

FREQUENT COMMUNION
*Herbst, Winfrid, 1891 -
Frequent communion cont...
ADR 2941*

AND THE
Eucharistic
FAST



BY
Winfrid
Herbst,
S.D.S.

A QUEEN'S WORK
PAMPHLET

Deacidified

FREQUENT COMMUNION AND THE EUCHARISTIC FAST

by
Winfred Herbst, S.D.S.

AN ARDENT INVITATION

Listen to these consoling words of the Divine Savior: "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament wants us; we need Him; what in the world should keep us apart?

JESUS WANTS US

The Divine Savior wants us. He commands us to come to Him. "This is the bread that cometh down from heaven," He says, "that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever" (John 50:52). In other words, "If you would live forever, you must come," He says.

From the Decree on Daily Communion, issued in 1905, we likewise learn the will of the Savior, speaking through His Holy Church. Therein we read: "Frequent and daily Communion, as a thing most ardently

desired by Christ our Lord and by the Catholic Church, should be open to all the faithful, of whatever rank and condition of life; so that no one who is in the state of grace, and who approaches the Holy Table with a right intention, can lawfully be hindered therefrom."

WE NEED HIM

He wants us. And we need Him. Who need Him? The perfect, because, being well disposed, it would not be right for them to remain away from the source and fountain of perfection; the imperfect, just that they may become perfect. Who need Him? The strong that they may not become weak; and the weak that they may become strong. Who? The sick that they may be cured; the well that they may not become sick. Who need Him? Those who have few worldly affairs, because they have leisure for daily Communion; those who have many business affairs, because they cannot well do without It.

EFFECTS OF HOLY COMMUNION

All the sacraments have as their effect the giving of sanctifying grace or the increasing of that grace and hence the uniting us with God considered as our supernatural end. But at the same time they give sacramental grace, a special assistance to help us realize the particular end for which the Savior instituted each sacrament. The sacramental grace in Holy Communion consists in the increase and preservation of the supernatural life by means of an intimate union with Christ and His mystical body,

which is the Church. "We are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread," says St. Paul (1 Cor. 10:17).

We now briefly enumerate the principal effects of the Eucharist. The first two are called essential, the others incidental.

1. The spiritual nourishment of the soul, which consists in an increase of sanctifying grace, of virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit, with a right to special actual graces for the conservation, increase and perfection of the supernatural life. "He who eats me, he also shall live because of me" (John 6:58).

2. Intimate union with Christ and with His mystical body through grace and charity, in which union an essential effect of this sacrament is found. "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him" (John 6:57).

3. The remission of venial sins. The Council of Trent teaches that this sacrament is "the antidote whereby we are freed from daily faults."

4. Preservation from mortal sins. The same Council teaches that this sacrament is "the antidote whereby we are preserved from mortal sins."

5. It moderates the ardor of carnal desires, checks the fire of concupiscence, weakening, but not entirely extinguishing, movements of the flesh which are incompatible with this union with Christ.

6. The pledge of and preparation for a glorious resurrection of the body. "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has

everlasting life and I will raise him up on the last day." (John 6:55.)

7. The pledge of future glory and perpetual happiness in the bliss of heaven. Through the Eucharist that union with Christ which is begun here on earth is consummated in glory in heaven.

8. The fervor of charity, namely, an urge to spiritual things or a burning charity that draws one to God, makes one gladly and promptly perform the duties of Christian life, despise worldly things, and faithfully serve God, not only in necessary but also in other things. All of which follows from the union with Christ by charity.

9. Spiritual sweetness, delight, and joy. "Taste and see that the Lord is sweet." The Eucharist is a source of joy which lessens the attractiveness of temptation, drives away sadness and discouragement, and enables us to experience supernatural gladness and to taste the sweetness of God's goodness. Sometimes this joy makes itself felt even in our senses, though this effect is not infallible nor even common. And, of course, it is not necessary for a worthy and fruitful Communion.

10. The remission or diminution of the temporal punishment due to sin (indirectly and secondarily), because with the remission of venial sins some part of the temporal punishment is remitted and because of the acts of love inspired by this sacrament. (Cf. Cappello, Noldin, Durieux.)

WHAT SHOULD KEEP US APART?

Then what in the world should keep us apart? What should keep the soul from its God?

1. Do not tell me that you refrain from daily Communion because you are afraid of making an unworthy, sacrilegious Communion. I repeat that one thing, and one thing only, is *necessary* for a worthy Communion: the state of grace. If you are certain that you have no mortal sin which you have not confessed, you cannot make a bad Communion.

2. Do not tell me that you abstain from daily Communion because of violent temptations. Precisely because of them you should "put on the armor of God." If the devil tempts you now, how much more will he do so if you remain away? He so dreads this saving sacrament that he often redoubles his temptations on the eve and in the very reception of Communion. Remember that temptation is no sin and do not worry.

3. You tell me that you sometimes remain away from Holy Communion because you have forgotten to confess certain mortal sins and don't want to, or cannot, enter the confessional again before Communion. I reply that mortal sins forgotten in confession are indirectly forgiven by sacramental absolution. There is no obligation to confess again before presenting yourself at the Holy Table. They are forgiven. The only obligation is to tell them in the *next regular* confession.

4. Do not tell me you fear to approach Jesus daily because you have committed

many mortal sins in the past — mortal sins which you fear you have not confessed as you should have done. "I'm afraid I have not received forgiveness," you say. Are you sure of that? Sure that you have not? Can you swear to it with your hand on the crucifix? If not, then hold on to the decision of St. Alphonsus, that your confessions were well made.

5. Do not tell me that the fear of having committed a mortal sin keeps you back. I answer in the words of Our Lord to St. Teresa, "No one loses Me" (by mortal sin) "without knowing it for certain." You will communicate worthily even if you do so with the doubt; for only unconfessed *certain* mortal sin can make your Communion bad. If you are not scrupulous, it might be better to confess in case of doubt. But if it is a case of communicating with a doubt or remaining away from Communion that day, it is better to receive Communion. Make an act of perfect contrition and go.

6. Do not tell me you have no time for daily or weekly confession. Who told you confession is necessary every eight days? Strictly speaking, confession is necessary only for those who have committed mortal sins. No; there is no obligation to confess every week, much less every day, in order to go to daily Communion. True, if daily communicants cleanse their souls in the Sacrament of Penance each week, they do the ideal thing; but if they go twice a month it is quite sufficient; and even then their confessions can and should be very brief and to the point. That is important!

So remember that all you need for worthy Communion is the state of grace. And if

you add to the state of grace what the Church desires, that is, a right intention, the permission of your confessor, obtained once a year, for instance, and freedom from voluntary distractions in the act of receiving, then you always communicate devoutly — absolutely so! The right intention implies that you go to Communion, not out of habit, vainglory, or human respect, but to please God and to seek this remedy for sin.

But you may say that you abstain from this adorable sacrament through respect. I answer with a Doctor of the Church that it is better to receive daily through love than to abstain sometimes through respect. "The greatest of these is charity."

But you have no time to prepare, you say. You have no time to make a thanksgiving. A special preparation and thanksgiving are to be highly recommended. But if you have no special time, no special time is required. Come in recollected; kneel a moment in prayer; receive the Savior devoutly; kneel again for a moment; go out recollected still. If you have no special time, know, as St. Alphonsus says, that if you discharge your different duties with the intention of pleasing God, all will serve you for preparation and thanksgiving. Never omit your daily Communion for want of time to prepare for it in church or because you cannot make your thanksgiving in church. Will not others be scandalized? No; only our modern Pharisees can find therein matter for scandal; others, knowing this workaday world of ours, will realize the impossibility of doing otherwise.

If the effort to get to daily Communion causes you to fail in the duties of your

state of life, then omit it, yes; but do not omit it because of the fact that others are provoked *without reason*.

FREQUENTLY AND DEVOUTLY

Do not misunderstand me. Just as I would have you go to Holy Communion with the greatest possible frequency, so would I have you go, too, with the greatest possible devotion. But the Savior will be satisfied if you do your best trying to be holy.

Come to Communion each day, or as often as possible, at least each Sunday — and all children, too, who have already made their First Communion — come to receive the kiss of the Spouse of your soul, given to you by the reception of His Body and Precious Blood. Be sure that no devotion is dearer to the Heart of Our Lord than that of receiving Him in Holy Communion. The sainted Cure d’Ars once said, “Place in the balance all the good works of the world against one well made Communion. It will be like weighing a grain of dust against a mountain.”

You cannot communicate too often. If we could receive Jesus ten times a day, we ought to be happy to do so. But since it is allowed only once, let us take care not to omit it.

And now you ask, “Well, then, when I have no certainty of being in a state of mortal sin, and I am not prevented by some duty, you tell me I ought never to omit Holy Communion?” Yes; that is what I tell you.

THE CONFESSOR'S ADVICE AND THE RIGHT INTENTION

The Decree of Pope St. Pius X on Receiving Daily the Most Holy Eucharist says among other things: "That the practice of frequent and daily Communion may be carried out with greater prudence and more abundant merit, the confessor's advice should be asked. Confessors, however, are to be careful not to dissuade anyone from frequent and daily Communion, provided he is in a state of grace and approaches with a right intention." How often ought one to ask this advice? Is it obligatory to ask it at all?

Speaking now (mark it well!) of those of the faithful who have the requisite dispositions for lawful Communion, namely the state of grace and the right intention, we say that this advice or judgment of the confessor can be explicit or implicit. It is not required that it be always explicit; often it suffices if it is implicit. This counsel is authoritative, indeed, but as such does not in itself oblige, not even under pain of venial sins, because it is merely directive.

It seems evident that this counsel for one rightly disposed, as above, is to be sought by those who are not frequent or daily communicants and who wish to become so and need not necessarily be asked by those who are already frequent and daily communicants. Hence it would appear that one ought to ask this advice once, before making this change in one's life, and then again whenever circumstances alter cases.

The right intention mentioned above includes the desire of pleasing God, Who

wishes us to partake daily of this heavenly food, of being more closely united with Him by charity, and of seeking in the Sacrament a divine remedy for weaknesses and defects. Negatively, one should avoid routine, vainglory, and human respect, for these circumstances in reception diminish the fruits of the Sacrament. The right intention need not be an explicit one; an implicit one is sufficient. The absence of the right intention, strictly taken, that is to say, inasmuch as the proper ends of the Eucharist are explicitly and positively excluded, so that those ends, as mentioned in the beginning of this paragraph, are not even implicitly and confusedly wanted, is sinful. But in practice this rarely happens. To receive Communion merely out of habit or out of vainglory or out of human respect would not in itself exceed a venial sin and would not make one's Communion unworthy. (Cf. Cappello, *De Sacramentis*; Davis, *Sacraments*.)

VENIAL SINS

You say: "I am a daily communicant and ought to be better than I am. At home I do a lot of talking and pass judgment on others or criticize their actions. Then, too, I sometimes become irritable during the day and impatient. Sometimes I also show disrespect to my superiors and am otherwise uncharitable in words and actions. I am wondering whether because I have so many faults and am at the same time a daily communicant I ought also to go to confession every day."

It seems quite clear that you do not look upon these faults as mortal sins; and ordinarily they are not. It is quite possible

that some of them are deliberate venial sins. Let us take for granted that they are all deliberate venial sins and that none of them are mortal sins. Such being the case, it is not necessary that you go to confession every day just because you are a daily communicant. Indeed, it would hardly be wise to go to confession every day. Once a week is the ideal thing; and it is quite sufficient for a daily communicant, unless the person concerned commits a mortal sin, in which case he must remember canon 856, which states that no one whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, no matter how contrite he may think himself to be, may receive Holy Communion without previous sacramental confession; but if there is urgent need to receive the sacrament and if no confessor is available, reception is permissible after an act of perfect contrition is made. We quote from the Decree on Receiving Daily the Most Holy Eucharist:

“1. Frequent and daily Communion, as a thing most ardently desired by Christ Our Lord and by the Catholic Church, should be open to all the faithful, of whatever rank and condition of life; so that no one who is in the state of grace, and who approaches the Holy Table with a right intention, can lawfully be hindered therefrom.

“2. A right intention consists in this: that he who approaches the Holy Table should do so, not out of routine, or vain-glory, or human respect, but for the purpose of pleasing God, or being more closely united to Him by charity, and of seeking this divine remedy for his weaknesses and defects.

“3. Although it is more expedient that those who communicate frequently or daily should be free from venial sins, especially from such as are fully deliberate, and from any affection thereto, nevertheless it is sufficient that they be free from mortal sin, with the purpose of never sinning mortally in the future; and, if they have this sincere purpose, it is impossible but that daily communicants should gradually emancipate themselves even from venial sins, and from all affection thereto.”

The last paragraph in the above quotation officially solves your doubts. Of course, you must try to become better, to avoid all uncharitableness in words and actions, all irritability, impatience, disrespect, unkind criticism, rash judgments. If only you try earnestly and begin over and over again in your endeavor to become perfect, you will gradually, just because of daily Communion, get rid of your faults; and the time will come when you can spend day after day without committing any of the imperfections and venial sins mentioned. As stated above, “it is impossible but that daily communicants should gradually emancipate themselves from even venial sins, and from all affection thereto.” — You have an affection for venial sins, by the way, when you like them so much that you make no effort to get rid of them.

THANKSGIVING AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

It is a pity that people who receive Holy Communion cannot stay in church for a thanksgiving of at least fifteen minutes. Often enough they do have to leave the

church, to make room for those who are coming for the next Mass, or to get home in time for others of the family to leave for the next Mass. When the circumstances are such, those who receive Communion need not be disquieted, provided they make their thanksgiving on the way home or on the way to work or while taking their breakfast in a restaurant along the way, etc. Let them remain recollected, remembering that they are Christ-bearers, since ordinarily after the reception of a small Host the physical presence of Christ is within us for up to about half an hour. If there is no time for a *special* thanksgiving, no *special* time is necessary; offer all your actions in thanksgiving; one can do what one must do out of obedience or charity or duty in a spirit of recollection and with the intention of thanking the Savior for His coming. Sometimes, too, when hundreds receive Communion and you are one of the first, you have fifteen minutes or more before the Mass is over during which to make a good thanksgiving. Use that time well; do not look around, gazing upon all the others as they receive Communion; keep your eyes down in meditation or fixed on the pages of your prayer book.

It is more than a pity, of course, if people who receive Communion can stay in church and make a thanksgiving and they do not do so — a great pity when a few minutes after their Communion they are standing outside the church door gossiping — a sad pity when, for example, they receive Communion after Mass for some reason or other and then, almost before the priest has gone back into the sacristy, they are outside the church, chatting about all kinds of things

as if they had not but two minutes before received Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament into their hearts.

It is each Catholic's business to see to it that he or she makes a good thanksgiving after each and every Holy Communion, in church, if possible, elsewhere if not possible. And it should last for fifteen minutes after receiving, at the very least. Better still would it be to make it a rule that the thanksgiving last for at least fifteen minutes after the Mass is over.

How important is it to make a thanksgiving after Holy Communion? The greater the gift you get, the more grateful you should be. But now, there is no greater gift than Jesus Christ, the God-Man, the Author of all grace, Who brings with Himself for you an increase of sanctifying grace. Holy Communion, remember, has in itself the power to confer automatically more sanctifying grace than any other sacrament; and the least increase of sanctifying grace is worth more than all the treasures of a million worlds like ours.

There are theologians, and among them the great Suarez, who think (it is not certain but a quite probable opinion) that Holy Communion continues automatically to bestow sanctifying grace upon the soul after its reception as long as the recipient improves his disposition by making acts of virtue, reciting prayers, communing with Christ in pious reflection and meditation. The longer and better the thanksgiving, then, the greater the treasures of sanctifying grace. And remember that your place in heaven will be determined by the amount of sanctifying grace you have when you die.

Again, in addition to the sanctifying grace thus automatically given, there is also an increase of sanctifying grace by reason of the fervor of your prayers, because of your actual disposition, your own personal cooperation. That is another reason for stressing the importance of thanksgiving after Holy Communion.

Moreover, you have often heard of sacramental grace, the grace proper to each sacrament, given to attain the purpose of each sacrament. The Holy Eucharist is the sacrament of charity. So Holy Communion gives a title to actual graces that aim directly at a more intense active love of God and of one's fellow men. Now, according to some eminent theologians (cf. Van Noort) these spontaneous actual graces are given *only* while Christ remains corporally present after Holy Communion, which, as Cardinal Gasparri says, is about half an hour after receiving a small Host. According to this opinion, there will be no more actual graces from that particular Communion once the real presence of Christ ceases to be within you. Therefore, get all the actual graces that you can by means of a fervent thanksgiving after Holy Communion. Strive earnestly for an increase in the love of God and neighbor as a fruit of Holy Communion. And there are the many other effects of Communion, its fruits, of which you can partake in greater abundance by your more fervent thanksgiving.

It may be that this lack of a proper thanksgiving after Holy Communion is the reason why so many Catholics who communicate quite frequently still seem to be lacking in the love of God and neighbor.

True enough, every Holy Communion worthily received means an increase in sanctifying grace; but *active* love of God and neighbor does not depend on that increase but upon their use of actual graces arising spontaneously from Holy Communion, which graces, it is thought, cease as soon as the corporal presence of Jesus ceases to be within us.

THE EUCHARISTIC FAST

That all the faithful could receive Holy Communion more frequently and fulfill the precept of hearing Holy Mass on days of obligation more easily, Pope Pius XII, feeling that paternal instinct which impelled the Divine Savior to say, when He was about to multiply bread to symbolize the Eucharist, "I have compassion on the multitude," by pontifical enactment which took effect on March 25, 1957, greatly lessened the rigor of the Eucharistic fast.

Among other things, His Holiness said (and this is now the new law):

"Mindful of the notable changes which have occurred in private and public working conditions as well as in all branches of social life, We deemed it advisable to comply with the insistent requests of the bishops and have therefore decreed:

"(1) Local Ordinaries, with the exception of vicars general who do not enjoy a special mandate, may permit the daily celebration of Holy Mass in the hours after midday whenever the spiritual good of a notable number of the faithful demand it.

“(2) The period of time for the observance of the Eucharistic fast by priests who wish to celebrate Mass and by the faithful who wish to receive Holy Communion whether in the forenoon or in the afternoon, is limited to three hours for solid food and alcoholic beverages, and to one hour for non-alcoholic beverages. The Eucharistic fast is not broken through the consumption of water.

“(3) The Eucharistic fast as specified in the above regulation (n. 2) must be observed even by those who celebrate Mass or receive Holy Communion at midnight or in the early hours of the day.

“(4) The sick, though not confined to bed, may take non-alcoholic beverages, and true and proper medicines in liquid form, before the celebration of Mass and the reception of Holy Communion, without any time limit.

“We earnestly exhort the priests and faithful who are able to do so to observe the venerable and time-honored form of the Eucharistic fast before the celebration of Mass and the reception of Holy Communion.

“Let all, then, who make use of these faculties compensate for the conferred benefit as best they can by becoming shining examples of a Christian life, especially through works of penance and charity.”

The law of the Eucharistic fast, thus adapted to our times, is now so simple that it is within the grasp of the mentality of even little children. Everyone can understand it. No question now of morning or evening, distance to be traveled, heavy labor, late hour, consulting a confessor,

different categories of persons. The law as above affects all the faithful in all places.

The exhortation at the end, about observing the complete fast as it formerly prevailed, is merely an exhortation. One has full liberty. To keep the complete fast would be a matter of greater merit, but there is no obligation.

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

Catholics in this country may be somewhat puzzled about the fact that we are now allowed to take alcoholic beverages up to three hours before Holy Communion. When thinking of drinking, they think of taverns where filthy stories are told or, if they think of drinking at home, they are rather shocked at the thought of drinking in the presence of children.

Now, it is hard to imagine a good Catholic drinking in a tavern where bad stories are told up to three hours before he goes to Communion. As for drinking in the presence of children at home, no one would see anything wrong about that, where such is the custom, provided the rules of temperance are respected. The new regulations for the Eucharistic fast take it for granted that all Catholics will always prepare even better for Communion now. The Holy Father has said: "All who take advantage of these benefits will, according to their ability, try to make compensation for these benefits by an outstanding life of Christian example and by works of penance and charity."

It is indeed true that some Catholics may be shocked to hear so much mention of alco-

holic beverages in the new Eucharistic fast legislation. We must remember, however, that this legislation is for the whole world; and the world is a big place with endless diversities of peoples and customs. In many places it is customary to serve alcoholic drinks at meals, e.g., hard liquors, wine, beer, cider, straight or mixed, much as most of us are accustomed to coffee or tea. The practice, it seems, is growing in the United States too. And, of course, there is nothing wrong in the moderate use of such beverages, even though total abstinence is most praiseworthy.

Therefore the law of the Eucharistic fast now obliges all, even the sick, except those in danger of death, to observe a complete fast of three hours from solid nourishment and alcoholic drinks such as mentioned above.

A new thing to remember now is that this rule applies at any time Communion is received: morning, afternoon or night, including the Paschal Vigil and the midnight Mass of Christmas. For the people that means three hours before the *reception* of Holy Communion, for the priests three hours before the *start* of Mass. The faithful, no doubt, will usually make it three hours before the hour at which the Mass begins, so that they do not have to figure too closely. They need no longer ask how long they have to fast before the midnight Mass. It is always and in all cases three hours, as just stated.

Before those three hours all the faithful and priests are free to take any kind of food and even alcoholic beverages, either at meals or between meals, even if they have

no difficulty in observing the traditional fast. But they must always observe the rules of temperance and the obligations of days of fast and abstinence.

MEANING OF LIQUIDS

So, then, it's three hours of complete fast for all, of fast from solid food and alcoholic beverages. But during the first two of these three hours one may continue to take liquids, provided they are without alcohol. The question is sometimes asked: "What is here meant by liquids, since it does not mean water?" According to a declaration of the Holy Office, Sept. 7, 1897, such liquids are all beverages or all nourishment liquefied or maintained liquid which can be drunk from a glass without mastication: milk, coffee, tea, fruit and vegetable juices, soup, bouillon, different broths (excepting meat broths on days of abstinence), syrups, even liquids that contain a solid substance in suspension, such as chocolate, cocoa, ovaltine, very thin gruel, crumbled bread or crackers or ground-up vegetables in soup or coffee, egg-nogs — provided always that the mixture does not lose the character of liquid nourishment. A raw egg may be taken separately or in a liquid; but it would be wrong to conclude that one may take an oyster, swallowing it whole, up to one hour before Communion without breaking the Eucharistic fast.

MEANING OF WATER

During the last of the three hours before Communion, for one full hour before receiving (or before beginning Mass, for the priest), nothing may be taken except water, which never breaks the Eucharistic fast, no matter what kind of water it is. It may be plain water, rain water, spring water, river water, dew, mineral water, sulphur water, etc. It may be distilled water, water purified with chemical elements according to law, or water to which one himself added the powder necessary to make it hygienic or drinkable. It may be mineral water bought in bottles, or water that has had gas added to make it effervescent.

THE SICK

The sick have to keep the three-hour fast too, except when in danger of health. They, too, may take liquid nourishment such as mentioned above during the first two of those three hours. However, when it comes to the last hour, during which others may take nothing but water, the sick are an exception. They are always permitted to take medicines (even solids) which they need; and they may also take non-alcoholic beverages that they may need to sustain themselves up to the moment of Mass (for priests) or Communion. And if those medicines contain a small amount of alcohol in the mixture, as in pills, tablets, pastilles, different pharmaceutical prescriptions, it does not matter. They are still true medicines and may be taken by the sick.

And for all the above one need no longer ask the priest. Everyone may use these favors without any further permission.

HOW SICK ONE HAS TO BE

It does not have to be a grave illness. The following may be included among the sick or infirm: Those who are physically weak, even though not bedridden or confined to their homes; those in a run-down condition; those whom illness confines to their homes, whether sick for a long time or for a short time; those who have been ill before Communion, or have fallen ill on account of the fast before Communion; people suffering from a heart condition, stomach ulcers, or a diabetic condition; those suffering from a serious indisposition, even though a passing one, as for example a splitting headache, indigestion, a bad cold, a hacking cough; pregnant women suffering from morning nausea; convalescents; etc.

In short, anytime anyone needs medicine without delay before Mass or Communion, it is permissible to say Mass or receive Communion after taking these medicines. And if one needs these medicines, he may likewise, if he feels the need, take non-alcoholic liquids for sustenance. This medicine or liquid nourishment may be taken as soon as the sickness sets in, or even earlier, in order to prevent the sickness when a person feels that it is coming.

A DANGER

Now that many more people are going to Communion because of the new Eucharistic fast regulations (and that is why the Holy Father made it so easy) there is danger of a thoughtless, careless, routine reception of the Most Holy Eucharist. To offset that danger, let all Catholics make an ever better preparation and thanksgiving.

No longer do the late Masses on Sundays have to be crowded with people who do not go to Communion. For example, they may sleep until seven o'clock, have a full breakfast before eight, and go to Communion during the eleven o'clock Mass. But their preparation and thanksgiving should be all the better.

Night workers and those who have to stay up late can eat something before retiring and still go to Communion in the morning (always remembering the three hours).

Farmers can take a good breakfast before doing the chores and still go to Communion.

People who work in offices, stores, factories can take their regular breakfast in the morning, have their coffee break at ten or so, and slip into some nearby church or chapel for noonday Mass and Holy Communion.

But let all remember the wondrous effects of the Holy Eucharist and how much greater and ever greater will be their growth in grace if they prepare themselves well and make a good thanksgiving. Most precious are the moments after Communion. Go often, yes, but go devoutly too; and if in this workaday world you cannot make your thanksgiving in church make it on the way home or on the way to work.

OUTSIDE OF MASS

If the fast of three hours is kept, one may receive Communion *by way of exception* outside of Mass also in the afternoon or evening, but only if there is a reasonable cause (c. 867). With the exception of the three last days of Holy Week, which have their own special rules, one may receive Communion at any time, and that whether one is healthy or sick, *provided there is a reasonable cause*, such as the impossibility of receiving at any other time, considerable inconvenience, a journey to be taken, etc., either on the part of the priest or the communicant. The more unusual the hour, the more reasonable the cause should be.

AN EXHORTATION

“Let all, then, who make use of these faculties compensate for the conferred benefit as best they can by becoming shining examples of a Christian life, especially through works of penance and charity.”

— Pope Pius XII.

Imprimi potest:

Paul Schuster, S.D.S.

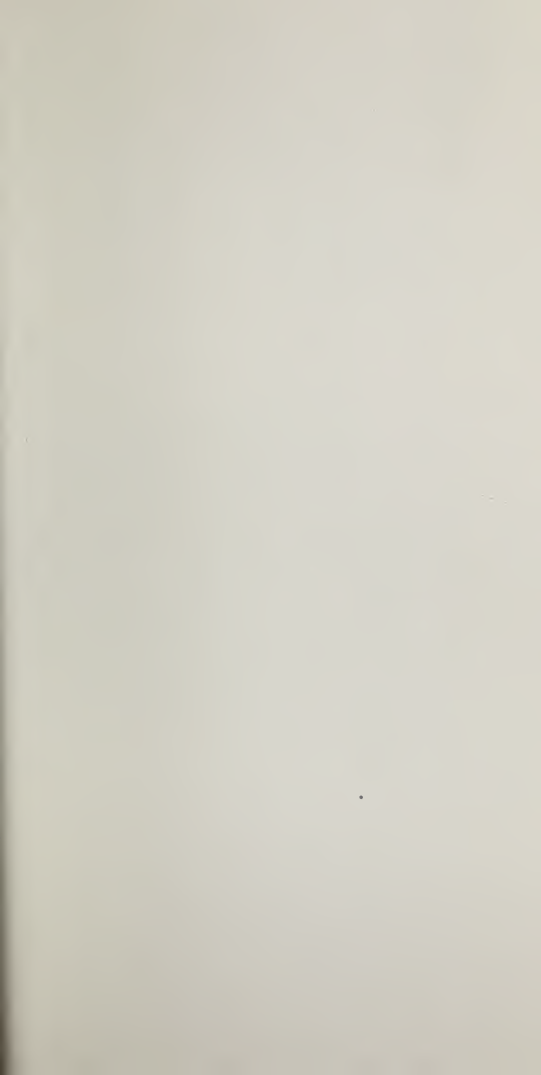
Provincial

Imprimatur:

✠ Joseph E. Ritter

Archbishop of St. Louis

June 13, 1958



THE QUEEN'S WORK
3115 South Grand Boulevard
St. Louis 18, Mo.

Printed in U. S. A.

