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TRADITION AND REASON IN THE ROMAN SACRAMENTS

A Thesis presented to the  
Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity

by

Wilfred Harold Janke

Concordia Seminary  
April 15, 1940

Approved by

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Justin Martyr	- 163-166	- Philosophical theologian
Irenaeus	- 130-202	- Eminent theologian
Clement	- 150?-220	- Bishop of Alexandria
Tertullian	- 160-220	- Latin theologian
Origen	- 185-254	- Alexandrian theologian
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Cyril	- 315?-386	- Bishop of Jerusalem
Basil	- 329-379	- Bishop of Caesarea
Jerome	- 331-420	- Theologian, translator
Ambrose	- 340-397	- Bishop of Milan
Chrysostom	- 347-407	- Patriarch of Constantinople
Augustine	- 354-430	- Latin theologian
Cyril	- ? -444	- Bishop of Alexandria
Pseudo-Ambrose	- 4th cent.	- Author of commentaries
Peter Lombard	- 1100-1164	- Bishop of Paris
Alexander of Hales	- 1185-1245	- Teacher of theology
Bonaventura	- 1221-1274	- Cardinal, General of Franciscans
Thomas Aquinas	- 1227-1274	- "Prince of Scholastic Theologians"
Council of Trent	- 1545-1563	-

The knowledge man has of God he has received through God's own revelation of Himself either in nature or in the Bible. There is, therefore, a natural knowledge of God and a supernatural knowledge. The natural knowledge may be vague, it may be incomplete, inaccurate, or distorted, but that knowledge is present among all people although differing in form. The heathen's idea of God finds expression in lifeless images. Such is his knowledge of God. However, we have a greater knowledge of the Supreme Being for we are in possession of the revelation He has made of Himself.

The supernatural truth was revealed to man through the Word of God. To this the Roman Catholic Church adds the unwritten tradition committed to the Church. Both Protestants and Catholics agree that it is not enough that God should give His revelation to man, but that gift must be kept pure and unalloyed and entire, otherwise it would be valueless. God, therefore, must both provide the sacred source of truth and keep it clean and uncontaminated. So far the two bodies are agreed.

However, they soon parted. The Protestants attached themselves to Scripture and have subordinated everything, including tradition, to the written Word of God. The Catholics, on the other hand, while accepting the purity of the Bible, attached themselves chiefly to the traditions given to the Church and have subordinated the Scripture to that tradition.

The Roman Catholic Church gave expression to their position at the Council of Trent. The Synod decreed:

"The sacred and holy, oecumenical, and general Synod of Trent, - lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the same three legates of the Apostolic See presiding therein, - keeping this always in view, that, errors being removed, the purity of the Gospel be preserved in the Church; which (Gospel), before promised

through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, first promulgated with His own mouth, and then commanded to be preached by His apostles to every creature, as the fountain of all, both saving truth, and moral discipline; and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten tradition which, received by the apostles from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand; (the Synod) following the example of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence, all the books of the Old and of the New Testament - seeing that one God is the Author of both - as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession... Let all, therefore, understand, in what order, and in what manner, the said Synod, after having laid the foundation of the Confession of faith, will proceed, and what testimonies and authorities it will mainly use in confirming dogmas, and in restoring morals in the Church." 1)

Scripture is not considered a sufficient source of dogma. In the Catechism of Deharbe, the question is asked: "Is it enough to believe only what is contained in Holy Scripture?" The answer is: "No: we must also believe tradition; that is, those revealed truths which the apostles preached but did not commit to writing." The New Testament contains only those truths which were extant in the Church at the time it was written. The Gospel record is fragmentary and does not present an exhaustive picture of Christ and, therefore, tradition is needed to complete the picture and clarify that which is hidden and obscure. Hence, Deharbe can say: "A Christian must believe all that God has revealed and the Catholic Church teaches, whether it is contained in Holy Scripture or not." 2)

In the natural order of things, tradition is subject to investigation and criticism. For unless tradition is written and thus fixed,

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1) Waterworth, tr., Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Session IV

2) Deharbe, Large Catechism, tr., p.10

it changes in the course of time. It is like a river which assimilates some of the impurities of the earth through which it passes. So tradition hands down good and evil, true and false. Hence, it cannot be accepted without reserve.

In the Church tradition belongs to the supernatural order of things. Both the truth handed down and the act of transmission are regarded as clothed in a divine character. Tradition becomes the sovereign rule of truth in the Church and thus is lifted above criticism and investigation.

Therefore, the Roman Church believes that the revelation of God has come down to us in two ways, one in writing, that being the Bible, and the other by word of mouth, that being tradition. Tradition is the general faith of the Church through all the ages manifested by outward historical testimonies. In this sense, tradition is usually termed the norm of faith, the standard of scriptural interpretation. Tradition is accepted as the sovereign.

The Catholic theologians, even from the time of Tertullian and Irenaeus, reason that the legitimacy of a doctrine is revealed in its antiquity. Vincent of Lerins originated the well-known principle: "That which has been everywhere, always, and by everyone believed (*semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*), that is truly Catholic." From this we see that to be authoritative, tradition must have three marks - universality, antiquity, and the consent of all. On this basis truth was always in the Church, and from the beginning to the present day remained the same. The Church changes nothing, adds nothing, subtracts nothing. New language may clothe the ancient truths (*non nova, sed nove*), but while there may be progress in the form, the matter will remain unchanged.



Due to the spirit of historical research and criticism of the last years, it has been found that Roman doctrine has undergone changes and additions during the centuries. The question arose whether any Church could exist for eighteen centuries and never vary? Where in the ancient documents were the dogmas recently defined, as the Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility of the Pope?

In answer to these questions a different view of tradition was advanced by such men as Newman and Moehler. They said that the Church has a characteristic genius which lives and is active in her. This genius is the Spirit of God, the same Spirit that worked in the apostles and prophets and which Christ promised to His followers. This Spirit is an eternally creative power who renews the ancient things and opens the closed book of Scripture and reveals its significance. Due to His influence, divine revelation is not fixed and adamant, but real and unlimited and present. Catholic tradition is Christ Himself incarnate from age to age in the historic Church which is His body and which carries on a perpetual ministry of mediation and revelation.

The theory has been advanced and accepted which has served as an excellent means of upholding specific tenets and practises which had become increasingly difficult to base either on the canonical Scripture or orthodox tradition. The starting point of this theory is the avowal that all teachings were contained in the original deposit of truth which was proclaimed by Christ and the apostles. Through the ages there has been a constant unfolding of the latent truths contained in the original teachings. Little by little they established dogmas until the Church was able to accept the entire teaching and convey it to the world. The point that should be observed is that the germ stands to

the outcome in a genetic relation. The dogma is the just and adequate representation of the original idea. It is what the first idea meant and contained in itself from the beginning, and it needed only the right circumstances to develop it.

Newman admitted that there was a possibility of corruption, as in the case of any growth. Error could slip in and spoil the plant. But he said there are several ways of determining the truth of any dogma. The tests are "the preservation of the idea", the "power of assimilation", the "logical sequence", the "chronic continuance". From all this the conclusion is drawn that the Roman Catholic religion as we know it, is the legitimate ~~heir~~ successor, and representative of apostolic Christianity.

The Church of Rome goes to great lengths to show that Scripture and tradition, although faithful and trustworthy, can never be a complete guide to heaven independent of some living interpreter. The doctrine of private interpretation is based on error and condemned for the Bible was never available to all men and thus salvation would be impossible for millions of people. Nor does the Bible contain all the truth necessary for salvation. When left to itself, the Bible is a source of heresy and anarchy, for it is not clear and intelligible even in matters of the greatest importance. Therefore, a living interpreter is needed.

The power that harmonizes all these authorities in the Church, the Scripture and tradition and decrees of the Councils, is the Church itself. Lest these many authorities be set against one another and be subjected to criticism, the Church condemns all those who interpret the Bible according to their own sense and give the Mother Church the sole right to judge of the texts and their interpretation.

Human reason plays its part in the development of dogma. Some divine matters are said to be within the grasp of human reason which possesses sufficient ability to develop the superficial natural knowledge of God into a philosophical concept by itself will never be able to grasp all the mysteries of God. The understanding can be aided and increased by analogy of divine things with those truths which are generally known, partly from the relation and bearing the mysteries have to one another and to the final end of man. There can be no real discrepancy between faith and reason since God is the Author of reason and the One who infuses faith, and He cannot contradict Himself or His own truths. Private opinions cause contradictions. Faith and reason are never opposed but are of mutual assistance. Right reason demonstrates the foundation of faith.

The Roman Catholic Church uses tradition and reason in addition to Scripture in the establishment of its doctrine. From these two sources proof is drawn to show the truth of their teachings. This is especially evident in their dogma of the seven sacraments. While most Protestant bodies accept two, or some three, sacraments, the Roman Church and the Greek Catholic Church have increased the number. The Church of Rome has definitely declared its belief in seven signs of grace. "If anyone saith that the sacraments of the New Law are more or less than seven, to wit: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and Matrimony, or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be anathema." 1)

## II. The number of the sacraments

The term 'sacrament' is derived from a Latin word, "sacrare", which

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1) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session VII, can.1

denotes something that produces holiness, a means of sanctification. To the word "sacrare" was added the Greek "mysterion", and the additional meaning was added that it was also something mysterious and hidden. In this usage it was common in Rome. When a lawsuit arose both parties deposited a certain sum before a priest and the portion forfeited by the loser was known as the "sacramentum", i.e. "res sacra", and was used to provide sacrifices. This word also was applied to solemn engagements, as, the soldier's oath.

The truths of religion and the types of Christ in the Old Testament were known as such sacred things. Since whatever was sacred was connected with God who is mysterious, the term "sacramentum" gradually came to include the various meaning of "mysterion." Later these two terms were changed about at will and were applied indiscriminately to all sacred customs and ceremonies.

The Vulgate translated, in places, the term "mystery" by "sacrament", e.g. in Eph. 5, 32. When the Latin and Greek Fathers of the early ages spoke of sacraments, it must be remembered that they used the term in its etymological sense, in which it designated something holy or consecrated, and not in the sense in which it is used in the theological terminology of today. In the usage of the Fathers, the word "mystery" was applied to whatever was at the same time mysterious and sacred, St. Augustine even speaking of the "sacrament of the Lord's prayer." It was especially applied to such acts as were of a symbolical character where some hidden reality was conceived to be concealed beneath their material aspect. Hence, the term, in its earliest usages, had no definite limit in its application. This also explains why many things are listed as sacraments which no one, not even the Catholics, admit to be such.

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The meaning of the term "sacrament" was not restricted until the time of Peter Lombard in the twelfth century. He defined the sacrament: "Sacramentum est signum efficax gratiae sanctificationis." 1) The grace of God is chiefly obtained through prayer and the sacraments. "A sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Jesus Christ to give grace to the soul." 2) Three things are essential for a valid sacrament, viz. a visible sign, invisible grace, and institution by the Lord. There has been some discussion whether institution by Christ is necessary but that will be treated later. These rites are symbols of a sacred reality, the perceptible signs that assure the individual that he has received grace.

Every sacrament of the New Testament consists of two elements, the matter (res) and the form (verbum). This was taught already by the "Decretum pro Armenis" of Pope Eugene IV where we read:

"Every Sacrament requires three constituents:- things for its matter, words for its form, and the person of the minister conferring the sacraments with the intention of doing what the Church does; if any of these be wanting there is no sacrament." 3)

Only Baptism can conclusively be proved from Scripture to possess both matter and form, but tradition supplies what is lacking for the rest. The Fathers also taught that the sacrament must have both form and matter. St. Augustine says: "Take away the word, and what is water but water? The word is added to the element, and there is a sacrament." 4) The use of the term matter and form as we know them, can be traced to William of Auxerre (d.1223). It is the coalescing of these two that makes the sacrament. The word raises the matter to the level of a sacramental sign.

It is held by some theologians that Christ did not determine the matter and form of all the sacraments but only of some, e.g. Baptism

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1) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.9

2) M. Scott, God and Myself, p.153

3) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.59

4) "Tract. in Ioa."; quoted in ibid., p.61

and Confirmation. However, there are arguments advanced to show just the opposite. Christ instituted all the sacraments: every sacrament consists of both matter and form: hence, Christ must have determined their matter and form. If the matter and form is changed the sacrament is changed. If the Church at any time in its history had possessed the power to change the sacraments she would still have that power today. But the Church denies that she has such a power. Therefore, the matter and form of the sacraments have remained unchanged.

Each sacrament has an outward sign which makes it a sense-perceptive thing. Such a sign is necessary for man is composed of an exterior, material body and an interior, invisible soul. The external matter of the sacrament corresponds to the material body of man while the interior grace corresponds to the invisible soul. The outward sign indicates in a fitting way what is imparted to the soul, .e.g. water in Baptism denotes the washing away of the soul's sin.

It is no more than proper that the Church of Christ which is an external and visible institution should dispense the grace of God by means of an outward and visible sign. If there were no exterior symbol accompanying the grace of the sacrament, we would never know when or whether the grace has been received. Man is, moreover, a sinner and most of his sins are committed by the instrumentality of the senses. It is surely appropriate that he receive assurance of forgiveness through the same senses.

It is necessary to prove that there are seven sacraments. Tradition, especially the writings of the early Fathers, and Scripture is quoted in support of this doctrine. But there is nowhere to be found, either in the Bible or patristic literature, an express statement that there are seven sacraments, neither more or less. That the Fathers failed to

mention this bit of information, which would be highly useful today, is accounted for by several reasons. We must bear in mind the conditions of the times. The Fathers wrote for neophytes, for heathen, etc., and they wrote from a practical viewpoint. Their attention was directed chiefly to the "sacramenta consecratoria" (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Orders), but that does not mean that there was no other means of grace. In addition there was the Discipline of the Secret which was the custom of keeping the heathen and the uninitiated ignorant of the sacraments. The Eucharist, for example, was celebrated in secret and all those not accepted as members in good standing were not permitted to remain at its celebration even as witnesses. Again we find that the theology which dealt with the sacraments developed rather slowly. Thus we can see why the early Fathers did not mention the seven sacraments with sufficient clarity to place the matter beyond doubt.

There was no agreement as to the number of sacraments until the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Before that time things seem to have been rather confused. Pseudo-Dionysius, in a passage where it is not clear whether he is giving an exhaustive list, enumerates six sacraments, namely, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Unction - meaning, perhaps, Confirmation - the consecration of priests, and the rite of burial. St. Ambrose calls the washing of feet a sacrament although it seems to refer to a purely local and temporary practise, peculiar to Milan. Augustine calls exorcism and the custom of giving salt to the catechumen sacraments, but he does not specify a number. Bernard speaks of ten including foot-washing. Thus we see that one rejected this and another added that as a sacrament. Job of Thessalonica, a Greek monk, added the monastic habit to the list and combined Penance and Extreme Unction into one. Damascene of Thessalonica struck Penance from the list

and, like Job, added the monastic habit. The Nestorian Ebed Jesu dropped Matrimony and Extreme Unction and added the sign of the cross and an unknown something called "Holy Ferment." Abelard enumerates five sacraments. Then, on the other hand, Hugo of St. Victor lists thirty sacraments. Even the Third Lateran Council (1179) included burial and investiture of bishops among the list. The number of the sacraments was rather indefinite.

In the eleventh and twelfth century a little more uniformity appeared for the meaning of the term was defined and limited. St. Otto, Bishop of Bramburg, is reported by his biographer Herbard (d.1168) to have left a book of catechetical instructions to his own people in which he speaks of the "seven sacraments of the Church", and enumerates them as we have them today. Master Roland, later Pope Alexander II, lists seven sacraments ca. 1150 A.D. Seven are listed in Bishop Poore's Statutes, ca. 1217, and in 1222 in the statutes of Stephen Langton. From then on they are mentioned quite regularly. The synodical constitution of Odo of Paris, 1197, explains only six but the context is said to demand a seventh. The list of seven was finally accepted largely on the authority of Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas and was adopted by the leading schoolmen of the day. They are mentioned at the Council of London, 1257, and at others, but they did not receive sanction by ecclesiastical decree until the Council of Florence, 1439.

The task now remains for the Church to trace these seven sacraments back to the time of the apostles. ~~We~~ <sup>It was</sup> have seen that the mention of seven sacraments can be traced back as far as the year 1150. Going back a few centuries <sup>they</sup> we arrive at the Great Schism when the Church separated into an Eastern and Western division in 869 A.D. During those days of charge and countercharge, we find no accusation in regard to



heresy in the number of sacraments. Neither would have missed such an opportunity but there were no accusations of abolishing sacraments or of introducing new ones from either side. Because of the hatred between them it is highly improbable that one would ever have borrowed it from the other. Therefore, since both of these Churches have seven sacraments today, they also must have had them prior to 869 A.D. and have derived them from a common source before all connections with one another were severed.

Another step takes ~~us~~<sup>them</sup> back to the time of the Monophysites and Nestorians. It is held that they taught the same thing in regard to the number of the sacraments as the Roman Church does today. Although a few writers from both sects added or subtracted one or so here and there, there is in general no disagreement, and hence, ~~we may~~<sup>they</sup> conclude that the number seven was already known in the fifth century.

The number could not have been changed before that time. If the Church's belief in regard to such an important matter as the number of the sacraments had undergone any change during the centuries, it certainly would not have escaped the notice of history and would have left some trace, whether the change were slow or sudden. The bishop's were zealous protectors of the faith and any innovation would certainly bring opposition. Thus the number goes back to the days of Christ.

The object of the institution of these sacraments is manifold. If man were a pure spirit the divine powers would not need a medium, but since man belongs in a world of sense he needs a sensible type to preserve and obtain contact with that supernatural life. Since man has surrendered himself to the material world and has lost touch and contact with the divine world, he needs the mediation of the material world to assist him to rise above it.

The attempt has been made to show the necessity of seven sacraments and no more. Their congruity, their adaptation to meet all the needs of fallen man, their correlation to all the defects and weaknesses of the soul - all these show the need of seven signs. To the admittedly inferior order of earthly things, the Church opposes a more exalted order to confer upon the former the blessings resulting from redemption, to explain its significance, and to cleanse by means of heavenly influence all the stages of sinful existence, and to lift humanity up to God. The human intellect cannot establish the number seven on 'a priori' grounds, but it is easy to see 'a posteriori', that the septenary corresponds to the practical needs of man's composite nature. There is a remarkable analogy between the natural life of man and the spiritual life of the soul to both of which the sacrament minister so wonderfully.

When man realizes that he needs certain graces he will want to ask God for them. And he will want the assurance that God has heard him and given him that grace. Man will be satisfied to use an institution ordained by Christ in which He has determined what man should do to obtain grace. "For in that case the meaning of the institution has been ordained by Christ, and it has before God the power of asking grace. Man also receives assurance that he has obtained grace even though he cannot see nor is told by God that He has it. These limitations are overcome by the 'sense-perceptive sacraments'." 1) When Christ ordained them He promised to grant grace and He is faithful to His promises. The void between God and man is bridged by these means.

A child receives grace in Baptism, is instructed in religion, but falls from faith soon after maturity. That which is necessary for battle

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings of the Church, Ch. VIII

with the evils of life is lacking. "It follows, then, that the condition both in this life and in eternity demand the perfecting of the grace received in Baptism." 1) An institution to perfect grace was needed or Christ's religion would not be complete.

Although Confirmation gives man an increase in grace, it is still not the greatest perfection that a soul can attain. A person could have grace and still be too weak to comprehend God's infinite perfection and greatness. But it is to this goal, this apprehension of God, that the perfection of grace tends. The grace bestowed in Confirmation must be constantly at battle with the evils surrounding it in the world. This constant struggle robs the individual of grace and if that lost grace is not restored the soul will grow weaker and finally succumb to the temptations. Thus grace must be given to the soul even after it is in the state of grace. This needed grace is given in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

But particular occasions arise when special help is needed. "This special help must come to their souls by actual graces of such a nature that they tend to procure the specific end required by such a condition." 2) Actual grace is given only when a soul receives gifts of sanctifying grace which require the protection of that grace.

Such a special circumstance requiring additional grace is marriage. There the participants have obligations to one another. They will bring children up, the images of God, for each of which they will have to give an account before their Creator. They need a special help that will bring the actual graces required. The sacrament of Matrimony covers the special increase of sanctifying grace.

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. I, p.60

2) ibid., p.62

Some men enter the work of the ministry. Their work in this office must be so discharged as to please God and save souls. The powers necessary for the task are given in Holy Orders. Now these powers given to the ministry require special help. The increase of sanctifying grace needed to make the soul worthy of the additional actual grace is bestowed in the sacrament of Holy Orders. Although mortal sins remove the increase of grace "the powers given by the sacrament remain. Their demand for that grace also remains in the soul." 1)

On the death-bed a person is beset by many temptations which he otherwise does not face in life. Again special help is needed and to obtain actual grace an increase of sanctifying grace is required. These graces are conferred in the sacrament of Extreme Unction.

The symbolical signs of the sacraments bring the higher world down to the immediate perception of sense, and they convey the capacity for that higher world to exert its influence. A spiritual birth, Baptism, is added to the earthly birth. When the individual is in danger of being overcome by the powers of the world, then Confirmation bestows the strength needed to face the struggle. Earthly intercourse is changed into a heavenly alliance. If matrimony is the vital condition for State, earthly existence, and all progress, so Ordination is the vital condition to all ecclesiastical life and all the other sacraments. In contrast to earthly bread we receive a heavenly food. As the foe attacks the body and the organs, so Extreme Unction gives strength and comfort. Penance has no counterpart in the normal life of man lest it appear as though it were inevitable that he should fall into sin and transgression. The sacrament of Penance is a special dispensation of divine grace.

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1) ibid., p.63

The need of the sacraments is founded by Aquinas on the peculiarity of our nature according to which we are led to spiritual things by means of material and sensible things because sin renders us more subject to things which are material, and because we spend our time dealing with corporeal existences. St. Thomas develops this thought in the third part of his Summa Theologia.

"The sacraments of the Church were instituted for a two-fold purpose: namely, in order to perfect man in things pertaining to the worship of God according to the Christian life, and to be a remedy against the defects caused by sin... Now the life of the body is perfected directly in three ways. First, by generation, whereby a man begins to be and live: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Baptism, which is a spiritual regeneration... Secondly, by growth, whereby a man is brought to perfect size and strength: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Confirmation, in which the Holy Ghost is given to strengthen us... Thirdly, by nourishment, whereby life and strength are preserved to man: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is the Eucharist... This would be enough for man if he had an impassable life, both corporally and spiritually; but since man is liable at times to both corporal and spiritual infirmities, i.e. sin, he needs a cure for his infamy. This cure is two-fold. One is the healing that restores health: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Penance... The other is the restoration of former vigor by means of suitable diet and exercise: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Extreme Unction, which removes the remainder of sin and prepares man for final glory... In regard to the whole community man is perfected in two ways. First, by receiving power to rule the community and to exercise public acts: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is the sacrament of Order... Secondly, in regard to natural propagation. It is accomplished by matrimony both in the corporal and in the spiritual life, since it is not only a sacrament but also a function of nature." 1)

"We may likewise gather the number of the sacraments from their being instituted as a remedy against the defects caused by sin." 2)  
Baptism is intended to be a remedy against the absence of spiritual life; Confirmation is a remedy against the infirmity found in those

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1) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.46-48

2) Quoted from "Summa Theol.", in ibid., p.48

who are newly born; the Eucharist against the soul's inclination to sin; Penance against those actual transgressions committed after Baptism; Extreme Unction against the remnants of sin, not sufficiently removed by Penance; Orders against division in the community; Matrimony against concupiscence in the individual and against the decrease in numbers that results from death.

"In der Taufe empfaengt der Mensch das zuvor verlorne Gnadenleben; in der Firmung gewinnt er die Vollendung des goettlichen Ebenbildes; durch das Altarssakrament gelangt er wieder zur Gemeinschaft mit Gott; in der Priesterweihe erhaelt er statt der verlorne ungestoerten Herrschaft ueber die Geschoepfe eine geistige Bevorzugung, ein geistiges Koenigtum; in der Ehe die Bezaehmung der sinnlichen Begierden; die Busze erneuert gleich einer zweiten Taufe das Gnadenleben; die letzte Oelung giebt uns ein Unterpfang der goettlichen Erbarmung, und unserer Aussoehnung mit ihm." 1)

The Roman Catechism gives seven specific reasons for the fitness of the sacraments under the Christian dispensation. "They are (1) the need of a visible sign owing to the peculiar constitution of human nature, which makes the soul dependent on the senses: (2) the consoling assurance to be derived from the use of concrete pledges guaranteeing God's fidelity to His promises: (3) the need of healing medicines to recover or preserve the health of the soul: (4) the desire of belonging to a visible society, knit, as it were, into one body by the bond of visible signs: (5) the necessity of an external profession of faith to distinguish Christians from infidels: (6) the advantage of having sacred mysteries to excite and exercise the faith: (7) the repression of pride and the exercise of humility involved in availing oneself of

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1) Wilmers, Lehrbuch der Religion, Vol. IV, p.260

suitable elements in obedience to God." 1)

The seven sacraments correspond to the seven virtues. Baptism, the Eucharist, and Extreme Unction correspond to faith, love, and hope; Orders to enlightenment, Penance to righteousness, Confirmation to endurance, and Matrimony to continence.

Bonaventura has a stimulating comparison drawn from the life of a soldier. Baptism equips man for the entrance into battle; Confirmation gives him encouragement; Extreme Unction gives aid at the finish; the Eucharist and Penance renew the strength; Orders bring new recruits; Matrimony furnishes men to be recruits.

### III. The essence of the sacraments

From the definition of a sacrament we learn that certain things are essential and indispensable. The external sign and interior grace are the two internal causes of a sacrament. But its external and efficient cause (causa efficiens) is its institution by Christ. Before the Council of Trent handed down its decision, some theologians taught that while Christ had instituted some of the sacraments, He had not instituted them all. Hugo of St. Victor, Peter Lombard, and St. Bonaventura, for example, thought that Confirmation and Extreme Unction had been instituted by the apostles, however, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Thomas Aquinas, said that there was no specific command for Confirmation but that it was involved in the promise of the Holy Ghost. Alexander of Hales even went so far as to maintain that Confirmation was instituted "quantum ad formam verborum et materiam elementarum" by the Council of Meaux, 845 A.D. But as the definition of the sacraments specifies, the institution by Christ is necessary for all. Scripture, tradition and reason are advanced as proof.

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1) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p. 30-31

The sacrament of Confirmation is defined as follows: "Confirmation is a sacrament in which through the imposition of the bishop's hands, unction, and prayer, baptized persons receive the Holy Ghost, that they may steadfastly profess their faith and lead upright lives." 1) At times this sacrament is called the Chrism because the forehead is anointed with oil in the form of the cross.

Man always desires progress, and he is so constituted that he either degenerates or advances and improves. His desire must be satisfied by some outward sign. The progressive Christian also desires improvement after grace is received in Baptism. This improvement is accomplished through Confirmation. This institution is necessary to satisfy men's needs otherwise "Christ did not make the Church the institution required to alleviate all of man's misery. That would not have been an institution worthy of a divine Being, for He lacks either the knowledge to see what is needed, or the power to give the institution, or the mercy necessary for entirely relieving the needs." 2)

Since such a sacrament was necessary Christ must have instituted it. That Confirmation was ordained as a sacrament cannot be proved conclusively from the Scriptures, but it is implied in the promise of the Holy Ghost in Luke 24, 49; John 7, 39 and numerous Old Testament passages. That a rite was used to bestow the Holy Ghost is proved from Acts 8, 14ff. But while the Canonical writings are not sufficiently clear to offer conclusive proof, no difficulty arises because the Fathers of the early Church are specific and clear in their mention of Confirmation. St. Jerome speaks of episcopal ordination and confirmation tours and says: "You ask, where is it written? In the Acts of the Apostles. But even if the Sacred Scripture supplied no authority, the consensus

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1) Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p.280

2) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. II, p.70



of the whole world would give it the force of a precept." 1)

Pope St. Cornelius (251-253) says of Novation who was baptized on his sick-bed, that he "did not receive the other things, nor was he signed with the seal of the Lord by the bishop; and not having received this seal, how could he receive the Holy Ghost?" 2)

St. Cyprian also mentioned this custom. He writes:

"The Samaritan had already obtained legitimate ecclesiastical Baptism and hence it was not fitting that they should be baptized anew; Peter and John merely supplied what was wanting, viz., that prayer being made for them and hands imposed, the Holy Ghost should be invoked and poured forth upon them; which also is now done among us." 3)

Chrysostom writes:

"Philip was one of the seven, the second (in rank) after Stephen. Hence, when he was baptized, he did not communicate to the neophytes the Holy Ghost, because he had not the power to do so. This gift was peculiar to the twelve, a prerogative of the apostles; whence we see that the coryphaei (bishops) and none other do this." 4)

St. Cyril is also quoted in this connection:

"To you also, after you had come up from the pool of the sacred streams, was given the chrism, the emblem (antitype) of that wherewith Christ was anointed; and this is the Holy Ghost... Beware of regarding this as a plain and common ointment. For as the bread of the Eucharist... so this holy ointment, after the invocation, is no longer plain ointment, nor, so to say, common, but the chrism of Christ, which by the presence of the Godhead causes in us the Holy Spirit." 5)

Little need be said in regard to the institution of the Lord's Supper except, perhaps, to show its necessity. Left merely with the graces received in Confirmation and Baptism, man would be under a handicap for every Christian sins and then these graces <sup>would be</sup> are lost. Every sin committed ends a series of grace in the soul. Both by sins of omission and commission souls are blighted and the spiritual life torn down, so that unless

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1) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.282

2) "Eusebius Eccl. Hist." VI; quoted ibid., p.284

3) "Ep. 73 ad Iubaian."; quoted ibid., p.284

4) "Hom. in Acts 18"; quoted ibid., p.285

5) "Cat. Myst." III; ibid., p.286

the damage is repaired, the actual grace received in Confirmation and Baptism are undermined. With these powers gone, mortal sin would follow and there would be no grace efficacious enough to assist man to rise from that condition. The final result would be loss of faith. Therefore, more had to be done for man. So Christ gave man another crowning institution. "Through it the weakness of man, coming from fallen nature, would be healed and supernatural life strengthened, so that the possibility of sin would be made most remote." 1) The Holy Eucharist repairs the damage done to the soul by the loss of graces, and its constant use guarantees us salvation. This institution had to be given. "If He had not given this institution there should have been one thing that He could have done for man's salvation and did not do." 2)

Penance is usually defined as a "sacrament in which the priest in the place of God, forgives sins, when the sinner is heartily sorry for them, sincerely confesses them, and is willing to perform the satisfaction imposed on him." 3) That the power to forgive sins, which was given to the priest, is really a sacrament is expressly taught by the Council of Trent. "If anyone saith that in the Catholic Church Penance is not truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by Christ our Lord for reconciling the faithful unto God, as often as they fall into sin after Baptism, let him be anathema." 4)

That Christ instituted the sacrament of Penance is, of course, <sup>for P<sup>o</sup>nc,</sup> essential. That the sacrament has this indispensable mark is reasonable, for Penance arose in the Apostolic Age. This sacrament could never have been introduced. It cannot be imagined, without violating common sense, that all people of Christendom went to bed one fine

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. III, p.81

2) ibid., p.82

3) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol.III, p.3

4) Waterworth, tr., Conc. Trid., Session XIV, can.1

night and awoke the next morning, firm believers in the sacrament of Penance. The Church Fathers would never have permitted an error to be taught in the Church. Penance is also a doctrine which is difficult for the flesh to accept, and only God could ever force man to undergo such an humiliation.

However, until the year 150 A.D., most Church historians hold that there was no Penance after Baptism. Hermas seems to teach that there was one, but only one, opportunity to repent after Baptism. Gradually the strictness lessened. In the third century, adulterers were absolved quite generally throughout the Church, if they did Penance. As a rule, apostates and murderers were not granted pardon at this time. At the start of the fourth century, the Council of Ancyra permitted the reconciliation of murderers upon their death-bed. St. Basil prescribed twenty years of Penance for murderers and ten years for homicides. Those who had once been forgiven and had fallen into sin again were debarred from further Penance and pardon.

The discipline of the early Church reveals a legalistic spirit. While the discipline varied with the locality, the underlying principle was the conviction that the Church could forgive sins and impose penalties for violations of the Law. In general the penitential discipline of the Church was very strict. In the arrangement of the early churches there was usually an open area before the building. This was the place in which the first and lowliest orders of penitents, the weepers, stood exposed to the weather. The Church itself was divided into three parts. In the first part, the narthex, a narrow vestibule extended the whole width of the church, and in this stood the second class of penitents, the hearers, who were allowed to hear the sermon preached and the Scriptures read. The next division was separated

from the nave by a railing, and just within this railing were the third order of the penitents, the kneelers or prostrates, so-called because they were permitted to join in certain prayers. At last, after they had undergone penance for the prescribed time, which varied according to the degree of the offense, they were restored to full communion by a public and formal absolution. 1)

During the Middle Ages the severity lessened and varied in different countries. Both public and private Penances were in use. Penitential books were published for the clergy but they were contradictory and not approved by any central authority. Later the Councils regulated it. Penitential redemption crept in, first as good works, prayers, alms, etc. for commuting Penance. Gradually it degenerated to a pecuniary level. This was checked after the Council of Trent.

The Vulgate changed the Greek "metanoia" to "agere poenitentiam" and thus transferred the sphere of repentance from the heart to an external performance. Not until about 1200 A.D. was the doctrine of Penance fixed, and it then consisted of four parts - contrition, confession, satisfaction, and absolution.

Fisher, in his History of Christian Doctrine, traces the origin of satisfaction back into the monastery. He says that in the monastery it was customary for every individual to deal with his own conscience and allot penance personally. In time this monastic habit spread beyond the walls and entered their dealings with the laity.

But Christ must have instituted this sacrament. Sin is a terrible thing. It is an insult to God; it makes the soul a hideous creature; it drags man down to hell. Every man who realizes the terrible condition

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1) This time of Penance was at times shortened, if the bishop saw fit, and was known as an indulgence.

into which sin flings him, is tormented. He will desire to rid himself of the evil, to obtain God's pardon. And until he is forgiven the sinner will have no peace. Similar worry and anxiety is caused by political, financial, or social matters. But when the problem is solved and tangible results are seen, the worry ceases. But sin is in a spiritual sphere and forgiveness is not a tangible thing, able to be comprehended by the senses. How can the sinner obtain such assurance?

Man may mourn, repent, "but unless what he does is ordained by God for obtaining forgiveness, it will neither bring that forgiveness nor even the assurance necessary for peace of conscience." 1) Some things, e.g. giving alms, brings temporary relief, but the terrifying doubts concerning forgiveness will again arise. The sinner sees no tangible proof.

Certainty of forgiveness can be had in but two ways. One way would be for God to tell each sinner that he is forgiven, as He did to Mary Magdelene and the paralytic. But Christ is no longer on earth. Still, man desires assurance. It is the work of religion to remedy the defects man encounters in worshipping God. Hence, religion must supply this lack of assurance, otherwise the Church would not serve its purpose. It would be imperfect and incomplete. Therefore, an institution to give the desired certainty is necessary. Without it Christ's work would be defective in this respect. This institution which would bring peace and happiness to the sinner must be instituted by Christ, and this institution is the sacrament of Penance.

To obtain this forgiveness and assurance, confession is necessary.

"If anyone saith that in the sacrament of Penance it is not of divine right necessary for the remission of sins, to confess all, and each of the mortal sins, which after due

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. VII, p.173

and diligent previous meditation are remembered, even those mortal sins which are secret, and those which are opposed to the last two commandments of the Decalogue, as also the circumstances which change the species of a sin, but (saith) that such confession is only useful... let him be anathema." 1)

"From the fact that such an institution was given to the Church, it follows that only those sins will be forgiven that are subject to this power." 2) Only that marble is changed into a statue to which the chisel is applied. So any guilt which is not covered by the words of forgiveness is retained. But the object sought in forgiveness is the friendship of God and restoration of eternal life. Every mortal sin, therefore, must be forgiven before this end can be obtained. Again, God's forgiveness only extends in so far as the sinner is guilty. The merits gained by Christ's death are too precious to be wasted. Absolution must "not be extended over sins that are not there. Thus a sincere and exact knowledge of the sins committed must be obtained by the minister before using this great power." 3) The minister cannot see the guilt in the soul nor does God reveal it to him. Therefore, the only way that he can know is that he be told. "In this confession all the mortal sins, number and kind, must be specified." 4) Neither should the sinner mention non-existent sins. By faithfully accusing himself, he receives the disposition required for absolution. "Thus the only reasonable use that could be made of this institution requires confession." 5)

Confession is psychologically necessary. Sin troubles man because of its horribleness and because his soul, "by its essence a good thing", desires happiness with God. In confession the sinner finds someone who

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1) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XIV, can.7

2) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. VII, p.183

3) 4) 5) ibid., p.184

sympathizes and shares his troubles - the priest. This consoles him, and encouraged, he makes a greater effort to overcome sin.

Confession is needed because man seldom feels safe in following his own judgment, especially is this true in religion. Common sense tells the sinner that he should go to God and God's mouthpiece, the Church, and even more particularly, the priest. The priest has the knowledge and the training necessary to handle the individual case. But if the priest is to aid, the sins must be confessed.

Confession has a great value as a deterrent to sin. The thought that sins must be confessed will prevent many a person from committing them. Leibnitz made a statement to the effect that confession is so beneficial that if God did not introduce it, man should. Surely God would not be less apt to see this than a scientist.

There are other essentials beside confession necessary for forgiveness. Sins can never be forgiven without contrition. Man can repair his wrongs against God only when he recognizes the wickedness to such an extent that he is dismayed. He will then desire the friendship of God, and seeing sin robbing him of it, hatred for sin will grow in his heart and sorrow affect him. That hatred and sorrow is contrition which leads him to repent of his sins. Man cannot feel sorry for his sins and still think to sin again. Thus he has the determination to better his life. Contrition is the "conditione sine qua non" for pardon.

In every sin that is committed there are two wrongs, the insult to God, and the temporal wrong. Through absolution the priest forgives the insult to God. But God has given man certain faculties and limited the use of them. When man sins he is guilty of the misuse of his faculties and has abused this gift of God. This misuse creates a debt of injustice which must be paid. "This can be done only by performing sufficient

good works to fill in the void made by them... Since the sacrament of Penance has for its object the reconciliation with God of a soul that has sinned after Baptism, it follows that it must impose upon the penitents some good works." 1) Reconciliation cannot be complete until satisfaction has been made.

In Pohle-Preuss we read: "Sacramental confession is nowhere expressly mentioned in Scripture, and hence none of the texts quoted in this connection are strictly conclusive." 2) The texts frequently quoted are I John 1,9; I Cor. 11,28; and Acts 19,18; also James 5,16. Indirectly Scripture is said to prove it by the following argument: Scripture shows that the power of the Keys is necessary to obtain the forgiveness of sins. All sins remain unforgiven, therefore, as long as the sinner does not appear before that tribunal. The forum of the Church authoritatively remits and retains sins, although not arbitrarily. To deal justly, the judge must know the number, the nature, and the circumstances of the sin. This information can be supplied only by the penitent. Consequently, the penitent himself must reveal the sins which are to be forgiven, in other words, he must go to confession.

A chief argument is derived from prescription. No one will deny that from the time of the Council of Trent until the present age, there has been taught the need of confession.

Before the Council of Trent it was also practised. Calvin says that confession was practised since 1215, the Fourth Council of the Lateran. Pope Innocent II made it compulsory for all the faithful who had attained the years of discretion, to confess their sins to a priest at least once a year or be excommunicated. Of course, the faithful would not have submitted to such a burden if it had not already been the custom at that time.

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. VII, p.210

2) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. III, p.185



Therefore, they trace it back beyond the thirteenth century. In the Greek Church they also find that confession is practised. At the time of the Great Schism, 869 A.D., they find no question was raised in regard to this custom. Hence it must have its origin before that time. An oriental book, compiled about the ninth or tenth century, speaks of the necessity of auricular confession. In the West there was a penitential book of Theodore (690) in which they find traces of this custom. He was the Archbishop of Canterbury which shows that it was also known in England. It also is claimed that it is mentioned in the decrees of the Council of Worms (868), the Council of Chalons (813) and Tours (813).

How about confession in the first five centuries? The patristic proof presents a difficulty for they used the Greek word "ἑξομολογήσθαι" which means either to confess before men or to pour out the heart to God.

Some historians think that Pope Leo the Great (d.461) introduced it. But Leo merely condemns certain priests who required some penitents to read off their sins publicly, and says "quorum quum reatus conscientiarum sufficiat sacerdotibus iudicare solis confessione secreta." 1) St. Augustine compares the sinful conscience to an abscess filled with pus, the priest to the surgeon, and confession to the lancing which causes the pus to run off.

In the fourth century they claim the testimony of St. Parian who gives the advice to sinners to do as the sick "who do not fear the physician, though he cut and burn even the secret parts of the body." 2) Lactantius says that "the true Church is that in which there is confession and penance." 3)

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1) "Ep. ad Episc. Camp."; quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Volume III, p.202

2) "Paraens. ad Poen."; quoted ibid., p.210

3) "Div. Instit."; quoted ibid., p.210

In the third century St. Cyprian pleads for the merciful treatment of sinners, saying:

"Since we find that no one ought to be forbidden to do penance and that those who implore the mercy of God... peace can be granted through His priests... and because in hell there is no confession, nor can "exomologesis" be made there, they who repent with their whole heart and ask for it, should be received into the Church and therein saved unto the Lord." 1)

Origen, in his second homily on the Psalms, says that according to the Scriptures <sup>we</sup> must not conceal <sup>our</sup> sins, and compares unconfessed sins to undigested food.

In the second century <sup>they</sup> we have the witness of Irenaeus who speaks of those who openly confess their sins while others are afraid and remain silent. The words here are "καὶ μὲν καὶ ἐς φάσμα ἐξομολογούσιν" From the "καὶ", which they translate "etiam", they try to show that a private confession is presupposed.

In the first century the remaining fragments are not clear and convincing. But we are now in the Apostolic Age and it is unlikely that any new doctrine was introduced so early in the history of the New Testament Church and allowed to go unmolested. Thus Rome accepts Penance as a divinely instituted sacrament and confession as an essential part of Penance by divine decree.

"Extreme Unction" is a sacrament of the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ, in which the sick, who are seriously ill, by the anointing with holy oil and by the power of the priest, receive the grace of God for the good of their souls, and often of their bodies." 2) The term "extreme" is used, not because the subject must die, but it probably comes from the fact that it is an anointing of those "in extremis", i.e. the dying.

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1) "Ep. ad Anton."; quoted Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, III, p.211

2) ibid., Vol.IV, p.5

Man needs such an institution. This need is seen in the fact that even the Protestants call for their pastor when they are sick. But the effect produced by the priest's anointing is far greater than that which mere prayers and hymns can bring. Nor does imagination produce this quieting effect for Catholics are no more imaginative than any other people. This anointing affects even those people who know very little doctrine, rouses those whom nothing else can stir, and even the partially demented become quieter after reception. "Such facts cannot be explained by mere natural powers, and hence must come from the influence of divine help, that operates through the institution and from the need of man for such an institution." 1)

A person who is seriously ill usually turns his thoughts to the life beyond the grave. The thought of having to leave everything behind and go where none ever return, to stand before the Creator awaiting reward or punishment, as the case may be, brings terror and dread to the heart. When the end is near, these truths become especially clear and intensive. Those who can then say that they have done what God has required of them, have some measure of consolation. But even that will not calm their terrors altogether. Sins are seen in their true light, the despicableness, variety, and untold number of the transgressions are recalled. The good done was very little, contrition was done half-heartedly, etc. As a result the soul is in agony.

Only one thing can ease such a persons mind and it comes from God. "The sick person must know that he has done something that brought God to him with His merciful forgiveness, and that He has prepared him for judgment." 2) God does not appear to him and tell him, and yet he must

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. IV, p.138

2) ibid., p.141

have this assurance to alleviate his anxieties and morries. In the last hours the pain inflicted upon the body is also greatly heightened. When the will power begins to fail, what forces will sustain this suffering? Without help the patient becomes exhausted "and one will be thrown into fits of anger. Anger will grow into hatred of God. In that terrible state the poor, despairing creature will send forth his soul to the judgment seat of God." 1)

Now the priest comes and administers Extreme Unction, the rite which prepares man for God's mercy and judgment, and the sick person is satisfied. Peacefully he waits for the end and patiently endures all pain and suffering. "It is evident, then, that there must be such an institution in God's Church in order that God's mercy and judgment be with one to the end." 2) If Christ had done nothing to alleviate the tortures of the dying, His work of mercy to suffering mankind would be incomplete. Even human beings try to lessen the sufferings of others. Christ sees every human sickness and agony. "Consequently He must have given some means to relieve them." 3) All is provided in the sacrament of Extreme Unction. It relieves the soul of its anxieties and the sick person can die happy and in peace.

The Scriptural proof for the doctrine that Extreme Unction is a sacrament is based on James 5, 14.15: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayers of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Of this passage the Council of Trent said: "In which words, as the Church has learned

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. IV, p.142

2) 3) ibid., p.143

from Apostolic tradition, received from hand to hand, he teaches the matter, the form, the proper minister, and the effect of this salutary sacrament." 1)

But the Scriptural proof is not entirely satisfactory. Hence, an appeal is made to tradition, but here also some difficulty is encountered. For at least the first five centuries, it appears that there was no sacrament of Extreme Unction known, for there is little mention of it among the Fathers. This is explained by various factors. The Discipline of the Secret kept them from discussing it; it was considered as a completion of Penance and was not stressed as a sacrament in its own right; there were many martyrs and it was not administered so frequently; many waited until death was near before they were baptized and hence had no need of Extreme Unction. For these reasons there are very few references to it in the first centuries.

A few of the Fathers indicate that there was such a practise as anointing the sick with oil. Origen mentions an anointing of those who were ill. Venerable Bede refers to the James passage and speaks of the priests anointing the sick. The strongest and clearest passage is that of Pope Innocent I:

"The words of St. James must without doubt be taken or understood of the faithful who are sick, who may be anointed with the holy oil or chrism, of which, having been prepared by the bishops, not only priests, but all Christians may avail themselves for anointing in their own needs, or in that of their connections... But if the bishop is able to do so, or thinks that anyone especially worthy of being visited, he, whose office it is to consecrate the chrism, need not hesitate to bless and anoint the sick person. For this unction may not be given to penitents as it is a kind of sacrament." 2)

Therefore, there has been some controversy in regard to the institution of this sacrament. Some of the most eminent theologians among

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1) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XIV, cap. 1

2) "Ep. 25"; quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p. 13

the Catholics, as Bonaventura, Peter Lombard, Hugo St. Victor held that Extreme Unction was instituted by the apostles after the Holy Spirit had been given them. Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas held that it had been instituted by Christ. The omission of a specific precept they attributed to the fact that Christ did many things not recorded in the Bible. Of course, they faced the question of whether Jesus would neglect to mention, at the least, such a precious thing as a sacrament. This difference of opinion continued down to the Council of Trent which declared that it had been instituted by Christ, and thus the matter was settled.

A distinction must be made between the priesthood and ordination to the same. Therefore, it is not enough to show that the ministry was divinely instituted, but that the act by which man becomes a priest is of divine institution, i.e. a sacrament. The Catholic Church holds that the rite of ordination is a true sacrament and condemns all who deny this. "If anyone saith that Order, or sacred ordination, is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord; or that it is a kind of human figment devised by men unskilled in ecclesiastical matters; or that it is only a sort of rite for choosing ministers of the Word of God and of the sacraments; let him anathema." 1)

Reason is called to aid in establishing the divine institution of the rite of ordination. Christ ordained the sacraments for the use of all men, but He did not give all men the right to administer them, Baptism excepted. There are several reasons for permitting only certain individuals to administer them. People, as a rule, are ignorant of the essence of the sacrament. They do not know what is necessary for their valid dispensation or reception. Hence, they would often be

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1) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XXIII, can. 3

desecrated. Therefore, only people with a thorough knowledge of the means of grace should be permitted to administer them. "This would necessitate that certain persons be prepared by special education in religion and set apart for their administration." 1)

If all were allowed to administer the sacraments no one would be satisfied. The people would not feel sure, would suspect deficiencies in their administration. The people themselves would finally select men to give them the means of grace. "Now this shows that the conditions of man here on earth in his relationship with God require a special institution ordaining one for the dispensing of the sacraments." 2) An institution so necessary for efficiency in the Church's work would certainly be given by Christ. The work of the Church is to bring peace to man, but without this sacrament it would be impossible. Doubt would lead to despair which would destroy the purpose for which the Church was created. Hence, one can readily see the necessity of such a sacrament as Holy Orders.

When Christ was on earth He possessed all the powers necessary to bring man salvation. But now He is no longer on earth. How can these powers be preserved among men? Two things are needed. First, those who had this authority in one generation should have the power to hand it down to succeeding generations. (Apostolic Succession) Secondly, there would have to be a ceremony ordained by Christ for that purpose, so that this power could be given to those who did not possess it. Christ promised to give that authority and His promises cannot be broken. He could not, in all justice, leave future generations without the means of obtaining grace necessary for salvation. This power was given to the apostles, Matt. 28,19, and the institution through which

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, CH. V, p.146

2) ibid., p.147

it could be passed onto others was also ordained, John 20,22.

The act or formality by which a person enters a conjugal relation or union is a sacrament. The Council of Trent says: "If anyone saith that Matrimony is not truly and properly one of the seven sacraments of the evangelic law instituted by Christ the Lord, but that it has been invented by man in the Church, and that it does not confer grace, let him be anathema." 1)

In regard to this sacrament Pohle-Preuss says: "The Council finds this doctrine "intimated" in St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, but bases its main argument on tradition." 2) The passage from St. Paul to which the writer here refers is Ephesians 5, 25-32. Paul speaks of the union of Christ with the Church and draws a comparison with marriage. In the 32nd verse, we read: "This is a great mystery, but I speak in Christ and the Church." This the Vulgate translates, "hoc est magnum sacramentum."

Of great importance is the argument from prescription. No one will attempt to deny that Rome has considered Matrimony a sacrament since the time of the Reformation. That admitted, we go back another century to the Council of Florence, 1439. There we find that Matrimony was listed among the seven sacraments. It was included in a list of the seven sacraments drawn up in the twelfth century. Hence, it must have been known before that time. Since the schismatic Greeks and Russians both have the sacrament of Matrimony, and since it was not a subject of debate at the time of the division in 869 A.D., it must have an origin antedating that period. In the same way it can be traced back to the sects of Nestorius and the Armenians who left the Church but not this

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1) Waterworth, Conc. Trdi., Session XXIV, can.1

2) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p.148



belief in the sacrament of Matrimony. The first four centuries offer no proof of the idea that new doctrines were introduced into the Church. Certain pictures in the catacombs, e.g. Christ standing between the bride and groom and blessing them, at least show that marriage was highly regarded. "Hence belief in the sacramental character of Matrimony is as old as the Church, which is merely another way of saying that it comes to us through the Apostles from our Lord Himself." 1)

Every sacrament of the New Law must have some external sign, or matter, which is sense-perceptible. This matter in the sacrament is very important. Due to the matter, the Eucharist is considered the "potissimum" among the sacraments. It is the crown of the means of grace, the "sacramentum sacramentorum" because it both contains grace and bestows the Author of grace. St. Thomas Aquinas says:

"The sacrament of the Eucharist is the greatest of all the sacraments; first, because it bestows Christ Himself substantially, whereas the others contain a certain instrumental power, which is a share of Christ's power;... secondly... all the other sacraments seem to be ordained to this one as to their end;... thirdly... all the sacraments terminate in the Eucharist." 2)

The first of these reasons is founded on the Real Presence, the second on the fact that Baptism and Confirmation bestow the right to receive Holy Communion; Penance and Extreme Unction make one worthy to receive it; Holy Orders impart the power of consecration, while Matrimony, as an emblem of the love between Christ and the soul also symbolizes the union between Christ and the Church. The third reason given by Aquinas is based on the consideration that those who have received one of the other sacraments, as a rule, also receive Holy Communion.

The matter in this sacrament is bread and wine. Wheaten bread must be used as the "Decretum pro Armenis" says: "Materia est panis triteceus

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1) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p.153

2) "Summa Theol." 3a; quoted ibid., Vol. II, p.5

et vinum de vite." That these two materials are needed is deduced from the words of institution, " Ἐλάβετε τὸν ἄρτον ", and the command "Do this in remembrance of Me." Unleavened bread is used in imitation of the example of Christ, because of the aptitude of unleavened bread to be regarded as a symbol of His pure body, and because of St. Paul's exhortation to keep the Pasch "not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Wine of grapes is the second element and the Church has always agreed on this. The law of the Church says that water must be added to the wine before it is consecrated because water flowed from Christ's side with the blood, and because it symbolizes the union of the faithful with Him.

Since the arguments for the Real Presence and the proofs are, to a great extent, the same as those advanced in support of transubstantiation, only the latter will be considered. 1)

The Council of Trent declared "that by the consecration of the bread and of the wine a conversion is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His blood; which conversion is by the Holy Catholic Church properly and suitably called transubstantiation." 2) Thus the term first used in the twelfth century by Hildebert (d. 1134) of Tours was officially adopted. 3)

The objection might be raised that it is impossible for body and blood to be contained in what appears only as a piece of bread or portion of wine. But did not God create all things and give the qualities and accidents that they have? He might have created the things in which

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1) Since the Mass is rather a sacrifice than a sacrament, it has not been treated.

2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XIII, cap. 4

3) The species in the course of time change. Jacobs has said "in such instances the Real Presence of the Eucharist will cease at the moment the species have transformed to such an extent that they are not those of bread and wine." The Sacramentary Teachings, p. 108

the accidents occur without creating them, and we would merely have the substance which underlies the qualities. Then again God could have created the accidents or qualities so that they would exist independent of any substance. What God created He also can destroy and although He made the accidents so that they need material substance to adhere in, He can change it so that such things would not be needed for their existence. "If He so chose, He could change only some of these qualities in only some particular place. And that is just what is done in the Holy Eucharist." The bread and wine lose their substance but the qualities remain. "The body and blood of Christ shorn of qualities assumes the qualities of the bread and wine that were left after the destruction of the substance... Even the human mind can grasp this idea." 1)

The classic Scripture proof for transubstantiation is John 6,25-72. Catholic theologians divided it into two interrelated sections. Some hold vv. 26-48 are metaphorical, and the "Bread of Heaven" is Christ, a spiritual food of faith. Others hold that the entire section speaks of the Eucharist and in the first part the Lord wants to show that faith is necessary for salutary reception. But both parties agree that beginning with v. 48, or at least v.52, the text must be interpreted literally. The vast difference attributed to the bread shows that while the first part may be figurative, the second part must be literal. As summarized by Atzberger, the argument goes:

"Some passages must be taken literally as John 6,35 and 6,47. In the second section such passages as 6,52.54.56 must be interpreted literally, (a) because the whole structure of the discourse demands it; (b) because a figurative interpretation would involve absurd consequences; (c) because our Lord's hearers understood Him literally and were not corrected by Him, and (d) because the Fathers and Councils of the Church have always upheld the literal interpretation." 2)

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. III, p.88

2) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. II, p.14

The second Scripture proof are the words of institution. 1) The words "This is My body - This is My blood" have always been taken literally by the Catholic Church. They say the phrase cannot be figurative and we are compelled to accept a literal interpretation "(a) by the very existence and character of the four evangelical accounts... (b) by the wording of the Scriptural texts, and (c) by the circumstances accompanying that institution." 2) But not all the theologians are agreed that these words prove transubstantiation. Pohle-Preuss says that while the Real Presence of Christ may logically be deduced from them "it is not perhaps strictly demonstrable from the sacred text. The interpretation of that text by the Fathers, as officially confirmed by the Church, remains the only conclusive argument." 3)

Nevertheless, some difficulties arise in connection with the teachings of the Fathers. These are accounted for by the fact that the Fathers felt secure in the possession of the truth: they preferred an allegorical interpretation: and, they were bound by the Discipline of the Secret. Pohle-Preuss comments:

"During this period the faithful had a deep and unquestioning belief in the Real Presence. This feeling of security is probably responsible on the part of some of the early theologians for some loose statements and a certain inaccuracy. The obscure and ambiguous utterances that occur in their writings are more than counterbalanced, however, by a number of others that are perfectly clear and evident and by every rule of sound hermeneutics the former should be explained by the latter." 4)

The Fathers that are quoted in support of transubstantiation are very numerous. The oldest patristic witness is <sup>said to be</sup> St. Ignatius of Antioch (d. ca.117) who, when speaking of the Gnostics, said: "They abstain from the Eucharist and prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist

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1) At the time of institution "His body was there only as a body capable of dying, and His blood as blood capable of being shed." If the Eucharist was celebrated while He was in the tomb, His soul was absent.  
 2) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. II, p.25  
 3) ibid., p,119                      4) ibid., p.72

is the flesh of our Savior, Jesus Christ." 1)

St. Justin Martyr, in an apology to the Emperor Antonius, writes in the second century: "We do not receive these things as common bread and drink; but as Jesus Christ our Savior was made flesh by the word of God, even so we have been taught that the Eucharist is both the flesh and blood of the same incarnate Jesus." 2)

Marcarius Magnes, Greek Father, wrote at the beginning of the fourth century: "He spake 'This is My body.' Not therefore, an image of the body, nor an image of the blood, as some feeble-minded persons have foolishly asserted, but in truth the body and blood of Christ." 3)

One of the most frequently quoted passages in that of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who wrote:

"At Cana in Galilee He once converted water into wine, which is akin to blood. Is he undeserving of belief when He converts wine into blood? Therefore, let us receive it with full conviction as the body and blood of Christ. For under the appearance (*ἐν τῷ φαινομένῳ*) of bread thou receivest the body, and under the appearance of wine the blood... Hence do not regard it as mere bread and wine; for according to the Lord's assurance it is the body and blood of Christ. Though the senses seem to tell thee otherwise, faith gives thee certainty. Do not judge by the taste, but obtain from faith the indubitable certitude that thou hast been vouchsafed the body and blood of Christ... Having been instructed and convinced that what appears to be bread is not bread, though it seems thus to the taste, but the body of Christ, and what appears to be wine is not wine, though it seems thus to the taste, but the blood of Christ... Strengthen thy heart by eating this bread as a spiritual food and make glad the face of thy soul." 4)

St. Chrysostom speaks in exaggerated and realistic manner in his description of the Lord's Supper. He says:

"You shall drink the salutary blood as if you sucked it with your lips from the divine and immaculate side." Hom de Poen. XX. Again: "That which is in the chalice is the same as that which flowed from the side of Christ, and of this we are made

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1) Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p.297

2) ibid., p.297

3) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. II, p.10

4) "Cat. Myst." IV; quoted ibid., p.62

partakers... The Wise Men adored this body as it lay in the manger; they prostrated themselves before it in fear and trembling. Now behold the same body which the Wise Men adored in the manger lying upon the altar... Already in the present life this mystery changes the earth for you into heaven; the sublimest thing that is there, - the body of the Lord - you can behold here on earth. Yea, you not only behold it but you can touch it and eat it." In "Hom. in I Cor. 24". In a passage considered a 'locus classicus', he says: "How many now-a-days say: Would that I could gaze upon His form, His figure, His raiment, His shoes. Lo, thou seest Him, touchest Him, eatest Him. He gives Himself to thee, not merely to look upon, but even to touch, to eat, and to receive within thee... Consider at whose table thou eatest! For we are fed with that which the angels view with trepidation and which they cannot contemplate without fear because of its splendor... What shepherd feeds his sheep with his own flesh? Some mothers entrust their new-born infants to nurses; this He did not wish to do, but He nourishes us with His own blood, He unites Himself with us. These are not the deeds of human power... We take the place of servants; it is He who consecrates and transmutes." 1)

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Theologians recognize the difficulty of supplying proof from the Fathers. They also try to prove transubstantiation from the terms used by them when speaking of the conversion in Communion.

Some of the terms used are: by Cyril of Jerusalem and Theodoret: μεταβαλλειν. Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom: μεταστοχεϊου. Cyril of Alexandria, John of Damascus: μεταποιειν. Chrysostom: μεταρρυθμιζειν.

An argument is also deduced from the liturgies. In the liturgy of St. Chrysostom the priests says: "Make this bread the venerable body of Thy Christ." ποιησον τον μεν ἄρτον ταυτον τιμιον σωμα του χριστου. Then he adds: "Make what is contained in this chalice, the venerable blood of Thy Christ." το δε εν ποτηριω ταυτω τιμιον αιμα του χριστου. In the Alexandrian Church we read: και ποιηση τον μεν ἄρτον σωμα... το δε ποτηριον αιμα της κλεινης διαθηκης. 2)

These liturgies are said to have their origin in apostolic times and, therefore, <sup>to be</sup> reliable and accurate.

1) Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. II, p.64

2) Moshler, Symbolism, p.247

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What is the essential matter in Penance? The Catechism says: "The acts of the penitent, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, constitute, as has been defined by the Council of Trent, the Matter, as it were (quasi materia) of the sacrament of Penance." 1) In regard to the indispensable matter in this rite there is no agreement. Pohle-Preuss says that the matter is not some material substance like wine. It may be something intangible, though subject to sense-perception in some way. The majority of the theologians hold it is the three required acts. The Scotists say that these are merely necessary dispositions of the soul and teach that the absolution of the priest is the matter, and also the form, though they are received and viewed under different aspects. They say that the "materia" may or may not be something concrete and particular. The Thomists interpret the phraseology of the Council of Trent, which was so framed that divergent views could be held, to mean that the matter is not true matter as the water used in Baptism. Many arguments are advanced. The Thomists say that true contrition and confession and satisfaction are integral parts of Penance and yet do not constitute the form, therefore, they must be the matter. This again seems vitiated by the practise of giving absolution to an unconscious person conditionally even if no sign of contrition or desire to have the sacrament is visible. Thus the matter stands and no definite verdict has been given. Neither can claim certainty and both views, therefore, must be permitted.

There is also a divergence of opinion as to what constitutes the matter in Confirmation. Four more important views are held in regard to the "materia proxima". First, many hold that the proximate matter is the imposition of hands. The exponents of this view argue that it

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1) Stearns, The Faith of Our Forefathers, p.322

is mentioned in Scripture and tradition. Secondly, others, among them St. Thomas, argue that the sole matter is the anointing with chrism. They base their argument on the "Decretum pro Armenis" which reads: "The second sacrament is Confirmation of which the matter is chrism, made of oil... and balsam... blessed by the bishop." They also are supported by many Fathers. Another group holds that the two former opinions should be combined, that jointly they constitute the matter. Their basis of proof lies in tradition also, and in the practise of the Greek Church which has both. Another group holds that either one is sufficient for validity, but recommend that both be used since the matter is so uncertain.

The "materia remota" is the oil, or chrism. The first writer to mention the ointment is Tertullian who wrote at the end of the second century. Deharbe says: "The Holy Chrism consists of oil of olives and balsam blest by the bishop on Maundy Thursday. It signifies inward strength and sanctification." 1) There is also a difference of opinion in regard to whether the oil is to be mixed with balsam. The majority regard the addition of balsam as essential because in the Bible, the Fathers, and the Church the word "oleum" is used for olive oil and not "chrism." There is no proof of this before the sixth century. The majority accept the blessing of the priest as essential for the Fathers speak of "blessed oil", consecration was specified by popes, etc.

Every marriage of Christians which is legitimately contracted is "eo ipso" a sacrament, and vice versa, where the sacrament is validly received there is also a valid marriage. Does the marriage become a sacrament because of the priest's blessing, or was the marriage contract itself raised to the rank of a grace-producing sign? If some

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1) Deharbe, Large Catechism, p.95



external sign makes it a sacrament, then people can be married without receiving the benefits of a sacrament. That such a thing was possible was held by three groups of distinguished theologians. One group said that the blessings make it a sacrament. Another group said that the contract is the matter and the blessing the form, and since the form is necessary so is the priestly benediction. Still they taught that it would be a valid marriage without it. The third group made the matter subjective, the sacramentality depending on the participant's intention of doing what the Church does.

These theories are today condemned as untenable, for every marriage contract is "eo ipso" a sacrament. This is not expressly mentioned by the Fathers but they taught that marriage was a symbol of the intimate union between Christ and His Church and thus implied the inseparability of contract and sacrament. The first clear statement that can be quoted in support of this goes back to the year 1439 A.D., where, at the Council of Florence, a statement was made from which can be deduced the doctrine that the sacrament and contract are identical. From that time this teaching has been stated frequently and more clearly.

Both the matter and the form are found in the matrimonial contract. The contract is the matter of the sacrament because by it the participants signify the mutual surrender of their bodies. The contract is also the form because it shows the acceptance of the same.

Every sacrament instituted by Christ must have a form. When Christ instituted the Eucharist, He did not consecrate by an act of His will, but by pronouncing the words: "This is My body (blood)." Had He done so His apostles would have consecrated in a mute manner. The Fathers also teach that the form is the words which Christ spoke. Tertullian says: Christ converted the bread which He had taken and distributed to His

disciples into His own body by saying: "This is My body." 1)

Today, when the priest utters the words of institution, Christ becomes present on the altar immediately. Thus the body and the blood are made present by the force of the words. (ex vi verborum). However, the Greek Church says this is incorrect and teaches that the consecration consists in the Epiklesis as, e.g. the Epiklesis from the Ethiopian liturgy: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, and we pray, that Thou send down the Holy Spirit and His power upon this bread and upon this chalice, and convert them into the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, from eternity to eternity." 2)

All theologians of the Roman Catholic Church agree that the words "Hoc est corpus meum - hic est sanguis meus" are undoubtedly essential. The majority hold that these are sufficient although the rest may not be omitted under penalty of sin. But these words effect the presence and constitute the essence of the sacramental form of the Eucharist. The Epiklesis is no part of the form.

Many ancient Fathers are quoted in this respect, but St. Chrysostom will speak for them all: "Taking the part of Christ, the priest stands there, pronouncing those words... "This is My body" he declares. These words convert that which lies before him." 3)

In Confirmation there is no unanimity in regard to what comprises the form. The formula must express, in the first place, the act of signing or sealing, and secondly, the grace of the Holy Ghost. The form may be either the prayer used, or the words, "I sign thee with the sign of the cross and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation

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1) "Contra Marc." IV; Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. II, p.200

2) ibid., p.206

3) "Hom. de Prod. Iud."; quoted ibid., p.205

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This latter form is no older than the twelfth century. Before that time there was no uniformity in this respect.

The sacramental form for the sacrament of Penance is contained in the words of absolution. These words are: "Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritu Sancti." The majority hold that the invocation of the Trinity is essential. "Absolve te" is essential because these words embody the priest's judicial act. The words "peccatis tuis" are implied in the "absolvo te" and are not essential. But this does not mean that they may be omitted arbitrarily, for such an omission is forbidden under pain of sin.

Aquinas said that the absolution of the priest was not like the Old Testament priest's declaration of cleanness after leprosy, but is a sacramental sentence which effects pardon for sin. Peter Lombard and others held that absolution was a "sententia declaratoria", i.e. the Church merely declares to the sinner that his sins are forgiven in heaven. But this teaching has been rejected.

The absolution must be pronounced in the indicative formula. It was thus prescribed by Pope Eugene IV, the Council of Trent, and the Roman Ritual. No other form of absolution is valid. But here we find a difficulty. The Thomists say that absolution is invalid if spoken in the form of a deprecatory prayer, i.e. the confessor merely asks or prays God to forgive the penitent without expressly mentioning the power of the Office of the Keys. When this power is expressly mentioned in any form, absolution is valid. Yet up to the end of the twelfth century, a deprecatory formula was in practically exclusive use. Due to the influence of the Sorbonne, the indicative formula was accepted as valid ca. 1240. But before that time that was not

The case. To this day the Oriental Churches use the deprecatory formula. The voice of history and the dogma of the Church are thus reconciled. Where there is some reference to the ministerial agency of the absolving priest, the deprecatory formula was equivalent to the indicative. But where the formula was equivalent to a prayer as, e.g. "God forgive the sin of this your servant", there is no judicial sentence and no absolution. In such cases the words must be interpreted as the people understood them and by the circumstances of the case. That form is comparable to the sentence of the judge who would say: "Let the warden release the prisoner." Similarly, the confessor forgives a sinner by praying to God to forgive him. The priest also in these cases was a judge, and no matter how he clothed the formula it was a judicial sentence and was universally so regarded.

The present form of Extreme Unction has been in use for approximately the last five centuries and goes as follows: "Through this holy unction and His own tender mercy, may the Lord pardon thee whatever faults thou hast committed by sight (hearing, smell, taste, touch, walking, carnal delectation.)" 1) Through the centuries there has been considerable change in the form. In urgent cases it is permitted to use the brief form: "By this holy unction may the Lord pardon thee whatever thou hast committed." Since there has been no uniform form throughout the ages, it is said that Christ did not institute a specific form but only required some sort of prayer.

IV. The efficacy of the sacraments

The sacraments are more than mere symbols but are efficient causes of grace. Grace is so evidently bound to the symbols that where there is a symbol there grace is also in operation. Thomas

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1) "Decretum pro Armenis": quoted Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p.21

Aquinas often made use of the expression "sacramenta justificant et gratiam conferunt ex opere operato." St. Augustine said: "Non earum meritis, a quibus ministratur, nec ~~erum~~, quibus ministratur constat baptismus, sed propria ~~sanctitae~~<sup>t</sup> atque veritate propter eum, a quo institutus est." 1)

The Tridentine Council defines the causality of the sacraments as a true "efficacia ex opere operato ."

"If anyone saith that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace they signify, or that they do not confer grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto; as though they were merely outward signs of grace and justice received through faith, and certain marks of the Christian professions, whereby believers are distinguished from unbelievers, let him be anathema." 2)

The efficacy of the sacraments is "ex opere operato", i.e. derived from the objective value of the rite itself and not from the merits of either the minister or the recipient.

An imposing array of Fathers are quoted to show that this is the traditional view. Tertullian says:

"Is it not wonderful that death should be washed away by bathing? But it is the more to be believed if the wonderfulness by the reason is not believed. For of what kind does it behoove divine works to be, except that they be above all wonder? We also ourselves wonder, but it is because we believe." 3)

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says to the neophytes:

"You have pronounced the salutary profession, you have been thrice immersed in the water, thereby symbolizing Christ's stay in the tomb. For just as the Savior spent three days and three nights in the bowels of the earth, so you, in emerging the first time from the water, have imitated the first day, and in being immersed, the night which Christ spent in the earth... And at the same moment you died and were born again; that salutary place became alike your grave and your mother... O new and unheard of species of things." 4)

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- 1) "Contra Cresc." IV; Wilmers, Lehrbuch der Religion, Vol. IV, p.220
  - 2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session VII, can.6
  - 3) "De Bapt."; quoted Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.219
  - 4) "Cat. Myst." II; quoted ibid., p.129

St. Chrysostom compares the influence of the water in Baptism to the maternal womb.

"What the womb is for the child, that is water for the faithful Christian; for in water he is shaped and formed. In the beginning it was said (Gen. 1,20): 'Let the waters bring forth the creeping creatures having life.' But since the Lord descended into the Jordan the water no longer brings forth weeping creatures, but rational souls that bear within themselves the Holy Ghost... What is formed in the womb requires time. Not so in the water: there everything happens in an instant." 1)

The efficacy in Baptism is compared to the maternal womb of Mary by St. Leo the Great:

"The origin which (Christ) took in the womb of Mary, He placed in the font of Baptism. He gave to the water what He had given to His mother. For the virtue of the most High and the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, which caused Mary to bring forth the Savior, also causes the water to regenerate the believing (Christian)." 2)

Tertullian ascribes a like efficacy to all the sacraments. "The flesh is washed off in order that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed in order that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed in order that the soul may be fortified; the flesh is overshadowed by the imposition of hands in order that the soul may be illuminated by the Holy Spirit; the flesh is fed with the body and blood of Christ, in order that the soul may be nourished by God." 3)

To the best of our knowledge, the technical term was first used by Peter of Poitiers (d. 1204) who said: "The act of baptizing is not identical with Baptism, because it is an *opus operans*, while Baptism is an *opus operatum*." 4) The term was adopted and used, although not generally, even at the time of Aquinas. The Tridentine Council expressed an unequivocal belief in their causality "*ex opere operatum*."

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1) "Hom. in Ioa." 6; quoted *ibid.*, p.130

2) "Serm. in Nativ. Dom." 5; quoted *ibid.*, p.131

3) "De Resur. Carn." 8; quoted *ibid.*, p.131

4) quoted *ibid.*, p. 134

But in this connection it cannot be overlooked that for a valid administration the free action of the minister is required to combine the matter and the form with the proper intention. The recipient also must make moral preparation for a worthy reception and must place no obstacle (obex) in the way.

As was mentioned, the valid administration of a sacrament depends on the intention of the priest. Intention may be defined as an act of the will by which that faculty desires efficaciously to reach an end by employing the necessary means. It is not the same as attention. The minister, being a servant of the Lord, must have the intention of exercising rightly the powers bestowed by the Lord. Since the Church acts in the name of the divine Founder, the priest must have the intention of doing what the Church does, otherwise he does not act as a minister of the Lord. The minister acts in Christ's name. In performing his acts, he must have the intention of doing one thing or another, viz., what Christ wants him to do. Since the will of the Church is coincident with the will of Christ, it is sufficient that he desire to do what the Church does.

The intention of the priest may be of a different kind or degree. There is a reflex intention in which the priest realizes the full import of his actions. There is a virtual or direct intention when the minister performs his acts without being fully conscious of their character and effect, not with a present act of the will, but with a power resulting from a former act and which is still working for the attainment of the end. For example, it is like a person having made up his mind to take a journey and during the trip occupies his mind with thoughts of other things. Then there is habitual intention, i.e. an intention that once actually existed but of which, at the present time,

there is no trace, and the most that can be said of it, is that it has never been retracted. There is the interpretative intention which is simply the purpose a man would be assumed to have in a given situation.

Tradition has undergone a long process of clarification in respect to intention. The most ancient testimony is a letter of Pope Cornelius (251-253) which tells how Novatian had three intoxicated bishops give him episcopal consecration. The Pope declared the ordination invalid because the bishops were irresponsible and under compulsion.

Augustine was not clear on this point as can be seen from the fact that he did not know whether a Baptism administered in jest was valid or invalid. The principle of the ancient church seems to have been to consider every sacrament performed in keeping with the custom as valid, presuming that the intention was always right. Hugo of St. Victor was the first to insist upon this point. William of Auxerre invented the formula: "Intentio faciendi quod facit Ecclesia."

The Church of today teaches unequivocally that for the valid conferring of the sacraments the priest must at least have the intention of doing what the Church does. This intention need not necessarily be of the sort called actual or reflex. It is sufficient if the intention be virtual. Pope Eugene IV demands the intention of doing what the Church does as the "condition sine qua non" of validity. Neither habitual or external intention is sufficient. To administer the sacraments with a conditional intention which would make their effect contingent upon some future act, is to confer them invalidly. This holds good for all the divine institutions except Matrimony.

Every pastor has it in his power either through ignorance or intentionally, to corrupt the form of the sacraments. If the mistake has



been made through ignorance, the sacrament may be considered valid if the wrongly pronounced words can be said to have morally retained the objective sense which Christ wished to connect with them. If the form is purposely altered, it retains its integrity only on the condition that the objective sense of the words was not essentially altered and the right intention not entirely excluded.

The combining of matter and form into a sacramental sign is not of necessity a sacramental act, but may be done indifferently, ambiguously, for the pastor's purpose may differ, e.g. he may wish to play a joke, practise, etc. "It depends entirely on his free will whether what he does is intended as a sacramental rite or not." 1)

Making the validity of the sacraments dependent upon the invisible intention of the priest takes away all certainty and assurance. Everything depends of what the priest intends to do. The recipient is helpless in this respect. The Tridentine Council states:

"The penitent ought not so to confide in his own personal faith as to think that even though there be... no intention on the part of the priest of acting seriously and absolving truly, he is nevertheless absolved... nor would he be otherwise than most careless of his own salvation, who, knowing that a priest absolved him in jest, should not carefully seek for another who would act in earnest." 2)

Alexander VIII condemned the proposition that "Baptism is valid if conferred by a minister who observes the whole external rite and form of the sacrament, but interiorly in his heart says: "I do not intend to do what the Church does." 3)

The valid reception is also dependent upon the intention of the recipient. No intention is required in those who have not yet reached the age of discretion and to those who do not have full use of their

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1) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p. 182  
2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XIV, cap.6  
3) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.186

reason. But in the case of normal adults, some intention is required and is indispensable if the sacraments are to be conferred profitably. The reason for this lies in the teaching that man is not justified without his own cooperation, and that includes the rational will to profit by the divine means of sanctification. The degree of the intention varies and depends upon the extent to which the acts of the recipient help to make the sacrament. Thus for Penance and Matrimony a virtual intention is required, while for the others a habitual intention suffices.

#### V. The benefit of the sacraments

The sacraments are called means of grace because they confer grace on the human soul, and that is the purpose for which they were given. The gifts bestowed by the sacraments are not all the same. The Council of Florence (1439) declared:

"Among the sacraments there are three, i.e. Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, that indelibly imprint upon the soul a character, i.e. a kind of spiritual mark, distinct from all the others, and this is the reason why they are administered but once to the same person. The other four do not imprint a character and can be administered more than once." 1)

This statement was reaffirmed by the Council of Trent which defined the character as a "spiritual and indelible sign imprinted on the soul." 2)

This teaching cannot be proved directly from Scripture but the proof is found in tradition. St. Augustine, in his letter to Boniface, refers to the mark imprinted by Baptism as "character dominicus." St. Ambrose taught:

"Therefore we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, not by nature, but by God, because it is written, 'God hath anointed us and hath also sealed us.' We are sealed with the Spirit in order that we may possess His splendor and image and grace, which is indeed a spiritual seal." 3)

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1) Pohle\*Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.77

2) ibid., p.85

3) "De Spiritu Sancto": quoted ibid., p.80

St. Chrysostom says: "Thus it happens that if you leave the ranks you can easily be recognized by all; for the Jews employ circumcision as a sign, we, the pledge of the Spirit." 1)

St. Cyril of Jerusalem declares:

"In battle the leaders distribute badges to the combatants by which friends can recognize and help one another... How is the angel to recognize thee? How is he to rescue thee from thine enemies if he does not see thy badge? How canst thou say: 'I belong to God' if thou dost not wear his sign and badge?" 2)

St. Thomas Aquinas, in speaking of the sacramental character, says that it "is not a habit because no habit is indifferent to acting well or ill, whereas a character is indifferent to either, since some use it well, some ill. Now this cannot occur with a habit, because no one abuses a habit of virtue or uses well and evil habit. It remains, therefore, that the character is a power." 3) He does not mean a physical power, for no more strength is given, but the power that these sacraments confer is purely moral, and may be defined as a supernatural faculty ordained unto things pertaining to divine worship, whether that consists of receiving divine blessings or bestowing them. This power is given because it is necessary to perform certain acts of worship.

The sacramental character remains after death. St. Cyril speaks of a sign "indelible for eternity." Aquinas writes "The character remains after this life, both in the good as adding to their glory, and in the bad as increasing their shame." 4)

Just what is meant by the indelible character in Baptism is hard to explain. St. Basil says "Baptism is the ransom paid for sinners, the remission of debts, the death of sin, the rebirth of the soul, a

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1) "Hom. in Cor."; quoted ibid., p.80

2) Procat."; quoted ibid., p.81

3) quoted ibid., p.87

4) "Summa Theol." 3a; quoted ibid., p.81

shining garment, an indelible (σφραγίς ἁγιωσύνης seal." 1)

Jacobs explains it as a right to grace. The soul is not only given the gift of sanctifying grace but the right to it, and the soul retains this right to eternity. Mortal sin may drive grace from the soul, but the right to have it remains. Original sin is merely the deprivation of this grace caused by the s̄on of Adam. In Baptism this sin is forgiven and it never revives. The soul always has the right to the life of grace which is the negation of that sin. This right to sanctifying grace which is freedom from original sin, is the mark that is imprinted in Baptism.

From that it follows that there is but one Baptism. The debt of Adam's sin can be paid but once for every soul. In Baptism Christ pays that debt. As a result each soul can have but one mark entitling it to that grace. If the grace is lost, the mark will bring it back to the soul, if the cause is removed. If that cause is never removed, then the mark, deprived of its rightful counterpart, grace, will become a source of torment in eternity. Since the soul needs but one title to grace, and since that title is conferred in Baptism and cannot be lost, this sacrament cannot be repeated.

The entrance into Holy Orders also confers an indelible character. It bestows an indestructible power. Once a priest, always a priest. This virtue, or power, of administering the sacraments, is not lost even when the priest falls into heresy. However, the bishop loses the power of conferring orders. The right and ability to exercise his authority is forfeited. Ordination, however, bestows upon the recipient sacerdotal authority and the grace for the exercise of it.

The Schoolmen asserted that the sacraments have virtue in themselves and that they not only signify, but sanctify. A favorite illustration

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1) "Hom. de Bapt."; quoted ibid., p.236

of the operation of these means is medicine. God is the Physician, man is the invalid, and the priest the minister, grace is the antidote, the sacraments the vase. The Physician gives and the minister dispenses the grace in the vessel which heals the wounds of the invalid.

The grace bestowed by the sacraments differ. "Baptism has for its office the giving of a right to the beginning of sanctifying grace." 1) The office of Penance is to forgive sins committed after Baptism. It only increases grace accidentally. These two sacraments are known as the sacraments of the dead because they take away sin and create life. The other five sacraments must be received in the state of grace and are, therefore, known as the sacraments of the living. They bestow an increase of divine grace.

Baptism is the first of all the sacraments to be received because it is the door to the other sacraments. It is indispensable. Through it the recipient enters the door to a spiritual life and is made a member of Christ and received into the body of the Church. None of the other sacraments can be received unless a person has been baptized.

It is stated that Baptism is absolutely indispensable to salvation. But if a man is heartily sorry for his sins and loves God, and desires Baptism but cannot receive it, then God will accept the will for the deed. Or, if an unbaptized person suffers martyrdom for Christ's sake, then he is considered baptized in his own blood.

Baptism bestows the grace of justification, it forgives sins and infuses sanctifying grace. "If anyone denies that, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in Baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted, or even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away... let him be anathema." 2)

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1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, Ch. VIII, p.222

2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session V, can.5

That Baptism forgives original sin is shown from the phrase used in the Nicene Creed: "I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins." From this it is argued that all sins are meant without exception, it cannot be limited. The "Decretum pro Armenis" also declares that all sins, including original sin, is forgiven in Baptism.

"If anyone saith that the principal fruit of the most Holy Eucharist is the remission of sins, or that other effects do not result therefrom, let him be anathema." 1)

There are four principal effects of the sacrament of the Eucharist. The first effect is the union with Christ by love. The principal effect of the sacramental union with Christ must be sought in the spiritual and mystical union of the soul with Jesus through love which is kindled, nourished, and communicated by physical contact with the sacred body. This Eucharistic union of the soul with Christ constitutes the "mystical body" of Christ.

The second effect is the increase of sanctifying grace. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of the living as is seen from the need of examination before Communion, also in the ancient Church. St. John Chrysostom writes: "We must always be on our guard for no small punishment waits those who communicate unworthily." 2) The grace of this sacrament differs from the others. Suarez thinks that the primary and direct effect is the growth of charity solely for its own perfection, and a more intimate union with the Lord. This spiritual food also produces a spiritual delight, or, as St. Thomas says: "The soul is spiritually gladdened and, as it were, inebriated." 3)

The third effect is that venial sins are blotted out. The soul is preserved from mortal sin. Just as physical food helps the weak, so

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1) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XIII, can.5

2) "Hom. in Matt.;" quoted in Polhe-Preuss, The Sacraments, II, p.223

3) "Summa Theol." 3a; quoted ibid., p.228

The spiritual food helps the spiritually weak. By the Lord's Supper concupiscence, the chief source of mortal sin, is allayed. Whether it is directly conducive to remission of temporal punishments may be disputed. It is safe to say that the Eucharist effects this indirectly because of the act involved. Prayers made in the presence of the Host are especially effective, and are more readily heard.

Since it is a protection against mortal sin, it also is a pledge of the resurrection and eternal happiness. St. Ignatius of Antioch says: "Breaking bread... is a means of immortality, an antidote against death." 1) By eating the sacramental species, our body has a moral right and claim to a future resurrection.

The effects of the sacrament of Penance are contained in the words of the "Decretum pro Armenis" which says: "The effect of this sacrament is absolution from sins." 2) This is the first and principal effect, reconciliation with God, and that includes justification since forgiveness can be effected only by means of interior sanctification. All mortal sins are blotted out and, while the eternal punishment is remitted entirely, it does not remit all temporal punishments. These must be eliminated some other way. The sacramental grace of Penance consists in this that it heals the soul become infirm through sin. This power is peculiar to Penance and its complement, Extreme Unction.

The power to forgive sins was bestowed upon Peter and on all the apostles. (Mt. XVI, 19; XVIII, 18) When Christ gave the "keys of the kingdom of heaven" to Peter, He gave him "supreme power to govern the Church to admit and exclude from it, to make and execute laws, to impose and remit penalties, in a word, the plenitude of jurisdiction over his

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1) "Ep. ad Eph."; quoted ibid., p.232

2) quoted ibid., Vol. III, p.101

his fellow apostles and all the faithful." 1) Such power must include the faculty of forgiving sins, for Peter was given all keys, not one or two. Nothing was so effective in sealing and opening heaven as sins, and if Peter did not have this power to forgive sins, he would not have all the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

"Were He (Christ) to bind, i.e. to refuse forgiveness in any case in which His Church on earth had 'loosed', i.e. given absolution, our Lord's promises in the Gospel of St. Matthew would be false, - an impossible assumption." 2) St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "The men who have received the breath of the Holy Ghost forgive sins in a two-fold manner, either by admitting the worthy to Baptism, or by forgiving the penitent children of the Church." 3)

<sup>Rome argues</sup>  
We know that the Church was established by Jesus Christ to perpetuate the work He had begun, the reconciliation of sinners with God. It follows, therefore, that this was to be the principal work of the ministers of His Church. They were to be the ministers of reconciliation in His name. It has always been the custom of God to use, both in the Old and New Testament, human agencies to execute His plans. This forgiveness was to continue as long as there was sin in the world. Since the time will never come when there shall be no sin, there <sup>will</sup> always be ministers of the remedy for sin.

The second effect is peace of conscience, but this is not produced in all recipients. It only happens "sometimes", as the Council of Trent said, and is conditioned on piety and devotion.

The third effect of Penance is that the previously acquired merits are revived. When a Catholic falls into sin all his supernatural merits

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1) ibid., Vol.III, p.8

2) ibid., p.11

3) "In Ioa."; quoted ibid., p.29



are lost. Of all the works which he has done, either good or bad, only the "opera mortificata" can be revived, i.e. those works once alive and meritorious but which mortal sin has destroyed. This teaching is based on Ez. XXXIII, 12: "The wickedness of the wicked shall not hurt him, in what day soever he shall turn from his wickedness." Also Heb. VI, 10 is used. It reads: "For God is not unjust that He should forget your works, and the love which you have shewn in His name, you who have ministered and do minister to the saints."

The claim is made that the Fathers interpreted Heb. VI and Gal. III, 4 as showing a belief in the revival of merits. St. Chrysostom says:

"If you wish to reawake and recall yourselves, I trust you may not have suffered in vain. Where now are those who abolish Penance? Behold, these (Galatians) had received the Spirit, they had wrought signs, had confessed the faith... and yet, after so many works, they had fallen from grace. Nevertheless, he said: "If you will you can recall yourselves." 1)

Another argument is derived from the Council of Trent: "If anyone saith that... the justified, by the good works which he performs through the grace of God and Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does not truly merit... eternal life, and the attainment of that eternal life, if so it be, however, that he depart ~~on~~ grace, let him be anathema." 2) Now if the "opera mortificata" are not rewarded in heaven, the Council should have made the condition that mortal sin must never be interrupted the state of grace. But the Council says nothing, and hence the conclusion is warranted that merits are revived.

There are also other reasons for believing this. Merits are moral entities. They live and are revived in the knowledge and acceptance of God, which cannot be destroyed. Mortal sin is an obstacle (obex), and

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1) "Ep. ad Gal."; quoted ibid., p. 109

2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session VI, can.2

since Penance removes mortal sin, there is no reason to assume that they are not revived. The "obex" is just like a dam, which once removed, permits the merits to resume their flow. It is assumed that any contrary view is absurd. A man who has served God faithfully all his life commits a mortal sin shortly before his death, does penance and dies. Does he deserve a smaller reward than the criminal, who having lived a wicked life, repents shortly before his death. If that were true, it would be hard to reconcile it with God's mercy and justice.

The sacrament of Extreme Unction benefits the recipient in many ways. The "Decretum pro Armenis" says that its effect is the healing of the mind and body. The Council of Trent has declared: "If anyone saith that the sacred unction of the sick does not confer grace, nor remit sin, nor comfort the sick, but that it has now ceased, as though it had of old only the grace of working cures, let him be anathema." 1) Thus the first and primary effect is the healing and strengthening of the soul, sanctifying grace is increased and sickness more readily borne.

Recently Father Joseph Kern published a treatise on this sacrament. He says that the proper object of Holy Unction is the perfect healing of the soul with a view to its immediate entrance into glory. This treatise has been well received and accepted by many leading theologians. 2)

Another effect of sanctifying grace is the forgiveness of mortal and venial sins and debility, i.e. moral weakness caused by sin which makes death more difficult to bear.

An effect resulting from this anointing is the restoration of bodily health, but this does not happen in every case. It happens, as the Council of Trent has decreed: "When it is expedient for the soul's

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1) Ibid., Session XIV, cap.2

2) "De Sacramento Extremae Unctionis". cp. Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p.26

salvation." 1) Usually the recipient is close to death when this sacrament is administered. If he should recover it can be applied again.

#### VI. The participants in the sacraments

Combining matter and form into a sacramental sign and applying the same to an individual requires a sane, rational person. The Priest's relation to the sacrament is vital, and with exceptions, indispensable. St. John Chrysostom says: "It is those who inhabit the earth and walk upon it who are called to administer heavenly things and who have received a power which God has granted neither to angels or to archangels." 2)

All Christians do not have the power to administer the sacraments. The administrators of these institutions are special representatives of Christ and need a special commission and authorization. With the exception of the Eucharist, no one can administer the sacraments to himself.

While it is necessary to have a priest administer the sacraments, their validity is not dependent on his personal worthiness or unworthiness. Tradition bears this out. Augustine argues that Baptism is administered by either a public or private sinner, and hence the validity cannot depend on the minister's worthiness. St. Chrysostom writes:

"It may happen that the rulers of a nation are bad and corrupt and their subjects good and pious; that the laity live moral lives while the priests are guilty of iniquity. But if the grace always required worthy ministers, there would be no Baptism, no body of Christ, no sacrifice. Now God is wont to operate through unworthy men, and the grace of Baptism is in no way strained by the life of the priest." 3)

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1) "In the Middle Ages the reception of Extreme Unction was often regarded as a complete break with the world, a formal exit from the various relations of denizens of this terrestrial globe. One who had been anointed in a dangerous illness and happened to recover, was treated as if he had come back from the other world. He was not allowed to continue his conjugal relations nor to take an oath; in fact he was held to all practical interests and purposes to be dead." Oswald. Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p.45

2) "Contra Ep. Parm." II; quoted ibid., Vol. I, p.163

3) "Hom. in Ep. ad Cor."; quoted ibid., p.169

The validity of the sacrament does not depend upon the belief of the minister as the Tridentine Council clearly avers. Wilmers explains this as follows:

"Der Haeretiker und Unglauebiger tauft nicht im Namen seiner Sekte, sondern im Namen Christi und deshalb auch im Namen der katholischen Kirche, der Christus die Ausspendung seiner Sakramente uebertragen hat. Das vom Haeretiker gespendete Sakrament ist nur deshalb gueltig, weil er irgendwie dasz tun will, was die Kirche tut, und weil er so als Diener der katholischen Kirche handelt." 1)

Penance is the only sacrament that cannot be performed by a heretical priest. There was a long drawn-out controversy in regard to Baptism performed by heretics. The Baptism of a heretical priest was finally accepted as valid, and the reason is found in the theological axiom of St. Augustine: "It is Christ who baptizes." 2)

The priest holds a very exalted position. The sacramental grace is exhibited here in the highest degree for the priest is given the power to celebrate the Mass. Aquinas said there is more reason for regarding Ordination as a sacrament than any other for it gives the power of administering the others. The Apostles were clothed with the authority of Christ, and the priests, as their successors, are clothed with the same power. The exalted dignity of the priest is not derived from his own person, but from the sacred functions which he performs.

The priest is a king, reigning over the hearts and souls of the people. He is a shepherd who leads his flock into the pleasant pastures of the sacraments. He is a father because he breaks the bread of life to his spiritual children. He is a judge whose duty it is to pass sentence on the sinner. He is a physician who heals the souls of the faithful of their sins.

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1) Wilmers, Lehrbuch der Religion, Vol. IV, p.247

2) Quoted in Pohle-Freuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.174

The priest is required to be a man of great learning and piety, for he is the custodian of the mysteries of the New Law. Like Moses, he stands before God to intercede for his people and proclaim the will of the Father. "Purer" says St. Chrysostom, "Than any solar ray should that hand be which deals that flesh, that mouth which is filled with spiritual fire, that tongue which is purpled with that most awful blood."1)

The ordinary minister of the rite of Confirmation is the bishop. The custom of the Greek Church of permitting the priests to confirm was condemned by the Council of Trent. The basis of this statement is found in the fact that Scripture only mentions it as being performed by the apostles; tradition always regarded it as an episcopal prerogative. Pope Gregory the Great (d.604) condemned the priests of Sardinia who confirmed. However, a wide-spread dissatisfaction resulted, so he 'benevolently' ceded to their wishes and permitted the priests to confirm by special permission of the Holy See. The fact that only a bishop is to confirm is not a hardship because Confirmation is not essential for salvation, and it is the sacrament of the "plenitude of the Spirit" and as such reasonably requires an administrator who has full power and is consecrated. Whether the bishop has this power by divine or ecclesiastical right has never been officially decided, but the weight of opinion at the present time favors a divine origin.

The Fourth Lateran Council and the Council of Trent declare that only that person can consecrate the bread and wine who has received the power from the Church. "That priests alone have the power to consecrate cannot perhaps be proved conclusively from Holy Scripture, but a con-

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1) Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p.398

clusive argument is supplied by tradition." 1) From the writings of Justin Martyr, Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom it appears that bishops and priests were the qualified celebrants. The Council of Niceae (325) forbade priests to receive the Lord's Supper from deacons because it was against "discipline and custom." Under ordinary conditions, the priest is to give the sacrament. Nevertheless, if circumstances require it, the deacon may administer Communion with the priest's permission. This was the ancient custom, as we read in the "Apostolic Constitution." "The deacons...does not baptize, nor offer, but when the bishop of the priest has offered, he gives to the people, not as a priest, but as one ministering to the priests." 2)

In the sacrament of Penance, the power which the priest has is judicial. The Tridentine Council decreed "that while the minister in Baptism is not a judge, it is otherwise with those who are of the household of faith, whom Christ the Lord... wished... to be placed as criminals before the tribunals." 3) Penance is a court trial with the priest as a judge. The faculties of the judge are to pronounce an authoritative sentence and to determine the extent of guilt and apply the law.

The sacrament of Matrimony differs entirely from the others in regard to the minister, for in this case the minister is not the priest but the two people who are entering the state of matrimony. They are administering the sacrament to each other. The priest is present by ecclesiastical law, and is the witness of the Church and the administrator of the ceremonies. That the priest is not essential for a valid sacrament is seen from the fact that both the matter and the form lie in the

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1) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol.II,p.257

2) "Const. Apost." VIII; quoted ibid., p.263

3) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XIV, cap.2

words which the two participants speak to one another.

These two participants must be baptized; they must be of opposite sex; there must be no diriment impediments; they must have the intention of doing what the Church does, i.e. contracting a Christian marriage. In addition they must be in a state of sanctifying grace and comply with all the ecclesiastical precepts.

If the recipient is to receive the full benefit of the means of grace, something depends on him. 1) The amount of grace which the sacraments confer is dependent on the disposition of the recipient. The Tridentine Council, speaking of the justification of an adult sinner, teaches: "We are... just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to every one as He wills, and according to each one's disposition and cooperation." 2)

While the sacraments are efficacious "ex opere operato" and the recipient's disposition is not a cause of grace, it is, nevertheless, a condition on which the amount of grace received depends. St. Cyril admonishes his catechumens who are soon to be baptized:

"Cleanse thine vessel, that it may receive a greater measure of grace. Forgiveness of sins is granted to all alike, but the communication of the Holy Ghost is given to each according to the measure of his faith. If thine effort be but slight, thou wilt receive little; but if thou dost much, thine reward will be great." 3)

St. Thomas voices the conviction of the Schoolmen when he says:

"All children are equally disposed to Baptism... and all receive an equal effect if Baptism; whereas adults,... are not equally disposed; for some approach with greater, some with less devotion, and therefore some receive a greater some a smaller share of the grace of renewal." 4)

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1) Should it be impossible for some to receive the sacraments "there is given love to supply them. If needs be love can baptize without water, can confirm without chrism, etc." Jacobs.

2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid. Session VI, cap.7

3) Cat. I; Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. I, p.73

4) "Summa Theol." 3a; quoted ibid., p.74

Not every man is fit for all the sacraments. With the exceptions of Penance, (true) faith is not an absolute requisite for valid reception.

St. Augustine says: is adducad:

"It is immaterial, when we are considering the question of the integrity and holiness of the sacraments, what the recipient of the sacrament believes, and with what faith he is imbued. It is of the very highest consequence as regards the entrance into salvation, but it is wholly immaterial as regards the question of the sacraments. For it is quite possible that a man may be possessed of the genuine sacrament and a corrupted belief." 1)

The personal worthiness of the recipient does not make the institution invalid although it robs it of its effect. When receiving the sacrament, man must not place an obstacle in the way. If an obstacle (obex) is in the way, the sacrament is received unworthily, although the sacrament is valid. Hence, for example, providing that the 'obex' is removed and was not placed in the way intentionally, the grace of baptism can be renewed or received later. St. Augustine says:

"In the case of him who has approached the sacrament in deceit, there is no second Baptism, but he is purged by faithful discipline and truthful confession, which he could not be without Baptism, so that what was given before, becomes powerful then to work his salvation, when the former deceit is done away." 2)

If no mortal sin is committed after a sacrilegious Baptism, the sacrament recovers its effect as soon as the obstacle is removed and the person returns to that state in which he should have been at the time it was administered. If new mortal sins are committed in the meantime, perfect contrition or Penance is necessary to remove them. Baptism, Confirmation, and Orders are not repeated and recover their grace because of the indelible mark which they confer. Matrimony and Uncion can be repeated, Penance and the Eucharist have no reviviscence.

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1) "De Bap. Contra Donat." III; Quoted in Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol.I, p.192

2) ibid., p.194



Every sacrament requires some special preparation. In the "Large Catechism" by Deharbe, the question is asked:

"How are we to receive the sacrament of Confirmation?  
Ans. "1. We must be in the state of grace; 2. Fervently pray for the gifts of the Holy Ghost; 3. Promise God that we will live and die as good Christians; 4. Not leave the Church before the Bishop has given his blessing." p.94

"How many things are required on our part to receive the sacrament of Penance worthily?"  
Ans. "To receive the sacrament of Penance worthily, these five things are required: 1. Prayer to the Holy Ghost; 2. Examination of conscience; 3. Contrition with a firm purpose of amendment; 4. Confession; 5. Satisfaction." p. 104

The Catholic Church believes in the Baptism of infants. They also must be baptized for they are under the curse of Adam. Very early action was taken on this point. The Council of Mileve anathematized all who denied that "new-born infants should be baptized immediately after birth." The testimony of the Fathers is clear and definite on this point. Origen says: "The Church has received this tradition from the apostles; also children are to be baptized." 1) The testimony that could be quoted is almost endless. We also have evidence to this effect in the catacombs where we find the inscription: "Here rests Achilla, a newly-baptized (infant); she was one year and five months old. Died February 23rd." 2)

In the early Church, the Eucharist was also administered to infants. This was the general practise until about 1118 when it was abolished on the grounds that "real devotion in the recipient" was required. The children were deprived of Communion because of the increased veneration of the elements and the danger of dropping them during administration was present.

For adults, the reception is necessary as a matter of precept,

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- 1) Jacobs, The Sacramentary Teachings, p.40
  - 2) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol.I, p.273

being commanded both by the Church and the Scripture. The frequency is left to the Church to determine. Pope Fabian (236-250) made it a matter of duty to attend three times, at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. The Fourth Lateran Council, 1215, prescribed annual Communion at Easter the minimum. The Council of Trent raised this to a dogma. Reception is not absolutely necessary for salvation because it is a sacrament of the living and grace may be preserved without it. However, the faithful are urged to commune frequently beginning at about seven years, the age suggested by Pope Pius X. 1)

Matrimony is the last of the sacraments because it has the least spirituality connected with it. But there are certain impediments to marriage. The Council of Trent has declared: "If anyone saith that the Church could not establish impediments dissolving marriage, or that she has erred in establishing them, let him be anathema." 2) In this connection the Catholic Church makes some of her boldest claims.

"If anyone saith that those degrees only of consanguinity and affinity which are set down in Leviticus can hinder Matrimony from being contracted, and dissolve it when contracted, and that the Church cannot dispense in some of those degrees or establish that others may hinder and dissolve it, let him be anathema." 3)

The Church of Rome rests her practise of forbidding and restricting marriages upon her infallibility. <sup>2</sup> Pohle-Preuss says: "The Church is infallible, indefectible, and holy; and hence, if she attributes to herself and exercises a right, that right undoubtedly belongs to her." 4) Down through the ages, there has been traces of such a legalistic spirit

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1) The custom seems to have been persistent in some places of giving the Lord's Supper to the deceased and was condemned several times, by the Synod of Auxerre, 578, and the Trullian Council, 692.

2) Waterworth, Conc. Trid., Session XXIV, can.4

3) ibid., Session XXIV, can.5

4) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p.222

in the Church. In the fourth century a council made lack of Baptism a diriment impediment, another made affinity an impediment. St. Basil said that if intercourse is had with a woman, it is impossible to marry her sister. Gregory the Great forbade the marriage of first cousins. All the present impediments to marriage, but one, are listed in the following lines:

"Error, conditio, votum, cognatio, crimen,  
Cultus disparitas, vis, ordo, legamen, honestas,  
Aetas, affinis, si clandestinus et impos,  
Raptane sit mulier, parti nec reddita tutae;  
Haec socianda vetant communibus, facta retractant!" 1)

On such a basis, tradition and reason, the Roman doctrine of the seven sacraments has been erected. Little need be said in criticism of their doctrinal foundation. To anyone who accepts God's Word as the sole source and Norm of faith, the entire structure is based as on shifting sand. The Fathers offer very little and weak support. In the majority of cases, their statements, if examined from the Scriptural instead of the Catholic standpoint, staunchly support the biblical doctrine. The difference in the meaning of terms then and now, the 'eisegesis' practised in interpreting their statements, seem to give some support to the Catholic doctrine. But there mere fact that the Fathers mention a certain custom or practise, or use the same terms used today, or even call it a sacrament, is in itself no proof that they taught the present Roman error. There is no proof in mere antiquity, and reason without a basis is useless. Perhaps we can best conclude in the words of Theodoret: "Bring not human reasonings and syllogisms; I rely on Scripture." 2)

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1) Pohle-Preuss, The Sacraments, Vol. IV, p. 227

2) "Dial." I; quoted in Faith of Our Fathers, Stearnes, p.69

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