

Apology XXIV

Of the Use of the Sacrament, and of Sacrifice.

68] Some clever men imagine that the Lord's Supper was instituted for two reasons. First, that it might be a mark and testimony of profession, just as a particular shape of hood is the sign of a particular profession. Then they think that such a mark was especially pleasing to Christ, namely, a feast to signify mutual union and friendship among Christians, because banquets are signs of covenant and friendship. But this is a secular view; neither does it show the chief use of the things delivered by God; it speaks only of the exercise of love, which men, however profane and worldly, understand; it does not speak of faith, the nature of which few understand.

Two (False) Uses

- 1. Profession of the Person**
- 2. A Mark for Others**

69] The Sacraments are **signs of God's will toward us**, and not merely **signs of men among each other**; and they are right in defining that Sacraments in the New Testament are **signs of grace**. And because in a sacrament there are two things, a sign and the Word, the Word, in the New Testament, is the promise of grace added. The promise of the New Testament is the promise of the remission of sins, as the text, Luke 22, 19, says: *This is My body, which is given for you.*

Principle Use

- 1. Sign of God's Will toward us (He is gracious and desires to give us forgiveness of sins)
--to arouse the heart to believe
--for terrified consciences**

This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. **70]** Therefore the Word offers

the remission of sins. And a ceremony is, as it were, a picture or seal, as Paul, Rom. 4, 11, calls it, of the Word, making known the promise. Therefore, just as the promise is useless unless it is received by faith, so a ceremony is useless unless such faith is added as is truly confident that the remission of sins is here offered. **And this faith encourages contrite minds. And just as the Word has been given in order to excite this faith, so the Sacrament has been instituted in order that the outward appearance meeting the eyes might move the heart to believe [and strengthen faith]. For through these, namely, through Word and Sacrament, the Holy Ghost works.**

71] And such **use of the Sacrament, in which faith quickens terrified hearts**, is a service of the New Testament, because the New Testament requires spiritual dispositions, mortification and quickening. [For according to the New Testament the highest service of God is rendered inwardly in the heart.] And for this use Christ instituted it, since **He commanded them thus to do in remembrance of Him.** **72]** For to remember Christ is not the idle celebration of a show [not something that is accomplished only by some gestures and actions], or one instituted for the sake of example, as the memory of Hercules or Ulysses is celebrated in tragedies, but **it is to remember the benefits of Christ and receive them by faith, so as to be quickened by them.** Psalm 111, 4. 5 accordingly says: *He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. He hath given meat unto them that fear Him.* For it signifies that the will and mercy of God should be discerned in the **73]** ceremony. But that faith which apprehends mercy quickens. And this is **the principal use of the Sacrament**, in which it is apparent who are fit for the Sacrament, namely, terrified consciences, and how they ought to use it.

74] The sacrifice [thankoffering or thanksgiving] also is added. For there are **several ends for one object**. After conscience encouraged by faith has perceived from what terrors it is freed, then indeed it fervently gives thanks for the benefit and passion of Christ, and uses the ceremony itself to the praise of God, in order by this obedience to show its gratitude; and testifies that it holds in high esteem the gifts of God. Thus the ceremony becomes a sacrifice of praise.

75] And the Fathers, indeed, speak of a **two-fold effect, of the comfort of consciences, and of thanksgiving, or praise**.

The former of these effects pertains to the nature [the right use] of the Sacrament; the latter pertains to the sacrifice. Of consolation Ambrose says: *Go to Him and be absolved, because He is the remission of sins. Do you ask who He is? Hear Him when He says, John 6, 35: I am the Bread of life; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on He shall never thirst.* This passage testifies that in the Sacrament the remission of sins is offered; it also testifies that this ought to be received by faith. Infinite testimonies to this effect are found in the Fathers, all of which the adversaries pervert to the *opus operatum*, and to a work to be applied on behalf of others; although the Fathers clearly require faith, and speak of the consolation belonging to everyone, and not of the application.

76] Besides these, expressions are also found concerning thanksgiving, such as that most beautifully said by Cyprian concerning those communing in a godly way. *Piety*, says he, *in thanking the Bestower of such abundant blessing, makes a distinction between what has been given and what has been forgiven, i.e., piety regards both what has been given and what has been forgiven, i.e., it compares the greatness of God's blessings and the greatness of our evils, sin and death, with each other, and gives thanks, etc.* And hence **the term eucharist** arose in the Church.

77] Nor indeed is the ceremony itself, the giving of thanks *ex opere operato*, to be applied on behalf of others, in order to merit for them the remission of sins, etc., in order to liberate the souls of the dead. These things conflict with the righteousness of faith; as though, without faith, a ceremony can profit either the one performing it or others.

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25] Now the rest are **eucharistic sacrifices**, which are called sacrifices of praise, Lev. 3, 1f.; 7, 11f.; Ps. 56, 12f., namely, the preaching of the Gospel, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, the afflictions of saints, yea, all good works of saints. These sacrifices are not satisfactions for those making them, or applicable on behalf of others, so as to merit for these, *ex opere operato*, the remission of sins or reconciliation. For they are made by those who have been reconciled.

26] And such are **the sacrifices of the New Testament**, as Peter teaches, **1 Pet. 2, 5: An holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices**. **Spiritual sacrifices**, however, are contrasted not only with those of cattle, but even with human works offered *ex opere operato*, because **spiritual refers to the movements of the Holy Ghost in us**. Paul teaches the same thing Rom. 12, 1: *Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable, which is your reasonable service*. **Reasonable service signifies, however, a service in which God is known, and apprehended by the mind, as happens in the movements of fear and trust towards God**. Therefore it is opposed not only to the Levitical service, in which cattle are slain, but also to a service in which a work is imagined to be offered *ex opere operato*, The Epistle to the Hebrews 13, 15, teaches

{Now that the conscience is comforted in this forgiveness...}

Secondary Use

2. Sacrifice of Thanksgiving

--the reception of the sacrament in faith gives thanks for it.

--praises God for His gift

--holds the sacrament in high esteem

the same thing: *By Him, therefore, let us offer* the sacrifice of praise to God continually; and he adds the interpretation, that is, **the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. He bids us offer praises, i.e., prayer, thanksgiving, confession, and the like.** These avail not *ex opere operato*, but on account of faith. This is taught by the clause: *By Him let us offer, i.e., by faith in Christ.*

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30] But Scripture is full of such testimonies as teach that sacrifices *ex opere operato* do not reconcile God. Accordingly the New Testament, since **Levitical services have been abrogated,** teaches that **new and pure sacrifices will be made,** namely, faith, prayer, thanksgiving, confession, and the preaching of the Gospel, afflictions on account of the Gospel, and the like.

31] And of these sacrifices Malachi 1, 11 speaks: *From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name and a pure offering.* The adversaries perversely apply this passage to the Mass, and quote the authority of the Fathers. A reply, however, is easy, for even if it spoke most particularly of the Mass, it would not follow that the Mass justifies *ex opere operato*, or that, when applied to others, it merits the remission of sins, etc. The prophet says nothing of those things which the monks and sophists impudently fabricate.

32] Besides, the very words of the prophet express his meaning. For they first say this, namely, that *the name of the Lord will be great. This is accomplished by the preaching of the Gospel. For through this the name of Christ is made known, and the mercy of the Father, promised in Christ, is recognized. The preaching of the Gospel produces faith in those who receive the Gospel. They call upon God, they give thanks to God, they bear afflictions for their confession, they produce good works for the glory of Christ. Thus the name of the Lord becomes great among the Gentiles.*

Therefore *incense* and a *pure offering* signify not a ceremony *ex opere operato* [not the ceremony of the Mass alone], but all those sacrifices through which the name of the Lord becomes great, namely, faith, invocation, the preaching **33]** of the Gospel, confession, etc. And if anyone would have this term embrace the ceremony [of the Mass], we readily concede it, provided he neither understands the ceremony alone, nor teaches that the ceremony profits *ex opere operato*. For just as among the sacrifices of praise, *i.e.,* among the praises of God, we include the preaching of the Word, **so the reception itself of the Lord's Supper can be praise or thanksgiving;** but it does not justify *ex opere operato*; neither is it to be applied to others so as to merit for them the remission of sins. But after a while we shall explain how even a ceremony is a sacrifice. Yet, as Malachi speaks of all the services of the New Testament, and not only of the Lord's Supper; likewise, as he does not favor the pharisaic opinion of the *opus operatum*, he is not against us, but rather aids us. For he requires services of the heart, through which the name of the Lord becomes truly great.

34] Another passage also is cited from Malachi 3, 3: *And He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of*

<p>Principle Use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Lord's Supper (Ceremony only) ≠ Sacrifice 2. The Lord's Supper (Ceremony only) = Sacrament <p>Secondary Use</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The Lord's Supper (the entire service) = Sacrifice (Including preaching, prayers, praise, etc.) 4. The Reception of the Lord's Supper = Sacrifice (Praise or Thanksgiving by receiving God's offered gifts of forgiveness)

righteousness. This passage clearly requires the sacrifices of the righteous, and hence does not favor the opinion concerning the *opus operatum*. **But the sacrifices of the sons of Levi, i.e., of those teaching in the New Testament, are the preaching of the Gospel, and the good fruits of preaching**, as Paul says, Rom. 15, 16: Ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, *i.e.*, that, the Gentiles might be offerings acceptable to God by faith, etc. For in the Law the slaying of victims signified both the death of Christ and the preaching of the Gospel, by which this oldness of flesh should be mortified, and the new and eternal life be begun in us.

But the adversaries everywhere perversely apply the name *sacrifice* to the ceremony alone. **They omit the preaching of the Gospel, faith, prayer, and similar things**, although the ceremony has been established on account of these, and the New Testament ought to have sacrifices of the heart, and not ceremonials for sin that are to be performed after the manner of the Levitical priesthood.

35] They cite also the *daily sacrifice* (cf. Ex. 29, 38f.; Dan. 8, 11f.; 12, 11), that, just as in the Law there was a daily sacrifice so the Mass ought to be a daily sacrifice of the New Testament. The adversaries have managed well if we permit ourselves to be overcome by allegories. It is evident, however, that allegories do not produce firm proofs [that in matters so highly important before God we must have a sure and clear word of God, and not introduce by force obscure and foreign passages; such uncertain explanations do not stand the test of God's judgment]. **Although we indeed readily suffer the Mass to be understood as a daily sacrifice, provided that the entire Mass be understood, i.e., the ceremony with the preaching of the Gospel, faith, invocation, and thanksgiving. For these joined together are a daily sacrifice of the New Testament, because the ceremony [of the Mass, or the Lord's Supper] was instituted on account of these things; neither is it to be separated from these. Paul says accordingly, 1 Cor. 11, 26: As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.** But it in no way follows from this Levitical type that a ceremony justifying *ex opere operato* is necessary, or ought to be applied on behalf of others, that it may merit for them the remission of sins.

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79] Λειτουργία, they say, signifies a sacrifice, and the Greeks call the Mass, liturgy. Why do they here omit the old appellation *synaxis*, which shows that the Mass was formerly the communion of many? **But let us speak of the word liturgy. This word does not properly signify a sacrifice, but rather the public ministry**, and agrees aptly with our belief, namely, that one minister who consecrates tenders the body and blood of the Lord to the rest of the people, just as one minister who preaches tenders the Gospel to the people, as Paul says, 1 Cor. 4, 1: *Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, i.e., of the Gospel and the Sacraments.* And 2 Cor. 5, 20: *We are ambassadors for Christ, as* **81]** *though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God.* Thus the term λειτουργία agrees aptly with the ministry. For it is an old word, ordinarily employed in public civil administrations, and signified to the Greeks public burdens, as tribute, the expense of equipping a fleet, or similar things, as the oration of Demosthenes, *For Leptines*, testifies, all of which is occupied with the discussion of public duties and immunities: *i.e.*: *He will say that some unworthy men, having found an immunity, have withdrawn from public burdens.*