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Year Two, Volume II

Catechism: The Sacrament of Penance, Pt. II

Here are some practical points about what sins are to be confessed. For the valid reception of the Sacrament of confession must be vocal (or at least the equivalent of vocal) and integral or complete. A reasonable cause excuses from an oral accusation.

“Integrity”

A confession is integral or complete when the penitent confesses all mortal sins, which have not been already confessed, of which, after careful examination, he is conscious, with their number and character, and the circumstances that alter their character.

A general confession of one’s whole life is necessary only when there is real grounds for thinking that one’s previous confessions have been invalid; it is advisable if there is really great doubt about their validity; it is permissible if it seems probable that the penitent will derive profit from it.

If a person cannot recall exactly the number of his mortal sins, he should state their probable number and add “about”. It is not sufficient to say merely “a few times”, or “many times”.

One, who through no fault of his own omits a mortal sin from his confession, receives the Sacrament validly and the forgotten sin is indirectly forgiven; but when he through his own fault, deliberately omits a mortal sin in confession not only gains nothing by the confession but also adds a grave sin of sacrilege. If he has been guilty of this, or feels that he has invalidated his confession through lack of true sorrow, he should go to confession again as soon as possible and tell the priest how many bad confessions he has made and how many sacrilegious Holy Communions he has received, together with all the mortal sins told in bad confessions or committed since.

In making preparation for a good confession, it is important to reflect that this confession may be the last one you will ever make. Ask God the Holy Ghost to give you the graces necessary to make a good examination of conscience, the light to see your sins clearly, the strength to confess them sincerely, & the grace to amend your life.

Confession should always be humble and devout. The penitent should tell his sins briefly, clearly, and modestly, without useless words or excuses.

“Examination of Conscience”

From what has been said it is obvious that before confession the penitent must examine his conscience. That means that he must recall as carefully as possible the sins committed since his last good confession. After asking God’s help, he should go through the Commandments of God and of the Church, finding out if he has sinned against any of them, remembering all the time that he is only bound to confess mortal sins. The number of mortal sins committed should be decided upon, together with their character and any circumstances that may alter their character.

Circumstances that alter character of our sins and therefore must be confessed are such as turn a venial sin into a mortal sin (e.g. when a lie gravely harms another’s character or good name) or when a mortal sin is multiplied by circumstances (e.g. a theft committed in a sacred place).

One who has not been guilty of mortal sin may still, of course, receive the graces bestowed by the Sacrament of Penance by confessing with sorrow venial sins or even sins, mortal or venial, from the past, which have already been forgiven by the Sacrament.

“Frequent Confession Recommended”

How often should we go to confession? Church law lays down the minimum of once a year for the laity. Those who have committed mortal sins are well advised to go to confession as soon as possible, although they would not add to their mortal sins by postponing their confession, so long as they have the intention to go when God’s law requires it or the Church commands it.

Confessions of devotion, those made by people in a state of grace, are highly recommended by the Church and are a great means of perfection because they increase sanctifying grace and obtain the special sacramental graces. In her canon law, for example, she lays down the following; “The faithful who are in the habit of going to confession every two weeks unless legitimately impeded...can gain all indulgences without actual confession, for which otherwise confession would be a necessary condition. The indulgences of an ordinary or extraordinary jubilee, and those granted in the form of a jubilee, are excepted from this concession.” (Canon 931). Hence, a good practical rule is: Go to confession every two weeks.”

“The Method of Confession”

There is no obligatory formula for the telling of one’s sins. Just as one is at liberty to choose one’s own confessor, so one is at liberty to use any approved form. Most Catholic prayer books contain one. The following form is as simple as any: “Bless me, father, my last good confession was (days, weeks, months, years,) ago. I have



The more frequently we go to confession, the more grace we receive to be able to resist sin & temptation. The Church recommends frequent confession as a great means of attaining spiritual perfection.

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committed the following sins through my own fault. (List mortal sins here and venial sins here). For these and all the sins of my past life, especially..., I am truly and heartily sorry, and I ask you, father, for penance and absolution.” (The priest may give some advice and then will give you a penance to do). Afterward, he will say “make a good act of contrition and be sorry for all of your sins.” Afterward, he will begin to say in Latin the words of absolution, during which the penitent says the act of contrition. When both have finished, the penitent returns to his place, renews his sorrow, thanks God for forgiveness, and says his penance. (Although the only obligation is to say the penance before one’s next confession, it is a good practice to say it immediately, so it won’t be forgotten).

“Satisfaction”

Satisfaction is the penance imposed on the penitent by the confessor for the sins made known to him in confession; this penance has, by Christ’s merits applied through the Sacrament, special value for the payment of the debt of temporal punishment due to sins. The penance, is imposed by the priest prudently, not only as a help to the latter in leading a new life and as a remedy for his weakness, but also as a penalty and a correction for past sins now forgiven. If a penitent finds he should make this known, with all due deference to the confessor and ask him to change it, the sacramental penance should be supplemented by other prayers, good works, and penances.

“Absolution”

The acts by which the confessor in the name of Christ remits sins in the Sacrament of Penance is called absolution. The words of absolution are the form of the Sacrament. Sometimes the priest may be bound to refuse absolution: e.g. when he prudently decides that the penitent has not the proper dispositions requisite to receive it. For a good reason he may defer absolution for a time, especially if the penitent agrees to that course with a view to bettering himself.

The Roman Ritual says: “ Those are incapable of receiving absolution, who give no sign of sorrow for their sins, who refuse to lay aside some hatred or enmity, to restore when they can someone else’s property, to avoid some proximate occasion of sin, or who are unwilling to give up their sinful lives and amend them; those again who have given public scandal. Finally, a confessor should refuse to absolve sins reserved to a higher authority.”

“The Seal of Confession”

The priest is bound to inviolable secrecy in regard to the sins revealed to him in sacramental confession. Even to save his own life or his good name, or the life or good name of another, he cannot be excused from this obligation. No law or no oath can

Satisfaction is the penance imposed on the penitent by the confessor for the sins made known to him in confession. This penance has special value in the sacrament by the merits of Jesus Christ. It is given to help the penitent remedy his weakness, & as a penance for sins committed.



force him to break the seal of confession, either directly or indirectly. Only permission freely and formally given by the penitent can release a priest from his obligation to strictest secrecy. History is full of instances of priests suffering imprisonment, tortures, and death for refusing to reveal knowledge that in any way would reveal what they heard in the confessional. The most famous case is that of St. John Nepomercence, who was drowned in the river Moldau by king Wenceslaus of Bohemia in 1393 for refusing to reveal the queen's confession to the king. The body of the saint was recovered and buried. 326 years later, during the process of beatification, the martyr's skull was placed on a table, when the tongue fell out. It was seen to be red and fresh. (cf. American Ecclesiastical Review, January, 1926).

The unanimity with which Catholic priests everywhere have for almost 2000 years preserved the confessional seal is surely a miracle, accounted for by the fact that they are God's instruments in forgiving sins through this sacrament.

“Confession, a Great Gift of God”

What a wonderful manifestation of God's mercy confession is. Here is a sinner, a grave sinner, one who has violated the most essential and important of the commandments of God—a murderer maybe, or a man sunk deep in the shame of lust, a man who has frittered away the years of his life in deliberate disobedience to the known will of God, a man who has again and again rejected grace, a man who has repeatedly despised the goodness of God, a man on whom the Precious Blood of Jesus has been frittered away. If such a man had violated the laws of the world as he has violated the laws of God, what would be his fate? He would be dragged from his house, publicly perhaps, by rough officers of justice; he would be flung into a comfortless prison; after days and days of waiting and anxiety he would be brought into the open court; the story of his crimes would be flashed across the headlines of every newspaper; it would be retailed on the radio and the television to every home in the land. Nothing at all would be done to spare him; he would have to bear it all in expiation for his crime. And at the end, a judge in solemn dignity would tell him that his life is forfeit and that he must suffer a death of public infamy and ignominy to expiate his crime. This is how the world deals with the criminal.

But what if that same wretched sinner appears before the tribunal of God in confession? Christ takes him by the hand, warns off the crowd and brings him to a secret tribunal. No witnesses are called against him; no finger of scorn is pointed at him. A word into the ear of the priest enters his mind, and in a moment it has passed away. Just as a little child on a calm summer evening might take a pebble and fling it into the bosom of a deep, still, placid lake; for an instant there is a ripple on the face of the water; presently these ripples die away; the waters close and the pebble is lost forever. No human eye shall ever see it again. So for an instant the sound of the sinner's voice makes but a ripple on the ear of the priest, quivers for a second, on the delicate tympanum and passes from that into the unfathomable ocean of the merciful Heart of Jesus. The water's of Christ's mercy close over it; and that God, in the hour of

The instant that the sinner confesses his sins with sincere sorrow for them in confession, they pass into the infinite ocean of the merciful Heart of Jesus. Mercy washes over them, & the Blood of Christ washes them away!



judgment, shall ever look upon it again in condemnation, for the Blood of Christ has fallen upon it and washed it away.

What a great grace and at how small a price! Surely no sacrifice ought to be too great for the assurance of the forgiveness of the Heart of Jesus. Yet, full of love, full of commiseration, He comes to us with mercy, sparing every feeling of the sinner, making every difficult thing smooth and trying to anticipate by the sweetness of His mercy all the humiliation and all the pain. It is the only tribunal where, when a man is found guilty, the only sentence pronounced on him is one of acquittal. How wrong it is; how superficial, how ignorant to suggest that confession is an intolerable burden. He who is offended by sin alone has the right to declare the terms on which the sin will be forgiven. Christ has done that by instituting the Sacrament of Penance, a most powerful invention of the love and mercy of His Sacred Heart. Its very existence makes one ever grateful for the privilege of membership of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, which offers such a treasure to her children.

(Taken from: *This is the Faith* by Francis J. Ripley; Published by *Catechetical Guild Educational Society*; St. Paul, Minn.; *Nihil Obstat & Imprimatur* given January 25, 1951)



Sermon by Fr. Martin Stepanich O.F.M. The Apostles Creed Pt. I: God

In the Credo of the Mass, we express our faith in the almighty power of God right at the beginning, when we say, “I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven & Earth, and of all things visible and invisible.”

It is an article of our Faith that God is Almighty. He is all-powerful, omnipotent. In popular language, we say that “God can do all things.” The archangel Gabriel said it this way, as he spoke to Mary, “Nothing shall be impossible to God.” (Luke 1:37). And Jesus Himself told the Apostles on a certain occasion, “With God all things are possible.” (Matt.19: 26).

However, as you know, statements like that must be understood correctly, because you yourselves could perhaps immediately give examples of things that God cannot do.

You may have heard how a certain nun was explaining to the children in the classroom that God could do all things. “There is nothing that He can do,” she said to the class. But, to her great surprise, a little girl disagreed. When given permission to speak, the little girl said, “Sister, I know something that God cannot do.” The good Sister felt sort of amused because here was someone who wasn’t only listening but was also thinking. So she asked the little girl to tell the class what God cannot do. And the answer came back, “Sister, God can’t please everybody.”

The little girl wasn’t just trying to be funny and it wasn’t some kind of a tricky statement. It is a real fact, God cannot please everybody. But does that mean that He is almighty? Does it mean that He lacks some of the power, which we think He has? No,

The Credo is the corner stone of our Faith. It is a statement of the major dogmas that we believe. A dogma is a divinely revealed truth that must be believed because it came directly from God.

it means only that we are not always satisfied with what God does and so the fault lies in us, not in God.

And there are other things which God cannot do. He cannot do evil. It would be a terrible blasphemy to think that God could do wrong. He is infinitely good and holy and cannot commit any evil. Infinite goodness and evil just do not mix. Besides, sin is a sign of weakness, not of power.

God cannot change historical facts. What has happened in the past, has happened, and nothing can ever change that. God cannot change Himself into a different kind of God. He cannot create another God, because that is, by its very nature, impossible.

So, when we say that God can do all things, we mean that He can do all things that are by their very nature possible. We mean that He can do anything that does not involve a contradiction.

There is one remarkable characteristic of God's almighty power that we encounter every day, though we do not realize it. It is the fact that this almighty power works so silently most of the time. God certainly can put on a big display of might and power, whenever He wants to do so, but most of the time He works invisibly. His power is hidden under everyday things we see and experience. Consider, e.g., what tremendous powers are hidden in the various laws of nature. Look what a force gravity is, how it keeps things in order here on earth. We cannot see it, but we know it is there. Consider the laws of growth-like the growth of the human body, of animals, of plants. Think of the power of the sun causing evaporation, where by water disappears as by an unseen force. Consider the most popular topic of the day-atomic power. A certain scientist (Einstein) once said (about 50 years ago) that, if all the energy within just a half a pound of matter were released, the resulting power would equal the explosive force of 7 million tons of TNT. And you know that scientists have actually harnessed that frightful power today.

But all these things are only a faint indication of the uncreated and invisible power of God, which really cannot be described. Nothing can really be compared to God's almighty power.

When the shepherds came to the manger in Bethlehem, they saw there an Infant only. There was no indication of divine might and majesty in Him. In that tiny body was hidden the infinite power of God.

We, too, come to the crib, but we see even less than the shepherds saw. They saw the real, living Infant Jesus. However, with the eyes of faith, we see more than they did. They were told by the angel that the Infant is Christ the Lord. We have been better enlightened and instructed through the teachings of the Church. Realizing whom we have before us, we exclaim with St. Thomas the Apostle, "My Lord and y God."

(Taken from the Sermon given at St. Alphonsus Church, Lemont IL, December, 1956)

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Catechism: The Holy Eucharist; Pt. I

We have several times alluded to the divine life of grace, which is received at Baptism and makes us sharers in the supernatural life of God. That life, born in the soul at Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, has for its ordinary nourishment the Holy Eucharist.

“The Sixth Chapter of St. John”

Let us look immediately at the Gospel story. St. John tells us how Our Lord had just worked two spectacular miracles; He had fed a great multitude containing 5,000 men and He had walked on the water of the Sea of Galilee and quelled a storm. Having returned to Capharnaum, He was sought out by the Jews who immediately asked: “Master, when didst Thou make Thy way here?” Our Lord, fully aware of their insincerity, replied: “If you are looking for Me now, it is not because of the miracles you have seen; it is because you were fed with loaves, and had your fill.” And He went on to demand their faith: “This is the service God asks of you, to believe in the Man whom He has sent.” They replied by demanding a sign. Moses had given manna in the desert, could Jesus do something comparable to assert His superiority? He replied: “The bread that comes from heaven is not what Moses gave you. The real bread from heaven is given only by My Father. It is I who am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will never be hungry, he who has faith in Me will never know thirst.” After this they parted, but there must have been a great deal of discussion about what Jesus had said.

Desirous of hearing Him further, they invited Him to explain His teachings in the synagogues. There He expounds His teachings in a manner which leaves no doubt as to His meaning: “Believe Me when I tell you this: the man who has Faith in Me enjoys eternal life. It is I who am the bread of life. Your fathers, who ate manna in the desert, died none the less; the bread which comes down from Heaven is such that he who eats it never dies. I Myself am the living bread that has come down from Heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And now, what is this bread which I am going to give? It is My flesh given for the life of the world.”

Immediately there was uproar. The Jews realized that this at least was incapable of a metaphorical explanation, and so, with perfect logic, they asked: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Jesus answered clearly and emphatically: “Believe Me when I tell you this: you can have no life in yourselves, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood. The man who eats My flesh and drinks My blood enjoys eternal life and I will raise him up on the last day. My flesh is real food, My blood is real drink. He who eats MY flesh and drinks My blood, lives continually in Me, and I in him. As I live because of the Father, the living Father who sent Me, so he who eats Me will live, in his turn, because of Me. Such is the bread which has come down from Heaven; it is not what it was with your fathers, who ate manna and died none the less; the man who eats this bread will live eternally.”

*Blessed be
the Most
Sacred
Heart of
Jesus in
the Holy
Eucharist
(taken
from the
Racolta)*

“Christ’s Promise must be accepted Literally”

That was more than enough for the Jews. Jesus had answered their challenge by repeating what He had said in such fashion that there was not the slightest doubt left that He meant them to take Him literally. He began by an emphatic statement: “Believe Me when I tell you this.” Six times in as many verses He repeats His statement, positively and negatively, adding all the time emphatic words to bring out His true meaning: “My flesh is real food, My blood is real drink.” He is careful to distinguish between eating His flesh and drinking His blood, which distinction would have been without purpose if He was only speaking metaphorically. In any case, there would be no metaphorical meaning that would fit in with the context. The only figurative meaning of eating another’s flesh and drinking his blood in the language used in Our Lord’s time is to hate or injure another.

On other occasions, as with Nicodemus, when Jesus had been using metaphors, He had quickly explained His true meaning, but on this occasion there was no metaphor to explain away. “This is strange talk,” the Jews said, “who can be expected to listen to it?...After this, many of His disciples went back to their old ways, and walked no more in His company.” Jesus let them go. If any mitigation of His teaching had been possible, He was surely bound, in the interest of truth, to call them back and explain their error. Instead, He turns to the Apostles and asks: “would you go away, too?” Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom should we go? Thy words are the words of eternal life; we have learned to believe, and are assured that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.”

“The Last Supper”

The promise made that day in the synagogue at Capharnaum was fulfilled on the night before Jesus died. It was at the Last Supper, of which there are four distinct accounts. Here is one of them, St. Paul’s: “The tradition which I received from the Lord, and handed on to you, is that Jesus, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke it, and said: Take, eat, this is My body, given up for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me. And so with the cup, when supper was ended. This cup, He said, is the New Testament, in My blood. Do this, whenever you drink it, for a commemoration of Me.” (I Cor.11:23-25). The words given by the other writers are as follows: St. Matt.: “Take and eat, this is My body. Drink, all of you, of this: for this is My blood, of the New Testament, shed for many, to the remission of sins.” St. Mark: “Take This, This is My Body. This is My Blood of the New Testament, shed for many.” St. Luke: “This is My Body given for you; do This in commemoration of Me. This cup is the New Testament, in My Blood which is shed for you.”


“The Meaning of the Words of Institution”

There is not the slightest ground anywhere in these four accounts of the institution of the Holy Eucharist to justify our accepting any but a literal interpretation of the words of Christ. They could not be simpler. Any fair-minded person must admit that



*Praised
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*(taken
from the
Racolta)*



Our Lord wished to implement the promise we have been considering above, He could not have used any words more effective or less liable to be misunderstood. No explanation can make them simpler. In fact, once the literal meaning was questioned they became perfectly meaningless, so much so that in 1577 Christopher Rasperger was able to write a book on some two hundred different interpretations of them.

If Our Lord had intended a metaphor, He could easily have used one. There are over 40 different words He could have used. He spoke in His native language, and if the word He used had meant “signify” or something similar, surely one of the accounts that have come down to us would contain some hint of it. Protestants have tried to gather texts against the literal interpretation, but in every case, the real meaning is evident from the nature of things, or from the manner of speaking, or from some previous warning.

Further, Christ was not speaking to modern rationalists. Those who heard Him were ordinary men of the people not given to analyzing obscure and mysterious phraseology. He was giving them His last will, speaking as a dying father to his children that He was about to leave. They were hanging on His words, ready to accept whatever He should tell them. What absolute cruelty it would have been for Christ, the Omnipotent God, to whose gaze the future was ever present, to use on such an occasion a metaphor that would plunge the whole Christian world into idolatry for centuries.

It is a universal principle of law that the words of a will must be taken in their natural, literal sense, because it is to be presumed that every sane testator is deeply concerned to draw up his will in clear language, without meaningless metaphors. Was the will of the God-Man to be an exception? He, who knew that for centuries the Eucharist would be the very center of all Christian worship and that for it thousands would suffer and die, certainly instituted it in the plainest, most unmistakable language possible.

Moreover, St. Paul himself accepted the literal interpretation. After relating his account of the Last Supper, he goes on: “ So it is the Lord’s death you are heralding, whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, until He comes; and therefore, if anyone eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily, he will be held to account for the Lord’s Body and Blood...not recognizing the Lord’s Body for what it is.” (I Cor. 11: 27-29). This is vigorous language, and the only possible explanation of it is that St. Paul was convinced that in the Holy Eucharist Christ was really and truly present.

And that is the only conclusion that we can draw from the scriptural quotations we have been considering. In the Blessed Eucharist, Christ left Himself, really, truly, and substantially present. That dogma defined by the Council of Trent is the result of an unprejudiced explanation of the scriptural narrative.

“The Real Presence always believed”

For 1900 years the Roman Catholic Church has consistently drawn the same inference. The Real Presence has always been the center of her worship. Fortunately, we possess abundant evidence of this from the earliest times.

*Eucharistic
Heart of
Jesus,
increase in
us the
Virtues of
Faith, Hope
& Charity.*

*(taken from
the Racolta)*



In 1873, Bryennios, the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Nicomedia; discovered the complete text of a book of religious instruction written before 90A.D. For centuries the book had been alluded to but its exact nature was not known. It is called the “Didache” or the teaching of the 12 Apostles, and it is a summary of the moral, individual, and social obligations of the first Christians. It is clear from chapters 14 and 15 of this work that the author believed in the Real Presence, Holy Communion, and the sacrificial nature of the Mass.

One of the greatest witnesses of this is St. Ignatius, the illustrious Bishop of Antioch, who was martyred in 107 A.D. On his way to Rome where he was to be thrown to the wild beasts, he wrote letters to Christian communities in various places. Their evidence is particularly valuable in view of the fact that they were composed only about 10 years after St. John wrote his Gospel. To the Ephesians he wrote: “That you may obey the Bishop and the priesthood without contrary intention, breaking of the bread, which is the medicine of immortality, the antidote against death, giving life forever in Jesus Christ.” To Smyrna he wrote of certain heretics: “They abstain from Eucharist and prayers, because they do not acknowledge the Eucharist to be the flesh of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins, which the Father raised up by His loving kindness. They, therefore, speaking against the Gift of God, die in their dissension.” It would be hard to find anywhere a more explicit statement than this.

“St. Justin”

Our next witness is St. Justin. He was born of pagan parents in Palestine about the year 100 A.D. Having studied philosophy in various schools, he eventually became a Christian and a great defender of the Faith for which he was martyred about 165 A.D. Some 13 yrs. earlier, he had written to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, asking for a plea in favor of the Christians, and a couple of yrs. later, he published an account of a “Dialogue with Tryphon”, a Jew he had met at Ephesus. His last work was another letter of protest to the Roman rulers and the Senate against the cruel injustices being perpetrated against the Christians. Describing to Antoninus Pius just what took place when the Christians met together for worship, St. Justin wrote: “We do not receive this as ordinary food or ordinary drink; but, as by the Word of God, Jesus our Savior, was made flesh, and had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so also the food over which thanks have been given by the word of prayer instituted by Him...is, we are taught, both the flesh and the blood of Jesus incarnate.” And he goes on to quote the words of institution in support.

There is nothing here to indicate that the early Christians accepted anything less than the true, real, and substantial presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist. St. Justin was explaining the doctrine to the pagans, and consequently, would be particularly careful about accuracy.

Belief in the Real Presence, as we have always been taught, goes back to the time of the Apostles. This fact was verified when the “Didache” was found in 1873. It was a teaching manual from the 12 Apostles, which was dated about 90A.D. It is very clear that they believed in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist & the sacrificial nature of the Mass. (taken from “Didache” ch. 14 & 15



“Other Evidence”

St. Irenaeus has many passages which show belief in the Real Presence. In fact, he uses the known fact of Christ’s Eucharistic Presence as an argument in favor of His Divinity: “How shall they feel assured that the bread over which thanksgiving has been made is the Body of their Lord, and the Chalice of His Blood, if they do not declare Him the Son of the world’s Creator.” The doctrine of this martyr is clarity itself.

These quotations are sufficient to convince any inquirer that the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist as defined by the Council of Trent was accepted in even the first centuries. That this is so, is proof, not only from the writings we have quoted, but also from an examination of the ancient liturgies, the Roman catacombs, and the inscriptions found therein. All conspire to clarify the sublime truth that the Blessed Sacrament is God Himself. This is our Catholic Faith.

“The Significance of the Real Presence”

In the Holy Eucharist, consecrated during every Mass and reserved in the Tabernacles of the True Roman Catholic Church, Jesus Christ is really present as Man and as God. His Body is there, His Blood is there, His Soul is there, His Godhead is there. The God who lived in endless ages alone before any creature was made, the God who created the angels, men, and entire the material universe, the God who permeates the sun, the moon, and the stars and every fraction of space with His Presence. He, that same God, is present with His human nature, really, truly, and substantially under the appearance of bread and wine.

The Child who lay on Mary’s lap at Bethlehem, the Boy who played in the fields of Nazareth, the Youth who stood by St. Joseph to learn the trade of a carpenter, the Working Man who supported His Mother by His daily toil, the Preacher and the Wonderworker of Galilee and Judea, the Redeemer who suffered and died for us, He is the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Sacraments, the very heart of Catholicism.

How dreadful is the loss of those who do not accept the Real Presence? If they seek Christ they must draw Him out of the dim past of history, they must use their imagination to create a vivid image of Him engaged in His work of love. If only they could understand the wonder of the Eucharist which brings Jesus as He is, whole and entire, human and divine, into the sphere of their present lives. If only they could realize that by this means they could touch Him, talk to Him, contemplate Him, or busy themselves about Him more closely, more intimately by far than did His dear friends at Bethany! He is in our midst as He was in the midst of those who conversed with Him in the flesh and beheld the sweet gentleness of His countenance. We are no less fortunate than those who knelt beside His crib at Bethlehem or heard His youthful voice at Nazareth or accompanied Him on the weary journeys of His Public Life. He is here, with us, just as He was there, with them.

May the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus by praised and adored, loved and thanked at every moment in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time.

(taken from the Raclota)



“O Jesus! My Lord, my God, and my All! I believe that Thou art in Thy Living Manhood as truly present in the Blessed Sacrament as when Thou didst walk amidst men and converse with them. Relying on Thy word, which shall not pass away, I believe that Thou art here, ever living to make intercession for us. Here is Thy Sacred Body, which hung upon the Cross; here is Thy Soul, which was sorrowful unto death and agonized in the garden of olives on account of my sins; here are Thy Sacred Wounds made by the nails and the spear; here are those eyes which looked with pity and love on the penitent Peter; here are those ears which heard the cruel cry of the Jews, “Crucify Him,” and which listened so compassionately to all the ills of men. Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

Of all the miracles that Jesus did while He was here on earth, the one that stands out for all time, & for all people, is the fact that the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar is God!

“The Blessed Sacrament is God”

Throughout the centuries sacred writers have vied with one another in describing the marvel of the Real Presence. It has been called the greatest work of God, the mirror of the divine perfections, the reflection of the wisdom, the immensity and the eternity of God, a type of all the operations of God, the teacher of the unity of God. It has been described as the continuation and the parallel of the Incarnation and the sum of its wonders, as the mirror of the life of Christ, as the triumph of the Church and even as its very life, as the explanation of the phenomena of the Church, as the compendium of all miracles, as the example of every virtue, as the fountain of all graces, as the magnet of souls. Yet, strive as they may, no writer, no poet, no saint can say anything more outstanding than the truth—the Blessed Sacrament of God.

(Taken from “*This is the Faith*” by Francis J. Ripley; published by *Catechetical Guild Educational Society*; *Nihil Obstat & Imprimatur* given January 1, 1951)

The Following of Christ; Bk. III, Ch .III. “The Words of God are to be heard with Humility, And That Many Weigh Them Not.”

My son, hear My words, words most sweet, excelling all the learning of philosophers, and of the wise men of this world. My words are spirit and life, and not to be estimated according to human perception. They are not to be drawn forth for vain complacency, but are to be heard in silence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

And I said: “*Blessed is the man whom Thou, O Lord, shalt instruct and shalt teach him Thy law; that Thou may give him rest from the evil days, and that he may not be desolate upon earth.*” “I,” saith the Lord, “*have taught the Prophets from the beginning, and even till now I cease not to speak to all.*” But many are deaf and hardened to My voice. The greater number of men listen more willingly to the world than to God; and are readier to follow the desires of their



flesh than the good pleasure of God. The world promises things temporal and of small value, and is served with great eagerness; I promise things most excellent and everlasting and yet men's hearts remain torpid.

Who is there that serves and obeys Me in all things with that great care with which the world and its lords are served? *“Be ashamed, O Sidon, saith the sea.”* And if you ask the cause, hear wherefore. For a scanty sustenance, men run a great way; for eternal life, many will scarcely lift one foot from the ground. A petty gain is sought after; for a single coin sometimes men shamefully quarrel; for men will brave toil say and night, yea, for some mere trifle or a slight promise.

But, alas! For an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honor and never-ending glory, they are loath to undergo a little fatigue. Blush, then, thou slothful, querulous servant, that they are actually more ready to labor for death than thou for life. They rejoice more in vanity than thou in the truth. Sometimes, indeed, they are disappointed of their hopes; but My promise deceives no man, nor sends away empty him that trusts in Me. What I have promised I will give; what I have said, I will make good; if only a man continue to the end faithful in My love. I am the Rewarder of all the good, and the mighty Prover of all the devout.

Write My words in your heart, and think diligently on them; for they will be very necessary in the time of temptation. What you understand not when you read, you will know in the day of visitation. I am accustomed to visit My elect in two manner of ways—namely, by trial and by consolation. And I daily read to them two lessons: One to rebuke their vices, and the other to exhort them to the increase of virtue. He that has My words and slights them, has One who will judge him at the last day.


“A Prayer to implore the grace of devotion”

O Lord, my God, You are all my good; and who am I, that I should dare to speak to You? I am Your most poor servant, and a wretched little worm, much more poor and contemptible than I can conceive or dare express. Yet remember, O Lord, that I am nothing: I have nothing, and can do nothing. You alone are good just, and holy; You can do all things; You give all things; You fill all things, leaving only the sinner empty. Remember Your tender mercies, and fill my heart with Your grace, because You do not will that Your works should be void.

How can I support myself in this wretched life, unless Your mercy and grace strengthen me? Turn not away Your face from me, delay not Your visitation, withdraw not Your comfort, lest my soul become as earth without water to You. O Lord, teach me to converse worthily and humbly in Your sight; for You are my wisdom; You know me in the truth, and did know me before the world was made, and before I was born in the world.

The greater number of men listen more willingly to the world than to God. The world promises things temporal & of small value; God promises things most excellent and everlasting and yet men's hearts remain torpid.

“Practical Reflections”



It is astonishing to witness how much men undertake, urged on by vain and deceitful hope, to obtain temporal and perishable goods, and how very little they do to obtain spiritual and eternal rewards, though encouraged by a solid and certain hope founded upon the word of God, which never fails. The prospect of interest, or the uncertain hope of riches, animates every heart, enhances every pleasure, dries up every tear, lightens every labor; and we think ourselves well repaid for our trouble when we have acquired the honor, the pleasure, or the advantage we had in view. The hope of heaven alone, the prospect of eternal happiness, which may be obtained by patience and good works, animates us not; it neither supports nor consoles us; we are as much cast down and discouraged at the thought of gaining heaven by patient suffering as though we esteemed it of no value. Where does this come from? It is because we are too much attached to things present, and too indifferent about the things to come. Our hope is faint because our faith is weak.

“Prayer”

What confusion for me, O Lord, that I should give myself so much trouble to please the world and to gratify my passions, and take so little pains to satisfy Your justice by works of penance, or Your goodness by punctuality in the discharge of my duties! Alas! Why do I not undergo as much for You as for myself? Why is not my ardor to please You as fervent as my eagerness to gratify myself? Change, O Lord, change the object and inclinations of my heart. Take the place of self within me, and grant that my love for You may be as ardent to please You as my own self-love is to satisfy myself. Give me such love for You as may be called a love of reparation—that is, such as may, by its ardor and constancy, make amends for the languor and inconstancy of mine. Amen.

The Explanation of Our Mission and of Our Logo.

Since we have named this newsletter the “Mystical Rose”, it would seem only prudent that we explain why we call it , “Mystical Rose”, and why we have designed this Logo at the top of the first page.

The title, “Mystical Rose”, is taken from the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Logo of the crown of thorns, with the roses attached, symbolizes Our Lady’s suffering during Our Lord’s Passion and Death. It also symbolizes Her suffering for us, her spiritual children. The seven roses affixed to the crown of thorns represents the Seven Sorrows of Our Lady.

We dedicate this work to Our Blessed Mother and we ask Her to help and guide us, so that we may be able to serve God’s people by printing material that will be spiritually edifying: bringing those who read it to a better knowledge of their faith; a better understanding of what God requires of them in order to achieve salvation; and a more sincere desire to serve the Living God to the best of their ability.

Information about Catholicism is so very necessary in order to live a good life. The world in which we live today is in dire need of that information, in order to save mankind from its own self-imposed ignorance. We hope, by the grace of God, that our newsletter will help to inform.

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