most Important Prayers

The RACCOLTA or "Manual of Indulgences" is the authentic collection of prayers and devotions which have been indulged by the Sovereign Pontiffs. Each prayer or devotion is numbered. Reference to this "Manual" found at the end of indulged prayers is indicated by the abbreviation Rac. and the number of the prayer; e. g. Rac. 678. For further references, see page 338.

The Sign of the Cross

IN THE NAME of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Three years indulgence; with holy water, seven years. Rac. 678)

The Lord's Prayer

OUR FATHER who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

HAIL MARY, full of grace! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Doxology

GLORY BE to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

I BELIEVE in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Confiteor

I CONFESS to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed (*strike your breast three times as you say*), "through my fault,"

"through my fault," "through my most grievous fault." Therefore, I beseech the blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May the Almighty God have mercy on me, and forgive me my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant me pardon, absolution, and remission of all my sins. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 691)

Act of Faith

O MY GOD, I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; I believe that Thy Divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived.

(Indulgence of three years. Rac. 36)

Act of Hope

O MY GOD, relying on Thy almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

(Indulgence of three years. Rac. 36)

Act of Love

O MY GOD, I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all-good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

(Indulgence of three years. Rac. 36)

Act of Contrition

O MY GOD, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

(Indulgence of three years. Rac. 36)

The "Hail, Holy Queen"

HAIL, HOLY QUEEN, Mother of Mercy; hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

(Indulgence of five years. Rac. 332)

Morning Offering

O MY GOD, I offer Thee all my prayers, works, and sufferings in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the intentions for which He pleads and offers Himself in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in thanksgiving for Thy favors, in reparation for my offenses, and in humble supplication for my temporal and eternal welfare, for the wants of our holy Mother the Church, for the conversion of sinners, and for the relief of the poor souls in purgatory.

I wish to gain all the indulgences attached to the prayers I shall say and to the good works I shall perform this day.

Blessing before Meals

✠ BLESS US, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Grace After Meals

✠ WE GIVE Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, O Almighty God, who livest and reignest forever; and may the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 683)

Prayer Before Work

DIRECT, we beseech Thee, O Lord, our actions and further them with Thy continual help, that every prayer and work of ours may always begin from Thee and through Thee be likewise ended. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 680)

Prayer After Work

WE GIVE thee thanks, O Almighty God, for

all Thy benefits, Who livest and reignest world without end. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 683)

The Memorare

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! To thee I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but, in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

(Indulgence of three years. Rac. 339)

Prayer to St. Joseph

GUARDIAN of Virgins and father, Holy Joseph, to whose faithful care Christ Jesus, very innocence, and Mary, Virgin of virgins, were committed, I pray and beg of thee, by these dear pledges Jesus and Mary, free me from all uncleanness, that with spotless mind, pure heart, and chaste body, I may ever most chastely serve Jesus and Mary all the days of my life. Amen.

Prayer to the Guardian Angel

ANGEL of God, my guardian dear, To whom His love entrusts me here, Ever this day be at my side, To light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 452)

The Divine Praises

Blessed be God
 Blessed be His Holy Name
 Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man
 Blessed be the Name of Jesus
 Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart
 Blessed be His Most Precious Blood
 Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar
 Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy
 Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception
 Blessed be her glorious Assumption
 Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother
 Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse
 Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints

(Indulgence of three years; five years if said publicly. Rac. 696)

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Ghost.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary, etc.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His passion and cross be brought to the glory of His resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

(For indulgence, see note, page 397, "What is the Angelus?", last paragraph.)

Regina Coeli

Queen of heaven, rejoice. Alleluia.

For He whom thou didst deserve to bear. Alleluia.

Hath risen as He said. Alleluia.

Pray for us to God. Alleluia.

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary! Alleluia.

R. Because Our Lord is truly risen. Alleluia.

Let us Pray

O God, who by the resurrection of Thy Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, hast vouchsafed to make glad the whole world, grant, we beseech Thee, that, through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may attain the joys of eternal life. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

(For indulgence, see note, page 397, "What is the Angelus?", last paragraph.)

De Profundis

OUT OF the depths I have cried unto Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice.

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall abide it!

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness; and by reason of Thy law I have waited for Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on His word; my soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night: let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with Him plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

(Indulgence of three years. Rac. 585)

Eternal rest give unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 582)

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins, that through pious supplications they may obtain that pardon which they have always desired: Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

The Mysteries of the Rosary*The Five Joyful Mysteries*

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation of Our Lord
5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony of Our Lord in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord

The Five Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Descent of the Holy Ghost
4. The Assumption of our Blessed Mother into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother

(For the recitation of the Rosary and its indulgences see pages 398-399.)

Prayer Before a Crucifix

LOOK DOWN upon me, O good and gentle Jesus, while before Thy face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech Thee to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; the while I contemplate with great love and tender pity Thy five wounds, pondering over them within me, calling to mind the words which David Thy prophet said of Thee, my good Jesus: "They have pierced My hands and My feet; they have numbered all my bones."

(Indulgence of ten years; a plenary indulgence if recited after Communion. Rac. 201.)

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
 Body of Christ, save me.
 Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
 Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
 Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
 O good Jesus, hear me.
 Within Thy wounds, hide me.
 Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.
 From the malignant enemy, defend me.
 In the hour of my death, call me.
 And bid me come to Thee,
 That, with Thy saints, I may praise Thee
 For ever and ever. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days; if recited after Communion, seven years. Rac. 131.)

Act of Resignation to the Divine Will

O LORD MY GOD, I now at this moment readily and willingly accept at Thy hand whatever kind of death it may please Thee to send me, with all its pains, penalties, and sorrows.

(Indulgence of seven years; a plenary indulgence at the hour of death, for those who say the above prayer on any day chosen, after Communion and Confession. Rac. 638.)

Ejaculations

Jesus!

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 113)

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine!

(500 days' indulgence. Rac. 227)

My Jesus, mercy.

(300 days' indulgence. Rac. 70)

Most sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us.

(500 days' indulgence. Rac. 242)

Mary!

(Indulgence of 300 days. Rac. 292)

Mother of mercy, pray for us.

(300 days' indulgence. Rac. 304)

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

(Indulgence of seven years for each invocation. Rac. 636)

Prayer to Christ the King

O Jesus Christ, I acknowledge Thee as universal King. All that has been made, has been created for Thee. Exercise all Thy rights over me. I renew my baptismal vows, renouncing Satan, his pomps and his works; and I promise to live as a good Christian. In particular do I pledge myself to labor, to the best of my ability, for the triumph of the rights of God and of Thy Church.

Divine Heart of Jesus, to Thee do I proffer my poor services, laboring that all hearts may acknowledge Thy Sacred Kingship, and that thus the reign of Thy peace be established throughout the whole universe. Amen.

(A plenary indulgence on the usual conditions once daily. Rac. 232)

The Manner in Which a Lay Person is to Baptize in Case of Necessity

Pour ordinary water on the forehead of the person to be baptized, and say while pouring it:

"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

N. B. Any person of either sex who has reached the use of reason can baptize in case of necessity, but the same person must say the words while pouring the water, and have the right intention.

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