Eucharist Questions

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Catholic Truth Society of Oregon No.apol041 (1940)

1. Is your Blessed Sacrament still a biscuit or a wafer?

The Blessed Sacrament is the Living Eucharistic Christ and it contains no trace of the substance of bread. The accidental qualities of bread are there, but veiled beneath them the living substance of Christ's Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity is present, the substance of bread having been converted into the body of Christ at the moment of consecration. We Catholics believe that this change does occur, that it can occur, and that Christ can be in the Sacred Host that has the appearance of a cracker or a wafer. "It is not His body," is the echo of the ages, the repetition of the Jewish complaint, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" John 6:61. Here then is the boast of fallible human reason. "Christ cannot be in the Host." "Who can hear it?" He alone who has a right idea of God, of His Truth and Majesty, has a correct estimate of a limited human intelligence. This doctrine is not for the proud. It is for the humble. And unless we become as little children, unless we know ourselves to be what we really are, it is not for us to believe this great mystery.

2. Christ becomes a piece of bread.

No. He does not become a piece of bread, nor does He become the appearance of bread. Christ remains Christ, and merely becomes present under the external signs of what was bread prior to the words of consecration. Christ has not been converted into bread, but the bread has been converted into the body of Christ, the external qualities of bread alone remaining. Reason has not a right idea of that against which it would protest. Even when it has a right idea of the doctrine, reason overlooks the fact that it is Almighty God who is the author of this wondrous gift. Arguing from their study of the universe, men urge that it is against the laws of nature, though no one has ever claimed that it is due to the laws of nature. We do not ask the laws of nature to do what they are not supposed to accomplish. In any case, these men do not even know all the laws of nature, nor do they know that these laws can go only as far as they themselves desire that they should go. But they certainly cannot say that God is limited by the laws He Himself has established; and it is no created law of nature which is in operation here. It is God's own immediate work.

3. Your doctrine is believed only by fools.

It is useless to assert that only fools would believe such a doctrine, and then say that the doctrine is foolish because only fools believe it. Men must prove that those who do believe are fools from other and independent evidence, or else prove the doctrine is wrong itself. As a matter of fact, the assertion that no intellectual man believes in dogma today is a dogma in itself for which those who propound it offer no reason save that they believe it. Few would be prepared to rank a Pasteur, a Manning or a Newman, a Sir Bertram Windle or a Chesterton, or a Martindale, a John Moody or a Kent Stone as fools. Yet these all believed it. St. Thomas Aquinas, whilst treating of the Blessed Sacrament in his Summa Theologica, was so far from suggesting a blind belief that he proposes and solves over 280 possible difficulties which might occur to the human mind, many of them far more

profound than any living adversary today could even conceive. He anticipated by 200 years the absurd arguments of the revolutionists of the so-called Reformation, which has turned out to be the world's deformation.

4. Well, I can't believe your doctrine because I cannot understand it.

If so, then to be logical, besides crying, "Away with the Eucharist," we should also cry, "Away with the idea of a man being God. Away with Christianity; we do not comprehend it. Away with Hell; we have never seen it. Away with the human soul; we have never touched one. Away with matter and substance; they baffle us. Away with the universe. Away with God; and so on, from degree to degree, from despair to despair, even to the suicide of reason." Perhaps your credulity leads you to swallow the notion that this world evolved out of an eternal nebula; that man is the product of organic evolution, etc. Let any man publish a theory and you, no doubt, would swallow it hook, line and sinker with whole-hearted adhesion, provided God be not mentioned. Offer to prove it, you reply, "No need. We believe it, it rings true." Yet, mention God, offer to show the proofs of Christian doctrine - you will not even look at them. Truly, St. Paul was right in his prediction, "They will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables." (2 Tim. 4:3-4.)

5. Can Christ be in the Host?

Yes. Nor is finite human reason the criterion as to what God can or cannot do, when the truth proposed is not against reason, but simply above and beyond its capacity. We know that, if God tells us a truth which human reason could not discover by its own unaided powers, that truth is bound to seem extravagant. The presence of Christ under the appearances of bread is His work and the very soul and bond of the whole architecture of Catholic and Christian doctrine. Human reason could not invent it, nor can reason without revelation prove it. For if this doctrine were a work of reason it might be fully comprehensible to us, but it would be a natural philosophy, not a supernatural religion. Reason alone tells us that the Living Christ could be in the Host, did God so desire.

6. Do you believe the consecrated Host to be the body of Christ because of any signs in the Host itself?

We do not believe in Blessed Sacrament because we can realize or visualize the full truth. Even a priest could not distinguish a consecrated Host from an unconsecrated wafer unless he were told which of the two had been consecrated. The consecrated Host looks like bread, it tastes like bread, it nourishes like bread. There is no difference for priest and layman. At the altar, the priest has no experience at all of a change. Yet, after consecration, there is no substance of bread remaining. The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ are present.

Human reason alone tells us three things:

- The God who created the universe with a mere act of His will is infinitely powerful, and not to be limited by the degrees of a created finite intelligence.
- God is Truth Itself, and could not possibly tell us a lie.
- The Gospels are true history. No documents have had such a thorough sifting. They have survived a deeper critical study, a more searching analysis than any other writings have had to undergo, and that not only by men of good will, but by the very enemies of Christianity.

These three things are clear to our human reason. Unless a man receives additional light from God, he will be unable to proceed, to grasp the full significance of the truths contained in the Gospels. That additional light is given by the Church that gave the Bible to the world.

As reason told us three things, reason and Faith combined also tell us three things:

- The historical Person described in the Gospel, and known as Jesus Christ, is Almighty God, with all divine attributes.
- This Christ taught the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament as clearly as it is possible to state it.
- He also established an infallible Church, which guarantees to maintain the judgment of reason and Faith in accordance with God's knowledge of this matter.

We, therefore, believe with absolute certainty that Christ is really present in the Sacred Host.

7. What have the Scriptures to do with your belief in the real presence?

They have very much to do with it. When we read through the Old Testament; when we see there how God treated with the Jews; when we study the account there given of the Tree of Life refreshing our first parents in Paradise; when we read of the bread and wine offered to God, and then given as food to the soldiers of Abraham by the High Priest Melchisedech; of the Paschal Lamb sacrificed to God and eaten by His chosen people; of the manna in the desert, prepared not by man but by angels; of the miraculous food in the strength of which Elias (Elijah) walked for forty days even to the Mountains of God; tears come into our eyes, our hearts ache, and a deep longing comes upon us, taking possession of our whole being.

We wonder what great gift from God all these wonders prefigure and foretell. If God intended to give us merely ordinary bread, then He would be giving us less than He gave to the Jews, and it is impossible that the religion of Christ, for which the ancient religion was but a preparation, should not be more perfect; should not infinitely transcend the forerunner, even as Christ Himself infinitely transcended the last prophet of the Old Law, St. John the Baptist, who said, "I must decrease, and He must increase." John 3:30. Then if the Jews had the tables of the law in their Tabernacle, surrounded by the visible glory of God, we may half-expect to have the very author of the law in our Tabernacle, the glory of God veiled out of compassion because it is too great for man to see and live. If the Jews received a divine and very miraculous food to eat during their journey through the desert, we, too, may expect a divine and miraculous food to eat during our journey through the desert of this life — a food prepared not by angels but by Christ Our Lord, under some form within our reach. That form within our reach is fully spoken of in the sixth chapter of St. John in both the Protestant and Catholic versions of the New Testament.

8. Do you believe in the literal interpretation of the sixth chapter of St. John?

Yes. There is no other possible interpretation than the literal interpretation. We agree with Luther who defended the literal interpretation against Zwingli, Carlstadt, and Oecolampadius, though with usual ill-logic, he warred against the idea of the Mass. He confessed that he was tempted to deny the Real Presence in order "to give a great smack in the face of Popery," but the Scriptures and all antiquity were too overwhelming in its favor. "I am caught," he wrote, "I cannot escape, the text is too forcible."

9. Explain the sixth chapter of St. John.

Jesus in the promise of the Eucharist points out the superiority of the bread which He is about to give them over the manna rained down from Heaven, saying, "And the bread that I will give, is My Flesh, for the life of the world." John 6:51-52. The Jews understood Christ to be speaking literally and not figuratively, for they say among themselves, "How can this man give us His Flesh to eat?" John 6:52-53. If Christ were talking in a figure of speech, in a metaphor, it would have been His duty not only as the Son of God, but as a teacher, to correct the Jews and say to them, "You take a wrong meaning to My words. You think that I am referring to My Flesh — I know you are a civilized people and that you are not cannibals — I am only speaking of a souvenir, a symbol, a token. See that multitude going away from Me? They are leaving Me because they think I meant it. I came to save them, to win them. I want them. Do you think I would let them go like that if I did not mean it? If I could unsay it, do you not realize that I would call them back and explain? Ah, no. I meant it so much that you, too, must go, or accept it." The Jews would have remained had they believed that He meant no more than a symbol or token. Christ knew that they would revolt at the thought of eating His very flesh, but He let them go with the idea which would become a fundamental doctrine of His Church. Why did He not correct these first Protectors of the Christian World?

10. What does the double expletive, "Amen, Amen" indicate?

It indicates importance. The double expletive of Hebrew when found, would in our tongue mean, “Now listen, I am about to announce the most important point of this discourse." Hence with emphasis does Christ say, "Amen, Amen, I say unto you; except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood you shall not have life in you." John 6:53-54. Instead of watering down His statement Christ drives home what He is proclaiming to His audience, "He that eats My Flesh, and drinks My Blood, has everlasting life; and I will raise him up on the last day. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eats My Flesh, and drinks My Blood, abides in Me, and I in Him." John 6:54-57. Twelve times does Christ tell his audience that “He is the Bread come down from Heaven" and in four consecutive sentences Jesus uses the double phrase "to eat My Flesh and drink My Blood." Hence, His meaning is unmistakably clear. He confirms His power and authority, saying, "As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father so he that eats Me, the same also shall live by Me." See John 6: 57-58. But this doctrine of the Teacher staggered the stiff-necked Jews who began to quit Christ. “Many therefore of His disciples hearing it, said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it?” John 6:60-61. "After this many of His disciples went back; and walked no more with Him." John 6:66-67.

11. Christ was only talking in the form of a Metaphor.

A metaphor, to eat one's flesh meant for the Jews to abuse and calumniate a man, to destroy his character. Do you think that Jesus meant, "He that reviles Me has eternal life"?

12. But the last words of Christ say, "It is the Spirit that gives life. The flesh profits nothing." John 6:63-64.

Christ is not speaking of His Body in those last words, but of you. You have not the true spirit of God in you, but you let your earthly and natural reason create foolish obstacles. You judge as the natural and animal man, who, according to St. Paul, does not perceive the things of God. Have true faith, and you will understand even though you do not fully comprehend this wonderful promise of Christ. But if you think that you have everything explained to the satisfaction of your human reason, God Himself will leave you without the truth. He has a strict right to our submission, body, soul,

mind and will, and God has sufficiently proved the truth of the Doctrines He has taught by the mere fact of His having uttered them.

13. You speak about the promise of the Eucharist. Where does its reality take place?

At the Last Supper Christ fulfilled what He had promised in the sixth chapter of St. John. "And while they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke: and gave to His disciples, and said: Take, all of you, and eat. This is My Body. And taking the, chalice He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink, all of you, all of this, for this is My Blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." Mt. 26:26-28. In these words Christ, therefore, literally fulfills His promise. This is My Body; this is My Blood — what words could be plainer? The Apostles made no mistake in understanding Christ.

14. How could the Apostles understand Christ literally, when He uses the verb "is"? I have read that in the Aramaic language there is no verb to express the meaning "to represent," "to signify."

The Aramaic language was rich in vocabulary. Scholars deny that charge. Cardinal Wiseman many years ago proved conclusively that in the language spoken by Christ there are at least forty expressions which meant "to signify."

15. Did the Apostles teach just what you are teaching?

The Apostles did not merely bless and distribute bread and wine, but they administered what they knew and believed to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. If they thought they were distributing merely a symbol or representation or reminder of the Savior's flesh and blood, then the Catholic practice comes to smash. The Apostles proclaimed that they were giving the Body and Blood of the Savior at His express command. St. Paul in both the Protestant and Catholic text fully answers for the Apostles.

St. Paul wrote (in about 57 A.D., eight years after St. Matthew wrote his Gospel) a letter to the Christian converts at Corinth: 1 Cor. 10:16, "The chalice of benediction, which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread, which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" 1 Cor. 11:23-29, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, And giving thanks, broke, and said: Take all of you, and eat: this is my body, which shall be delivered for you: this do you all, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord, until He come. Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself: and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."

Here then is fully stated the doctrine of the Apostles and the faith of the Infant Church in the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Notice the words ‘Guilty of the Body and of the Blood’ — how could a person be guilty, if he had merely eaten a little bread and drunk a little wine, as a picture or representation or reminder of the Last Supper? No one is guilty of homicide if he merely does violence to the picture or statue of a man without touching the man in person. St. Paul's words are meaningless without the dogma of the Real Presence.

"Plain and simple reason," says Cardinal Wiseman, "seems to tell us that the presence of Christ's Body is necessary for an offence committed against it. A man cannot be ‘guilty of majesty’, unless

the majesty exists in the object against which his crime is committed. In like manner, an offender against the Blessed Eucharist cannot be described as guilty of Christ's Body and Blood, if these be not in the Sacrament."

16. What did the early preachers besides the apostles teach about the last Supper?

St. Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century says: "As a life-giving Sacrament we possess the sacred Flesh of Christ and His Precious Blood under the appearance of bread and wine. What seems to be bread is not bread, but Christ's body; what seems to be wine is not wine but Christ's Blood." You can get abundant testimony on this belief from many others of the Fathers of the primitive Church.

17. Does the Greek Church believe in the Real Presence?

The Greek Church which seceded (technically ‘went into schism’) from the Catholic Church about 1,000 years ago, the present Russian Church which joined the Greek Church in its schism, the schismatic Copts, Armenians, Syrians, Chaldeans (who had left Roman unity in the fifth century) and in fact all the Oriental sects, still hold fast to the teaching of the Infant Church in the Real Presence of the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist.

18. Did all Christendom believe in the literal understanding of the Savior's words?

Yes. Berengarius was the first to openly attack it in the year 1088, but he retracted before he died. In the sixteenth century, it became the hobby of the day to give new and arbitrary interpretations to the Scriptures in accordance with one's own private whim and fancy. The amount of religious and intellectual chaos brought about by this confusion is seen in the fact that within seventy-five years over 200 different meanings were given to the four simple words of Christ: "This is My Body." At Ingolstadt in 1577, Christopher Rasperger wrote a whole book entitled, "Two Hundred Interpretations of the words ‘This is My Body’." It shows how hard pressed the inventors of new sects were to explain away the real meaning of those four words, which were understood in just one sense for a thousand years and now are not understood by millions.

19. I still cannot believe in your literal interpretation.

Unless the words of Christ are taken in the literal sense and at their face value, they become meaningless, incoherent and worse than that, Christ would be, then, an arch-deceiver. For He certainly taught, allowed, encouraged, and stressed the literal interpretation of His words and the figurative interpretation of the Protestant mind has no basis of plausibility. You must remember that the Jews deserted Christ simply because He meant just what He said, "'This is My Body." Such a phrase involves a mystery, but you believe in the Incarnation and the Trinity, which are likewise mysteries but revealed truths far beyond our capacity fully to understand. We do not reject mysteries to the garbage can because we don't understand them, but we believe them on the authority of the Revealer.

20. Christ also said, “I am the door”. “I am the vine.” If you say bread is His Body then He is also a door and actually a grapevine.

You resort to any excuse to deny the meaning of Christ. There is no parallel between those two cases. "I am the door," can have a metaphorical sense. For Christ is like a door, since I go to Heaven through Him; He is like a vine, because all the sap of my spiritual life comes through Him. But the bread is in no way like His Body or His Flesh. Either it changed into His actual Body, or the expression "This is My Body" is nonsense. It is misery that God should have to force a Gift upon

you, which you should accept with deep faith, gratitude, and love. But let us turn to St. Paul who knew and spoke with the resurrected Christ. Have you never read his words, "Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord." (See 1 Cor. 11:27.)

Why, in the Catacombs, did the early Christians depict the Blessed Sacrament upon the very walls as a loaf of bread with the sign of a fish above it — the fish which is represented in the Greek language (ixthus) whose letters are the initials for, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior?" Why did St. Ignatius, in the second century, declare that the Docetae were false Christians, because they "do not receive the Eucharist, not admitting that it is the Flesh of Our Lord Jesus Christ which was tormented for us?" Why, in the fourth century, did St. Ambrose appeal to the Power of Almighty God for this very remarkable change? "The Lord spoke," he writes, "and the Heavens were made. See how powerful is the word of Christ. And if it has such power that things begin to be where there was nothing, how much more powerful when something already existing has to be changed. The Body of Christ was not there before consecration, but after consecration, I tell you that the Body of Christ is there."

21. How is Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament?

The Fourth General Council of the Lateran, in 1215, defined that "the Body and Blood of Christ are truly contained in the Sacrament of the Altar by Transubstantiation." Transubstantiation is a changing across from one substance to another. A transcontinental railroad will take a person from New York to San Francisco but it does not change New York into San Francisco. Take the word "transformation." A carpenter can transform a log of wood into all kinds of furniture. He gives the wood another form or shape. In Transubstantiation, it is a question not of another form or shape, but of another substance. Hydrogen and oxygen are two gaseous substances, but we know that they can be changed into the substance of water. So also, Transubstantiation changes the substance of bread into the Substance of the Body of Christ. When hydrogen and oxygen are changed into water, they lose their previous form or gaseous appearance whereas the bread retains its previous appearance, the substance alone being changed. The word "Transubstantiation," therefore, is used by the Catholic Church to show that the substance of bread, which was present before the consecration, has been changed into the Substance of Our Lord's Body, although the appearance of bread still remains.

22. Your doctrine of transubstantiation was "invented" during the Lateran Council 1215.

The Doctrine was always held in the Church, and in 1215, the Lateran Council gave not a new doctrine, but merely the exact word which correctly describes the original and revealed Doctrine of Christ. Not in 1215, but in the year 500, Faustus, Bishop of Rietz, wrote, "Before consecration the substance of bread and wine is present; after consecration, the Body of Christ and the Blood of Christ. Is it anything wonderful that He, who could create with a word, should with a word change the things He has created?" The Doctrine, then, existed. But in the eleventh century Berengarius used very ambiguous language when speaking of the Blessed Sacrament which could have had very serious consequences, and in the thirteenth century, perceiving the actual growth of these evil consequences, the Lateran Council insisted upon Transubstantiation as the correct expression to be used.

The doctrine of transubstantiation is certainly contained in the words of St. Ambrose (340-397) when he declares: "Cannot, therefore, the words of Christ, who was able to make something out of

nothing, change that which already exists into something which it was not before?... What we effect (by Consecration) is the Body taken from the Virgin."

St. Augustine (354-430) writes: "That which is seen on the table of the Lord is bread and wine; but this bread and this wine, when the word is added, becomes the Body and Blood of the Logos."

St. Cyril (386) writes: "As a life-giving Sacrament we possess the sacred Flesh of Christ and His Precious Blood under the appearance of bread and wine. What seems to be wine is not wine, but Christ's Blood."

St. Basil (331-379) prays in these words of his liturgy, "Make this bread into the Precious Body of our Lord and God and Redeemer Jesus Christ, and this chalice into the Blood of Our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, which was shed for the life of the world."

23. If Luther believed in the Real Presence, then how did he explain it?

Luther always maintained the literal interpretation of the words: "This is My Body; This is My Blood." In fact he said he was tempted to deny the Real Presence in order "to give a great smack in the face of Popery," but the teaching of the Bible and all antiquity were too strong in its favor. He explained how Christ was present by using the word "consubstantiation" instead of transubstantiation. He held that the two substances of bread and of the Body were present at one and the same time. Since he admitted no changing of one substance into another then the logical explanation for his theory is the use of the sentence "Here is My Body or This contains My Body" instead of "This is My Body." Luther's explanation would place the Body of Christ "with," "upon," "alongside," or "in" the substance of bread or wine. If Protestants believe in the Real Presence there is no other way of explaining the literal meaning of the four words, "This is My Body" than by Transubstantiation. Christ did not say, "My Body is in or with this bread." He said, "This is My Body." Now it is certainly not His body according to appearances. It must, then be His body according to substance, or in other words, God changes the substance without altering the appearances of bread.

The Council of Lateran in 1215 condemned the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation, that the substance of bread and the Body of Christ exist together; the Zwinglian idea of a memorial supper; and the Calvinistic doctrine of a virtual or dynamic presence, whereby the efficacy of Christ's Body and Blood is communicated from Heaven to those who are predestined to be saved. This was done 300 years before Luther, Zwigli, or Calvin were to seduce so many away from the apostolic Catholic doctrine.

24. Are you not guilty of cannibalism?

No. Catholics do not believe that they are eating Christ's human flesh in its natural form. There is a change of substance and nothing else in the Host. The appearance and qualities of bread are not changed at all. Christ gives us His Body in a Divine and supernatural way, not in a natural way, for His Presence is not natural but Sacramental. The Catholic Doctrine does not suppose such folly of eating Christ's Body in a merely natural sense as we eat ordinary flesh.

25. Was the changing of water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana the same as transubstantiation?

When Christ changed the water into wine, it was nothing but a kind of transubstantiation. The multiplication of the five barley loaves and two fishes that fed five thousand men, women, and children is a miracle of the same kind as that of transubstantiation.

26. Your real presence idea implies a contradiction in that the same thing is both bread and not bread at the same time.

You misunderstand our doctrine for the doctrine of Luther. We teach transubstantiation and not consubstantiation. We teach that the substance of bread does not remain after the consecration. What remains are the accidents — the appearances, such as color, size, shape, taste, weight — in short, whatever is apparent to the senses.

27. The famous Bishop Ernest Barnes of Birmingham proclaims that transubstantiation was outmoded by the advance of modern science. (This in a famous Times article in 1925.)

At the time, he once again showed the world how absurd he is. The physicists were at work in their laboratories changing one chemical element into an altogether different one. They were exploding the theory of the old school of physics, namely, the laws of the conservation of matter and energy. Sir James Jeans in 1929 declared: "The two fundamental cornerstones of twentieth century physics, the conservation of matter and the conservation of energy, are both abolished." Modern scientists have already produced one element from another, thereby, giving the lie to Bishop Barnes. If scientists today can effect a kind of transubstantiation of one element into another, who will be so wise and presumptuous like Bishop Barnes and deny that power to Almighty God? If Bishop Barnes still believes in the permanence and immutability of the chemical elements (which is now thoroughly disproved) and if he still holds that you can change the form and the appearances of the elements through various combinations, but you can never change them into distinct and immutable elements then we come back to the laws of nature to show that elements do change their nature. If Bishop Barnes ate nothing but bread and wine for a few days, he certainly would have to admit that the bread and wine in his stomach was changed into his human flesh and blood by the laws of nature. If God can through the laws of nature change bread and wine into our own flesh and blood, then why all the unwillingness to accept His Promise of the Eucharist?

28. Are there any signs in the Host proving that he is bodily present?

NO. It is a mystery of faith. All external appearances remain as before consecration, but the substance of bread and the substance of wine are changed into the substance of our Lord's Body and Blood. The reason why we believe is not in the Host as such, but in God. He has revealed this truth, and we believe because He must know and could not tell an untruth.

29. Did not the Jews think that they were asked to eat the very body of Christ? Yet He refuted them by saying that His Body would ascend to Heaven and that the flesh profits nothing. Jn. 6:61-64.

When Christ promised that He would give His very Flesh to eat, the Jews protested because they imagined a natural and cannibalistic eating of Christ's Body. Christ refuted this notion of the manner in which His Flesh was to be received by saying that He would ascend into Heaven, not leaving His Body in its human form upon earth. But He did not say that they were not to eat His actual Body. He would thus contradict Himself, for a little earlier He had said, "My Flesh is meat indeed and My Blood is drink indeed." John 6:55-56. He meant, therefore, "You will not be asked to eat My Flesh in the horrible and natural way you think, for My Body as you see it with your eyes will be gone from this earth. Yet I shall leave My Flesh and Blood in another and supernatural way which your

natural and carnal minds cannot understand. The carnal or fleshy judgment profits nothing. I ask you, therefore, to have faith in Me and to trust Me. It is the spirit of faith which will enable you to believe, not your natural judgment." Then the Gospel goes on to say that many would not believe, and walked no more with Him; just as many today will not believe, and walk no more with the Catholic Church. According to the doctrine of the Catholic Church Christ's Body is ascended into Heaven. But by its substance, independently of all the laws of space which affect substance through accidental qualities, this body is present in every consecrated Host.

30. We Protestants believe that Christ's Body is really present in the Eucharist, but not by transubstantiation.

The majority of Protestants believe that His Body is really absent. Those who do say that they believe in His real Presence yet deny transubstantiation, illogically admit an effect yet deny the only process by which it can truly occur. If there be no transubstantiation or conversion of the substance of bread into the substance of Christ's Body, then the substance of bread remains after consecration, and it is bread and not the Body of Christ. People make a kind of bogey of transubstantiation as foolishly as a man would do somewhat similarly if he admitted a railway from New York to San Francisco, yet refused to admit that it could be called the transcontinental railway.

31. The Apostles' Creed, the Athanasian, and the Nicene do not mention transubstantiation. There is no record of such a doctrine until 1564 when Pius IV put it into his creed. Are we to believe the early Christians, or the doctrine of a thousand years later?

The doctrine is not in the three Creeds you mention. But they do not contain the whole of Christian doctrine. They are partial statements insisting upon certain doctrines against special errors of those times. It is true that Pius IV included the doctrine in his profession of faith, but you are wrong when you say that there was no mention of the doctrine till then. In 1551, 13 years earlier, the Council of Trent taught the doctrine explicitly. In 1274, 290 years earlier, the 2nd Council of Lyons insisted upon the admission of transubstantiation by the Greeks as a condition of return to the Catholic Church. In 1215, 349 years earlier, the 4th Lateran Council consecrated the word transubstantiation as expressing correctly the Christian doctrine of Christ's real presence by conversion of the substance of bread into the substance of His Body. In 1079, 500 years earlier, Berengarius declared in his retraction, "I acknowledge that the bread is substantially changed into the substance of Christ's Body." Everybody who possessed the true Christian faith, until this year, 1079, believed in the substantial change, and there was no need to insist upon the word, since no one denied the nature of the change.

In the fourth century, all the great Fathers and writers admitted that by consecration bread was changed into our Lord's very Body. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who died about 107 A.D., wrote, "Heretics abstain from the Eucharist because they do not confess the Eucharist to be that very Flesh of Jesus Christ which suffered for us." And that doctrine is all that is expressed by transubstantiation. At the Last Supper Christ said, "This is My Body which is given for you." Luke 22:19. Now He either gave them His Body or He did not. But He gave them His Body, for we dare not say, "Lord although you say, ‘This is My Body,' it is certainly not Your Body." However, it was not His Body according to appearances and visible qualities, and it could have been His Body only according to substance. Therefore, our Lord first thought this doctrine of substantial change.

32. The elements do not change, for there is no chemical difference after consecration.

Which elements do not change? In every material thing, there are two sets of elements quite distinct — substance and qualities. And no man has ever seen substance; he has seen qualities only. Thus, I see the squareness of a block of iron, but it can become round, still remaining iron. I can feel its hardness, though it can become soft in the furnace, the substance being unchanged. If it be black, it can become red; if it be cold, it can become hot; if it be heavy, by great heat, I can render it a vapor. The qualities, then, differ from the substance, or we could not change one without changing the other. And if we can change qualities without changing substance, God can certainly change substance without changing qualities. And chemical differences are dependent upon qualities. Granted the permanence of the same accidental qualities the same chemical reactions will be apparent.

Father Faber, whilst yet a Protestant, well said, "I am worried about the Roman doctrine because, whatever may be said of the proofs for it, I do not see how any man can disprove it. If they say that the substance changes, but that all appearances remain the same, then they say that something changes of which no man has any experience and yet which reason must postulate as the reality underlying all appearances and separate from them." When you say that the elements do not change their chemical properties, I simply reply that the elements of external qualities do not change their chemical properties, and that no Catholic has ever imagined that they do. But the substance underlying those external appearances certainly does change. The fact that qualities remain unaltered is a fact of experience; the fact that the substance changes is revealed by God, and cannot be known in any other way. Yet is it not more than sufficiently guaranteed when God says so?

33. We have only the word of the priest for the fact.

No Catholic priest would himself believe it were it not the doctrine of Christ. It would be the height of folly to believe it without solid evidence that Christ had taught it. God created substance and qualities, and we cannot deny to Him perfect control over them and ability to change them at His pleasure. And when Christ says, "This is My Body," we have to accuse Him of falsehood or else admit that it is His Body not according to the senses, but according to the underlying substance which is imperceptible to the senses.

34. Is Christ's Body anatomically and physiologically present?

Christ's real Body is present. Anatomical structure and physiological modifications belong to qualities possessed by substance. After the consecration, we have the substance of Christ's Body present without any external manifestation of His anatomical or physiological appearances, and the qualities of bread remaining as the object of sense perception without any substance of bread. That substance of bread has been converted into the substance of Christ's Body. And as substance is the basic reality, we rightly say that the Blessed Sacrament is the very Body of Christ.

Father Dalgairns explains your question in these words: "This then is what God has done to the Body of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. It has ceased to be extended, and all at once, it is freed from the fetters which bound it to place. It is not so much that it is in many places at once, as that it is no longer under the ordinary laws of space at all. It pervades the Host like a spirit. It uses, indeed, the locality formerly occupied by the bread, in order to fix itself in a definite place, but it only comes into the domain of space at all indirectly through the species, as the soul only enters into its present relations with space through the body. Who will say that this involves contradiction, or that it is beyond the power of Omnipotence?"

35. Would Christ be present in a crumb of the Host?

Yes. Christ is present, whole and entire, in every particle of the Sacred Host. The human soul is also confined to no part of the body, but is present in every part of the body. It is wrong to think that, by breaking the Host into several portions, the Body of Jesus would be broken, mangled or dissected.

36. Christ is in Heaven. How can you put Him in the tabernacle?

No Catholic denies that Christ is continually present in Heaven. He is not so present in the Eucharist that He ceases to be present in Heaven. He is in Heaven according to His natural though glorified form. The same Christ is in the Eucharist substantially, but not in the same way as He is present in Heaven. Substance as such abstracts from limitations of place and space. Locality directly belongs to the qualities of bread which remain after consecration, and indirectly only to the substantial presence of Christ's Body underlying those apparent qualities.

37. Is Christ's Body subject to processes of digestion?

The substance of Christ's Body is not subject to processes of digestion or to any chemical reactions. The qualities of bread, of course, behave in their normal way, undergoing a change as they are affected by digestion. Our Lord's substantial presence ceases as these qualities cease to retain those characteristics proper to bread.

38. If poison were present before Consecration would it be safe to consume the Eucharist?

No. People would be poisoned. The Church has never taught that poison could be converted into Christ's Body, and in any case, you are dealing with chemical activities proper to qualities, and not proper to substance as such. All such objections are based upon notions excluded by Catholic teaching. And it is of little use to refute what the Catholic Church does not teach.

39. Is not the priest who can accomplish this thing akin to the miracle man of primitive religions?

No. The miracle-man claimed to perform his wonders by his own marvelous powers. The priest says that the power of Christ effects the change in the Eucharist, and that he himself is but an instrument employed by Christ, and taking a very secondary place. The miracle-man depended upon the superstition and credulity of the bystanders. The priest forbids superstition and credulity, and insists upon faith in God, a supernatural faith based upon rational foundations. The miracle-man attributed preternatural effects to natural causes, whether spiritual or material. The Catholic Church attributes supernatural effects (a vast difference!) to a supernatural cause. The miracle-man could never prove any direct commission from God. The Catholic Church can prove her direct commission from Him to the satisfaction of every intelligent man willing to inquire into her credentials with sincerity. The miracle-man tried to perform things wholly unbecoming to God, by means which have no resemblance to those relied upon by the Catholic Church, and for a purpose and end totally different.

40. I heard you say that Christ is offered in the Eucharist as the Sacrifice of the New Law.

That is true. That offering of Christ in the Eucharist is known as the Mass, and the Mass is the Sacrifice of the New Law.

41. There is only one Sacrifice for Christians — that of Calvary.

The Sacrifice of Calvary was a Sacrifice not only for Christians but for the whole human race from the moment of the first sin. But whilst the death of Christ upon the Cross was the one great absolute Sacrifice, the Mass is a true and relative Sacrifice applying to the souls of men the fruits of Calvary.

Anyway, the doctrine which denies that the Mass is the true Sacrifice in the Christian dispensation is simply anti-Scriptural.

42. How do you prove that the Sacrifice of the Mass is Scriptural?

By religion, we honor God, and the chief and highest form of worship has ever been by the offering of sacrifice. Now God demanded continual sacrifices of various kinds from the very beginning of the human race until the coming of Christ, and it is not likely that the Christian and more perfect religion would lack a continual and regular offering of the highest act of religion. All the various sacrifices of the Jewish dispensation represented and prefigured the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, and derived all their value by anticipation from His death upon the Cross. And if the Jews had to honor God by regular sacrifices, so too, must Christians in the higher and more perfect New Law. But there is this difference. Whilst the Jewish sacrifices were anticipations of the Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, the Mass is a recollection and constant application of that one great Sacrifice to the souls of men.

43. It is little use your telling us what ought to be, unless you can prove it as a fact from Scripture.

I can do so. The Old Testament predicts that Christ will offer a true sacrifice to God in bread and wine — that He will use those elements. And this prediction is every bit as clear as the prediction that He will also offer Himself upon the Cross. Thus Gen. 14:18, tells us that Melchisedech, King of Salem, was a priest, and that he offered sacrifice under the form of bread and wine. Now Ps. 109 (Psalm 110 in the Hebrew) predicts most clearly that Christ will be a priest, according to the order of Melchisedech, i.e., offering a sacrifice under the forms of bread and wine. You may say that Christ fulfilled the prediction at the Last Supper, but that the rite was not to be continued. However, that admits that the rite was truly sacrificial — and the fact is that it has been continued in exactly the same sense. It was predicted that it would continue. After foretelling the rejection of the Jewish priesthood, the Prophet Malachi predicts a new sacrifice to be offered in every place. "From the rising of the sun even to the going down my name is great among the Gentiles: and in every place there is sacrifice and there is offered to my name a clean oblation." Mal. 1:11. The Sacrifice of Calvary took place in one place only. We must look for a sacrifice apart from Calvary, one offered in every place under the forms of bread and wine. The Mass is that Sacrifice.

44. Were all the conditions of a Sacrifice verified in the Last Supper? And are they still verified in the Mass?

Yes, to both questions. For a true Sacrifice, we need a priest, an altar, a victim, and a covenant with God. Christ was truly the great High Priest, and He gave the power of priests to His Apostles, commissioning them to do repeatedly as He Himself had done in their presence. "Do this," He said, "in commemoration of Me." Luke 22:19. The power was to persevere in the Church, even as Malachi had predicted. As victim, Christ offered Himself at the Last Supper. Taking bread and wine He said, "This is My Body... This is My Blood... As often as you shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come." 1 Cor. 11:24-26. The separate forms of consecration represented the separation of His Body and Blood when He ratified the Sacrifice by His death on the Cross next day. The victim, then, is Christ under the appearances of bread and wine representatively separated. This does not interfere with the value of Calvary, for Christ's real death occurred there, and without it, this representative function would be useless. Continuously through the ages, the Sacrifice of the Mass has been offered daily in the Catholic Church, and is today offered in every place from the rising of the sun even to its going down, as Malachi predicted.

As for the altar, years after the death of Christ, St. Paul said, "We have an altar whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle." Heb. 13:10.

Finally, there is the covenant with God. "'this chalice is the New Testament in My Blood," said Christ. 1 Cor. 11:25. It had legal documentary value in the sight of God. The Catholic Church alone fulfills Scripture in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

45. Christ's Blood is not shed in the Mass, and without shedding of blood, there is no remission.

Christ offered Himself with the shedding of blood on Calvary. Without that shedding of blood there would be no remission of sin. Yet since the Mass is but an application of Calvary with its shedding of blood, there is no real difficulty. There is a difficulty for one who denies the Sacrifice of the Mass, for without that there is no fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy that there will be offered in every place a clean oblation, without shedding of blood, from the rising to the setting of the sun.

46. Did not Pope Innocent III in 1208 first teach the Dogma that the Mass is a Sacrifice?

No. He merely insisted upon the doctrine which had always been held by Christians that the Mass is a sacrifice in the true sense of the Gospel teachings. If the idea was not Catholic doctrine until 1208, why did St. Irenaeus in the year 180, over 1,000 years earlier, write that Christ commanded His disciples to offer sacrifice to God, not because God needed it but that they might become more pleasing to God? And he goes on to show that the continued offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi which manifestly predicted that the Jewish people would cease to offer to God, and that a new and pure sacrifice would be offered to Him in every place by the Gentiles. Adversus Haer. IV., 17, 5. If Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, could write that in the second century, it is of little use to assert that Catholics did not believe the Mass to be a true Sacrifice until the year 1208.

47. Catholics speak of the Mass as if it meant the real death of Christ, and calculate its mathematical value!

No Catholic has ever believed that Christ is really slain in the Mass. They have never gone beyond the words of Scripture, "As often as you do this you shall show the death of the Lord until He come." 1 Cor. 11:26. Nor did any theologians attempt a mathematical calculation as to the efficacy of the Mass. They knew that mathematics could never express it. The theological value of the Mass is a perfectly legitimate question for any man to ask who seeks deeper knowledge of Christian doctrine.

48. According to Cardinal Vaughan, Catholics think the Mass better than Calvary!

That sweeping statement is not justified by Cardinal Vaughan's qualified doctrine. "So far as the practical effects upon the soul are concerned," he writes, "the Holy Mass has in some senses the advantage over Calvary." And he was quite right. No Catholic thinks that the Mass in itself is better than Calvary, for it is Calvary reapplied depending upon and deriving all its value from Calvary. "As often as you do this," said Christ, "you shall show the death of the Lord until He come." 1 Cor. 11:26. And that death took place upon the Cross. Yet the Mass has this advantage that whilst the death of Christ upon the Cross occurred in one place only and before a few people, Calvary reapplied in the Mass can occur in many places and before multitudes.

49. Christ offered the Last Supper in the evening. Why do you not have Mass in the evening instead of in the morning?

It is not essential that Mass should be offered in the evening, but simply that the Mass should be offered. Mass in the evening, of course, would be quite valid. The Church, making use of her God-given power to regulate all that pertains to disciplinary matters, has decreed that the Mass can be celebrated in the evening as well as in the morning.

50. Jesus gave Himself under the forms of bread and wine. You are not justified in withholding the cup from the laity.

The fact that the Catholic Church does so is sufficient proof that she is justified in doing so. However, let us view the theology of the matter. Jesus gave Himself under both kinds, yet He was completely present in either kind. He who receives either kind receives the whole Christ. In any case, Christ being risen dies no more. It is not possible now to separate Christ's Body and Blood in actual fact. Wherever Christ is, there He is whole and entire. He is wholly under the appearance of bread and wholly under the appearances of wine. In receiving the Blessed Sacrament under the form of bread, the communicant receives the Blood of Christ also. In receiving under the form of wine alone, he would receive the Body also. There is no possibility of receiving the Body of Christ without the Blood of Christ. (And see the next question.)

51. Why does the Catholic Church give Communion under one kind only?

For many grave reasons. This custom inculcates in a practical way that Christ is completely present under either kind. It excludes the heretical doctrine that it is absolutely necessary for Communion to partake of the chalice. It removes the danger of irreverence to the Precious Blood by upsetting or spilling it. It spares the recipients the danger of infection by their drinking from the same chalice. It enables a priest to celebrate Mass and distribute Communion without keeping the congregation an undue length of time, a reason which has particular force in the Catholic Church where hundreds go to Communion at early Masses. It secures uniformity of practice throughout the Church, for whilst flour is easily obtained for the purposes of bread, and easily kept, wine cannot be secured in sufficient quantity in many countries, above all in foreign missions. If our 20,000,000 Catholics in the United States (the 1940 figure – there are 70 million Catholics there in 2011) went to Holy Communion tomorrow, imagine the wine bill the Church would have to pay should all receive under both forms. It is impossible in the Arctic Circle to keep wine. The priests caring for the Eskimos carry raisins with them in order to make sufficient wine out of them to celebrate Mass. [Since Vatican II the opportunities to receive under both kinds have been considerably expanded, but Father Rumble’s points still maintain their validity.]

52. Your practice of one form is contrary to the Lutheran doctrine and the Bible.

We are not going counter to the Bible. There is no difficulty about the sixth chapter of St. John which Martin Luther declared must be understood in the literal and not the figurative sense. Christ Who said: "Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you," also said: "He that eats this Bread shall live forever;" and Christ Who said: "He that eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood shall have everlasting life," also said: "The Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world," and finally, Christ Who said: "He that eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood, abides in Me and I in him," said also: "He that eats this Bread shall live forever." (See John chapter 6.) When Christ commanded the Apostles: "Drink ye all of it," (Matthew 26:27) He was speaking not to the lay people, but to his priests, who when saying Mass always partake of Communion under both forms.

53. Whatever the theory may be, I object to the anti-Christian practice.

The practice is not anti-Christian. Reception under one kind only is quite sufficient for Holy Communion. Our Lord said simply, "If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, for the bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world." Jn. 6:51-52. In the early Church Communion was at times given to little children by giving them a few drops of the consecrated wine only. The martyrs would often take into the arena with them the Blessed Sacrament under the form of bread only, wrapped in linen, to give themselves Communion before death. The practice is quite in accordance with the doctrine of St. Paul, "Whosoever shall eat or drink unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord." 1 Cor. 11:27.

54. "Eat or drink" is not in my Protestant Bible.

It is not in the Authorized Version, but you will find it in the Revised Version. Protestant scholars admit that the substitution of "and" for "or" in the Authorized Version was an inexcusable mistranslation of the Greek for polemical purposes. Honesty will out some day.

55. So the priest always has the wine, but does not give it to the laity!

The priest does not always receive under both kinds. If for some reason he cannot celebrate Mass, yet desires to receive Holy Communion, he receives under the form of bread only, just as any other communicant. If he celebrates Mass, he must consecrate both kinds for the sake of the Sacrifice, the separate consecrations being necessary for the representation of Christ's death by the shedding of His Blood on the Cross. Having consecrated under both kinds the priest must consume both kinds. But even in doing so, he receives no more than the laity, for both priest and lay communicant receive the complete Christ, and more than the complete Christ cannot be received. But your objection proceeds from a complete misunderstanding of the nature of the Eucharist. The idea of the officiating priest having a "drink of wine" which is denied to the laity does great injury to the reverence due to the Presence of Christ, and is utterly absurd. About an egg-cup full of wine is used in the celebration of the Mass, and in any case if a priest did merely want a drink of wine there is no need for him to vest himself elaborately and spend half an hour saying Mass in order to have it.

56. Could a priest be in mortal sin yet give the true body of Christ?

A priest commits a grave sin of sacrilege if he celebrates Mass whilst he himself is in a state of mortal sin. But that would not render the consecration invalid. The words of consecration have their effect quite apart from the state of the celebrant's soul. He consecrates in virtue of his priesthood, not in virtue of his being in a state of grace or of sin. It is his loss if he be not in God's grace, but the communicant suffers no loss in receiving Communion from his hands. It is the priesthood of Christ in him that consecrates, and that is not less efficacious because a priest sins personally.

57. At what age can children receive Holy Communion?

Any baptized child could receive Holy Communion with profit. The early Christians frequently gave Communion even to infants. However, the Church for wise reasons requires in her present discipline that children should have attained sufficient reason to be able, after due instruction, to know that the Blessed Sacrament differs from ordinary food, and that by receiving it they are receiving Christ.

58. Has a child of seven sufficient reason?

As a rule, yes. The law of the Church to receive Holy Communion once a year obliges all Catholics who have come to the use of reason, and this begins to oblige from about the age of seven. The

average child of seven certainly has enough sense to realize that the reception of the Holy Eucharist is a religious act. It can know who our Lord is, and the fact that He is present in the Blessed Sacrament. Such a child is quite capable of approaching with sincere faith and devotion.

59. Do Catholics have to receive Holy Communion in order to be saved?

The reception of Holy Communion is not absolutely necessary for salvation, as the Council of Trent defined when it spoke about the custom of the Infant Church giving Communion to children immediately after Baptism and Confirmation. It is necessary in the sense that our Lord commands us to receive it; otherwise the words of Jn. 6:53-54 and Luke 22:19 would be meaningless. This Divine Command is observed in the Catholic Church today when she obliges her members under the pain of mortal sin to receive Communion during Easter time, as prescribed by the Fourth Council of Lateran in 1215.

60. The parents of a Jew who became a convert to your Church worried about his fasting before receiving Communion.

Catholics abstain 3 hours from food and one hour from drink before they receive Communion, out of respect for the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. [After Vatican II, the discipline of fasting was reduced to one hour for both food and drink.] St. Augustine writes: "It has pleased the Holy Spirit that in honor of so great a Sacrament, the Body of the Lord should pass Christian lips before other food; for this reason that custom is observed throughout the whole world." Tertullian (died in 220) mentions fasting before Communion and the Third Council of Carthage (397) ordered fasting before Communion, allowing but one exception and that was on Maundy Thursday, when Mass was celebrated in the evening to commemorate the Institution of the Eucharist. For the Catholics of today fasting is required, unless they are in danger of death or incurably ill over a month or obliged to consume the Blessed Sacrament at the time of a fire or profanation.

61. What do you Catholics get out of going to Holy Communion?

The principal effect out of Holy Communion is the spiritual union of the soul with Christ, as mentioned by St. John, 6:56-57, 58, "He that eats My Flesh, and drinks My Blood, abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eats Me, the same also shall live by Me." This union with Christ unites us in the "Mystical Body of Christ." "For we, being many, are one bread, all that partake of One Bread." 1 Cor. 10:17. The reception of this sacrament instituted by Christ increases in our soul sanctifying grace. The Council of Trent speaking on this point says, "No one conscious of mortal sin, how contrite so ever he may seem to himself, ought to approach the sacred Eucharist without previous Sacramental Confession." It makes us spiritually alive in order to receive it worthily and frees us from daily faults and preserves us from mortal sins.

62. Why do Catholics genuflect?

We genuflect or bend the knee when entering our seat in church or when crossing in front of the Blessed Sacrament as a mark of adoration to Jesus Christ, who is really and actually present in the tabernacle on the altar. Bending the knee is a natural sign of reverence as Luke 22:41, remarks. "And he was withdrawn away from them a stone's cast; and kneeling down he prayed." Acts 9:40, "And they all being put forth, Peter kneeling down prayed...." Phil. 2:10, "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth."

63. What do you mean by Benediction Service?

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is a devotion of public homage to the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It consists of singing of hymns of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament exposed in a vessel called the "Monstrance" or "Ostensorium" coming from the Latin word meaning a thing which shows. In the Ostensorium, we are SHOWING Christ Sacramented to the people. Incense is placed in the thurible and it is waved three times in front of the Blessed Sacrament, as a symbol of the people's prayer, "Let my prayer be directed as incense in Your sight; the lifting up of my hands, as evening sacrifice." Psalm 140:2, (Psalm 141:2 in the Hebrew). Two hymns composed by St. Thomas Aquinas are usually sung, "O Salutaris Hostia" (‘O Saving Victim’) and "Tantum Ergo Sacramentum." (‘Down in Adoration Falling,’ literally ‘Now, to such a great Sacrament {give adoration}’) After singing "Tantum Ergo," the priest covers his shoulders with a humeral veil and then makes the sign of the cross (which constitutes the Benediction) over the adoring people. At the closing, Psalm 116 (Psalm 117 in the Hebrew), or "Holy God, we praise Thy name," is sung.

64. "After mortal sin, is it allowed to make an act of perfect contrition and then receive Holy Communion without confession?" Quoted from "Questions of Youth," by Joseph Kempf.

The erroneous opinion that this may be done in any case seems to be due to a misunderstanding or misapplication of the following truths:

A. Truths.

- Perfect contrition (including the desire of confession) forgives mortal sin at the time of the contrition, though the obligation of confessing the sin remains.
- Holy Communion forgives venial sins, if there be at least imperfect contrition (attrition) for them; therefore, contrition is among the acts recommended as preparation for the reception of Holy Communion.
- There could be some cases in which Holy Communion may be received with perfect contrition only, without confession (see below).

B. Principles.

- If the intending communicant remembers a mortal sin which was omitted without his fault in a previous confession (in which he had sorrow for all grievous sins) that sin was forgiven and he is in the state of grace by confession. Therefore, there is no obligation of confessing this sin before receiving Holy Communion, whether once or many times. There is, however, the obligation of confessing that sin in the next confession. (The question above usually does not refer to this case, but to the next.)
- If the mortal sin was committed since the last confession,
- Even though perfect contrition forgives mortal sin at the time of contrition, one may not receive Holy Communion after mortal sin without first receiving the sacrament of Penance.
- The only exceptions occur when the following two conditions are both present simultaneously:
- No confessor is available, and
- there is urgent need of receiving Holy Communion (Canon Law, canon 856) [quoting the 1917 version of Canon Law].

C. Application.

- A confessor is not available if
- there is no confessor in the place,
- nor can a confessor be reached elsewhere without serious inconvenience, depending on distance and time available.

The fact that the usual confessor is not available cannot be construed as absence of confessor in this connection.

- Necessity of Holy Communion. This will be extremely rare in the case of youth.
- The following do not constitute cases of necessity:
- the desire to receive Holy Communion;
- the fact that one has been accustomed to receive daily;
- the fact that one has promised to receive Communion on that day;
- the fact that a whole class or group is now receiving;
- the desire to "avoid interrupting the nine First Fridays," etc.
- The necessity of receiving Holy Communion would be present if it could not be omitted without serious scandal or defamation of character. About the only case in which this would happen to youth would be the case in which one is already at the altar rail before recalling the mortal sin. This is surely extremely rare. But if it does happen, the person should endeavor to make an act of perfect contrition, and then receive Holy Communion. He is not obliged to leave the altar rail without receiving (Davis, III, 207-211.).

65. Is it not better to receive Holy Communion rarely, with devotion, than frequently, without any devotion?

While it is possible that such a question could be used in an effort to cover up reasons for infrequent Communion such as laziness, etc., this is surely rare. Usually it denotes some doubt or anxiety about the matter, as revealed by the varying forms of the question, e. g., "Would it be better to discontinue receiving daily when one feels that he is not receiving with enough devotion?"

A. Principles.

- Catholic theology distinguishes effects of sacraments:
- ex opere operato, i.e., in virtue of the act performed, independently of the merits of the recipient or minister;
- ex opere operantis, i.e., because of the acts and dispositions of the recipient.
- It is a matter of faith that the sacraments produce their effects ex opere operato in those who do not place an obstacle thereto (Council of Trent, Session VII, canons 5-8).
- Note that
- the amount of grace conferred by a sacrament depends on the disposition of the recipient (Council of Trent, Session VI, canon 7.)
- This disposition of the recipient, however, is not the cause of the grace, but merely a condition of a richer out-pouring of grace (Pohle-Preuss Dogmatic Theology, VIII, pages 73, 122-142, 6th edition, St. Louis Herder, 1931.)

B. Application to Holy Communion.

- The effects of Holy Communion are:
- union of the soul with Christ by love;
- increase of sanctifying grace;
- blotting out venial sin and preservation from mortal sin by allaying concupiscence, and consequently Holy Communion is
- a pledge of our glory and everlasting happiness (Council of Trent, Session XIII, chapter 2; Eugene IV, Decree Pro Armenis, (A. D. 1439); see Pohle-Preuss, IX, 218-234).
- These effects are produced ex opere operato in one receiving, if he places no obstacle. The only obstacle in the case of Holy Communion would be the absence of the state of grace (Council of Trent, Session XIII, chapter 7).

N.B. Even the absence of a right intention in receiving would not prevent an increase of sanctifying grace, though grace would be received far less abundantly than by reception with a proper intention. Lack of proper intention could not be approved, since it would be a venial sin.

- The effects of Holy Communion will be produced in still greater measure if the recipient is better disposed. Therefore it is expedient that
- one be free from deliberate venial sin, and
- one make a preparation and thanksgiving at Holy Communion (demanded in any event by reverence to the Sacrament) (Pius X, Decree on Frequent Communion, Dec. 20, 1905).
- Concerning the Specific Question.
- The question is somewhat misleading. It implies that there is choice only between infrequent Communion with devotion, and frequent Communion without any devotion. This will hardly be the case.
- The term "devotion" is not at all clear. There is great danger that one interpret devotion entirely as feeling or emotion. It may be true that communicating infrequently one experiences more feeling of devotion. But this does not prove that the absence of such feeling is the absence of devotion; for feeling, however useful, is not essential.
- One who deprives himself of frequent Communion in order to receive with greater "devotion" is actually preferring to miss the effects of Holy Communion ex opere operato many times, in order to gain the doubtful advantage of receiving the effects only once, though perhaps in greater measure. This is to be deplored.
- It could be said that one Holy Communion is about the best preparation we can make for another Holy Communion. One is better disposed by the graces of the sacrament than by one's personal efforts, though the latter are also desirable.
- The best effects are obtained by
- receiving often,
- with as much reverence, love, etc., as one can evoke by earnest effort.

- So long as this earnest effort is present, one need not be disturbed by any lack of feeling of devotion.

66. Why don't I get better even after frequent Communion?

- Obviously, if one meant by "frequent" Communion only that he has increased the number slightly, the answer would be that:
- One has not really received frequently, and
- Consequently any failure to improve is no argument against frequent Holy Communion.
- Some of the effects of Holy Communion cannot be perceived or measured. Thus
- The degree of union with Christ;
- Increase of sanctifying grace;
- The blotting out of venial sin.

Therefore we cannot say, "I don't get better" in regard to these.

- The statement "I don't get better," however, usually refers to apparent absence of progress in avoiding sins and practicing virtues. Two considerations apply here:
- Progress can be considered not only absolutely, but also relatively. Although one may not commit fewer venial sins after Holy Communion, yet actually one may be committing fewer in proportion to the number and violence of temptations. In other words: How do we know that we would not be much worse without frequent Communion?
- If there is actually no improvement,
- the fault cannot lie in the sacrament;
- the fault must lie in the recipient.
- Obstacles to improvement on the part of the recipient.

The individual may have been led into one of two errors:

- The stressing of the minimum requirements for Holy Communion (state of grace and right intention) may have created the erroneous impression that other dispositions are of little consequence. But it would be a mistake to consider "not absolutely necessary" the equivalent of "not desirable or recommended."
- The encouragement to frequent reception of Holy Communion may have left the erroneous impression that Holy Communion is an end in itself, that is, that with the reception everything is accomplished. But the sacraments, including the Holy Eucharist, are not ends in themselves; they are "the principal means of sanctification and salvation" (Canon Law, [1917 version] canon 731).
- If there is no improvement, desirable dispositions may be lacking
- Desirable dispositions are:

- freedom from venial sin. Pius X: "It is most expedient that those who communicate frequently or daily should be free from venial sins" (Decree on Frequent Communion, Dec. 20, 1905, article 3).
- proper preparation and thanksgiving. Pius X: "Whereas the sacraments of the New Law, though they may take effect ex opere operato, nevertheless produce a greater effect in proportion as the dispositions of the recipient are better, therefore, care is to be taken that Holy Communion be preceded by serious preparation, and followed by a suitable thanksgiving, according to each one's strength, circumstances, and duties" (Same Decree, article 4).
- Regarding preparation and thanksgiving:
- A purely passive behavior is not sufficient, as is evident from the condemnation by Innocent XI (A. D. 1687) of an opinion of the Quietist M. de Molinos;
- Active procedure is wanted.
- Preparation should consist of acts of ardent desire, humility, love, etc.
- Thanksgiving should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, surrender, petitions for self and others (Tanquerey, pages 147-150).
- If there is no improvement, it may be because one fails to use the graces received.
- Holy Communion does not make one a saint without his own personal effort. Not he becomes holy who receives much grace, but he who uses that grace (that is, actual grace).
- This effort must consist in:
- anticipating and avoiding the unnecessary occasions of sin;
- resisting temptation when it occurs.

It will be extremely useful to concentrate on faults and sins to be avoided, in the preparation and thanksgiving at Holy Communion. But it is not enough simply to resolve that we will do something. We ought to discuss in the presence of Jesus how we may accomplish it. We know the situations in which we fail; we should know when and why we fail. A definite plan to cover the circumstances, made in the presence of Jesus and with His grace, will undoubtedly help to overcome our failings.

The sacrament gives grace, and the oftener we receive and the better our dispositions, the more grace we receive. If we actually use that grace "it is impossible but that daily communicants should gradually emancipate themselves even from venial sins, and from all affection thereto" (Pius X, Decree on Frequent Communion, article 3).

67. Can Holy Communion really be received for others?

Many questions in varying form have as common element the point stated here. It is to the credit of youth that, in spite of frequent use of the expression "offering Holy Communion for others," it finds difficulty understanding how this can be. For to "offer up Holy Communion for another person" is, strictly speaking, impossible.

- The effects of Holy Communion (see Questions 61 and 65B) can be received only by the one actually receiving Holy Communion, and cannot be transferred to others.

St. Thomas, speaking of Penance, says: "A person cannot receive a sacrament for somebody else, because in a sacrament grace is given to the one who receives it and not to another" (Summa Theologica, Supplement question 13, article 2, ad 2).

Of Holy Communion, he says specifically: "No help can accrue to a person from the fact that another, or even several others, receive the body of Our Lord" (III, question 79, article 7, ad 3). Again, commenting on Chapter 6 of St. John's Gospel, he says: "It follows, therefore, that the laity who receive Holy Communion for the souls in Purgatory err" (Sup. Joan., chapter 6, lectio 6, number 7).

(Of course, the fruits of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass can be applied to others.) .

- In receiving Holy Communion, the faithful perform other good works: prayer, etc.

Can these be applied to others? Distinguish: (1) Merit; (2) Satisfaction; (3) Impetration (or Asking).

- The merit of good works cannot be applied to others.
- The satisfactory value of good works can be offered for others. Receiving Holy Communion may involve a certain amount of self-denial or penance, such as fasting, arising early, walking a great distance, praying in spite of distractions, and the like. The value of these as satisfaction may be applied to others, e. g., to the Poor Souls.
- The impetratory value of prayers can benefit others, that is, one can and should pray for others at Holy Communion. "It is generally held that the prayers of petition made in the presence of the Eucharistic Lord are more readily heard by God" (Pohle-Preuss Dogmatic Theology, IX, page 231, 6th edition, St. Louis Herder, 1931.)

(On the whole question see Orate Fratres, IX [1935], 512-515.)

Note: No contrary argument can be drawn from the fact that "Spiritual Bouquets" list "Holy Communions" among the things one promises to do for another. For theological truth cannot be deduced from any custom, no matter how widespread. On the contrary, custom should follow theological truth and express it correctly. Therefore, instead of "Holy Communions" it would be better to print "Special Prayers at Holy Communion" or something similar.

(For details of the distinction of (1) Merits; (2) Satisfactions; (3) Impetrations (or Asking), see outline: Value of Prayers and Good Works, etc. in Tanquerey.)
