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DIVINE HELPS FOR MAN

by

Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M.,
Vice-President of St. John's College,
Brooklyn, New York

Eleven addresses delivered in the Catholic Hour,
sponsored by the National Council of Catholic
Men with the co-operation of the National
Broadcasting Company and its Asso-
ciated Stations.

- I. The Seven Sacraments.
- II. Soldiers of Christ.
- III. Holy Orders.
- IV. Bread for the Soul.
- V. The Clean Oblation.
- VI. Sons of God.
- VII. The Tribunal of Mercy (Part I)
- VIII. The Tribunal of Mercy (Part II)
- IX. A Sanctified Society (Part I)
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- XI. The End of the Combat.



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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

There is a wealth of theology, liturgy and history in the Sacraments of the New Law. In the time allotted for the delivery of these addresses, there could be only a summary of these things, but it has been my purpose to make each address an adequate, and even complete, if not exhaustive, presentation of each Sacrament. It is my hope that my listeners were inspired to seek further knowledge of these Divine Helps for Man.

It is the practical spiritual value of these treasures that is of paramount importance. The Seven Sacraments might be called the Bank of God's Grace, for in them are countless treasures of unique, divine value, and we may draw on them as freely as we will. It is God's Love that sets up that Treasury and it is His Love that urges us to seek these Gifts—to drink of these fountains of living water. God intends our salvation and sanctification chiefly through these means—they are the channels of that grace He merited by His blood.

I have evidence that some hearts were touched by the glorious story of Christ's Love in His Sacraments; that some hearts were inspired where the fires of Divine Love were already burning; and that a spark was lighted in some that were cold. May I dare to say it: I wish that millions of men would appreciate the Sacraments more fully, and that all men would use them to reach that Heaven which is most surely and infallibly attained by a good use of God's grace. This is a prayer as these radio addresses, given over the Catholic Hour, become the printed word.

DEDICATION

To

Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal,
In Memory of Her Centenary:
The Mother of Divine Grace,
Who is a Munificent Creditor of mine—
Who recalls another Mother of mine.

DIVINE HELPS FOR MAN—THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in
the Catholic Hour, May 17, 1931)

Persons who have visited the great cathedrals of Europe will remember what are called the "Treasures of the Church," the collection of sacred vessels and vestments of intrinsic value or perhaps of historic value. But let me say at once that the "Treasures of the Church"—the real treasures, the Spiritual Treasury that neither gold nor silver can buy—are the Sacraments of the New Law which are to form the subject of the series of addresses begun today. I have called them *Divine Helps for Man* for they are truly helps for man in working out his destiny, his salvation; and they are truly divine because they come from God and God alone. Each Sacrament is a precious treasure because it is wet with the blood of Christ.

May I state at the very outset of this course that there is no intention or desire to enter a field of controversy? My purpose is to explain what we as Catholics believe concerning the Sacramental System. It will be for the benefit of our Catholic people to recall these solemn truths; and with the spirit of good will and Christian love, we should be happy to share these precious things with all sincere religious minded people, even though they are not convinced of the truths which we as Catholics believe.

The scope of this address is to prepare the way for the fuller development of each individual Sacrament, and therefore to explain the spiritual ideas and truths that underlie all the Sacraments. In the

treatment of these topics, no word will be more frequently used, nor could any idea be more important, than the word grace, and I beg to tell its meaning briefly.

Grace is a supernatural gift of God given to man to enable him to attain his salvation. It is a gift, something perfectly gratuitous, altogether beyond our power to deserve or merit. It is a supernatural gift—above nature; altogether beyond our capacity to attain by any combination of natural powers or energies; altogether beyond any claims of our nature, or natural humanity. Its point of contact with the individual is the intellect and the will, the superior powers which give us our dignity as human beings. It touches the soul, not in its essence, but in its powers. It illumines, sharpens the intellect; it strengthens, stimulates the will, to enable us to avoid evil and to do good. Of course you will realize that this covers the whole scope of life in reference to God and the attaining of our eternal destiny—avoiding evil and doing good.

The purpose of grace is, therefore, to help us to attain our salvation. Without God's grace it is unthinkable as it is impossible for man to reach the supernatural destiny to which he is called. Now this grace, so wonderful, so rich in value, so necessary, is given to man by Jesus Christ, through the Sacraments. Certainly our Lord can give grace in other ways and often does so, but it is the teaching of the Church, and tradition bears it out, that men are to be saved ordinarily in the design of Christ through the reception of the Sacraments, and are actually saved by the graces given through these divine instruments of Christ's power and love.

A sacrament is an outward sign of inward grace,

instituted by Christ. *Sacramentum* means a sacred thing, a hidden thing and connotes the idea of religious worship. There must be an outward, a sensible sign, that is, something appealing to the senses. This sign signifies an inward grace; it stands for it; it is the pledge of it, as well as the symbol of it. Thirdly, it *produces* grace in the soul through the institution by Christ. God alone can give grace. Certainly God alone can attach a spiritual value to physical things and signs.

The Sacraments are the product of the New Dispensation that came with Christ. In the Old Law, strictly speaking, there were no Sacraments. There were religious rites set up by God and accepted by Him, which foreshadowed the Sacraments, inasmuch as they were evidences and tests of religious worship and practice, and inspired sentiments and emotions which could put the soul in a receptive disposition to receive God's grace. And this is showing how the whole idea beneath the Sacraments accords with our human nature in its fullness; and how God, as it were, adapts Himself to our nature. We are body and soul, we are physical and spiritual, we have an immaterial soul and material senses and members. God surely is mindful of this when He uses physical signs and symbols, physical things as means of sanctification, as He does in the Sacraments. And this is only one of the countless manifestations of the consideration and love for men that Our Divine Saviour lavishly gives us in the institution of the Sacraments.

Christ alone could establish the Sacraments, that is, give to physical things and human actions the power to produce grace. So also Christ established

the number of the Sacraments; namely seven—Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony. The Church from the very beginning has taught this and in the Catholic Church—likewise in the Greek Church—there has never been any variance with respect to the number seven. As there is a certain fitness that our Divine Saviour should have established the Sacraments as His chosen means of giving grace to men, so we can readily see the fitness that there should be seven Sacraments—no more, no less. It is really remarkable how the spiritual life of man parallels his physical and social life. He is born; he matures by growth; he needs food for strength and continued life and health; he falls a victim to the ills that flesh is heir to; he dies. In the spiritual order too he is born—that is Baptism; his spiritual life is fostered and developed—that is Confirmation; the soul must have sustenance suited to its nature—that is Holy Eucharist; his soul, stricken by his own sin needs power of recovery—that is Penance; death comes to the body, the separation of the body from the soul and the final sentence: a tragic situation that surely needs help from God—there is Extreme Unction. Again, man is a social being, placed in a society established by God. That society has two characters, the spiritual and the civic; each needs support and development: the Sacrament of Holy Orders supplies the government of the spiritual order of society, Holy Matrimony lays the foundation of the home which is the basis of the nation, of civil society. It can thus be seen how full and complete are the graces supplied for man's need by the Sacraments. Everything is provided for that man could wish or hope for. There is no spiritual condition that could pos-

sibly arise that is not met by the generous love of Christ in the Sacraments that He instituted.

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The purpose of the Sacraments, in the mind of Christ, is to sanctify and save men. The Sacraments signify grace, symbolize it, stand for it; they also *produce* it. They are therefore not only signs of grace but causes of grace. All the Sacraments are the vehicles of sanctifying grace which is a permanent, static thing, the condition that renders man pleasing to God. Baptism and Penance confer this grace; that is, give it to the soul that lacks it. By original sin man is out of harmony with God. Baptism confers the grace which brings the soul into harmony with God. By sin the soul becomes defiled: Penance restores grace and the friendship of God. All other Sacraments, presupposing the existence of sanctifying grace in the soul, increase this grace, give it in fuller measure. Thus the reception of any Sacrament means the influx of grace and renders the soul more holy, and therefore dearer to God.

The Sacraments give grace of their own power, their own intrinsic character. The technical term, which is very expressive, is that they give grace *ex opere operato*, by the fact of the work done, *of themselves*, unless, of course, the person should put an obstacle in the way. But they produce their own effects independently of the worthiness of the minister. Thus, even if the one who confers the Sacraments be unworthy or sinful it does not affect the flow of grace into the soul. That may only be done by the person himself placing an obstacle; e. g., receiving Confirmation or Matrimony in a state of sin. But by itself the effect of the Sacrament is infallible. It is as if our Saviour said: "If you use this sign, this water, this oil, in such a way and with such a form

as determines the words to the act, I promise to give My grace: your act is the sign which I shall use as the instrument for imparting grace."

In addition to the conferring or increasing of sanctifying grace, the Sacraments give another help which is called *sacramental grace*. This is defined as a special help which God gives to attain the end for which He instituted each Sacrament. Thus the sacramental graces are different in the different Sacraments, for each Sacrament has its own meaning and purpose. By this grace the recipient is pledged certain helps that blossom, as it were, from each Sacrament. It is the right to the specific helps, the actual graces which one needs to carry out the purpose for which the Sacrament was instituted. At a glance one can see the value of these sacramental graces, say, in Baptism or in Penance or in Matrimony. One not only becomes conscious of the increased sanctifying grace, but feels a strength and stimulation from the consciousness of the pledged helps to meet the conditions and necessities of the spiritual life.

What is the secret of these tremendous benefits to man? What is the power that gives such efficacy to these sacred rites? How explain the value of these outward signs that Christ endowed with such miraculous effects? Just this—the Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ. "You are bought with a great price," says St. Paul. Our Saviour's passion and death, the infinite merits of His life and acts, are the background of the Sacraments. Once for all He lived on earth and died, and men were sanctified and made holy by the application of His merits to their souls. The ordinary way in which this is done is by the Sacraments that He left in His Church as His price-

less heritage. We must take the salvation He offers and take it through the Sacraments. We must not allow His passion and death and the spilling of His blood to become inoperative, in so far as they concern us. We must apply them to ourselves—appropriate them—and this we do through His Sacraments.

In the administration of the Sacraments there is always a ceremonial that enshrines them. There is never just the naked rite of the use of the matter and the form, though this is the only essential thing. Each Sacrament has a ritual that is comprehensive, majestic and of great antiquity. It would be wrong to dispense with these ceremonies, unless in case of necessity. The prayers are beautiful, uplifting, and breathe real religious fervor and spiritual life. There are exorcisms, anointings, significant acts, and in their use lights and vestments are employed with telling effect. It is not too much to say that the administration of the Sacraments is, if simple, dignified, likewise dramatic and touching. Everything tends to appeal to the highest sensibilities, to evoke sentiments that are of deepest faith and religion, and arouse dispositions that in turn put the person receiving the Sacrament in a position to gain a fuller measure of profit and benefit. It surely means something to be warm and intense in these holy things rather than cold, formal and sluggish.

To know the will of Our Divine Saviour is surely sufficient to urge any religious man or woman to use the Sacraments that are the dearest, most treasured gifts He has left us. The Sacraments are the chief means—far and away the chief means—of sanctification, of spiritual development, of growth of the soul. And this is the first duty of everyone—you

could almost say man's only duty—sanctification. "This is the will of God, your sanctification," says St. Paul. "Thy Will be done on earth (in Me) as it is in Heaven," says Jesus Christ. Nothing that we could do ourselves, intensified to the highest degree, could have the merit of a Sacrament; because in a Sacrament what we do is lifted up out of the natural into the supernatural order, and has a value from the blood of Christ applied through the sacramental idea of our Saviour. Therefore the Sacraments are the chief means to help us lead a good, faithful life; the most powerful helps to practice virtue—meekness, humility, purity; the most inspiring ambitions to do good in this world in our relations with our fellow men. Every man knows the difficulty in keeping from sin, the evil tendencies, and propensities that lie deep in his breast. The Sacraments are the chief means to enable man to keep from sin. The Sacraments give man hope and encouragement in the struggle against discouragement, against human weakness, despair, and all because he is conscious that with a Sacrament he is not alone, that he has the help, infallibly, of Jesus Christ. Thus the Sacraments enable man to get the most out of life (as we often express it) and to have that peace which the world cannot give and the world cannot take away, the peace of Christ, the fruit of His Passion and His blood; that happiness which is the natural yearning of our hearts—the happiness that is consistent even with trial, suffering, failure and sorrow. The Sacraments are the chief means in the design of God of attaining salvation, of meriting heaven. We must fight for heaven. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling" is the Scriptural command.

Need I mention the value of the Sacraments in

the regeneration of society? They are the leaven of society, for society can only be what individuals *are* and what they *make* it, and the Sacraments make and mould the individuals.

But the sweetest word, the highest appeal is love. We can interpret the Sacraments with their tremendous, supernatural effects only in terms of love—Divine Love—the love of Jesus Christ for the children of men, whom He makes His brothers and sisters by and through the Sacraments. This point must not be lost, and I intend to emphasize it in every address on the individual Sacraments. Here are sympathy, consideration, tolerance, thoughtfulness, generosity: and these and more make up love, only realized in its fullness in Jesus Christ.

SOLDIERS OF CHRIST

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, May 24, 1931)

All over the Christian world today, the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, is signally recalled, invoked, honored and adored. The Feast is called Pentecost Sunday, and commemorates the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles in the Cenacle at Jerusalem. This extraordinary event occurred fifty days after Easter and ten days after the Ascension of Our Lord into Heaven. Thus is emphasized the bond uniting the Resurrection of Our Lord, which was the final, inescapable proof of His Divinity; the Ascension of Our Lord, which He had foretold, and which was visible from the summit of Mt. Olivet; and the Descent of the Holy Ghost, whom Christ said He would send when He returned to His kingdom.

Obedient to the command of Christ, the Apostles and Disciples, with Mary the Mother of Jesus,—some 120 in number,—repaired to the Cenacle, the holy place where Jesus Christ ate the Last Supper and instituted the Holy Eucharist, and said the first Mass. There they waited in prayer for the coming of the Holy Ghost. You will read the full account of this in the second Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. About nine o'clock in the morning "there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming," and the Holy Ghost came down visibly upon the assembled group in the form of fiery tongues. "And there appeared to them," says St. Luke, "parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon everyone of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, accord-

ing as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak." Light and fire from heaven—symbols of the spiritual illumination of the mind, the full revelation of the New Dispensation created by Christ—a warmth, and strength and courage and zeal in the love and service of God in accordance with His will!

The visit of the Holy Ghost inaugurated the new kingdom of Christ: the kingdom that was to know no limits of nations, nor limits of time even to the consummation of ages. It announced the new Law of Grace, the new law of the sanctification of man as a result of the Passion and death of Christ. It regenerated, re-created spiritually, the Apostles whom Christ made His successors under the primacy of St. Peter. It sent them forth at once fearless, courageous, full of zeal and enthusiasm in their work of salvation throughout the known world. It set up the Church of Christ as an organization with definite purpose and definite means to accomplish that purpose; hence this Pentecost Sunday is the birthday of the Church of Jesus Christ. Light and fire—splendid symbols of the work of the Church—the consuming spiritual fire that sparkles and burns throughout the ages, and the tongues that teach men truth and the way to reach that heaven whence the mighty wind came!

But this is more than a commemoration of an event, it is a renewal; for the visit of the Holy Ghost to this earth was to reach into the souls of men, and to accomplish their sanctification. The visit of the Holy Ghost in the form of tongues of fire is historical; but the work of the Holy Ghost in the souls of men has been going on ever since, is going on today with fiery force, and will go on to the end of time. The function of the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of

the Blessed Trinity, is to sanctify. He is the Sanctifier, as the Father is the Creator and the Son the Redeemer. But it is all the one God, and where each one Person is there are the other Persons; for does not the Apostle describe the operation: "We will come to him and make *our* abode with him;" that is, "If you keep My word," says Jesus Christ.

It is with design that I have chosen the visit of the Holy Ghost today in the treatment of the Seven Sacraments. I am to speak on Confirmation, for this Sacrament deals with the Holy Ghost. It is the visit of the Holy Ghost to the soul in abundant measure, and whilst the word is not used in the Sacred Scriptures, there is frequent account of the conferring of the Holy Ghost upon persons; and the producing of the effects that the Holy Ghost means to accomplish in the souls of men. Thus, Philip went down to Samaria, we read in the Acts, and "when the Apostles at Jerusalem had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who. . . prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. . . Then they laid their hands upon them. . . and they received the Holy Ghost." So in Antioch, where the Disciples were first called Christians, and so on through the years and the centuries has the Holy Ghost fulfilled His mission of sanctification through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation is a Sacrament through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ. In Baptism we are initiated into the kingdom of God, we are inducted into the supernatural order of grace. In Confirmation, however, we receive the Holy Ghost in fuller measure, in lavish abundance: His visit is

entirely more significant and effective. Baptism means spiritual life; Confirmation full life, matured life, speaking spiritually. It means a spiritual growth, strength, vigor, health—life.

Confirmation is a Sacrament; if so, it must meet the three essential requirements for a Sacrament. It is an outward sign—the prayer and anointing with oil by the minister conferring it; grace is given to make us strong and vigorous in our spiritual life; and there is the institution by Christ, which may have been at the Last Supper or, as some theologians think, after His Resurrection when He taught the Apostles the essentials of His new kingdom. But always from the very beginning has the Church numbered Confirmation among the Seven Sacraments, and conferred it upon her children. The bishop is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament and he is clothed with the full symbols of his power and authority in conferring it. He wears the mitre on his head, the cross is on his breast, the ring is on his finger and he holds in his hand the crosier or staff, the symbol of his authority. The matter used for the anointing is chrism. In Baptism it is water, now it is oil, almost as common as water. Water cleanses, oil strengthens. Back in Greece and Rome, and since then, oil was spread over the bodies of the athletes; swimmers today, in attempting feats, as the swimming of the English Channel, use oil for their bodies. The oil penetrates, it gives a lithe character to the body in its members and joints. It strengthens and gives endurance. Transfer this to the spiritual order and you will see what Confirmation is meant to do for the soul. The chrism used is a mixture of olive oil and balsam. Balsam is an aromatic plant, it has a fragrance. One who uses well the graces of Con-

firmation will indeed be the "good odor of Jesus Christ." The Sacrament helps him to be such. This chrism is solemnly blessed by the bishop in the cathedral church on Holy Thursday with a ceremonial that is unique and elaborate.

In the actual conferring of the Sacrament the bishop raises his hand over those to be Confirmed, solemnly invokes the Holy Ghost (in words the Church formulates for him) to come down upon those to be Confirmed. Then with blessing he places the chrism individually on the forehead in the form of a cross, saying "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then he gives a slight blow on the cheek and concludes with a prayer, *Pax tecum*, "Peace be with thee"—the peace of Christ, of course. The anointing on the forehead, the dignified part of the human body, means that the Christian receiving Confirmation should openly and resolutely defend and practice his Faith, should under no condition be ashamed of it, never deny it even under penalty of death. And the little blow on the cheek reminds him that he should be ready to bear hardships, even to suffer persecution, if necessary, for his Faith and for the sake of Christ. The whole ceremony signifies that the Holy Ghost comes down upon the soul with manifold and treasured graces. Now the child of God, by Baptism, is a soldier of Jesus Christ, he is in the royal army whose standard bearer in his Big Brother, Jesus Christ, the God-man, and this is stamped into his soul by the *character*; for this is one of the Sacraments impressing the indelible mark that will be for his glory in eternity, if he remains the true, loyal soldier of Christ, or his

Truly
was marked
Baptism
vs. sign of cross
Sold

shame should he be guilty of spiritual disloyalty or treason.

As Confirmation is a Sacrament of the living, it presupposes grace in the soul of the recipient. It would be a sacrilege to receive it in mortal sin. Its purpose, therefore, is to *increase* grace; to give grace in fuller measure and in abundant measure, to develop into splendid maturity the spiritual life endowed in Baptism. To express it in terms of the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier, the effect of this Sacrament is to give us the Holy Ghost with His Gifts, to strengthen us as the Holy Ghost gave Himself to the Apostles and Disciples on the first Christian Pentecost.

You will remember from the former address that each Sacrament gives its own peculiar graces or help in accordance with the nature and purpose of its institution. In Confirmation this sacramental grace is that which is conferred by reason of the Sacrament, that gift which is a *right* to all those actual graces which are necessary to serve Jesus Christ with loyalty and fidelity, the spiritual strength and courage to confess Christ in word and deed—to be a real Christian. It is the love of Christ on which we can lean with perfect repose, for “It is *I*,” He says, as He said on the stormy Lake of Genesareth. It is that note by which frail, helpless men can cry out with force and power, “By the grace of God I am what I am.” And bolder still, “I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me.”

I believe this truth will be more evident if I repeat that in Confirmation the Holy Ghost comes to us Himself, and with His Gifts. These Gifts are seven, and I shall give them by name and add a word of explanation: **The *F*ear of the Lord** is given us to

fill us with a dread of sin. *Piety* helps us to love God as a Father and to obey Him because we love Him. No fear here, but love. *Knowledge* is the Gift to enable us to discover the will of God in all things. The supreme law: God's will, the basis of all law, "Thy will be done." *Fortitude* strengthens us to *do* the will of God in all things: something very different from knowing it: the difference between the sinner and the saint, the bad man and the good man. *Counsel* is the Gift that warns us of the deceits of the devil and of the dangers to salvation. How necessary is that warning in a world of cross currents, of different standards, of false, presumptuous prophets and teachers! By the Gift of *Understanding* we are enabled to know more clearly the mysteries of Faith—not human faith but divine Faith, God's Faith. The Gift of *Wisdom* is the culmination: it gives us a relish for the things of God and directs our life and actions to His honor and glory. This is the highest ambition. This is the crown on the head of the saint.

While it is now the custom to give the Sacrament of Confirmation to a matured boy or girl, in the early days it was given even to infants after Baptism. It is not necessary for salvation absolutely, as is the case with Baptism, but there is a severe obligation for all to receive it and it would be a sin to neglect it—this because of the conditions under which we live, when faith and morals are so much in danger; for we can not with impunity cast aside the graces Jesus Christ has supplied to meet these conditions. Thus, if Confirmation were for any reason not received in boyhood or girlhood, one should see to it that it is received at the first opportunity. Always when the Sacrament is conferred on the hun-

dreds of children in our parish churches there are also adults to receive it; not alone converts to our Holy Faith but others who for one reason or another did not receive the Sacrament at the ordinary time.

The God who is the Author of this Sacrament alone can tell the glorious record of the Sacrament of Confirmation. You have only to think of the countless army of martyrs of every age and clime, of both sexes, of all conditions of life, who have given their blood for the Cause of Christ. Think also of the hundreds and thousands and millions of all grades and conditions who did not die for Christ but have lived for Him; who did not give their blood but who gave their sweat, their toil, their service, their love for the kingdom of God. Verily, Jesus Christ will confess them in heaven—these brave, warmhearted confessors—before His Father who is in heaven, because they confessed Him in a world where confession called for courage, sacrifice and loyalty. And how was all this accomplished—by their own efforts, their own gifts? No; by the grace of God that was in them, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, by His Gifts, communicated at least in part by the Sacrament of Confirmation. Oh, it is glorious to speak these things! It is a privilege to speak them in God's name. It is romance to tell these wonderful things of God to human hearts that know the meaning of struggle, temptation and work in the battle of life. And it is thrilling to apply these truths to life as we live it and see it. We know the conditions of the world today. We know the spirit of irreligion that is abroad, the materialism and naturalism, the godlessness. We know the violent attacks on morality, fundamental morality; the setting aside of the commandments so as to reduce us to the level of beasts

—we who have kinship with angels. How shall we keep true and loyal to Christ in the midst of this poisonous atmosphere? By ourselves? No, else we would lean on broken reeds: by the Grace of the Holy Ghost, by using the graces of Confirmation, by “putting on Christ,” as St. Paul would say, His courage, His fortitude; leaning on Him, “working together,” He in us, and we in Him.

HOLY ORDERS

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, May 31, 1931)

On this day, called in the Liturgy Trinity Sunday, a day set apart to worship the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, hundreds of newly ordained priests are ascending the altar to offer for the first time the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It is quite customary for these ordinations to take place in Ember week, that is, the Quarter Tenses, and it is on the last day of the spring Quarter Tense that Orders are given and the priesthood conferred. It would be proper and profitable, therefore, when the mind of the Catholic world is centered on the priesthood, to consider the Sacrament of Holy Orders, established as one of the seven sources of grace by our Divine Saviour.

There are two phases under which we may regard society: the religious and the civic: two concepts which comprise all that concerns man in the destiny given him by Almighty God. Under the civic aspect it is plain that there must be organization for the welfare, prosperity, even the existence, of society. So must there be organization in the religious society which claims man's allegiance if, again, man's genuine welfare, prosperity and spiritual life are to be conserved. Antecedently we should suppose that when our Divine Lord would establish His Kingdom on earth—His Church—He would provide for its nature, its scope, its structure, its organization. By parable He spoke of His spiritual society as a sheepfold, a house, a city; and all of these demand some bond of unity welding together the different elements that enter into the structure. In-

deed, antecedently we should expect that, since the chief reason for the coming of Christ was the spiritual health and life of His creatures, and since by every law or just estimate the spiritual is beyond the civic, the material, He would surely set up an organization and make it clear, defined, detailed. Consequently, when we study the history of mankind we should be led to believe that Jesus Christ would indeed create an organization, a "city seated on a mountain" that could not "be hid." This Christ has done if we are to believe the Holy Scriptures, and it may be said that at the summit stands the priesthood—His priesthood—His priesthood multiplied and extended throughout time and space in the many individuals who share it with him. The Sacrament of Holy Orders is one of the two Sacraments set up for the welfare of man as a social being. It is the provision for the demands of man's spiritual nature, and the means supplied by Christ for the promotion of the destiny of men, for their sanctification and salvation.

Holy Orders is a Sacrament of the New Law, by which bishops, priests and other ministers are ordained and are given the grace and power to perform worthily the sacred functions of their spiritual ministry. It all centers around the priesthood. You might call the Sacrament of Holy Orders the Sacrament of the Priesthood. However, you will notice the plural form to designate the Sacrament of Holy Orders. There are therefore different ministries that are conferred, culminating in the episcopacy, which is the fullness of the priesthood. The Orders are comprised in the terms Minor Orders and Major Orders. Before any one of these is given, the aspirant to the priesthood receives the tonsure,

which is the introduction to the Orders. It places him in the clerical state. The candidate takes Christ for his "portion" and this is symbolized by the cutting of the hair. There are four Minor Orders which are not Sacraments but Sacramentals, established by the Church; namely, *Porter*, which confers the power of opening and closing the church, calling the faithful to sacred functions and excluding the unworthy; *Lector*, which gives the power of reading publicly the Sacred Scriptures, singing the lessons, teaching the rudiments of Faith and giving some lesser blessings; *Exorcist*, bestowing the power of imposing hands upon those possessed by the devil and using the prayers provided by the Church for the expelling of demons; and *Acolyte*, which allows the recipient to minister at the lesser functions around the altar. The Major Orders are *Subdiaconate*, *Diaconate*, and the *Priesthood*. The Priesthood has the indelible mark or character of the Sacrament. So has the Diaconate and probably the Subdiaconate. By his office, the subdeacon may assist the celebrant at the solemn Mass, chant the Epistle and care for the sacred linens used in divine services. The deacon by his office may assist *immediately* the priest in the solemn Mass, chant the Gospel solemnly, and under certain conditions solemnly baptize and even administer but not consecrate the Holy Eucharist. With these two Major Orders comes the obligation to celibacy and to the daily recitation of the Divine Office. The priesthood gives the power over the *real* and *mystical* body of Christ, of consecrating the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ at the Mass, and of forgiving or retaining sin; also of dispensing the other Sacraments (excepting Confirmation and Holy Or-

ders); of teaching Christian truths and invoking blessings on the people. The *Bishopric* is the Order which perfects and completes the priestly power and gives the right and power to confirm, to ordain and to rule by legitimate jurisdiction. Beyond this there is no Order. The Archbishopric is not an Order, neither is the dignity of cardinal, nor is the papacy. The bishop is a priest, the Pope is a priest—both in fullness of priestly power—but these exercise power of ruling and governing, culminating in the full power and jurisdiction over the whole Church, conferred by Jesus Christ on the Pope, the successor of St. Peter.

In saying that Holy Orders is a Sacrament, there must be found the three essentials: the outward sign, the inward grace and the institution by Christ. In all the Orders there are the *matter* and the *form*. Sacred Orders are conferred by the imposition of hands and by the words of the Bishop, the use of instruments which symbolize the end and purpose of each Order. And these are the outward, physical signs that stand for the grace given for the attaining of the spiritual ends for which they were instituted. Nothing could be more plain than that Our Lord left in His Church certain rites to be used for the spiritual welfare of man. He explicitly commanded the Apostles, "Do this in commemoration of Me," after He had instituted the Holy Eucharist and said the first Mass. He commanded them after His Resurrection to exercise His power of forgiving sins: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." He orders them to preach the Gospel to the whole world. On another occasion to "preach the Gospel to every

creature." He gives them the Holy Ghost that they may give the Holy Ghost to others. He promises that "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." His Apostles and their successors must baptize in His name and must preach in His name, for "faith cometh by hearing." And as showing that His ministry is not committed to any one indiscriminately, He asked the question, which supplies its own answer, "How shall they preach unless they be sent?"

The ceremony for the conferring of these Orders is very striking, very ancient, especially in respect to the ordination to the priesthood and the consecration of a bishop. These functions are elaborate, and soul-stirring. They leave the consciousness on the newly ordained priest or consecrated bishop that he is indeed the "Minister of Christ and the dispenser of the mysteries of God." Here, then, are involved the ministrations of angels. More than that, there are the deeds of the divine Son of God. Here are the human vessels which will hold divine treasures. Here enters grace, that vital thing in the Sacraments which tests their institution by Christ; grace, that tremendous thing that is divine.

As a Sacrament of the living, Holy Orders *increases* sanctifying grace which it finds resident in the soul. It therefore enriches the soul of the recipient in the sight of God. If this is true in the case of any Sacrament of the living, how logical that here the increase of grace would be not only great, but greatest, because it is the very Sacrament which is to provide for the spiritual needs of the souls of men in general, and is to be the human source, let me say the human fountain,—in contradistinction to the Divine Fountain, Jesus Christ Himself—whence the waters of the spiritual life are to flow, through the

channels of the religious society called the Church. There is another point that has value. The recipient of the priesthood and the bishopric has gone through a long spiritual process of development and refinement—prayer, meditation, self-sacrifice, self-control, exercises of devotion, spiritual readings and conferences, the use of the Sacraments themselves. All of these enter in and thus is prepared the soil for a tremendous outpouring of grace when the Sacrament of Holy Orders is conferred upon him.

Now, too, there is the peculiar sacramental grace which is present, a certain right and promise of those helps of grace which will enable the priest to be faithful to his great vocation and trust; to enable him to discharge fully, worthily, effectively those duties impressed upon him by the Order he receives. The Sacrament of Holy Orders gives the spiritual power by virtue of which the one ordained exercises the sacred functions of the Order received. In his ordination, the Holy Ghost is invoked upon the candidate by the imposition of the hands of the bishop; he receives the power to consecrate in the Mass, he receives the power to absolve and retain sin, he receives the power to confer the other Sacraments, to perform the sacred rites and offices of the Church, to preach and to teach. His hands are anointed with holy oil blessed by the bishop and he is told plainly "what these hands bless shall be blessed." In this Sacrament, too, a *character* is impressed upon the soul—that indelible mark that distinguishes him as a minister of Christ—the Ambassador of God—a "priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech."

The priesthood of Christ is continued and perpetuated through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and

the priests of the Church share the priesthood of Christ. It is indeed a baffling thought that such power should be given to men as that which resides in the ordained and consecrated priest, but is it any more baffling than that that Person who is called Jesus Christ, who is like us in all things, save sin, a man, apparently a human Personage, should be the Man-God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity? If Our Divine Saviour came into the world to exercise a ministry that He considered vastly important and even necessary for man's spiritual welfare and his salvation, is it not consistent that we should expect Him to make His ministry permanent, that it should be given for all men for all times? Society would always need sanctification, man would always need spiritual health, spiritual recovery from sin, spiritual food for his soul, spiritual truth for his mind. In physical life man is weak, sometimes helpless; in the spiritual life he is doubly weak—"the strain of sin fills his whole being," he is of himself helpless, a moral failure, and it is only by grace he can say "by the grace of God, I am what I am," and "I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me." This is the purpose of the ministry of the priesthood and by every law of human association there must be organization, and organization means a series of officials. These are priests supplied by Jesus Christ through Holy Orders. It is not merely an expediency, it is not merely an advantage, a benefit—it is a downright necessity.

The dignity of the priesthood on earth is just this: it is the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Now there are not two priesthoods nor two high priests, but one priesthood and one priest, and the priest that stands at the altar to offer Sacrifice, who raises his

hand to dare absolve from sin his fellow man, who utters truth from the pulpit is, as the Fathers of the Church say, an *alter Christus*, "another Christ," because he is acting in the name of Christ, by the power of Christ, with the commission of Christ, handed to him, burned into his soul at the solemn moment of his ordination, when by every sacred law he vows himself to the service of God and is made in turn the *agent* of Christ, His *representative*, the ambassador of God.

Is it necessary to say that here there is no question of mere whim or fancy in the choice of such a life? Here is not a business, an avocation, or a vocation in the ordinary sense. "No man taketh this honor to himself, save he that is called by God as Aaron was." This is a call from God which the candidate must prove. His training is long, serious, arduous, searching, and on his ordination day he is advanced to Orders only after the solemn avowal of his superiors that as far as human frailty allows this man is worthy. Such is their answer to the solemn question of the ordaining prelate, "Do you *know*—not think, nor hope, but *know*; do you *know* that he is worthy?"

It is indeed great power that the priest holds; it is indeed great dignity that he possesses. It is also tremendous responsibility that he accepts. In the humility of Christ that adorns his soul no one knows better than he that he carries his treasure in an earthen vessel. There is no pride here, nor arrogance, nor sense of superiority over his fellow men. He knows he can fail, and will fail if he be not supported by the Christ he represents and serves. If he can do the spiritual things no other man can do he knows that Apollo may plant and Paul water, but it

is God that giveth the increase. He knows that. If he can impersonate Jesus Christ as he stands at the altar changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, he is appalled that, knowing himself as he is, Christ should do these things in him and through him.

It is an article of divine Faith that Christ died for all men. For all men, for all ages, for all times He shed His blood, the ransom He paid for the souls of men. And is it not the mark of His supreme love, His matchless love, His divine love that there is a priesthood, His priesthood that should apply constantly, faithfully, His blood to the needs of men in the Sacraments He instituted? Is not His priesthood on earth—Himself on earth—the undying, unmistakable proof of His love for the children of men?

BREAD FOR THE SOUL—THE HOLY EUCHARIST

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in
the Catholic Hour, June 7, 1931)

The Church Year gives us the Sacrament that is to be the topic of the address today—the Holy Eucharist, greatest Sacrament of all, for here is the Author of all the Sacraments. On Thursday last, the Catholic world kept one of its loveliest, most significant feasts, that of Corpus Christi, the Body of Christ, the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament. So great is the mystery involved that the Church celebrates it with an Octave, and on this day the “solemnity” is observed everywhere with gorgeous ritual, deepest faith, thanksgiving and popular acclaim that are altogether unique. The solemnity rises to a wonderful degree of splendor in Catholic countries, in superb cathedrals and majestic churches, but there is no little church so poor and lowly that it does not have its procession of the Blessed Sacrament today; nor is there any place, even where the atmosphere is indifferent or hostile, where the Corpus Christi is not honored publicly by those who love and adore Jesus Christ, present in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. I think you might call Corpus Christi People’s Day, for the people, in their numbers, faith and gratitude, constitute the celebration of Corpus Christi, the Body of the Lord.

It is difficult to think and to speak calmly when there is question of the Holy Eucharist. It baffles and staggers every concept of the mind, save only implicit trust in the truth of Jesus Christ, and in His divine words and promises. Let me tell you the

whole story at once. The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament which really, truly and substantially contains the body, blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the species or appearances of bread and wine. The Holy Scriptures give us a detailed account of the promise made by our Divine Saviour to institute this Sacrament; of the actual institution itself; and also of the literal belief in, and consequent use of, the Sacrament in the very beginning of Christianity. The sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel is the classical account of the detailed promise of our Saviour to give us His flesh and blood for the spiritual nourishment of the souls of men. With significance and wisdom our Divine Lord performed, in the desert, the miracle of feeding 5,000 men, not counting the women and children, with five barley loaves and two fishes, and the left-over twelve baskets of fragments accentuated the miracle. It was natural that the people in admiration should declare that "this is of a truth the prophet that is come into the world," and should desire "to take Him by force, and make Him king." The Prophet disappears, and the same day He is seen at evening when the Disciples are struggling with the rough waters while rowing in the Sea of Genesareth, and He appears to them walking on the troubled waves, with the calm assurance "It is I; be not afraid." What a background for a great truth! Well might the Saviour on the next day, with the memory of such miracles fresh in the minds of the people, declare that He would give bread from heaven, and boldly say, "I am the bread of life." He continues: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. . . If any man eat this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, for the life of

the world. . . He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed: and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me." So much for the Promise.

Turn now to St. Matthew, twenty-sixth chapter (MARK xiv; LUKE xxii,) and read the inspired word of God which narrates the fulfillment of the promise—the actual institution. It is at the Paschal Supper of the Jews which was eaten by all the followers of Moses. But now it is another Paschal Feast, newly established by Jesus Christ, who had come to set aside the Old Dispensation, and to establish the New Dispensation. "And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread and blessed, and broke: and gave to His disciples, and said: Take ye and eat: This is My body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is My blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins." There are frequent references in the Sacred Scriptures that attest the literal belief in the mystery of Christ's body and blood; and we can recall St. Paul chiding the people for customs growing up that tended to profane the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and his severe, positive statement has meaning only in the literal acceptance of the words of Christ—"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. . . he eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."

In the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the *institution by Christ* stands out prominently and the *outward signs* and the *inward grace* are present. Again, our Saviour makes use of common things—bread and wine: bread, the commonest form of food, the very symbol of food. With men, give us bread; with Christ, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Wine is the common drink rather than water in that part of the eastern world where Christ lived, and also for millions and millions of people in other lands. The *matter* is *bread*, wheaten bread, unleavened, and *wine*, the juice of the grape. The outward or sensible sign of the Sacrament is the species, the appearances of bread and wine; that is, whatever falls under the senses, as taste, color, odor, figure, etc. These elements, bread and wine, are used with the form of words presented by Jesus Christ Himself, in fact His own Words: “This is My body,” “This is My blood;” and when this act takes place at what is called the Consecration in the Mass, the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ by the priest at the altar, acting in the name and with the power of Christ, and in accordance with His command, “Do this in commemoration of Me.” By this act, which is called transubstantiation—a Latin word designating the change or crossing of substances—the substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the body of Christ, and the substance of wine is changed into the substance of the blood of Christ. The appearances of bread and wine remain.

This is all done by the power of Christ. Of course, it is a miracle, something infinitely beyond the power of nature. There is nothing against reason in all this, as can be shown by science and philosophy, but it is beyond and above reason. There is

nothing strange in this, as Christ is the one who effects the Sacrament, and He is God. He does all this because He wills. If He had not done it, we should never have guessed it. But He has done it, and *why* is another story, the Mystery of Love. Let it be noted that whilst a two-fold consecration is made with bread and wine, Jesus Christ is whole and entire under each species. There is question here not even of the dead Christ but the living Christ; therefore always the body, blood, soul and divinity. By the Incarnation God became man, and never can there be separation of His humanity from His divinity.

Here indeed is mystery, something beyond the kingdom of man's senses and man's intellect. The supernatural world here supplants the natural world. There is mystery in the world around us. Man is baffled, is impotent, before the mystery of the growing corn, the forces of nature. Man can play with electricity yet cannot explain its nature and power, except to use it and to give names to the operations. But here in the Eucharist the mystery is deeper. When our Saviour first proclaimed it openly, many said, "This saying is hard, who can hear it," and many of His disciples walked away from Him, abandoned Him. He did not stop them. He leaves man physically free, but He asked the faithful group that remained "Will you also go away?" The millions who acknowledge with faith in Christ and His word the mystery of His body and blood in the Sacrament of the Eucharist are the successors of those whom Peter represented when he said simply, humbly, sublimely, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

This is indeed the most treasured thing in the Church of Christ—the Real Presence of Our Lord

in the Blessed Sacrament. In the other Sacraments there is grace, grace in abundance, but here is the very Author of grace. In the other Sacraments He gives grace, here He gives Himself. The Holy Eucharist is the very summit of the sacramental system. In Its light we can see them all. In Baptism and Confirmation there is given and perfected that spiritual life which it is the purpose of the Holy Eucharist to sustain and nourish. Penance makes ready the soul to receive It, and Extreme Unction disposes the soul to receive the Viaticum to make the journey into eternity when the shadows fall at life's close. Holy Orders is the Sacrament which gives the priesthood, which, in turn, is the divine instrument for the effecting of the Holy Eucharist Itself. In Matrimony we can learn its dignity because St. Paul tells us that the bond of love between husband and wife is symbolized by the bond of love between Christ and His Church.

In the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist we are face to face with the manifold expressions of miraculous deeds, and in no other Sacrament is there such lavish display of the power, wisdom and love of God. The Holy Eucharist is indeed the very heart of the Church, the distinguishing badge, let us say. It is no wonder that, entering our churches, we bend the knee in adoration. It is no wonder that we remain there with reverence and awe. It is no wonder that we love the very walls, the very floors of our churches. It is no wonder that there is a ceremonial that surrounds our worship, that subdues the mind and heart and that suggests the heaven we do not see,—for here is the Man-God, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; the living God, really, truly and substantially present.

Would it not seem that in establishing this Sacrament, our Divine Saviour had in view His own glory, primarily? Certainly the adoration that He receives through this Sacrament and the splendid ceremonial and pious devotions that it has inspired would seem to make earth the counterpart of heaven. But we should miss the secret of Its institution if we did not know that it was for us—for us men and for our salvation—that our Lord primarily instituted this Eucharistic Sacrament. Let us recall the purpose of Christ in giving us the Holy Eucharist. By this Sacrament a union is effected of Christ with the soul—Communion is the word we use for the reception of the Sacrament. This union is again and again emphasized by Christ: “Abideth in Me and I in him” are His own words. A sort of mystical incorporation that is the deepest yearning of love! By grace the soul is *particeps divinitatis*—partaker of divinity—in the daring words of St. Peter. What must be the union effected when the Author of grace takes possession of the soul by the Holy Eucharist? No physical union of chemical elements could be closer, or so close, and no human tongue would dare describe the action “He in me and I in him.” This is the very essence of heaven, with only the veil of time and physical nature between. Then the Sacrament nourishes the soul. It is the bread for the soul: “I am the living bread.” “My flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed,” and thus does our Saviour plainly say that as bread and meat and drink are absolutely necessary for the health, vigor and life of the body, so are His flesh and blood the sustenance for the soul, for its health, its vigor, its life. His burning words break down that fear and dread to do such a tremendous thing as to take Him into our bodies, for we are

made bold to do so by the severity of His tone when He says: "Except you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you."

How can we estimate in word and thought—we simply cannot—the measure of grace that He gives to the soul already sanctified at the reception of the Eucharist, and what limit can we set to the growth of the virtues of Christ in our soul when the source of sanctity and virtue is inundating our soul whilst He is reposing sacramentally within our breast?

The Holy Eucharist has relation to sin in various ways, and we know that this is the one thing that stands between us and God. The Holy Eucharist is the surest and best remedy against mortal sin and is an antidote against the venial sins that disfigure our souls. It helps to break the force of passion and evil tendencies. It roots out ingrown habits of sin, and without doubt It is, as the Council of Trent assures us, the power that best of all checks the fire of concupiscence and fleshly sensations and desires. In every sense the Holy Eucharist helps us to lead a worthy, honorable, dignified spiritual life and It is the the very pledge of a glorious resurrection. Amen, Amen, I say to you, if any man eat My flesh and drink My blood, he hath everlasting life; he *hath*, mark you, and I will raise him up in the last day. amen, I say to you, if any man eat My flesh and last day. It is the purpose of the Holy Eucharist to fit the soul and the body for a glorious immortality. No wonder the Church insists that it is the will and desire of Jesus Christ that all should receive Holy Communion frequently and even daily, as was the custom of the Christians of the first days of Christianity.

The Holy Eucharist gives us the continued pre-

sence of Our Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament, kept on our altars, and the Holy Viaticum for the welfare of the dying. It inspires such popular devotions as the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Forty Hours Devotion and the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament—all of them very dear to the lovers of Christ. The love of our Saviour in this Sacrament is so obvious, so marvelous, that it has become known as the *Sacrament of Love*. Here is love run to its farthest limits—far beyond the horizon of man's thought and imagination. Jesus Christ gives Himself for our benefit, for our sanctification, for our salvation. Not to angels is this gift, but to men. Not for saints is it given, but for sinners, poor, weak men who in moments of prayer and moments of loneliness yearn to become saints. Not as a reward of merit is it given, but as a help to be good and holy. In heaven we shall have the God of the Eucharist, the only difference being that we shall then meet Him in His glory, whereas now He tests our faith, He is hidden behind the veil of the Eucharist. It will be a thrilling moment—may you all experience it—when we shall see Him face to face and recognize that it is He that we have often welcomed into our breasts in Holy Communion!

THE CLEAN OBLATION—THE MASS

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, June 14, 1931)

How often does an emotion, springing from the very depths of the soul, represent the summit of truth. I can easily picture the Apostle Thomas completely overwhelmed, on the occasion of Christ's second visit to the Apostles in the Cenacle at Jerusalem, falling on his knees before his Risen Lord, and bursting forth, "My Lord and my God!" It seems to me that when we think of the Holy Mass, or better, assist at it, there is nothing else to say—"My Lord and my God!" That is the Holy Mass, and at the Consecration of the species of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, the soul must instinctively cry out, "My Lord and my God! Body and blood of Jesus Christ I adore Thee! Blood of my Saviour, save me!"

It is not all the truth of the Holy Eucharist to tell of Its institution and Its benefits in Holy Communion, though here is "life, more abundant life." For the Holy Eucharist is a Sacrifice as well as a Sacrament, the one Sacrament that has the double character of Sacrament and Sacrifice. There are points of variance to be noted between the Eucharist as a Sacrament and the Eucharist as a Sacrifice. The Eucharist as a Sacrament is meant for our sanctification: "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him." As a Sacrifice, it is the supreme act of worship and adoration of God. Thus the value of the Sacrament lies in its reception by us, whereas the purpose of the Sacrifice is the offering to God. Moreover, the Sacrament is meant for our spiritual nourishment: "I am the bread of life. . . .

My flesh is meat indeed: and My blood is drink indeed." As a Sacrifice, it is the satisfaction of God's justice for sin. The Holy Eucharist as a Sacrament is for the benefit of the individual soul that will take It, but the Sacrifice is for all the world—the whole Church of Christ, the living and the dead.

There is so much emphasis on the Mass as a Sacrifice—it is nearly always called the Sacrifice of the Mass—that I should like to say something about Sacrifice in general. Sacrifice is an old idea, and goes back to the beginning of time. I might almost say that, when you speak of creation by God, you speak of sacrifice—to bridge over the chasm between God and man. Sacrifice is the offering of an object made to God alone, by a priest to attest the Creator's supreme dominion over us. It is some thing, some person offered to God, to God alone, by a priest—using the word priest here in its comprehensive sense—and by the destruction, or equivalent destruction, by change, thus to express that He is the Creator, the Lord and Master of all things. Sacrifice is contained in the very fundamental idea of religion. There can be no true religion without sacrifice. It is essential that a rational creature give worship to his Maker and acknowledge His supreme dominion over him. And this must be of an internal and external kind to accord with man's spiritual and physical nature, his make-up of soul and body.

God is essentially a Spirit and the adoration and praise due Him must come from man's spirit, his soul, which bears the image of God. This is the vital thing in sacrifice. But man, besides being spiritual, is physical. He owes everything to God—his body, his physical energies, his members. These, too, by the very law of nature must pay court to God, the

Creator. Hence man's physical acts must be turned to God to express their dependence upon Him. Not only this, but man is a social being and hence as a member of society as well as an individual, he must acknowledge the supreme dominion of God. All this enters into the idea of sacrifice, accounts for the varied kinds of sacrifice, and explains the public, external, vicarious character of sacrifice that rises up to God from the complex character of man.

Sacrifice always existed. There are historical records to show that it was practiced in all the old civilizations, in all times, in all nations. It is a singular fact that even among uncivilized and barbarous tribes and peoples the necessity of sacrifice was recognized, and this even when the true nature of God was unknown or abused. Man always felt the impulse and the necessity to worship God as he knew Him, and to acknowledge His supreme dominion.

In the Old Testament, we have what could be called a history of sacrifice. God expressed His will time and time again, and indeed gave explicit instructions about the mode of sacrifice. There are sacrifices of religious rites and incense; the sacrifice of oxen and heifer; the sacrifice of human life (demanded but not executed in the case of Isaac), and all these true sacrifices were forerunners and types of the Great Sacrifice of the New Law—the Sacrifice of the God-man, and the continuation of the Sacrifice of Calvary in the Sacrifice of the Mass of the New Law. The idea becomes more pertinent when we recall the sacrifice of bread and wine by Melchisedech. There is the last link when Malachi foretold that: "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." This is the Sacrifice of the Mass which literally is offered from the rising of the sun even to the going down thereof.

Let me here remind you that the Sacrifice of the Mass is made possible by the Mystery of the Incarnation, that truth which tells us that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity became man, namely, Jesus Christ the Divine Son of God, true God and true man. It is the Incarnation that makes possible the Passion and death of Christ and gives its efficacy to the divine act of atonement by Jesus Christ. The Holy Mass continues, perpetuates, the Mystery of the Incarnation. Each time Mass is said, Jesus Christ comes sacramentally on the altar, where before He was not; for the elements of bread and wine are literally changed into the body and blood of Christ. What once were bread and wine are become now by Consecration the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, the living God.

The Mass is the unbloody Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ. It is the very life, the very heart of the Church. It is indeed the reason for the church building, the altar, and the priesthood. The ideas of altar and priesthood imply the idea of sacrifice. The Mass was instituted at the Last Supper when, after communicating His Apostles with His own flesh and blood, Jesus Christ said to them: "Do this in commemoration of me." This has always been interpreted by the Church to be the commission of power to the Apostles and their successors to immolate and offer in sacrifice His precious body and blood. The Lord here said the first Mass and made priests of His Apostles to continue His sacrifice by the celebration of Mass. The Holy Mass draws all its efficacy

from the sacrifice of the cross on Calvary. The Mass is Calvary—the Last Supper and the death on the cross. “The Sacrifice of the Mass,” says the Council of Trent, “is one and the same sacrifice with that of the cross: the Victim is one and the same, Christ Jesus, who offered Himself once only a bloody Sacrifice on the altar of the cross. The bloody and unbloody Victim is still one and the same, and the Oblation of the Cross is daily renewed in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. . . . The priest is also the same, Christ Our Lord; the ministers who offer this sacrifice consecrate the holy mysteries not in their own but in the person of Christ.” The Mass and Calvary are the same, then, because Priest and Victim are the same. On Calvary the immolation was made to His heavenly Father by the High Priest, Jesus Christ, His eternal Son; in the Mass the chief Offerer is Jesus Christ through the instrumentality of the man-priest who functions at the altar. On the cross, the Victim of the sacrifice was Jesus Christ, the Man-God, immolated as a propitiation for sin. In the Mass, Jesus Christ is again the Victim offered to His heavenly Father—a worthy Victim because the man offered in sacrifice is truly God, by reason of the Mystery of the Incarnation.

It is only in the manner of offering that there is a difference between the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass. They are essentially the same. On the cross our Saviour really died: He really and visibly shed His blood, and allowed that separation of body and soul that means death. In the Mass, our Saviour is only mystically slain: by figure represented by the double Consecration of the bread and wine into His body and blood. Again, on the cross, our Saviour made the supreme act of sacrifice and

propitiation once for all, for all men, for all times. In the Mass at the altar, the merits and satisfaction of Christ are distributed and applied to the souls of men. The Sacrifice of the Cross had four ends in view, which are the ends of all sacrifice properly understood. These ends were and are, the adoration of God; thanksgiving to Him for His bounty; propitiation or satisfaction for sin, and petition for the graces and blessings required for man's true and various needs. On the cross all these were adequately and perfectly provided for, since the One who made the sacrifice and was the Victim of the sacrifice was the Divine Son of God. God was then and there fully adored, thanked, satisfied for sin and petitioned. And the value of all this for man was assured and fully provided for, since the Offerer and the Victim was the Man-Christ, thus representing the race of men; and the Man-Christ was God. In the Holy Mass, these four ends are also subserved. Every Mass at every altar is offered for these four ends, and thus *constantly* is God perfectly adored, thanked, satisfied and petitioned. There is proper and adequate approach to God and all man's relations and obligations to God are met.

The Mass is a very world in itself. It is the heart and soul of the world. You might say it is the world in miniature. It reflects every human aspiration, every human accomplishment. It is the synthesis of all things: science, art, culture, philosophy, theology, human history, life, radiate from it, look back to it as a center. As a study for the mind, not to say an object of the heart's love, it is a never-ending theme, a fountain of delight and satisfaction that flows on and on forever. You never could grasp its divine wealth in its fullness—it *is* divine. The consecra-

tion of the bread and the wine, when they are changed into Christ's body and blood, soul and divinity, is the essential idea of the Mass—everything before it, leading up to it, and all after looking back to it. However, the Offertory, that is, the offering of the bread and the wine, and the Communion, that is, the consuming of Christ's body and blood, are important parts too, from the very nature of sacrifice. At the Offertory the object for the sacrifice is solemnly presented to God, and in the Communion of the priest we have the idea of the destruction of the Victim to attest God's dominion: here it is represented by the consumption, and hence the change, of the Sacred Species. The preliminary part of the Mass embraces readings from the Old and New Testaments; special prayers of the day in honor of the Mystery or the Saint commemorated; the prayer giving glory to God in the highest, and the Nicene Creed. Then comes the Offertory, the offering of the bread and the wine. The Canon of the Mass, the most sacred part, follows. It begins with the Preface, a solemn prayer of praise to God, and includes the beautiful prayers that enshrine the Consecration: the memento for the living, the memento for the dead, the Lord's Prayer and others. Then comes the Communion. The concluding prayers are sentiments that well up in the mind of the Church after the Sacrifice proper, and the Mass ends with that sublime flight of St. John's Gospel beginning: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Verily, here is God.

This is a mere outline of the structure of the Mass. The Mass is a superb, sublime drama. Only it is more than a play, a drama: it is a reality. But it is a drama too, the Drama of the Passion; for

every act of the priest commemorates and symbolizes some individual act of the tragedy of the suffering and death of Christ. This drama sounds the depths of human nature and strikes every chord in man's being. There is joy, gladness, adoration, thanksgiving, hope, aspiration; sorrow, suffering, pathos, pity; retribution, humility, penance, sanctification, salvation—all wrapped up in the prayers and actions that the priest utters and performs as the official minister of the Church.

Now you understand why we say the Mass is everything! It *is* everything; the one reality! Otherwise there is none. It is only consistency, therefore, that impels the Church to center everything around the Mass. Sunday is God's day, and the Mass must be heard then under penalty of sin. Every day is a holy day, for at thousands of altars Mass is offered, and at every altar there are good pious souls who come to adore and praise God, to be a propitiation for the world and to find strength, consolation, grace to fight the good fight until death comes. When the bishop gathers his priests together in a synod for the spiritual needs of the diocese, it is begun with Mass. A conclave of cardinals to elect a Supreme Pontiff is begun with Mass. Catholic conventions of all kinds—educational, social, fraternal—begin with Mass. The school year begins with Mass, whether it is the parish school, college or university. The people run to the Mass when there is need or danger. The nuns in the convent greet the rising sun at the Mass on God's altar; the children of the Church pledge their bodies and souls in holy marriage at the Mass; and at the end of life, loving hands bring the dead father, or mother, or wife, or child, or friend to the altar of God where the Mass for the dead is

celebrated for the soul that has fled to God to be judged.

Who is the priest that stands at the altar? He is some mother's son, the brother perhaps of your friend. And he stands at the altar representing the people. He is a son of the people, formerly a boy of some parish, and he is serving there in a representative capacity, standing in the name of the people, inviting them to pray that "My sacrifice and your sacrifice may be acceptable to the Lord our God." If he is another Christ, saying in Christ's words at the Consecration, "This is My body"—not "This is the body of Christ," but "My body", Christ's body—he is also the voice of the people speaking in their name. For "every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men, in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifice for sins."

SONS OF GOD—BAPTISM

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, June 21, 1931)

In the order of reception, Baptism is the first of the Sacraments, for Baptism gives spiritual birth. In the physical order, birth is the basis of the whole life of man, the beginning of all the blessings of life. In the spiritual order, Baptism is the foundation of the whole spiritual life of man, and the beginning of all the blessings in the supernatural order. The Holy Eucharist must be, by its very nature, the greatest of all the Sacraments, for it is Christ Himself who is involved, the very Author of grace and all blessings; but Baptism is the most necessary of all the Sacraments, and thus, from *our* point of view, the greatest and most important. It is indeed the gateway to all the other Sacraments, the one entrance to the supernatural life, and the only door that opens into the kingdom of heaven.

It would please me very much if you would read the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke, and notice the setting of Baptism, in the New Dispensation. When the Apostles received the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, as was explained in an address preceding this one, they immediately set out, filled with the Holy Ghost, to exercise their ministry—their new ministry of priesthood—with a zeal and a fire that almost stand out on the printed page. Peter, as was fitting in the leader, the Vicar of Christ on earth, broke out in impassioned discourse which evidently struck deep into the hearts of the multitude, for we read in the thirty-seventh verse of that chapter: “Now when they had heard these things, they had compunction in their hearts and said to

Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles: What shall we do, men and brethren? But Peter said to them: Do penance, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins: and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. . . . They therefore that received his word, were baptized; and there were added in that day about 3000 souls." Here was the first exercise of the new ministry to men! The first sermon of the new Kingdom of Christ on earth: significantly the baptism of 3000 souls! It would be interesting to proceed further into the Acts of the Apostles (chapter viii) and read the ministration of Philip, the Deacon, in Samaria, where he converted and baptized the Samaritans ("both men and women") as the inspired writer explains it; and I am sure you will read with something of romantic interest of the conversion and baptism of the man from Ethiopia, "a man of great authority under Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, . . . who had come to Jerusalem to adore." This is also related in the same eighth chapter of the Acts.

Baptism is a Sacrament which cleanses from original sin (and actual sin, if it be present,) and makes us children of God and heirs of heaven. Baptism signifies a cleansing, washing, bathing, and it is the means left us by Christ for the washing and cleansing of the soul from original sin. Baptism presupposes original sin, the sin that is on our soul when we are born, the sin inherited from our first parents, who broke faith with God by disobedience to His command. By this sin man cut himself away from God, lost original innocence and justice, lost his supernatural character, with its endowments, and forfeited his right to eternal life. The purpose

of Baptism in the mind of Christ is to correct all this as far as may be done, to give back to man what he lost by sin; to reinstate him, to put him again in the friendship of God.

In this Sacrament, we have the three necessary elements entering into every Sacrament. The *outward sign* is the use of water on the body with the form which gives the flowing water a meaning—the explicit invocation of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity: “I baptize thee,” (uttered while pouring the water) “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” This double action, the use of water with the prescribed form, symbolizes or signifies the washing and cleansing of the soul from sin, and this cleansing is effected by Jesus Christ who instituted this sacred rite. He has pledged Himself to give grace, to take away our sin, if this symbolic act of washing is used according to His will. It is very probable that Our Lord instituted the Sacrament when He Himself was baptized by St. John on the banks of the Jordan River.

If we all are born in sin, it is obvious that there must be some way of dismissing sin, if we are to be saved, for “nothing defiled” can enter heaven. Baptism is the constituted means and hence Baptism is absolutely necessary for salvation. Without Baptism, man must ever remain in the sin in which he was born. He must ever remain in the plane of the natural; therefore he could never see God, for he is in another sphere altogether, the natural sphere, and his soul has not that *fitness* to take in God, according to its nature. He is, as it were, out of his element, like a fish that cannot live on land because its element is water. But it should not be necessary to emphasize this point too much, though it is the essen-

tial thing; for our Saviour has settled it all, as we may read in the third chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. There is related the discourse of our Lord with Nicodemus, in which Christ says these plain words: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, *unless* a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And the literal truth is further emphasized by our Saviour when answering Nicodemus' question, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again?" The Saviour amplifies the first expression, "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Wonder not that I said to thee, you must be born again!" Baptism is the spiritual birth that is necessary for eternal life.

Let me state here that if it were impossible to receive Baptism of water, the salvation of man could be supplied by Baptism of desire, (sometimes called Baptism of fire), or by Baptism of blood. In the first case, it would be the ardent wish to receive Baptism and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation; and in the second, the shedding of one's blood for the faith of Christ, that is, martyrdom. Whilst these would be sufficient for the salvation of the soul, they would not produce all the effects of Baptism of water: they would not produce the character, they would not confer sacramental grace. And let me repeat that Baptism of water is the Sacrament instituted by Christ.

Again, we see its necessity in the mind of our Saviour when we recall that though the priest is the ordinary minister, anyone can and should give Bap-

tism in case of necessity. You could save the soul of a dying person by conferring the Sacrament with plain water, pouring it over the forehead of the child or adult, saying at the same time: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." But mark carefully: the words must be used at the time of the pouring of the water and, of course, the words and the pouring must be by the same person.

Perhaps the first thought that comes to our mind, when there is question of Baptism, is that it removes original sin: "You are washed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb." And rightly so, for sin is the death of the soul, the poison that vitiates and kills its spiritual life. Baptism destroys sin, roots out the cancerous thing, takes away original sin that we have inherited and all actual sin, if such be contracted before the reception of this Sacrament. But this is far from telling the whole story of the marvelous effects of this Sacrament. It confers sanctifying grace, thus rendering the soul dear to God—"Blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against us." This is the soul's spiritual birth. It means the coming of the Holy Ghost into the soul, the great Sanctifier. And this means in some mystic way, the indwelling of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity: "We will come to him and make our abode with him," as Jesus Christ expresses it. The Holy Ghost comes to the soul with His graces and gifts, and by His action the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity are implanted in the soul as well as the moral virtues. Note particularly the seed of faith implanted there—faith, the root virtue, the very foundation of the whole spiritual edifice. Note too the seed of charity, the very virtue which is the

bond of perfection and the fulfilling of the law and the prophets.

Let me here direct your attention to what is of paramount importance in grasping the meaning of these Catholic doctrines in relation to God and the end He has designed for us. There are two orders—the natural and the supernatural; one according to nature and the other above nature. The child is born into the natural order and would ever remain in that order unless God should intervene. Its acts, of whatever value intrinsically, must always remain natural, and that soul could never have the Beatific Vision of God, that is, know, understand and enjoy God as He is in His essence, for the simple reason it is not by nature capable of comprehending God or performing what is really a divine operation. Baptism raises the person out of the natural order and places him in the supernatural order, gives him a new order of being and a new order and mode of life; and hence his acts, natural in themselves, are given a value beyond their own worth, for by this incorporation,—as St. Peter expresses it, “partakers of Divinity,”—they have a supernatural character, and the soul is *fitted* and made capable to meet God. Our Divine Saviour makes this plain, as you will read in the Gospel according to St. John, chapter xv—“I am the true vine. . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.” *Nothing*, He says, and by that He means nothing that has merit for eternal life. No man can come to the full maturity of his manhood unless he is bap-

tized. He may be clever, educated, cultured; he may be a wizard of finance, a shining light of science, a leader of men, shaping the destiny of the nation; but he is only a natural man. God calls him to a spiritual life, a spiritual order. Christ bought the privilege with His blood. Man is a failure in God's eyes unless he lives a supernatural life. Baptism is the incorporation into it. It is Baptism that incorporates the person into the vine that is Jesus Christ.

By Baptism we are made Christians and bear Christ's name by right; "for as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ," says St. Paul to the Galatians. We enter into the family of Christ and are made members of His mystical body: He is the head, we are the members. We enter the Communion of Saints, that vast society that embraces the saints in Heaven, the suffering souls in Purgatory and the faithful followers of Christ on earth. By Baptism we enter the kingdom of God on earth, the Church which He came to establish and did establish to be His visible representative, and we have a right to all the other Sacraments and all the rights, privileges and advantages of the society He founded. By Baptism we are made children of God,—no longer mere creatures of God; "we are called and are the sons of God." It is not now our God, our Master, our Sovereign Lord that we appeal to, but our Father who is in heaven, and we dare to say *Abba*, "Father", because we are brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ by Baptism. By Baptism we are made heirs of heaven. We get the right to it, of course, by God's love and mercy; but we receive the right to it, and this makes it ours, unless we lose the benefit of our Baptism by sin. But the right we have because we are stamped with the character, that in-

delible mark that distinguishes us forever after as children of God. Finally, in the Sacrament of Baptism we receive those sacramental graces which give the baptized person the right to all those helps, as they are needed, to enable him to foster and preserve the spiritual life received in Baptism and to live up to the dignity of his Christian profession, and to the promises made in his Baptism to renounce forever the devil and all his works and pomps.

Here is love in abundance, here is a wealth of love that goes far beyond what is human, and is believable only because it is divine. There is no science or art that explains the value of this vocation to Christ by Baptism. There is no law of right or justice that can demand it: it is simply, absolutely and only the love of Jesus Christ for the children of men and for each human soul in particular. It is the love of a divine Big Brother who yearns for the love of men's hearts and, being God, can produce it. Amen.

THE TRIBUNAL OF MERCY—THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

PART I

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, June 28, 1931)

What a glorious, happy old world this would be if man had been faithful to God from the very beginning of creation; if he had only known his honor and dignity and had been loyal and obedient to his Maker! But, alas, he fell from his high estate and let loose the torrents of woes and sorrows to which every child of Adam is a witness in his own experience. But even granting that dire calamity, what nevertheless a happy joyous race would be ours, in a world governed by reason, if man, when he was raised up by the Incarnation and Passion of Christ, had only accepted and used the grace of God given to him in floods from the Saviour's sufferings and death! But again, alas, and alas, every man can measure the sin, sorrow and distress of all the world by the tragedy that is enacted in his own life and in his own heart. But herein lies the wonderful story of the divine mercy and divine love. "Even the just man falls daily" and "if the just man shall scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Without the doctrine of Penance and the forgiveness of sin, we should be doomed, living our lives in black despair, with not a gleam of hope. But we may hope, for it is the word of the Holy Ghost from the tender lips of the beloved John: "My little children, these things I write to you, that you may not sin. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just. And he is the

propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also of the whole world." Oh, that fatal *if*! There is no *if* with any of us; we all need the Advocate. We have Him. And this ministry of forgiveness is exercised through the Sacrament of Penance.

There is a distinction to be made between the virtue of penance and the Sacrament of Penance. The *virtue* became necessary and was born when man sinned in the very beginning. The *Sacrament* came with Jesus Christ when His Blood paid the price for it. In the Old Law, that is, before the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, man's only hope for salvation was in his belief in a future Redeemer, and in the virtue of penance if he sinned. The situation was more difficult than under the New Law, for in the first place God's grace was not then so abundant; and again, there was no sacrament, no tangible thing appealing to man's senses to focus his mind on his sins, and thus pave the way for penance. And this was absolutely necessary. The virtue of penance is a supernatural virtue by which we are moved to abhor and detest our sin, satisfy for it as far as we can, and renounce it for the future. The Sacrament includes the virtue of penance, and was instituted by Jesus Christ as the ordinary way in which man's sins are forgiven.

There could be no question that the power of the forgiveness of sin is lodged in the Church of Jesus Christ. The whole range of the Sacred Scriptures shows that. All through the sacred pages there is the story of penance and the forgiveness of sin. It is a striking feature of the new kingdom of Christ established by Him on earth. And rightly so, for Christ stands out always as the Great Healer of man's sin. His precursor, the lovable John the Baptist, that

connecting link between the Old and the New Dispensation, gives the preface to the new kingdom, going through the hill country of Judea and crying out, "Do penance: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "And He came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins. . . Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of penance." At the height of his glory as the mouthpiece of Christ, laying down his office when the Bridegroom came, he greets the Messiah—that picturesque strange Prophet—and introduces Him to the new world of God and Christ with those sublime words that the liturgy of the Church catches up and sings through the centuries: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sin of the world."

Our Saviour's whole ministry is filled with deeds of mercy and the forgiveness of sin. He became known as the Great Healer, healing all the ills of humanity, even raising the dead to life; but almost invariably before He restores the health of the body or the broken member, as the Sacred Scriptures attest, He would say, "Son," or "Daughter, arise, thy sins are forgiven thee." Time and time again he was challenged for doing this deed of God. No one can forgive sin but God, they said, and they were right, no man can forgive sin, only God. But He was God and He could forgive, and He did forgive. And not only as the Son of God did He exercise this mercy and this right, but also as the Son of Man. St. Luke relates the story of the palsied man carried to Him on his bed and let down from the roof through the tiles with his bed into the midst before Jesus. "Whose faith when He saw, He said: man, thy sins are forgiven thee." Listen attentively to these words:

you will hear them again under striking conditions. "Who is this," the Scribes and Pharisees thought, "who speaketh blasphemy? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" This time the Saviour, reading their thoughts, picks up the challenge: "Which is easier to say: Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say: Arise and walk?" Listen closely: "But that you may know that the Son of man"—mark that, the Son of *Man*,—"hath power on earth,"—mark that, too, power on earth—"to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy) I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. And immediately rising up before them, he took the bed, on which he lay, and he went away to his own house, glorifying God." What could the bystanders say? The Master proved His case—His divinity and His divine mercy. What could they say? "We have seen wonderful things today."

But the Apostles were to witness something even more wonderful. And it is significant that this should occur after Our Saviour's Passion and death which have all their meaning as the ransom for man's sin. It is the Risen Christ, in all the majesty of His strength and power—even over death,—that flashes into the midst of the Apostles on the very day of the Resurrection. Let us hear St. John. In the twentieth chapter of his Gospel he writes: "Now when it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut, where the Disciples were gathered together, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord. He said therefore to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When He had said this,

He breathed on them and He said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Did you not hear these words before? It is the Son of Man, now by death and Resurrection the proved Son of God, that met the challenge and healed the palsied man. And now He passes on the power. "Peace be to you," He says, and He says it again. It sums up the meaning of the Sacrament of Penance—peace to the soul. He breathes on them. It is not the first time that such breathing signifies something very great: God made man and breathed into him a living soul. God breathed on the waters: life sprang forth. Here Christ, the Son of God, breathes on His Apostles a new life: supernatural life from death by sin is inaugurated. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them." Here Christ passes on the power of the forgiveness of sin to His Church through the Apostles. He sets up a judicial tribunal. He gives the Apostles the power He has of right—to forgive sin—in His name and with His commission. The Sacrament of Penance is set up.

As the Holy Eucharist has ever been a distinguishing mark of the Church of Christ, so likewise has been the Sacrament of Penance. From the very beginning the Church and its ministers were conscious of the power they possessed in the forgiveness of sin, and it was everywhere preached and exercised. Wherever the ministry of Christ was introduced and applied, there was set up the confessional, which typifies the Sacrament of Penance. In every church, whether great or small, whether a little cabin or a great cathedral, the confessional was there to distribute the mercy of Christ and reconcile

men estranged from God by sin. It has always seemed very significant to me that in all those superb churches of Europe—of all the nations,—the confessional has its place of honor. Amid all the wealth of marble, and the beauty furnished by all the arts, the simple confessional is found to attest the mercy of Christ and to be the silent witness of the fact that here divine pardon is given to weak, sinful men. And today, after nearly 2000 years, every Catholic church in every land, in every part of the world, has its confessional, just as it has its altar and its pulpit. And it all goes back to Calvary and to the Cenacle at Jerusalem when the risen Saviour gave His power to men to forgive sins.

As Baptism was the provision for the removal of original sin, so Penance is the sacrament for the forgiveness of sin committed after Baptism. It can be seen at once what a bountiful gift it is; for, as Baptism is meant to be received shortly after birth, Penance is meant to remove the sins of commission during the years of childhood, adult life and old age. The necessary *matter* of the sacrament is the mortal sins committed after Baptism, whilst venial sins also may be presented for forgiveness through the sacrament. It is proper too, and advantageous, to present mortal and venial sins already confessed and forgiven, and for which the penitent wishes to renew sorrow. The *form* of this sacrament is the words of absolution uttered by the priest who sits in the tribunal: "I absolve thee from thy sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The *outward signs* and the *inward grace* are here evident, for there must always be the acts of the penitent to receive the Sacrament worthily, namely contrition, confession and satisfaction, and these are

so important and so comprehensive that I shall consider them in a later address.

The effects of the Sacrament of Penance are not only tremendous; they are also abundant and I should like to mention here what might be called its major benefits. There is the removal of mortal sin and also of the venial sins confessed with sorrow. Notice I say the *removal*, not merely the covering over of sin: they are not merely not imputed, but are washed away from the soul by the blood of Christ. Then there is the removal, together with the eternal guilt of sin, of the eternal punishment of sin, and also the temporal punishment according to the measure of the dispositions of the penitent—his sorrow, and the satisfaction. Hence there is involved the restoration to grace which has been lost by sin, the renewal of supernatural life quenched by sin. There is the return of the merit formerly attained, but lost by sin. And Penance, as every sacrament, in giving or increasing grace, makes the soul dearer to God. By the sacramental grace of the sacrament the penitent receives the *right* to those helps which will enable him to avoid sin in the future: the very sins he is prone to commit; and he is enabled to fight successfully temptation, and to do the deeds of penance which are so necessary, according to the word of Christ Himself: "Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish."

The wonderful effects of this sacrament might indeed make us hesitant in our belief if there were not the solid background that we know; for sin is sin, and nothing can change its essential malice—disobedience to God's Law. And there is the word of St. Augustine that when God forgives sin, He does something more wonderful than the Creation of the

world. In a word, the solution of the mystery is this: Jesus Christ on earth forgave sin in His own name, by His own right. He has left in His Church to His priests the power to forgive sin in His name, by His power, by His command, and commission. And again, the background is the Passion and death of the Divine Son of God. The merit of these is applied through the Sacrament of Penance, where we are washed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb. The confessional rests on Calvary, the Sacrificial Acts of the Cross by which we are Redeemed—meant to be Redeemed—not “with corruptible things as gold and silver. . . but with the precious blood . . . as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled.”

Oh, here is love unspeakable, only possible, only believable because divine—the outpouring of a Heart that beats human throbs for the love of the children of men. I have always thought that in the Sacrament of Penance there are refinements of love found nowhere else in the whole scheme of God's relations with man, even in the Holy Eucharist. Holy Eucharist He established for His friends by grace, but Penance for His enemies: for those who would disobey, disown and insult Him. For this is the sacrament by which man can return to God, no matter if his sins be as scarlet and as numerous as the sands of the seashore. Oh, God of mercy, this is love!

By every law of justice, when man sins he is ruined, and his ruin would be permanent, eternal, if God did not intervene. God does intervene by the Sacrament of Penance and thus gives to man not seven, but seventy times seven times the opportunity to renounce his sins and to hope again for eternal life. And the only price is man's humility, his renunciation of sin, and his humble confession that

attest the sorrow of his heart. If ever one had the disposition to doubt his salvation, to question God's Love for him, a sinful man, to despair when he realizes the number and malice of his sins, he needs only look up to the Cross of Christ and behold the tribunal of mercy, the Confessional, and find there the infallible word of Christ, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

THE TRIBUNAL OF MERCY—THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

PART II

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, July 5, 1931)

The working out of our salvation is largely the constant struggle against sin. Sin is in our blood; in our members, as St. Paul says. That the heart of man is prone to evil from his youth, is the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Sacred Scriptures, and it is our own sad experience that even when malice is absent, human weakness, frail humanity, is the source of many violations of the Law of God. What comfort lies in the doctrine of the forgiveness of sin, and the tribunal of mercy that we call the Sacrament of Penance! Because we are human, we crave love, and because we are human we need mercy.

Now what is the price of this mercy, this forgiveness of sin? Sin is against God—God alone: *Tibi soli peccavi*, "to Thee alone have I sinned," as the Royal Psalmist expresses it. And surely there must be some action on our part if sin is to be taken away. And this action of the sinner must be something definite, something decisive, for there is question of dealing with the God we have offended, and of the reversal of the will of the sinner that caused the act of sin. Hence the acts of the penitent who wishes pardon, acts which are called Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction. These are necessary in order to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily. These are the price, if I may so express it, they are the necessary conditions of forgiveness. They are

little enough to offer to God for the forgiveness of sin and even the salvation of the sinner's soul.

Contrition is the most necessary element of all in the forgiveness of sin—it is absolutely necessary, if sin is to be forgiven. God demands it: He must demand it, for God Himself could not take away from the soul the sin that the sinner has put there willingly unless he renounces that sin. Sin means turning away from God; contrition means turning back to God, renouncing the former rebellion of will which caused sin. Contrition means a breaking, a crushing of sin. It is the sorrow for sin, the hatred of sin and the true grief of soul for having offended God, as the catechism expresses it, with the firm purpose of sinning no more. This contrition to be genuine must have four qualities, four features that test its character. It must be *interior*, *supernatural*, *universal* and *sovereign*. Since sorrow for sin is the one absolutely indispensable requirement for the forgiveness of sin, we must linger here for a few moments to appraise these four qualities which break or crush the sin in the soul.

The sorrow, then, must be *interior*, that is, not merely a lip sorrow, it must come from the heart, the will. It is not enough to *say* we are sorry, we must mean it in the heart which is seen by God. Our sorrow must be *supernatural*, that is, above the natural, and must spring from supernatural motives; from God, in other words. When we do wrong, we may easily regret our evil deeds because of purely natural motives, such as being found out, or being punished, or because of the loss of our good name or our reputation, our health. Or perhaps our pride, our sense of importance is hurt. These are natural motives, they are not supernatural. They do not

touch God whom we have offended any they could never suffice for the forgiveness of sin. God in His mercy might use these sentiments to spur us on to make us realize our condition, but if our motives of sorrow rest there, there is no forgiveness. The sorrow, again, must be *sovereign*; that is, a sorrow of the appreciation of what sin is, a sorrow of the reason by which we recognize that sin is the greatest of evils, the only unqualified evil because it ruins the soul; whereas sickness, or death, the loss of money or goods or friends, the loss of health, though inconvenient and painful, are not evils that affect the soul or rob us of God's grace. This sovereign sorrow for sin, remember, is not therefore a grief of the emotional nature but a grief of the mind, of the soul valuing things at their proper worth. In the fourth place, the sorrow must be *universal*; that is it must embrace all our mortal sins. No matter how many or how grave are the sins of the soul, if one is clung to and not repented of, there can be no forgiveness. The soul is clean or unclean, it is in God's grace or it is not. And even one mortal sin makes it unclean—out of God's grace, and therefore all must go by universal sorrow or none can go.

Let me state here the distinction between *perfect* and *imperfect contrition*. Imperfect contrition means a sorrow by which we renounce our sins because by them we lose our right to heaven and merit hell. Surely here we are thinking of the consequences of sin as they affect us; still after all, God is included in this act, because heaven and hell have no meaning at all except that heaven means God's presence and hell His absence. Imperfect contrition, with the absolution of the priest in the Sacrament of Penance, will forgive sin, not because of the perfect

worthiness of the motives in themselves, but because God in His mercy will supply the deficiency by the grace of the sacrament received. There is something better than imperfect contrition and that is perfect contrition by which we regret our sins not on account of the evil consequences to ourselves—deprivation of our right to heaven and incurrance of eternal damnation—but because they offend God, who is all good and worthy of all our love. Here is an unselfish act of sorrow: we are sorry for having offended our God, our Father who is eternally lovable, and the only object really worthy of our love. This is a supernatural act and can of itself forgive sin, even though it be necessary to confess sin as far as possible. This act should always accompany the Sacrament of Penance. Not only that, but we should make it frequently, at least every night before retiring; and at the moment of death it should spring to our lips; for if God gave us this grace, our soul could be saved, even if it were not at that juncture possible to confess our sins and receive the Sacrament of Penance in the accustomed way.

You will recall that in the very definition of contrition there is contained the essential notion of resolving, with a firm determination, to sin no more. There can be no forgiveness of sin unless there is this resolution not to sin again. This does away at once with the idea sometimes expressed that we can have our sins forgiven merely by telling them in confession, reserving our liberty to do the same things again. This could not be true in the sight of God, for it would mean lack of genuine sorrow. It would be a fresh offense to our Creator. God knows our weakness, our instability, our changing moods, our temptations and dangers. He does not demand of us a

promise not to sin again. But He does demand, He must demand, an honest, sincere determination to avoid sin in the future. And the test of this is not merely the will to avoid a particular sin, but the fact of giving up the *occasions* of sin; that is, the persons, places, things and conditions that we know from past experience or settled knowledge are liable to lead us into sin. This is surely the "rending of our hearts and not our garments," as the Prophet urges. This is being straight with God.

Confession is the second part of the Sacrament of Penance, and is often the term we use to express the reception of the sacrament. We speak of "going to confession." And a good confession does embrace all the necessary elements for the forgiveness of sin. Confession is the telling of our sins to a duly authorized priest, making an honest statement of our sins as we feel they are in the sight of God and in the depths of our own conscience. I never could understand the objections raised to Confession. It seems to me that our Saviour is here appealing to a very deep instinct in the human breast, that impels us to expel our sin from our heart by an honest avowal of it. You will find that vein of thought in universal literature. Surely we do not wish to publish our sins, down in our hearts we are ashamed of them; but for all that there is a satisfaction and consolation in telling them to a tried and trusted friend and counselor. In the Sacrament of Penance the friend and counselor is the ordained priest, fully prepared by his training to sit in the tribunal of penance as father and physician as well as judge, to dole out the mercy of Jesus Christ to sorrowing sinners: a priest who can have compassion ("for he too is encompassed with infirmity") and whose lips are closed

by the seal of the confessional; who would lay down his life, as he must lay it down, if that be necessary, rather than break the silence of the confessional, which is not a human but a divine court of trial and mercy. May I refer in passing to the use of psycho-analysis in medical science and practice, and note the benefit to persons who are sick in mind and heart. This is, after all, confession, but it is confession without absolution; it is not the forgiveness of sin.

Confession should be *humble*, that is not merely an accurate statement of sin but a relation of sin with a sense of shame, of self-abasement, of conscious self-humiliation before God whom we have disobeyed. It should be *sincere* that is, a straightforward, honest, open statement of our sins—with truth, all the truth and nothing but the truth for our maxim—before the God who sees the secrets of the hearts and reins. It should be *entire*, namely, it should tell all mortal sins, in number and kind, and add any circumstances that might change the nature of the sin. It is such honesty that makes a worthy confession, and when we do our best there is a worthy confession, even though we might make a mistake through ignorance or nervousness or confusion. It is only when we are in bad faith that we make a sacrilegious confession which, of course, would not remove our sin but rather deepen our guilt. There is never any reason for this. We are dealing with a priest, a man; yes, but he is the agent for Him “who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins.” (COL. i, 13-14)

But there is a third requirement for the forgiveness of sin,—*Satisfaction*, the third part of the Sacrament of Penance. This means reparation for sin, doing penance for sin. Obviously with God it is little more than the evidence of our good will, our desire to atone, to satisfy for the offenses against Him. But it is absolutely necessary. The priest in confession gives what is called a *penance*; that is, he imposes the obligation of some prayers or good works in satisfaction, and these have a special value because of their connection with the sacrament. But we should never stop here. We must do other penance: “unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish.” We must satisfy for the temporal punishment due to sin, here or hereafter. And it is wisdom to do as much penance now as we can, and the real Catholic spirit embraces the virtue and practice of penance throughout the course of one’s life. Satisfaction also involves repairing any injury we have done, as far as we are able, such as making good any loss or injury we may have inflicted on our neighbor.

This last requirement suggests the tremendous social value of the Sacrament of Penance. It is all so simple, yet so comprehensive and far-reaching. Let me summarize the operation. A man decides to go to confession. He goes to the church, asks God for light to know his sins, and grace to detest them. He examines his conscience, finds out his sins, by number and kind. He makes acts of sorrow and regret, he asks pardon of God for his acts of disobedience. He promises to himself to repair any evil he has done; he resolves, with God’s grace, which he humbly begs, to give up those sins. He repairs to the confessional, makes the sign of the cross and announces his own guilt. He has no accuser—he is his own accuser. He

confesses his sins; he expresses sorrow and asks pardon, and on the strength of this, he receives absolution from the priest. He leaves the confessional a new man, with joy in his heart, strength in his will, grace in his soul. Now if you multiply that man by the millions of creatures who make up the world and society, you can appreciate what the world would be if all men accepted the word, the mercy and the forgiveness of sin which Jesus Christ doles out in the Sacrament of Penance.

Let me tell you again, and again, and again, that it is a wonderful story of divine love. And with like repetition, that it is all explained and made clear in the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. What joy it is to know we do not have to carry our sins through life. Imagine what a load they would be from childhood, adult years and old age! And to know that we can be "washed and made clean in the blood of the Lamb!" What joy in the consciousness of forgiven sin, a joy which no man knows but he that has made a good confession and felt in his heart the peace of Jesus Christ. What joy to know on the infallible word of Jesus Christ that in spite of our sins, we may still hope for God and His heaven! What a mystery of divine love to realize that there are millions of souls this day in heaven who had sinned and by every law of right and justice would have been doomed forever but are enjoying the beatific vision, yet are saved through Penance, the virtue and the sacrament. An eternity will be far too short to give thanks to God and His Crucified Son for these benefits. Meanwhile, we can all take heart, we can hope; for in the Church of Jesus Christ there is the Sacrament of Penance, and in common appreciation and gratitude we can use well and often this sacrament

of salvation, the supreme gift to sinners from Christ "in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i, 7).

A SANCTIFIED SOCIETY—THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

PART I

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in
the Catholic Hour, July 12, 1931)

The purpose of the Sacraments is the sanctification of the souls of men. They are the heritage of the Passion and death of Jesus Christ. They are also the heritage and evidence of His matchless love for the children of men. They belong to the supernatural order though enshrined in a natural setting, and they are meant to bring man with ease and security to his eternal destiny. They build up the Kingdom of God in men's souls, they build up the individuals that form a Christian society. The Sacrament of Matrimony with which we deal in two addresses is the gift of our Saviour not only to the individual but to society. It is the sacrament of a sanctified society.

Marriage goes back to the dawn of creation, to that far time when God made the world and placed in it the first human beings. God directly created Adam, and gave to him as a companion Eve, the first woman. After that the creation of human beings was to be in accordance with the forces and laws of nature,—God Himself to be always the immediate Creator of the soul. God made marriage His instrument for the peopling of the world, for the propagation of the human race. He is the author of marriage. He might, if He wished, have sent us all into the world as full grown men and women. He might have ordained direct, immediate creation of body as well as soul. He did not do this,

and the contract of marriage, that spiritual bond, was to be the basis of the propagation of the human family. It is not out of place here to remind you that the ultimate aim of God in creating human beings was their enjoyment of Him in an endless eternity. God made marriage and God made the marriage contract. The prime end of marriage is the procreation of children. There are other ends—to be a remedy for concupiscence, to furnish human association, love, protection, security in goods of life—but the prime end in God's mind is the generation of children in accordance with His design in creation. In addition, God Himself declared the essence of marriage to be the union of two in one, a moral union of two persons forming, as it were, a new creation. Upon this new creation, He both establishes a severe law and offers the essence of marriage: "Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife: and they shall be two in one flesh." Besides, God Himself established the prerogatives of marriage—unity and indissolubility—the marriage of one man with one woman and the bond that can be broken only by the death of one of the parties to the contract. There is something final and comprehensive in these facts of the natural law and the positive, divine law: God is the author of the marriage contract; the prime end of marriage is the procreation of children; the essence of marriage is the union of two in one; the marks of unity and indissolubility. In the very beginning God decreed these things, and no man and no state can interfere with them. They are God's spoken word—His unchangeable law. And it is interesting to note that whenever and wherever marriage is attacked, some one or other of these eternal truths is

impugned. But man speaks too late: God has spoken first. The matter is closed.

By every law of human association, a contract is a sacred thing. There enter into it the highest things of which man is capable—truth, fidelity, honor, sacrifice, loyalty. Marriage is the very highest type of contract: into it enters all that is best and noblest in human nature. Marriage is sacred, most sacred, even as a contract. But it is something more since Jesus Christ raised marriage, the contract of marriage, to the dignity of a sacrament. It is a sacrament of the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ to sanctify the lawful union of Christian man and woman. This speaks its holy character. It is one of the channels of grace by which Christ enriches the souls of men, gives the graces needed for men, and thus it takes its place in the holy series of sacraments—with Baptism, Penance and Holy Eucharist. It is holy in its origin, holy in its scope, holy in its end. Our Saviour Himself bore testimony that marriage had lost a great deal of its pristine dignity and holy character. He distinctly bore testimony to the fact that the concessions made by the Law of *Moses* were due to the hardness of men's hearts, but He said "from the beginning it was not so," and He set about the remedy, and the Sacrament of Matrimony was the result. He realized that the low condition of society was largely due to the desecration of marriage, and He offers the Sacrament of Matrimony as a vital means in the regeneration of society, and in the creation of the new polity and civilization which has been known for two thousand years as Christendom or Christian society.

Our Lord's estimate of marriage as a holy thing is thus made plain, and His coming into the world

in the manner in which He did come is also His estimate, for He came largely in a human way. He had no human father, but Mary was literally His Mother and thus He exalted the family idea; for Joseph was the legal husband of Mary; and that Family—Jesus, Mary and Joseph—is the cornerstone of Christian society which seeks its basic unit in the family. The Sacrament of Matrimony was probably instituted by our Saviour at the marriage feast of Cana in Galilee when He performed His first miracle at the request of His Mother, and added to the joy of the nuptial party. Its *external* character is evident as in the case of the outward acts which attest any contract. The *matter* of the sacrament is the mutual consent of the two parties entering the married state to give themselves to each other; and the *form* is the formal expression by which each one takes the other for husband or wife, “for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, until death do us part.” The inward grace is promised by our Saviour to those who enter married life according to the requirements of the sacrament.

It is for a double purpose that I now refer to the Epistle to the Ephesians, written by St. Paul when he was a prisoner in Rome, about 29 years after the Ascension of our Lord. In the first place, it gives us the historical facts of the acceptance of Christ’s idea of marriage, as understood in the early Church, as it was known and practiced for a third of a century following the establishment of the Christian Church. And again it gives a new light on the sanctity and dignity of the marriage contract, raised to the eminence of a sacrament. St. Paul had preached at Ephesus for about three years in all, and he is now writing to those people remind-

ing them of his presence and preaching among them, and giving them practical and salutary advice on various topics. Here he becomes the champion of holy marriage. It is in the fifth chapter that he writes: "Let women be subject to their husbands, as to the Lord: because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church. . . . Therefore as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church, and delivered Himself up for it: That He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life: That He might present it to Himself as a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing: but that it should be holy, and without blemish. So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church." This is remarkable language and puts marriage on a high plane, indeed. The union between Christ and His Church is made the symbol of the union effected in Christian marriage. It is the ideal of Christian marriage. In the administration of the Sacrament of Matrimony it is unique that the contracting parties themselves are the ministers of the sacrament: they effect the sacrament, whilst the priest, who is the ordinary minister of the sacraments, is but the witness, though the necessary witness of the ceremony. Thus they become, as it were, the priest: the man, who is symbolized by Christ in the make-up of the Church, confers on the woman, symbolized by the Church in that mystic marriage, those qualities of soul that make her a fit emblem of the Church, the Bride of

Christ; and the woman in turn, conferring on the man those characteristics of soul that make him a worthy symbol of Christ Himself. Here marriage is unique and holy. No wonder St. Paul adds: "This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church," and this is marriage in the mind of Christ and thus used in the early Church, and ever since the ideal in Christian society.

Christian marriage comes to the soul already constituted in grace by Baptism or Penance, and, in conformity with the nature of the sacraments, increases sanctifying grace. It would be a sacrilege to receive it in a state of mortal sin and marriage therefore means a more abundant supply of God's grace—the grace, as the Council of Trent expresses it, which perfects that natural love and confirms the indissoluble union, Christ Himself, the author and finisher of the sacraments, has merited for us by His Passion. The bond of marriage, therefore, is sealed by the blood of Christ.

Likewise, Matrimony has its own *sacramental* graces which, as you will remember, are given by reason of the individual sacrament, to enable the recipient to accomplish the ends for which the sacrament was instituted. In Matrimony these may be considered in three classes. First, the love of the parties of the marriage is sanctified and ennobled. It is begun in nature; it is consummated in grace. How necessary that the love of youth, the charms and graces of early life, the physical health and integrity should receive this spiritual support, comprised in God's grace, that will still cement the association when natural gifts vanish or are destroyed! Love is needed for marriage in its inception; love is needed throughout its course, for the parties

themselves and for the children; and love is needed when the years bring on old age. The grace of Matrimony is ever at hand to produce this sanctified affection.

In the second place, grace is given to enable the husband and wife to live together in peace and harmony. All phases of life are filled with differences, difficulties, irritations and anxieties, and married life is no exception. It is more subject to these in fact, because of its intimacy, its closer and more constant association. In marriage our Saviour has provided for this: He promises grace by reason of the sacrament that will be the support and help in the trying moments of married life. He will supply grace for tolerance, mutual consideration, generosity, forbearance—all so needed for fidelity, happiness and success in married life. But holy matrimony always looks to the children of the sacramental union. The parents are thrice the parents of the children whom God sends to them. They are the instruments that God uses for the physical life of the little ones; they are the appointed agents of God to bring them to the supernatural life by Baptism; and they are the natural guardians, teachers and leaders to bring them, by word and example, to eternal life. By holy marriage the parents receive the grace to enable them to bring up the children in the fear and love of God. This is the supreme mission of parenthood. A tremendous dignity, a tremendous responsibility! It is wonderful to rear a huge shaft, a superb building, but this is nothing to rearing a man or woman—a human temple that shoots its summit into eternity—a living man or woman with an immortal soul that holds God's image, that was purchased by the blood of Christ and that is destined for the bea-

tific vision and eternal enjoyment of God. Parents in every sacramental marriage receive the grace to do this.

But such an ideal! How can there be disaster or failure? Yet, there is failure. Perhaps many persons are ignorant of these things. Perhaps they entered the state thoughtlessly, frivolously; perhaps they did not consider it seriously. Whatever the reason, this is certain: where there is disaster or failure, rest assured that one or the other of the parties concerned, or both, do not use, do not accept the graces of the married state promised and offered by Jesus Christ in the institution of this great sacrament. It is only consistent and logical that the Church should be very vigilant where marriage is concerned and in another address we shall see further evidence of this vigilance, a deeper testimony of Christ's love as manifested in holy Matrimony.

A SANCTIFIED SOCIETY—THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

PART II

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in the Catholic Hour, July 19, 1931)

It would be idle to pretend to think that the teachings of Jesus Christ are faithfully put into practice by all men. Perhaps in no other matter is the Gospel of our Saviour more abused than in His teaching on holy marriage. But for all that, His word is there, and it will remain, for "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

In this address, we are to consider further His word—His institution of Matrimony as a sacrament—and we note at once that it is to His Church that He has committed it for its perpetuation, its integrity and its perfection. The whole idea of Christian marriage is so serious, so far-reaching in consequences, that it is not strange the Church considers marriage as a *vocation*—something comprehensive, stable, fixed, final, and with results reaching into eternity. It is souls, always souls, that the Church has in mind in preaching and defending the principles of marriage. Hence, before their marriage the Church wishes her children to consider well the state to be entered, to count the cost, as it were, for undoubtedly many are not fitted for this state, by reason of physical defects, mental conditions, temperament. And when one enters a vocation unfitted for it there is liable to be difficulty, distress, even failure.

Let me name the chief attributes of marriage: unity and indissolubility. These are its support and attest its dignity. In the long run, these are the

sanctions of marriage, and they are the rights and safeguards of the man and woman venturing so much in making marriage vows. The *unity* of marriage means the marriage of one man with one woman. *Indissolubility* means the integrity of the bond until the death of one of the parties. Unity and indissolubility are correlative. One demands the other. In a sense they supplement each other. One man marries one woman in God's decree and a bond is created which prevents disunion. The bond is unbreakable because of the permanency connoted by the union of one man and one woman. Whatever concessions were made by the Mosaic law, it is plain that from the beginning God's will called for the unity of marriage: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh"—two in one flesh, not three or four! And our Divine Saviour in restoring marriage to its first dignity and raising it to the character of a sacrament, emphasizes the word of God as given in the Book of Genesis, and adds, "Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh." Again *two*, not three! Polygamy is plainly repudiated by Jesus Christ.

Indissolubility means that in a truly contracted marriage there is no such thing as breaking the bond. Let a man "*cleave* to his wife." They are one; it is the law of God. No man can break this tie, no body of men; no whim or fancy or determination of the individual; no enactment of so-called law, or any legislation or body of legislators; no state, no nation: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." And God hath joined together man and woman by a sacred contract that reaches out to every creature of God. Divorce, therefore, is plainly

condemned by the positive law of God, as it is by the legislation of the Church. There might be reason for separation, but never divorce with the right to marry, once a valid marriage has been consummated.

It is sharp language that our Lord uses in expressing the stable character of marriage and its binding force. "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery" . . . "and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery." Plainly the Sixth Commandment is concerned, for it explicitly states the law: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." If it is this foul thing, then the bond in the original contract stands.

Here again, St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians expresses the practice of the early Church and adds his testimony to the unbreakable character of marriage. "A woman," he says, "is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty. . . To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband. And if she depart that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband." Evidently St. Paul does not tolerate divorce or separation, with the right to marry another. This principle has always been accepted by the Catholic Church and her defense of indissoluble marriage through the course of nearly 2000 years has been one of the outstanding features of the history of Christianity. In many crises, the Church has stood firm in her teaching and she has seen losses of individuals and nations because she would not compromise or minimize the stern doctrine of Jesus Christ. If the law is inflexible and seems severe, consider the many and disastrous evils of lax views on

marriage. If divorce is permissible in the first case, why not in the second, the tenth or the twentieth? If it is permissible for one, why not for all? Of course this would mean just what some take it to mean—free love, companionate marriage, personal liberty, absolute freedom—but this is only using euphonious language for license, human passion run riot, animality debased, plain adultery whose scarlet letter still burns and corrodes. You cannot dress up adultery to make it look respectable. Adultery is adultery and it is involved in divorce.

Besides this spiritual, religious warrant for Christian marriage, it has the support and sanction of high-class thinkers and statesmen. Polygamy is branded as corruption, and even on purely natural grounds students of social science consider it inferior to the religious concept of marriage. Easy divorce and remarriage tend to weaken and even destroy the social fabric, the society that finds its finest support and most solid foundation in the Christian character of marriage. And it is historical fact that for almost 2000 years the current thought of each period accepted literally, in theory, even if there were violations in fact, the Christian standard as given by the Catholic Church in all that period. It was the accepted social ideal, as can be attested by studying the legislation of any country in Christendom. It is the shame of our time that divorce is growing. It is a cancer in our social polity. It is ruinous to the individual who cannot be expected to hold to any ideal if here there is no sacred standard, and it is ruinous to that society in which stable marriage does not provide for the true well being socially, educationally and religiously of the rising generation, who are themselves to become the society

of the future. It is further to our shame that divorce is so prevalent here in the United States, for in this we have the highest percentage of any Christian nation! Oh, the pity of it. No man can flout with impunity the law of God. Neither can any nation, and history writes the epitaph of nations, once prosperous and great, now broken and forgotten, that tampered with the law of God; and I know of no more significant cases than those nations that repudiated God's will in the matter of marriage and therefore of fundamental morality.

When it is recognized that marriage is a holy thing, one of the seven sacraments, it follows logically that it is to the Church of Jesus Christ that it belongs as such. The Church is its guardian and protector, and its mouthpiece, as in the case of all the other sacraments. This trust the Church has always accepted and Christ's original ideal has always been upheld in all the ages and in all nations. Hence it is the Church that regulates matters touching the sacramental character of marriage, though, of course, the State has the right to make laws governing the purely civic and social side of the contract. The Church has her code of law governing the sacrament and has provided legislation necessary and useful for the benefit of souls and the integrity of the Christian ideal.

In this code of law we find what are called *diriment impediments* that nullify a marriage contract unless they can be and are removed before the parties attempt marriage. You might call a diriment impediment the obstacle that prevents the possibility of a marriage. It has its counterpart, say, in a law made by the state which would prevent any contract, for example, in case of a minor. These *diri-*

ment impediments are not mere enactments to curb our liberty; they are expressions in some cases of the divine will of God. Diriment impediments are founded on the natural law, the positive divine law and the Church law; indeed the very law of decency is sometimes concerned. It is a diriment impediment that nullifies a marriage attempted by one party whose husband or wife is still living. It is a diriment impediment that nullifies a marriage contracted through serious fear, as if one were held in bondage and forced to go through the marriage ceremony. It is a diriment impediment that nullifies a marriage attempted when an unfaithful partner has had illicit relations with another with the promise of marriage at the death of the lawful partner. It is a diriment impediment that nullifies a marriage with a person of close blood relationship. I have said that in all cases of a diriment impediment the marriages are null and void unless the impediment is removed by the proper authority. This authority is sometimes the Bishop, always the Pope. But it must be remembered that even the Pope cannot interfere where there is question of the natural law. The Holy Father, in his wisdom, can grant a dispensation for first cousins to marry in certain conditions. He could not recognize as lawful a marriage into which a person was forced. This involves the natural law.

Another provision of the Church's legislation is that which concerns what is called a "mixed marriage," that is, the marriage of a Catholic with one not of the same faith. Whilst the Church law is very explicit on this point and nullifies such a marriage unless a dispensation has been granted the matter may really involve the positive divine law and the natural law. The preservation of divine faith—first

given in Baptism—is involved, and this is the root gift of God to his children. The Church opposes such marriages because of the dangers to faith of the Catholic party, as also to the code of Catholic morality; but chiefly because of the danger to the faith of the children of the union. That the dangers are real, serious and far-reaching the Church knows by actual facts and experience. This legislation should cause no ill will on the part of those not of our Faith. It is a religious matter purely, it is not a social matter, nor a matter of comparative temporal values or class distinction. It is founded on the principles which I have often heard expressed and emphasized by ministers of different denominations, that “people should marry in their own faith.” Religion is the most important thing in a person’s life and those bound together by so intimate a union as marriage should be of the same religious character, and this for their own peace and harmony and for the welfare and upbringing of the children. In the Catholic ideal of marriage, the husband and wife have mutual *religious* obligations and their souls can best be benefited by unity in faith and morals as proposed by the Church.

It is also Church law that a Catholic must be married, under penalty of nullity, before a priest and at least two witnesses. There is vast wisdom in this as there is in so many points of Church legislation. It guarantees, for instance, impossibility of a marriage at a moment’s notice by requiring the public announcement of the contemplated marriage for three weeks, at the Sunday services. How many broken hearts and wrecked lives attest the wisdom and sanity of this and other enactments of Church law!

And it is all, as I have said, in view of souls—for their benefit and their salvation. If marriage is a sacrament, is it not only consistent that the Church should say that courtship is the preparation for the sacrament, and thus declare by one stroke what its character should be—a time of serious thought and prayer; a time not to be abused by frivolity or sin; a time to prepare for the responsibilities of future years. If it is a sacrament, then married persons should live up to their marriage vows, their promises of loyalty, mutual support and human consolation; and in all their relations they should keep their high principles of honor, personal dignity, chaste manhood and womanhood.

Parenthood ranks high in the mind of the Church, for it is a holy vocation; beset with difficulties, to be sure, filled with responsibilities, certainly, but bringing joys that are supreme. Father and Mother are terms that are sacred in every language and speak of a love that is unique and changeless. It is holy marriage that gives a meaning, value and true appreciation to parenthood. Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives are saving their souls when they are true to the ideals Jesus Christ proclaimed for holy marriage.

Holy Marriage is the Sacrament of a Sanctified Society—the gift of Jesus Christ in His sacramental plan for the sanctification of men. The family is the basis of society, and society can never be any more than that which it is made by the families that constitute it. Christ has sanctified the family idea by the Sacrament of Matrimony. It gives grace to the individual not merely as an individual but also as a member of society. Society is weak or strong in the measure that the family is weak or strong. But it

must be strong if the graces that flow from Matrimony are accepted and used. There is a close bond between the integrity of marriage and social morality. The Church has ever been the strong bulwark of fundamental morality and she has exercised this trust largely by her fidelity to Christ's ideal of marriage and by her marriage legislation. You can gauge pretty well the actual standard of morality in any period of history by its practical reaction to the marriage contract. It is a sanctified society that prepares men for the great society of eternity: the souls of men sanctified by grace and bought for Heaven by the blood of Christ.

THE END OF THE COMBAT—THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION

(Address delivered by Rev. Dr. Edward J. Walsh, C. M., in
the Catholic Hour, July 26, 1931)

If, according to the word of Scripture, "the life of man on earth is a continual warfare," and if we recall the testimony of St. Peter that the "devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about, seeking whom he may devour," it is surely a stimulating thing to know that our Divine Saviour, who shed His blood for us, has provided helps and graces to enable us to fight manfully, and to conquer all our spiritual enemies. These graces are always at our disposal and we find their chief expression in the seven sacraments of the Church. It can be said that the sacraments are given to us to enable us to live well, and when we come to the end of life, to the end of the spiritual combat, there is waiting for us a specific sacrament that in the design of Jesus Christ is meant to enable us to die well. This is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.

Never must it be thought that this sacrament is a sort of miraculous remedy for a sinful life. It is an accepted spiritual maxim that death is the echo of life, and also that "as a man lives so will he die." Making allowance for extraordinary conversions at the end of life, the Sacrament of Extreme Unction is the gift of Christ to one who is a child of the Church and one who, though weak and frail, has been a faithful child of the Church through effort, and by devotion and obedience to God's Law.

The Sacrament of Extreme Unction is a sacrament which through the anointing and prayers of the priest gives health and strength to the soul and sometimes to the body when one is in danger of death from sickness. The road to eternity is not broad, but narrow : it is at least somewhat hard and rough, and, therefore uncertain, and surely it is a gracious thing on the part of our Saviour to provide this sacrament to give strength and confidence, not to say consolation, to make the journey into the mysterious eternity.

The word "unction" means anointing and this sacrament is the last anointing—the last sacrament we receive in order of time as Baptism is the first. Moreover, it is the *last* anointing, for we recall that we receive anointings with holy oil in Baptism: *three times* the sign of the cross is made, with oil, on our breast, on our shoulders and on our head, turning us over wholly to the service of God. Again in Confirmation, we are anointed with holy oil by the Bishop. In Holy Orders, the candidate is solemnly anointed. In Extreme Unction, we have the last anointing, and the oil used is called the oil of the sick. It is solemnly blessed by the Bishop in the cathedral church of the diocese on Holy Thursday and then distributed to the parish churches to be used for the administration of this sacrament.

In Extreme Unction, we have the three elements that enter into the nature of each sacrament. There is the *outward sign*—the application of the holy oil to the senses of the body, with the determination of its significance by the words used by the priest in the actual anointing of each sense. There is the *inward grace* promised by our Saviour for the use of

this sacred rite; and the *institution* by Christ, who alone can give grace, and who alone can attach infallible results to physical actions. It is St. James that gives the most explicit testimony to the character and value of Extreme Unction. In the Epistle that bears his name, in chapter five, we read: "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." This is vigorous testimony to the fact of the sacrament and to its wonderful effects—effects which could only find their cause and source in God. This is the teaching of the Church at all times, as many Councils bear witness. And it is the doctrine and practice attested by Ambrose, Chrysostom and Gregory the Great in the primitive ages of the Church. Innocent III, who was Pope and Vicar of Christ in the last years of the Twelfth, and in the early part of the Thirteenth Century, refers specifically to it and recommends it constantly to the people. And the Council of Trent anathematizes anyone who presumes to think or teach otherwise than the accepted truth and practice of the sacrament. And all over the Catholic world there is as much provision for the administration of this sacrament as for the use of any other. The holy oil is kept in the sanctuary in all our churches in a little silver vessel called the oil stock; and the priest, when summoned to the bedside of the sick or dying, takes with him the sacred oil of the sick and confers the Sacrament of Extreme Unction after having given the Sacrament of Penance and Holy Communion. These, under such circumstances, are frequently referred

to as the Last Rites of the Church and it is the hope and earnest prayer of every Catholic that when life is done he may have the supreme gift of God in the reception of these spiritual treasures.

The *matter* used in the sacrament is oil—another case of our Saviour using common things in nature to symbolize grace. Thus, we have the *water* in Baptism, *bread and wine* in the Holy Eucharist, and *oil* in Confirmation. Here, again, in Extreme Unction is oil used—the oil of olives. “Oil,” says the Council of Trent, (and it here embodies the thought of St. Thomas), “is very efficacious in soothing bodily pain, and this sacrament soothes and alleviates the pain and anguish of the soul. Oil also contributes to restore health and spirits, serves to give light, and refreshes one fatigued; and these effects correspond with, and are expressive of, those produced, through the divine power, on the sick, by the administration of this Sacrament.” The *form* which determines this matter of oil is: “By this holy unction and through His great mercy, may God pardon thee whatever sins thou hast committed by sight, touch, hearing,” etc., accordingly as each organ of the senses is anointed.

I should like to linger here to note the beauty and significance of the Ritual of Extreme Unction. It is really very touching and it reveals the deep solicitude of the Church for the sick and suffering, and the far-reaching consequences of sacramental prayer and practice. Using some preliminary prayers, the priest makes this solemn appeal: “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, may every power of the devil be destroyed in thee by the imposition of our hands and by the invocation of the holy Angels, Archangels, Patriarchs, Pro-

phets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins and all the Saints. Amen." Then he proceeds to the actual anointing of the eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands and feet. He uses the form I have described and places the oil with the sign of the cross on each of these senses and members of the body. What is the reason of this anointing of these senses? The senses are the avenues of sin: practically all sin enters the soul through the ears, eyes, hands, etc.; "death is come up through our windows," as the Sacred Scriptures express it. So true is this that strictly internal sins largely reach the soul through impressions conveyed by the outward senses.

Is not all this a proof of the thoughtfulness and love that prompts our Saviour at the crucial moment of life—at death—to give, as it were, a grand, solemn, final absolution of all the sins committed through life? The concluding prayers are likewise very impressive. As the priest, when anointing, prepares the soul for death by the last blessing and the use of other prayers in the Ritual, I cannot refrain from quoting that sublime introduction into eternity that the Church places on his lips for the benefit of the dying soul: "Go forth, Christian soul, from this world, in the name of God the Father who created thee, in the name of Jesus Christ who suffered for thee, and in the name of the Holy Ghost who is poured forth into thee."

Here are blessings indeed and they are waiting for all of us. The sacrament should be received by all who are in danger of death. I say *in danger* of death: and that is when a person is taken with a pronounced illness or suffers a severe accident that is liable to bring on death. This should not be interpreted as at the *moment* of death. A delay here is

often fatal, for even in a lingering illness, death sometimes comes quickly. It is pitiful that, because of delay in calling the priest, many die without this sacrament and thus are denied the very helps which our Saviour meant them to have during their illness and at the end of life. It is a real kindness and charity to send for a priest in time when there is illness in our home or among our friends or neighbors. Let the benefit of a doubt be given in favor of the sick.

Now, let us note the splendid effects and benefits of this sacrament. As a sacrament of the living, Extreme Unction demands that for its reception the one sick must have received the pardon of his sins. If possible, the priest will therefore antecedently hear the confession of the sick person. Hence Extreme Unction adds a wealth of grace to the soul already living by grace. However, if the sick person were unable to make a confession, and were in mortal sin, the sacrament could remit even this, though it is not intended primarily to do so. But of its own power the Sacrament of Extreme Unction does remit venial sin. Of course, you will keep in mind that always for the forgiveness of all sin there must be genuine sorrow in the heart. It is on that disposition that grace builds up.

Then, too, Extreme Unction removes what are called the "remains of sin," that is, the disposition or inclination or tendency to evil and sin, and the weakness and inconstancy of the will, which are the direct consequences of sin and which remain even after sins are forgiven and removed. Sin is so terrible an infection that even when destroyed it leaves its mark—as scars from a healed wound, or weakness from a grave illness. It is these conditions that

the Sacrament of Extreme Unction removes or lessens by its healing grace.

Another malignant evil of sin is a serious spiritual languor and disrelish for prayer and spiritual things. This is always to be deplored, but especially so at the time of death, when we would naturally wish to be in close communion with God. The grace of the sacrament helps us in this prostrate condition and stimulates the drooping soul. The grace of the sacrament consoles and strengthens the sick at a time when, partly because of physical conditions, such a person is a prey to discouragement and despair. It must be a shock to realize that one is going into eternity and that immediately one will stand before Jesus Christ, as Judge, to be judged according to one's deeds! Little wonder that fear, dread, anxiety and worry over past sin, over good left undone, should arise before the mind of the sick person. Our loving Saviour provides for this too in His Sacrament of Extreme Unction. In the beautiful words of the Council of Trent: "It quiets our fear, illumines the gloom in which the soul is enveloped, fills it with pious and holy joy, and enables us to wait with cheerfulness the coming of the Lord."

But there is another dangerous situation that the soul faces in its last moments. All through life, the devil tempts us, lures us from God in many and subtle ways, in his efforts to ruin us. It is only to be expected that he would tempt and torture the stricken person in the last effort to win a soul from God. But here again, human weakness is met by divine strength, for the Sacrament of Extreme Unction brings grace to enable one to be victorious in such a combat.

Finally, the sacrament may even restore bodily

health. This is not an infallible result; neither is there any promise of miraculous restoration. But if it be for the welfare of the soul, the sacrament may produce, and as a matter of fact has often produced this physical result.

All of the sacraments are evidences of our Saviour's generous love. It will neither take time nor present any difficulty to see in all these effects of Extreme Unction a divine love that is made up of concern, solicitude, consolation, benevolence, helpfulness for the children of men. Once more, must we say, if we are grateful: "Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God;" for, "blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." I know not what this means if it does not refer to a soul that passes from time to eternity fortified with the rites and blessings of Holy Mother Church, which includes the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, the specific divine help given for the crisis that settles for all eternity the fate of the individual human being.

And so ends the story of the sacraments: in the shadow of the eternal years! A glorious story, truly, covering all the years of man's life on earth, answering all his spiritual needs, his aspirations, his yearnings. Oh, why should any man starve spiritually, or even be hungry in the midst of such divine plenty? There is room for all in the vast compass of Christ's redeeming blood, applied through these divine treasures. Herein, speaking practically, is the source of sanctity, "the fountain of water, grace springing up into life everlasting." The best expression of gratitude for these priceless gifts is their frequent use all through life. The Church of Christ must dispense them freely in accordance with the will of Christ: **that is a test of her truth.** It is the test of a personal,

practical Catholic faith to receive them with fidelity and eagerness. This is the will of our Saviour who loved us and delivered Himself for us. May His will be done in all men! In particular, may I say, let it be done in all those who are my unseen audience, for, in the vivid language of St. Paul to the Philippians: "God is my witness, how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." May I make his prayer for the Thessalonians my own as I depart: "May the God of peace Himself sanctify you in all things; that your whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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