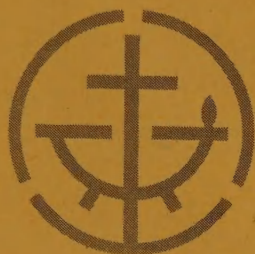


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ORDINATION TO THE
PRIESTHOOD

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

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ORDINATION TO THE
PRIESTHOOD

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by

JOHN BLIGH, S.J.

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CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	PAGE xi
PREFACE	xiii

PART I: INTRODUCTORY

I. THE PURPOSE OF THE RITE	3
THE CHARACTER OF THE PRIESTHOOD	3
THE POWERS OF THE PRIESTHOOD	7
THE DUTIES OF THE PRIESTHOOD	15
THE GRACES OF THE PRIESTHOOD	20
II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RITE	23
THE SOURCES	23
THE GENERAL PATTERN OF THE MODERN RITE	29
ORDINATIONS BY THE APOSTLES	31
HIPPOLYTUS	31
THE ROMAN SACRAMENTARIES	32
THE EIGHTH-CENTURY GELASIAN RITE	33
THE ROMANO-GERMANIC PONTIFICAL	33
THE PONTIFICAL OF DURANDUS	33
THE FIRST PRINTED PONTIFICAL, 1485	34
III. ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS	36
THE PRIMITIVE ROMAN RITE	36
THE GALLICANIZED GELASIAN RITE	37
OPINIONS FROM THE NINTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY	37

	PAGE
OPINIONS IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY	40
THE DECREE FOR THE ARMENIANS, 1439	47
IV. ORDINATIONS AND EMBERTIDE	56
 PART II: DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF THE MODERN RITE 	
V. PRELIMINARIES	63
ENTRY OF THE ORDINANDS	63
THE ENTRY AND VESTING OF THE BISHOP	65
THE MASS BEGINS	68
VI. FIRST PART OF THE RITE: THE ORDINATION PROPER	70
THE CALLING OF THE ORDINANDS	70
THE INTERDICTION	71
THE ARCHDEACON'S PETITION AND TESTIMONY	73
THE PEOPLE GIVE CONSENT	76
THE BISHOP'S ADDRESS TO THE ORDINANDS	79
THE LITANIES	84
THE LAYING-ON OF HANDS BY THE BISHOP	88
THE LAYING-ON OF HANDS BY THE PRIESTS	92
THE INVITATORY AND COLLECT	97
THE "PREFACE" OF CONSECRATION	100
THE INVESTITURE OF THE NEW PRIESTS	108
The Stole	111
The Folded Chasuble	114
THE PRAYER OF CONSUMMATION	120
VII. SECOND PART OF THE RITE: COMMISSION TO SAY MASS	126
THE ANOINTING OF HANDS	126
THE DELIVERY OF INSTRUMENTS	136

CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
VIII. THIRD PART: REPRESENTATION OF THE LAST SUPPER	142
THE MASS IS RESUMED	142
THE OFFERING OF CANDLES	142
THE CONCELEBRATION	145
THE SECRET PRAYER	151
THE COMMUNION	154
THE RESPONSORY <i>IAM NON DICAM</i>	158
IX. FOURTH PART: COMMISSION TO ABSOLVE, ETC.	160
THE PROFESSION OF FAITH	160
THE UNFOLDING OF THE CHASUBLE	161
THE SECOND LAYING-ON OF HANDS	163
THE PROMISE OF OBEDIENCE	166
THE BISHOP'S CHARGE TO THE NEW PRIESTS	172
THE SPECIAL BLESSING FOR THE NEW PRIESTS	175
X. THE CLOSE OF THE CEREMONY	177
THE MASS IS RESUMED AGAIN	177
THE FINAL EXHORTATION	178
THE KISSING OF HANDS	180
INDEX	185

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

I. THE CALLING OF THE ORDINANDS: ROMAN PONTIFICAL, 1520	80
II. THE LAYING-ON OF HANDS: ROMAN PONTIFICAL, 1520	96
III. THE ANOINTING: PONTIFICAL OF BISHOP LANDOLF OF BENEVENTO, 10th Century	112
IV. THE TRADITION OF INSTRUMENTS: ROMAN PONTIFICAL, 1520	128
V. THE TRADITION OF INSTRUMENTS: ROMAN PONTIFICAL, 1595	144
VI. THE TRADITION OF INSTRUMENTS: ROMAN PONTIFICAL, 1664	160
VII. THE FINAL EXHORTATION: ROMAN PONTIFICAL, 1520	176

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i> , Rome.
CIC	<i>Codex Iuris Canonici</i> .
Denz.	Denzinger, H., <i>Enchiridion Symbolorum</i> .
DTC	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i> .
HBS	Henry Bradshaw Society for the editing of rare liturgical texts.
JTS	<i>The Journal of Theological Studies</i> , Oxford.
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i> , Berlin.
PG	Migne, <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> .
PL	Migne, <i>Patrologia Latina</i> .
S.C.R.	Sacred Congregation of Rites.

The following works are referred to either by the author's name only, or by his name with a short title:

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PREFACE

The rite of ordination to the priesthood is a sacrament: it infallibly confers grace on those who receive it worthily. But the measure of grace received depends on the dispositions of the recipient. It is a travesty of the doctrine of *ex opere operato* efficacy to say that all recipients receive exactly the same, no matter how well or ill prepared they are, provided only they are in a state of grace.¹ The *powers* of the priesthood are conferred equally upon all who receive the sacrament of Orders validly, but the *graces* of the priesthood are not given to all in equal abundance. That is why aspirants to Holy Orders must prepare themselves as carefully as possible for the reception of the sacrament. Canon Law requires them normally to spend at least six years in their moral, spiritual and intellectual preparation. Part of their intellectual preparation should surely be an effort to understand the complicated ritual of the ordination ceremony. This book is designed to make that task less difficult than it has been hitherto.

The writer's main object has, therefore, been to meet the needs of students preparing for the priesthood. He has assumed that they will be interested in every detail of the rite and in the theological problems that lurk in various parts of it. The resulting book is not a pious meditation on the priesthood, but a liturgical and theological essay, written in the belief that a careful analysis of the rite will in the end be more conducive to solid piety than a devotional treatment of the subject could be.

The explanations to be proposed are of two sorts: historical and symbolic. The historical explanations will endeavour to say when each prayer or ceremony was added to the rite and what forms it has taken before reaching its present condition, e.g., when the anointing was introduced, and how it has been

¹ Cf. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses*, I, 5, (Rouët, n. 809) and Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, Denz., n. 2238.

performed in various centuries. The symbolic explanations will suggest what each part of the rite is meant to signify, e.g., why the priest's hands are anointed. Liturgical writers of the Dark and Middle Ages, such as St. Isidore, Rhabanus Maurus, Amalarius and Gulielmus Durandus, concentrated almost exclusively on symbolic or mystical explanations—largely, no doubt, because before the days of printing it was almost impossible to study a ceremony historically. But to reach a complete understanding both types of explanation are required. The ceremonies must be studied genetically, to discover how they came into being and grew, who were the persons chiefly responsible for their growth, and what contemporary influences and beliefs affected their liturgical innovations. But it is no less necessary to know what the innovators intended to signify, or if that cannot be discovered, then what their innovations do, by their very nature, signify in their liturgical context. To reject the very idea of symbolic and mystical interpretations through prejudice in favour of "practical" ones is absurd, because some of the chief innovators are known to have set great store by mystical symbolism. And to perform a piece of ritual, such as wearing a chasuble folded up at the back, without having any idea of the reason why one is doing it, is like prophesying in a language that is not understood. It is better to attach a good and suitable symbolic meaning to such rites, even though it may not be what the inventor intended, rather than to go through them, or to watch them, in a state of complete puzzlement.

For two reasons our generation is in a much better position to understand the rite of ordination than any other since the Middle Ages. From the ninth century to the thirteenth the ritual became ever more and more complicated, with the result that there was great uncertainty about what parts of it were essential to the sacrament and what were merely additions for the sake of greater solemnity. Not having printed copies of the liturgical books of earlier centuries, theologians were forced to seek the essence of the rite by deduction from *a priori* principles—a thoroughly unsatisfactory method, as is shown by the resulting diversity of opinions! For us the situation is quite different. Pope Pius XII has laid down, in

his Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* of 30th November 1947,¹ that the essentials of the rite now are the imposition of hands and the words of the "Preface" that are printed in *italic* type on page 48 below. This provides us with a firm basis for an explanation of the mutual relations of the parts of the ceremony.

Secondly, the industry of scholars of many nations has given us printed editions of ancient liturgical books that show how ordinations have been performed through the centuries. In particular, thanks to Professor M. Andrieu, of Strasbourg, complete and reliable information is now available about the Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the Pontifical of Durandus.

It is matter for no small wonder that the modern rite, which has grown up so slowly, has received accretions from so many parts of Christendom, and has been refashioned and altered by so many bishops (not all of whom held the same views about the essence of the rite), should nevertheless form such a harmonious whole. There are a few details in which the result of the evolutionary process cannot be praised;² perhaps one day these will be reformed. But the rite as a whole falls into an admirable pattern, which it is a pleasure to contemplate.

Finally, the author wishes to express his gratitude to Father Joseph Crehan, Professor of Liturgy at Heythrop College, for much valuable criticism and assistance in a field of study notorious for its pitfalls.

¹ *AAS*, 1948, XL, pp. 5-7.

² In particular, the present method of binding hands for the touching of the chalice. Cf. Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, p. 138: "At first it was sufficient to touch the chalice and paten in turn; then it was necessary to touch the chalice and paten simultaneously and with bound hands; some further required that the host too should be touched (the logical conclusion would be that the wine too should be touched; but so far nobody has proposed this as necessary)."

PART I

INTRODUCTORY

I

THE PURPOSE OF THE RITE

The purpose of the rite of ordination is to confer upon the ordinands the ecclesiastical dignity of the priesthood, together with the character, the powers, the duties and the graces proper to that dignity.

In the first place, the ordinands are promoted to a high office in the social structure of the visible Church: they are raised from the rank of deacon to the priesthood. There is nothing at all mysterious about that; it is a simple promotion comparable to promotion in the army from (say) lieutenant to captain. But the other effects of ordination belong to the spiritual order and are not so simple to understand. They must be treated in greater detail.

THE CHARACTER OF THE PRIESTHOOD

When a man was enrolled into the Roman army in St. Augustine's day, a mark was branded on to his body. This was called the military *character*—a mark entitling its bearer to serve as a soldier and engage in warfare, and a sign by which his quality of soldier could be verified if ever called in doubt (e.g., if he deserted). Christian Baptism confers a similar mark or character upon the souls of those who receive it. Just as a civilian was given the status, rights and duties of a soldier when he received the military character, so a person receives the status, rights and duties of a member of Christ's Church when he receives the baptismal character.¹

Two other sacraments, Confirmation and Holy Orders, also confer characters. The Council of Trent laid down the following canon:

¹ Cf. L. Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis*, Rome, 1914, I, p. 151.

Si quis dixerit, in tribus sacramentis, baptismo scilicet, confirmatione et ordine, non imprimi characterem in anima, hoc est signum quoddam spirituale et indelebile, unde ea iterari non possunt: A.S.

If anyone says that in three sacraments, namely Baptism, Confirmation and Orders, there is not imprinted on the soul a character, i.e., a spiritual sign that is indelible, wherefore the sacraments cannot be repeated, let him be anathema.¹

While the baptismal character marks a person as a member of the Church, Holy Orders marks him as a member of the governing body within the Church, and Confirmation as a member of its military forces. The Church of Christ is a hierarchy of three grades. Just as in civil society one can distinguish (as Plato did²) the rulers, the workers, and the armed forces, so also in the Church there are basically three divisions of membership, into which a person is co-opted by the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Orders. Each grade of this triple hierarchy has its own functions, which belong to its members *ex officio*, i.e., precisely because they are members of that grade. It is the function of the highest grade, whose members have the character of Ordination, to impart divine grace and instruction to others: they are "dispensers of the mysteries of God".³ The function of the lowest grade, which includes all who have the character of Baptism, is to take part in the Church's worship and sacrifice and to receive divine grace and instruction. The third grade is intermediate between the other two and comprises all who by Confirmation have been deputed to defend the faith and sacraments against external attack.

The character is, therefore, a sign that its bearer is deputed to a certain function in the Church's activity. It may be compared to the cross set over the roof of a chapel to mark it out as a building set aside for divine worship.

The doctrine of the three characters was first made quite clear by St. Augustine in his controversy with the Donatists.

¹ Conc. Trid., cn. 9 de Sac. in gen. (Denz., 852).

² Cf. R. Roques, "La notion de Hiérarchie selon le Pseudo-Denys", in *Archives d'Hist. doct. et litt. du Moyen Age*, Paris, 1949, XVII, pp. 183-222, and 1951, XVIII, pp. 5-44. It can hardly be denied that the Neoplatonic notion of a triadic hierarchy has played some part in the working out of the doctrine of the three characters.

³ 1 Cor. iv. 1.

It had never been explicitly formulated before, but was implicit in the practice of the Church, which both Augustine and his adversaries recognised as an apostolic tradition, whereby the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Orders, once validly received—even if received in heresy or schism at the hand of an heretical or schismatic minister—are permanently valid and may not be repeated. St. Augustine's explanation of why they may not be repeated was that each of them imprints a character comparable to the military character, which is indelible, can be present in the bad as well as in the good, and does not need any sort of rectification when its bearer returns to the true Church.¹ This doctrine has won universal acceptance throughout the Church.

St. Augustine argued as follows: Suppose a deserter from the Roman army looks at the mark branded on his body: he is filled with fear and dread, and resolves to appeal to the emperor's clemency; he is pardoned and returns to his military duties. Will the military character be branded anew, or will the already existing character be examined and acknowledged? Obviously the latter! Well, then (Augustine asks), are the Christian sacraments less durable than that bodily mark? Surely not!² Elsewhere, Augustine compares the effect of the sacrament of Orders with that of Baptism: "Some of the Donatists have begun to say that one who leaves the Church does not lose his Baptism but does lose the right of giving Baptism. A futile and empty opinion, for many reasons: in the first place because no explanation is forthcoming of why one who cannot lose Baptism itself can nevertheless lose the power of giving it. Each is a sacrament, and each is given to a man with a special consecration—the one when he is baptized, the other when he is ordained—and therefore in the Catholic Church neither may be repeated. When any bishops or priests have come to us from the party of Donatus, they have been received for the sake of peace after correction of their error; and if it seemed good that they should continue to exercise the offices that they held in schism, they have not been reordained."³

¹ Cf. the quotations from Augustine, *Contra Epist. Petiliani*, in Billot, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 155-6.

² *Ibid.*, I, p. 151.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

When a soldier received his military character (the equivalent in the modern world is the uniform and badges of rank), he thereby received a ministerial power, which authorized him to perform certain actions as the instrument of the civil authority. Similarly, when a Christian receives a sacramental character, he receives therewith and thereby a ministerial power, authorizing him to perform certain religious actions as an instrument of the Head of the Church, who is Christ. Some theologians have thought that the sacramental character is identical with the ministerial power.¹ According to this view, the powers of the priesthood are the character of the priesthood. But the sayings of the Fathers and of St. Augustine in particular suggest that it is rather to be thought of as a physical quality of the soul.

The "power to fight" which a soldier receives with and by his military character is a power of the moral or legal order: it does not give him the physical power to fight, but it does give him the right to bear arms and engage in warfare as commanded; it is the possession of this right or "moral power" which distinguishes a soldier from a bandit. The character is in a true sense a cause of this right, because the right is conferred on him by the conferring of the character: in the modern world international law does not recognize a man as having a right to fight unless he is wearing a uniform or badge. To confer the badge is to confer the status and its rights. In this sense the character gives the power to fight.

The sacramental characters may be thought of in much the same way, i.e., as conferring not new physical powers in addition to those that belong to our ordinary human make-up, but moral powers to do certain actions *ex officio*. For example, the character of Confirmation deposes a man to confess and defend the Christian faith before its opponents and persecutors; yet one who has not yet received this character can confess and defend the faith, and may in some cases be under an obligation to do so. Hence the power conferred by the character of Confirmation is clearly not a physical one.²

The sacramental characters can give powers to perform

¹ e.g., St. Thomas, *Summa*, IIIa, 82, § corp., and Billot, *op. cit.*, I, p. 157f.

² Cf. Billot, *op. cit.*, I, p. 16of.

validly acts which those who have not the character cannot do validly; but it is not necessary to suppose that they do so by bringing with them a special physical power. It suffices that some acts can be performed validly only by those who do them *ex officio*. Thus, at his ordination a priest receives power to confer *ex officio* the sacraments of Baptism and Extreme Unction. The sacrament of Baptism, by the law of its institution, can be validly conferred by anyone at all who has the right intention; therefore the priestly character does not give the power to baptize validly. But the sacrament of Extreme Unction, by the law of its institution, can be validly conferred only by one who does so *ex officio*, i.e., by a priest; therefore, the priestly character, by giving power to confer Extreme Unction *ex officio*, also gives the power to confer it validly.¹

The Council of Trent laid down that the three sacramental characters are indelible.² It would not perhaps be heretical, but it would certainly be rash, to restrict this indelibility to the present life. Some people have thought that the characters will vanish in the next life, because they will no longer have any purpose: the powers signified by them will there have no opportunity for exercise. But St. Thomas gives a simple and sufficient answer to this argument when he says that the characters will remain in the elect for their greater honour and in the damned for their greater shame.³

THE POWERS OF THE PRIESTHOOD

In his exhortation to the ordinands the bishop says: "The functions of a priest are: to offer sacrifice, to bless, to preside, to preach and to baptize."⁴ This list of powers reflects the functions which priests did in fact commonly exercise at the time when the exhortation was composed. It does not contain a full list of the powers conferred upon priests at the present day, since, for one thing, it makes no mention of the power of absolution.

In order to complete the list of powers exercised by the

¹ Cf. Billot, *ibid.*

² Cn. 9 de Sac. in gen., quoted *supra*, p. 4.

³ *Summa*, IIIa, 63, 5 ad 3.

⁴ Cf. *infra*, p. 79.

priesthood, it is necessary to examine other ecclesiastical documents and the practice of the Church.

The Council of Trent declares that "besides the other ecclesiastical grades, the bishops, who have succeeded to the position of the Apostles, belong especially to the hierarchical order; they are set up, as the same Apostle [St. Paul] says, by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God; they are superior to priests, and can confer the sacrament of Confirmation, ordain ministers of the Church, and do several other functions which the rest who are of an inferior order have no power to perform."¹ Again, the seventh canon on the sacrament of Orders says: "If anyone says the bishops are not superior to priests, or have not the power of confirming and ordaining, or have that power but hold it in common with the priests . . . let him be anathema."² From these definitions it is clear enough that the episcopacy and the priesthood are distinct orders because, or at least partly because, a bishop has the power to confirm and ordain whereas a priest has not.

However, from the practice of the Church it is quite certain that a simple priest can in certain circumstances (now not at all rare) administer Confirmation validly, and it is almost certain that with Papal authorization he can validly ordain even to the diaconate and priesthood. The Decree for the Armenians drawn up by the Council of Florence in 1439 says that a bishop is the *ordinary* minister of Confirmation and the *ordinary* minister of Ordination³—which would seem to imply that in extraordinary circumstances the minister of either sacrament can be a priest. Since the decree *Spiritus Sancti Munera* of 14 September 1946,⁴ it has been the common law of the Latin Church that all parish priests may confer the sacrament of Confirmation on their subjects in danger of death. And there exist four Papal Bulls of the fifteenth century which empowered abbots, who were not bishops, but simple priests, to ordain their subjects to sacred orders;⁵ two of them

¹ *Doctrina de Sac. Ordinis*, cap. 4 (Denz., 960).

² Denz., 967.

³ Denz., 697 and 701.

⁴ *AAS*, 38, 1946, p. 349.

⁵ The Bulls—*Sacrae Religionis* of Boniface IX, 1 Feb. 1400; *Apostolicae Sedis Providentia*, also of Boniface IX, 6 Feb. 1403; *Gerentes ad Vos* of Martin V, 16 Nov.

explicitly give power to ordain even to the priesthood.¹ The Council of Trent repeated that a bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation,² but said nothing about ordinary and extraordinary ministers of Orders. The Code of Canon Law, promulgated in 1917, lays down that: "Only a bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. The extraordinary minister is a priest to whom a faculty has been granted by common law or by a special indult of the Holy See." And again: "The ordinary minister of sacred ordination is a consecrated bishop; the extraordinary minister is one who, though without the episcopal character, has received either by law or by a special indult from the Holy See power to confer some orders" (it does not state which).³ Some theologians have held that in the four above-mentioned Papal Bulls the Popes were acting *ultra vires*, so that the ordinations performed by priest-abbots in pursuance of them were invalid.⁴ But as Cistercian abbots used the privilege and ordained their subjects to the diaconate for a matter of centuries, and as this was known and tolerated by bishops and Popes,⁵ it is better to admit that a priest can by Papal Indult confer the sacrament of Orders.

A simple priest then can be given by common law or apostolic indult powers that he did not receive at his ordination.

1427; and *Exposcit* of Innocent VIII, 9 April 1489—are printed in full in Lennerz, *De Sac. Ordinibus*, 1953, pp. 145–50.

¹ Viz. *Sacrae Religionis* and *Apostolicae Sedis Providentia*.

² Denz., 873.

³ *CIC*, 782 and 951.

⁴ e.g. C. Pesch, *Praelectiones Dogmaticae*, Fr. im Br., 1920, VII, n. 668: "Unum factum pontificium non facit legem neque dogma." (He knew only of *Exposcit*.)

⁵ Cf. Ysambertus, *Disput. in IIIam Partem S. Thomae*, Paris, 1643, p. 460: "Quo privilegio [scil. concesso in Bulla *Exposcit*] dicti abbates non tantum ante Tridentinum Concilium usi sunt, sed etiam et hoc ipso tempore utuntur [scil. 1643], videntibus nec repugnantibus, imo consentientibus et probantibus Episcopis, in quorum dioecesi praedictae Abbatiae sunt constitutae: nam dictos religiosos a suis praedictis Abbatibus in subdiaconos et diaconos ordinatos, et ad se pro suscipiendo ordine presbyteratus missos, visis eorum subdiaconatus et diaconatus litteris cum obedientia suorum Abbatum, sine ulla difficultate vel scrupulo conscientiae ordinant sacerdotes: igitur cum a facto ad posse valeat consequentia, et haec praxis numquam fuerit reprehensa vel a Summo Pontifice aut Episcopis, sed potius usu confirmata: fit ut recte dicamus simplices sacerdotes, de quorum dumtaxat condicione (quantum spectat ad ordinum ecclesiasticorum collationem) sunt praedicti Abbates, posse per dispensationem Summi Pontificis etiam conferre subdiaconatus et diaconatus ordines." Ysambertus (*ibid.*, p. 461), holds that a priest cannot even by dispensation of the Holy See ordain to the priesthood. He knew of no instance of such a privilege and argued *a non esse ad non posse*. Cf. also P. de Langogne in *Études Franciscaines*, 1901, V, p. 141.

At first sight this may seem very remarkable; but if one accepts the view proposed above that the powers of the priesthood belong to the juridical rather than to the physical order, everything becomes quite easy to understand. By the decree *Spiritus Sancta Munera*, for example, Pope Pius XII did not confer a new physical power on parish priests all over the world, but he did give them a juridical power. This can be understood in various ways. One may say that by his ordination every priest received the power to confirm (and ordain) with episcopal authorization; and the necessity of episcopal authorization can be conceived as arising either from an ecclesiastical law restricting the priest's valid use of his power, or from a divine law requiring that a priest who exercises these powers must receive special authority or some kind of jurisdiction from a bishop or from the Pope.¹ Either of these explanations is admissible, because it remains true in either case that a priest cannot by reason of his ordination alone validly confirm or ordain. If he cannot do so validly, then it is true to say with the Council of Trent that he has no power to confirm or ordain.

However, it seems more obviously in accordance with the Council of Trent, and more consistent with what we know of the origin of the priesthood, to say that by his ordination to the priesthood a man receives no power whatever to confirm or ordain; he is, however, given a certain dignity in the Church and raised to an eminent rank, so that he is a fit person to whom episcopal or Papal authority can communicate power when it seems good.

These are two ways of describing one and the same situation. The real point of difference between them is that in the former explanation it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the restriction of the powers of the priesthood is due to ecclesiastical law, whereas in the latter it is much easier to hold that the distinction between the episcopacy and the priesthood is of divine law, and was indeed instituted by Christ our Lord Himself. Hence, before proceeding further, it is necessary to discuss whether this distinction is immediately of divine or of ecclesiastical origin. (Those who say that it is immediately of

¹ For an explanation of this type cf. C. Baisi, *Il ministro straordinario degli ordini sacramentali*, 1935, Rome, p. 128f.

ecclesiastical origin do not of course deny that it is mediately of divine origin; i.e., they say that the distinction was made by power committed to the Church by Christ.) The question at issue is an historical one: did Christ our Lord Himself lay down that there should be two ranks or grades of priests in His Church, and that the lower rank should not normally confirm or ordain, but might do so with episcopal authority? Or was this rule laid down by the Apostles in virtue of the authority they had received from Christ?

The Council of Trent deliberately left this question open and undecided. In its sixth canon on the sacrament of Order it says:

Si quis dixerit, in Ecclesia catholica non esse hierarchiam, divina ordinatione institutam, quae constat ex episcopis, presbyteris et ministris: A.S.

If anyone says that in the Catholic Church there is not a hierarchy, instituted by divine ordination and consisting of bishops, priests and deacons, let him be anathema.¹

Before deciding to adopt the phrase "by divine ordination", the Council considered the phrases "by divine institution" (*divina institutione*) and "by a special divine ordination" (*ordinatione speciali divina*), but rejected them because it did not wish to decide the question whether the distinction between bishops and priests was instituted by Christ Himself.² This was in accordance with its regular policy of condemning the errors of heretics but not settling disputes between orthodox Catholic theologians.

If we turn then, as we must, to the history of apostolic and subapostolic times, we find no evidence that the above-mentioned rules (allowing presbyters to confirm and ordain only with episcopal authority) were then explicitly formulated. Rather the evidence is that at first all the sacraments except Baptism and of course Matrimony were normally administered either by the bishop or by presbyters explicitly delegated by the bishops.³ It was only as the Church grew and developed

¹ Denz., 966.

² Cf. Lennerz, op. cit., p. 84; Paleotti, *Acta Conc. Trid.*, ed. Goerres, 1931, III, p. 691.

³ Cf. Ignat Antioch., *Ep. ad Smyrnaeos*, 8, 1 (Rouët, n. 65): 'Εκελη βεβαλα εύχαριστια ήγεισθω, ή υπό επίσκοπον ούσα ή ψ̄ αν αυτός έπιτρέψη.

that priests were allowed to administer the sacraments separately and on their own initiative.¹

Since we find from the Acts of the Apostles and from the Epistles that wherever the Apostles preached and were received, they set up an organized Church and appointed presbyters, it may legitimately be inferred that they were told to do so by Christ Himself. Our Lord evidently told them to appoint presbyters to help them in their work of teaching, ruling and sanctifying the Church, and pointed to the example of Moses appointing the seventy-two presbyters—an Old Testament type which has been mentioned in the prayers of the rite of Ordination from the earliest times known to us.² This being so, we have very good reason for saying that Christ Himself instituted the distinction between bishops and priests, because that distinction is simply the continuation of the distinction between the Apostles and their presbyters. It is true that in apostolic times these helpers of the Apostles were given the titles "presbyter" and "bishop" indifferently.³ But it does not follow that the presbyter-bishops by their ordination received all the powers that the Apostles had! In the sub-apostolic period we find that the title "bishop" (i.e., *episcopus*) is reserved to the so-called "monarchic bishop", i.e., to the person who had succeeded to the presidency of the local Church on the death or departure of the Apostle. These monarchic bishops, when they were appointed to the presidency, were also given the fullness of the apostolic power. If they did not assume the title "apostle", the reason was, according to St.

¹ Cf. C. de Smedt, "L'organisation des Églises chrétiennes au III^e siècle", in *Revue des Quest. historiques*, 1891, 50, pp. 397f. He shows that the persecutions of Decius and Valerian, which were aimed mainly at the bishops, necessitated the performance by simple priests of sacred functions and acts of jurisdiction that had previously been reserved to the bishops.

² Eusebius, *Demonstrat. Evangel.*, III, 2 (PL 22, 173), in working out the parallelism between Christ and Moses, says: "Further, Moses appointed seventy men to rule the people, for the Scripture says: 'Choose out for me seventy men from among the elders of Israel and I will take away some of the spirit that rests upon thee and give it to them, and he chose out seventy men' [cf. Num. xi. 16]. So also our Saviour 'appointed seventy disciples and sent them two by two before his face' (Luke x. 1)." It is probable that the disagreement among the chief Gospel codices in Luke x. 1—where Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus have seventy, while Vaticanus and Cod. Bezae have seventy-two—is due to uncertainty about the real number of Moses' disciples.

³ Cf. e.g., Acts xx. 17 and 28.

Ambrose,¹ reverence for the giants of the first generation; the new presidents assumed the humbler title of bishop (*episcopus*), which henceforth was not given to presbyters.

The first priests were, therefore, men whom the Apostles appointed to be their assistants and to do such tasks as they might entrust to them. There is no historical evidence whatever to prove that every presbyter whom St. Paul appointed was given power to ordain as many other presbyters as he liked and that his use of this power was later restricted by an ecclesiastical law to the monarchic bishop alone. St. Paul's language in his letters to Timothy suggests that the power of ordination was originally exercised collectively by the whole presbyterate of a Church, i.e., that all presbyters imposed hands at an ordination.² But there is no evidence that a presbyter could validly impose hands by himself independently of the monarchic bishop and without his authority. The very idea would have been unthinkable, because to make a man a presbyter was to give him a certain position in the visible organization of the local Church—a certain place in the meeting house, the right to teach others, etc.—and this could not possibly be done without reference to the president of the local Church.

The monarchic bishop, for his part, would not ordain new presbyters without consulting the existing ones; but since he was their ruler and not their subject, if he performed an ordination without their consent it would be valid.³

For these reasons it seems that we should not say, with St. Jerome and his adherents,⁴ that at his ordination a priest receives power to ordain which is immediately restricted by ecclesiastical law; rather we should hold that by his ordination no priest does or ever did receive power to ordain on his own initiative without reference to episcopal authority. Priests are essentially helpers and official assistants of the bishops. In the central prayer of the rite of ordination the bishop refers to

¹ Quoted by Amalarius, *Lib. Off.*, II, 13, 12, ed. Hanssens, p. 231: "Beatis vero apostolis decedentibus, illi qui post illos ordinati sunt, ut praessent ecclesiis . . . grave existimaverunt apostolorum sibi vindicare nuncupationem. Diviserunt ergo ipsa nomina." Cf. also Rhabanus Maurus, *Enarr. in Ep. 1 Tim.*, PL 112, 604D.

² 1 Tim. iv. 14; cf. 2 Tim. i. 6.

³ Cf. St. Cyprian, Ep. 38, quoted by Lennerz, op. cit., p. 18.

⁴ Cf. St. Jerome, *Comment. in Ep. ad Titum*, I, 5, 9-13 (in C. Kirch, *Enchiridion Font. Hist. Eccl. Ant.*, nn. 631-3).

the new priests as *cooperatores ordinis nostri*—"assistants of the episcopal order". By their ordination priests are given this eminent status, and by reason of their status they can thereafter, as the four Papal Bulls show, be given power to ordain; but the status is not identical with the power,¹ and normally those who possess the status do not possess the power.

The power to administer the sacraments (other than Baptism and Matrimony) was given by Christ our Lord to the Apostles and their successors the bishops to be exercised either in person or through their helpers. By instituting the sacraments Christ our Lord was making a compact or covenant with His Apostles, so that if they and their successors performed the sacramental rites, either in person or through their helpers the presbyters, He would use the rites as instruments of supernatural efficacy.

The practice of the Church shows that some sacraments are always validly conferred by one who holds the office of the priesthood, whereas others are valid only when performed by a priest with episcopal or papal authorization. Consecration of the Eucharist and Extreme Unction are performed validly *ex officio* simply—no further authorization is required for validity; but for the valid administration of Confirmation, Penance and Orders the status of presbyter is not enough. Hence one may say with St. Thomas that a priest has power to consecrate the Eucharist by his ordination (*ex consecratione sua*) and power to absolve, etc. by episcopal commission (*ex commissione episcopi*).²

The sacramental powers conferred by the ordination itself are therefore power to consecrate and power to administer Extreme Unction. Ordination does not by itself give power to confer the sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Orders, but it raises its recipients to an eminent status in the Church, so that they are fit persons to whom episcopal authority can give such power.

¹ Cf. Scotus, quoted *infra*, p. 46.

² *Summa*, III, 82, 1 ad 4: "Episcopus accipit potestatem ut agat in persona Christi super corpus eius mysticum, id est super Ecclesiam: quam quidem potestatem non accipit sacerdos in sua consecratione, licet possit eam habere ex episcopi commissione." In interpreting this passage it should be borne in mind that in the rite of ordination as St. Thomas knew it there was explicit mention of power to consecrate, but not of power to absolve. In his *Commentary on the Sentences* (cf. *infra*, pp. 42-3) he shows no knowledge of the second group of ceremonies, i.e., of the last of the four parts of the rite (cf. *infra*, pp. 29-30).

The idea that the presbyterate is distinct and separable from some at least of the powers that are exercised by priests will seem less strange, if one considers the ordination of the Apostles. It is impossible to point to any one moment at which they received all the powers they were to exercise in the Churches they founded. First of all they received a hierarchical status when they were formally constituted the Twelve and given the title of "Apostle". A considerable time later, at the Last Supper, they received the power of consecration. And it was not until after the Passion and Resurrection that they received power of absolution.

The rite or ordination in the form it has had since Durandus re-enacts the progressive ordination of the Apostles. The ordinands first receive their hierarchical status by the imposition of hands; then the tradition of instruments¹ expresses the conferring of the power to say Mass; then the Sacrifice of Christ is made present in the Mass of Ordination; then the second imposition of hands with its accompanying words expresses the conferring of power to forgive sins. As will be seen later, according to the interpretation of the rite proposed by Scotus, the ordination of priests, as of the Apostles, takes place in stages; he held that the tradition of instruments and the second imposition of hands did in fact effect what they signify.² But now, since the Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis*, it is certain that bishops confer the powers that belong necessarily to the priesthood, by the very act of ordaining to the presbyterate.

THE DUTIES OF THE PRIESTHOOD

The purpose of the presbyterate may be defined, in general terms, as being to assist the Apostles and their successors in their task of carrying on the work of Christ our Lord. The duties of the presbyterate collectively are to give this assistance to the Apostles and bishops. In the language of St. Paul, their task is to assist the bishops in building up the Mystical Body to the full stature of Christ, without spot or blemish.

¹ "Tradition of instruments" is a technical phrase for the delivery or handing-over of the chalice and paten, which are the instruments used in offering the Sacrifice of the Mass.

² Cf. *infra*, p. 45.

Considerable light is cast upon the duties of the presbyterate by the Old Testament analogy, which, as has been mentioned already, has been referred to in the prayers of ordination from the earliest times. In the eleventh chapter of the Book of Numbers we read how the chosen people in their journey through the desert grew tired of the manna which God was miraculously providing for them, sighed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and grumbled to Moses about their hard lot: "If we had but meat to feed on! they said. How well we remember the fish that Egypt afforded without stint, the cucumbers, the melons, leeks and onions and garlic! Our hearts faint within us, as we look round, and nothing but manna meets our eyes."¹ Moses found their complaints insupportable and addressed almighty God with remarkable liberty of speech: "Lord, he said, why dost thou treat me thus? How is it that I have fallen out of favour with thee? Must I carry a whole people like a weight on my back? I did not bring this multitude of men into the world; I did not beget them; and thou wouldst have me nurse them in my bosom like a child, till they reach the land promised to their race. Where am I to find meat for such a host as this? And that is the complaint they bring me; they would have meat for their food. I cannot bear, alone, the charge of so many; it is too great a burden for me. If I may not have my way in this, then in mercy, I beseech thee, rid me of these miseries by taking my life away."² By the word "alone" Moses hints to almighty God that he needs helpers; and when he says "If I may not have my way in this", he means: "If I may not have helpers to assist me in bearing the burden of rule", then let me die.

The Lord granted Moses' request: "Choose out for me seventy Israelites of ripe age, men already known to thee as elders and officers of the people, bring them to the door of the tabernacle that bears record of my covenant, and let them stand there at thy side. I will come down and converse with thee there; taking away some of the spirit that rests upon thee and giving it to them instead, so that they may share with

¹ Num. xi. 5-6 (Knox).

² Ibid., xi. 11-15. Cf. St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, v, 15 (PL 42, 921): "*Tollam de Spiritu tuo, et dabo eis: hoc est, dabo illis de Spiritu Sancto, quem iam dedi tibi.*"

thee that charge over the people which thou canst not support unaided.”¹

This narrative shows that the seventy elders were appointed to help Moses keep the people of God firm in their faith and hope, to check them from going back to the Egyptian bondage from which God was liberating them, and to keep up their courage in the long journey to the Promised Land. They were given a share in the spirit of Moses—primarily in his faith in God and hope for the Promised Land. In this spirit they would sustain the morale of the Chosen People by their word and by their good example.

The journey of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage to the promised land of Canaan has always been recognized as a type or figure of the journey of Christ’s followers from the bondage of sin to the celestial Jerusalem. Our life on earth is a pilgrimage; we have no abiding city here; the very word “parish” is a reminder of that.² It is the duty of the bishop to sustain the perseverance of his people on their long and tedious journey, to remind them of their destiny, and to check them from drifting away into the bondage from which they have been rescued. In this task he has the presbyters to help him: they too must support the people’s morale by their word and by leading exemplary lives.

However, although this analogy is helpful and illuminating, it does not give us a complete picture of the functions of the presbyterate of the New Law. The Mosaic presbyterate was merely a type, and did but foreshadow the Christian priesthood that was to take its place. In addition to the functions prefigured in the seventy elders, the priests of the New Law also exercise functions that were typified in the Aaronic priesthood, namely the offering of sacrifice to God and the distribution of the graces won by the sacrifice. We may, therefore, distinguish in the Christian priesthood two sets of functions: the presbyteral functions of teaching and ruling the Church by precept and example, and the sacerdotal functions of offering sacrifice and administering the sacraments.

¹ Num. xi. 16–18 (Knox).

² Cf. F. X. Arnold, “Zur Theologie der Pfarrei” in *Theologische Quartalschrift*, 1953, pp. 129–59. A *paroikia* means originally a group of pilgrims; at first it was used for what we call a diocese—perhaps it has that meaning in the dialogue from the Romano-Germanic Pontifical quoted *infra*, p. 83.

Our Lord united these two sets of functions in Himself; He was both the second Moses¹ and the second Aaron.² The purpose of His incarnation was not simply to teach mankind by word and example how they ought to serve God (that is a Nestorian and Pelagian error), but to introduce a new form of life—sanctifying and actual graces—which would pervade the mass of mankind like a spiritual leaven and transform men by its physical influence into His own likeness. Similarly, in the Christian priesthood, which exists to continue the work of Christ in the world, the presbyteral and sacerdotal functions are conjoined: the bishops and the priests who are their assistants are appointed to teach and guide the faithful by their word and example, but they are also to continue the offering of His sacrifice in their Masses and the distribution of its fruits in the administration of the sacraments.

It is, however, a mistake to draw too sharp a distinction between the presbyteral and the sacerdotal functions of the priesthood. The administration of the sacrament of Penance, for example, is a judicial act of “binding and loosing”; hence in so far as it is an act of government it is presbyteral, and in so far as it confers grace it is sacerdotal. It has often been said that a priest by his ordination receives two sets of powers: power over the physical Body of Christ, and power over the Mystical Body.³ Indeed this distinction has probably influenced the development of the rite of ordination, as will be shown later. But it is not a profound distinction. All the powers of the priesthood are given for the one purpose of sanctifying God’s people, building up or “edifying” the Mystical Body of Christ. The power of consecrating the Eucharist is no less for this purpose than the power of absolution, because the Blessed Sacrament is the sacrament of unity and the source of cohesion in the Mystical Body.⁴

¹ This comparison is worked out in considerable detail by Eusebius, *Demonstrat. Evangel.*, III, 2 (PL 22, 167–78).

² Heb. v. 4–5; cf. however, *ibid.*, vii. 11.

³ This is the view of Scotus, adopted by numerous theologians of every school; cf. van Rossum, p. 27f.

⁴ Cf. B. Piault, “Le Sacrement de l’Ordre” in *Nouvelle Rev. Théol.*, 1949, 71, p. 1037: “Nous voudrions décrire l’Ordre par rapport au corps mystique du Christ. Car—et en cela nous nous séparons de saint Thomas—nous subordonnons le pouvoir eucharistique donné par le Sacrement de l’Ordre au pouvoir sur le corps mystique.” Cf. *infra*, pp. 123–5.

In the early centuries, when presbyters rarely exercised their sacerdotal functions, it is not surprising to find that the main emphasis in the rite of ordination was on the presbyteral functions and in particular upon the duty of giving good example. The earliest extant prayers of presbyteral ordination mention the power of consecration only indirectly;¹ presbyters are looked upon primarily as rulers and guides of the Church and models of Christian virtue. Similarly, the words which have been specified by Pope Pius XII as the essence of the form of the sacrament lay great emphasis on the priest's duty of edifying the Church: "Bestow, almighty Father, on this Thy servant the dignity of the priesthood; renew in his heart the spirit of holiness, that he may keep the office of second rank that he has received from Thee, O God, and gently reproach the conduct of others by the example of his holy life." This important Papal pronouncement is a timely reminder of a truth which had perhaps been obscured by medieval liturgical developments, namely, that one of the main duties of a priest is to give good example in the Church.

Nowadays, a priest must also teach by word: he must be able to remind the people of the life and teaching of Christ, of their divine adoption, of their destiny, and of their duties. But this was not always so. In the first three or four centuries the bishops exercised a more or less complete monopoly of preaching—less in the Greek, and more in the Latin Church. When, for example, St. Augustine, very shortly after his ordination to the priesthood, was called upon to preach in the Church of Hippo, some were scandalized. Pope Gregory the Great, when unable through sickness to preach to his people, instead of calling upon a priest to preach in his place, had a sermon of his own read out to the people.² In days when there were no courses of theology for prospective priests, bishops had good reason for being careful about letting their priests stand up and address the people. But from the sixth

¹ Cf. the prayer from Hippolytus given below, pp. 31–2. In the Leonine and Gregorian Sacramentaries there is an indirect reference in the phrase *hostias salutare* and in the allusion to the sons of Aaron; in the "Prayer of Consummation", which is added in the Gelasian Sacramentary, occurs the first direct reference: *corpus et sanguinem Filii tui immaculata benedictione transformet* (on which see below, p. 123).

² Cf. G. Bardy, in *Prêtres d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*, Paris, 1954, pp. 35–6.

century on, as Christian worship was more and more decentralized from the cathedral to the parish churches, the pontifical *cathedra* ceased to be the main source of instruction, and priests exercised the office of preaching more and more often. The parish system requires a learned presbyterate; that is why it is nowadays the priest's duty often to read and meditate upon the sacred Books, the writings of the Fathers and the Councils of the Church. In dioceses where the majority of the faithful rarely see their bishop, and where the bishop's time is largely taken up by diocesan administration, the preaching must of necessity be done to a very large extent by his assistants, the priests.

All priests of the Latin rite are bound to celibacy by ecclesiastical law.¹ Although they do not assume this obligation on the day when they receive the priesthood, but by ordination to the subdiaconate, celibacy may be put down here as one of the duties of the priesthood. Many and various are the reasons that have been offered to explain why the Church imposes this obligation. The one that fits best with the view here taken of the task and duties of the presbyterate is that by renouncing all hope of founding a home and family of his own a priest gives the clearest witness he could give to his belief in another world, for the sake of which it is worth while making great sacrifices in this world. His renunciation of all hope of wife and children must inevitably help to focus his mind and heart on the other world, and help the faithful to do the same. The Christian religion preached by their priests requires of them adherence to an exacting moral code, and they might well murmur against the priests if they did not see them submitting to a still more heroic discipline.

THE GRACES OF THE PRIESTHOOD

Each of the seven sacraments was instituted for a special purpose and confers a special grace. The purpose of the sacrament of Orders is not merely to confer the status of presbyter and the powers of the priesthood, but also to confer graces

¹ *CIC*, 132 §1 and 949.

to make the recipient a worthy presbyter and a worthy priest.¹

Since it is the presbyter's task to support the faith, hope and charity of the faithful by the example of his own faith, hope and charity, the chief grace he needs in order to do his duty worthily is an increase in his own faith, hope and charity, which must so shine before men that they see the presbyter's good works and glorify their Father who is in heaven. The graces are, therefore, graces that will enhance the personal holiness of the priest, but they are given primarily for the good of the Mystical Body at large. Their effect is, in the words of the so-called "Preface" of consecration "that the beauty of perfect justice [or righteousness] may shine forth in them" and that they may be "prudent fellow-workers" of the bishops; the prayer *Deus Sanctificationum* begs grace for them "that they may give proof in themselves and set an example of justice, steadfastness, mercy, fortitude and all other virtues". From the liturgical prayers, therefore, we can gather that the graces of ordination to the priesthood include an increase in the infused virtues of faith, hope and charity and of the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.

It would be a mistake to think that the graces of the priesthood are given once and for all on the day of ordination. The sacrament of Orders is a permanent source of grace—probably through the character which it confers.² That is to say, the character makes its bearer permanently a presbyter, and therefore permanently in need of the graces that will make him worthy of his eminent rank. To speak in very human terms, the character is a perpetual reminder to almighty God of the priest's need of actual graces in the performance of his duties. If this view of the relation between the character and the graces of the sacrament is correct,³ it will be true to say that a good priest continues to receive sacramental graces to the end of his life.

There is a reference to the permanence of the sacrament of

¹ Conc. Florentinum, *Decretum pro Armenis* (Denz., 701): "Effectus augmentum gratiae, ut quis sit idoneus minister."

² In Matrimony, which is also a "permanent sacrament", there is no character; but there is something analogous, namely the *vinculum*.

³ This is not St. Thomas' view—cf. *infra*, p. 42.

Orders in the prayer which the bishop makes immediately before the Preface of Consecration; he asks that God will pour down on his servants "the power of priestly grace, that Thou mayest accompany them through their lives with a never-failing abundance of Thy gifts". The Prayer of Consummation makes a similar petition. And further testimony is provided by St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy to stir up the embers of the grace that is within him by the imposition of hands¹—as though by ordination a perpetual fire were kindled within the priest's soul, which may through neglect die down and smoulder beneath dull ashes, but which can always be stirred up to fresh life again.

In a word, the grace of the priesthood is a participation in the Spirit of Christ, the second Moses, to enable the priest to persevere throughout his life in carrying on the work that Christ began. It imparts to him something of the Spirit of Christ the King and Christ the High Priest.

¹ 2 Tim. i. 6, where the Greek ἀναζωπυρεῖν means "to stir up a fire to life".

II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RITE

THE SOURCES

In order to understand how the rite of ordination has developed in the course of the centuries from its primitive simplicity to its present complexity, it is necessary to have some idea of the source-books in which this process of development is disclosed to us. Nowadays, the official text of the rite is a part of the Roman Pontifical. A "Pontifical" is a book containing both the prayers, exhortations, etc., and the rubrics for the performance of all the rites and ceremonies that are normally reserved to a bishop. In the first nine-and-a-half centuries of the Church's existence there were no Pontificals in this sense; the prayers and rubrical directions for ordinations were contained in various collections that went under different titles. (The name *Liber Pontificalis* was then reserved for an official chronicle of the Popes.)

The earliest of such collections that has come down to us is the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, compiled at Rome by the schismatic Hippolytus about A.D. 217.¹ As Hippolytus was an extreme conservative in things liturgical, and set out, as the title of his work indicates, to describe rites which he believed to be of apostolic origin, it is safe to assume that his text records liturgical practice that was already traditional at the end of the second century, when he was a young man. The original Greek of Hippolytus (Greek was still the liturgical language of the Roman Church²) has not survived except in

¹ Cf. B. S. Easton, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*, Cambridge, 1934.

² T. Klauser, "Der Übergang der römischen Kirche von der griechischen zur lateinischen Liturgiesprache" in *Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati (Studi e Testi, 121)*, Rome, 1946, I, pp. 467-82, gives evidence to show that the changeover at Rome is to be dated between 360 and 382, and that the Pontiff responsible was probably Pope Damasus. The Church of Milan may have led the way.

fragmentary portions, but the work had a wide circulation and is known to us through Latin, Sahidic (Coptic), Bohairic, Arabic and Ethiopic versions, which have been edited with English translations in recent times.¹

Next come the three famous "Sacramentaries" of the Roman Church, called the Leonine,² the Gelasian,³ and the Gregorian,⁴ after the three Popes—St. Leo (d. A.D. 461), St. Gelasius (d. 496), and St. Gregory the Great (d. 604)—to whom they have been ascribed. The Sacramentaries are not, as their name suggests to modern ears, collections of prayers and rubrics for the administration of the seven sacraments. They were compiled long before the word "sacrament" acquired the precise technical meaning we give to it today, and long before the period (about A.D. 1150) when the doctrine that there are seven and only seven sacraments became fully explicit.⁵ They include, therefore, many other rites of blessing and consecration, such as the rite of coronation, which used to come under the heading of *sacramenta*, but are not sacraments in the technical sense defined by the Council of Trent.⁶ The large portions of the Sacramentaries taken up with prayers for the celebration of Mass was eventually separated off to become the Missal. A good deal of the remainder has passed into what we call the Roman Pontifical, by channels that will be described below after a word has been said about each of the three above-mentioned Sacramentaries.

The so-called "Leonine Sacramentary" survives in a manuscript, probably of the seventh century, kept in the capitular library at Verona. It is an unofficial collection of heterogeneous materials not arranged in any systematic order. It is by no means certain that the whole book is of Roman origin; more probably it contains *libelli* (portable liturgical books in use

¹ Cf. F. X. Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, Paderborn, 1905; G. Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles or Canones Ecclesiastici*, London, 1904; H. Duensing, *Der Aethiopische Text der Kirchenordnung des Hippolyts*, Göttingen, 1946; W. Till and J. Leipoldt, *Der Koptische Text der Kirchenordnung des Hippolyts*, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, Berlin, 1954, 58.

² Cf. C. L. Feltoe, *The Leonine Sacramentary*, Cambridge, 1896.

³ Cf. H. A. Wilson, *The Gelasian Sacramentary*, Oxford, 1894.

⁴ Cf. H. A. Wilson, *The Gregorian Sacramentary*, London, 1915 (HBS).

⁵ Cf. the anonymous *Sententiae Divinitatis*, ed. B. Geyer, in *Beiträge zur Gesch. der Phil. des Mittelalters*, 1909, VII, p. 108*.

⁶ Conc. Trid., *Canones de Sac. in gen.*, 1-8 (Denz., 844-51).

about A.D. 500–600) from a variety of sources, e.g., from Spain.¹ Some of its prayers, including those for ordinations, show a strong resemblance to St. Leo's severe, elegant, rhythmic prose style,² and may well be from his pen; others are certainly post-Leonine.

What is now called the "Gelasian Sacramentary" is a liturgical collection that was widely used in the churches of France and England in the seventh and eighth centuries.³ Its original may perhaps have been compiled and arranged by Pope Gelasius, but many additions were made to it in the course of time by Gallican bishops, and what is known as the "Gelasian of the Eighth Century" contains elements taken from the Gregorian.

The Gregorian Sacramentary, which dates from the end of the sixth century, was arranged by Pope St. Gregory from traditional texts and probably contains little of his own composition.⁴ Both here in England and in France it was in use concurrently with the Gelasian. In Rome it was still in use in the tenth century. The earliest extant manuscripts are from the end of the eighth century, by which time there had already been an official revision at Rome. This revised Gregorian Sacramentary was introduced into the Carolingian Empire by the authority of Charlemagne himself. Wishing to secure liturgical uniformity throughout his dominions, he wrote to Pope Hadrian between 784 and 791 asking for a copy of the Gregorian Sacramentary. When it arrived he tried to make its use obligatory in his Empire, but, as will be seen in a later section, he did not succeed. The copying of books was a very slow and costly business; the Gallican ecclesiastics did not like the primitive simplicity of the Gregorian rites; and Charlemagne's successors did not insist on strict adherence to the Roman text.⁵

¹ Cf. L. Eizenhöfer, "Nochmals *Spanish Symptoms*" in *Sacris Erudiri*, 1952, IV, pp. 27–45.

² Cf. G. Gallewaert, "S. Léon le Grand et les Textes du Léonien" in *Sacris Erudiri*, 1948, I, pp. 36–164.

³ It passed under the title of *Liber Sacramentorum Romanæ Ecclesiæ*, and is sometimes referred to by medieval writers as *Missale Gelasianum*. It was given the title of *Sacramentarium Gelasianum* by the great liturgist Muratori in 1748.

⁴ Cf. De Puniet, I, p. 24.

⁵ Cf. Ellard, chapter 4, p. 34f.

As the Sacramentaries originally contained no rubrics, they had to be supplemented by other books, called *Ordines Romani* ("Roman Ordinals"), which described the ceremonies but did not give the text of the prayers. The Ordinals claimed to describe the ceremonies as performed in Rome, but often they contained ultramontane additions and modifications. At first they were composed as separate booklets—one for Ordinations, one for coronations, etc.—but in the ninth and tenth centuries they were often put together into collections; and at an early date—even in the ninth century—bishops began to have composite books made containing both the rubrical directions from the Ordinals and texts of prayers and exhortations from the Sacramentaries. The bulky tomes thus produced may be called the first Pontificals,¹ but their compilers did not so call them; they do not seem to have known what to call them!

These first Pontificals were made not in Rome but in France and Germany. Their chief components, coming from the Sacramentaries and Ordinals, were of Roman origin, but were amalgamated with Germanic and Frankish ceremonies and prayers. The most important of them was one made at the monastery of St. Alban in Mainz, the old religious capital of Germany, perhaps for Archbishop William (A.D. 954–68), the son of Otto the Great. It was soon copied and used in other important continental sees—Salzburg, Cologne, and Trèves—and a little later, probably in the reign of King Edward the Confessor, it was brought into use in England.²

When this Mainz Pontifical—now generally known as the "Romano-Germanic Pontifical"³—had been in existence for about half a century, it was taken to Rome and ousted the old Gregorian Sacramentary and the *Ordines*. Its adoption by the See of Peter was a consequence of political developments: by the restoration of the Empire in 962, Italy became once more a part of the Germanic Empire, and the German bishops

¹ Cf. Andrieu, *Ordines*, I, pp. 546–8.

² Andrieu, *Ordines*, I, p. 510.

³ The name suggested by Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 4. From the time of M. Hittorp, *De Divinis Cath. Ecclesiae Officiis et Mysteriis*, Cologne, 1568, it has passed under the misnomer of *Ordo Romanus Antiquus*. Its ordination ritual is also printed in Morinus, II, p. 257f.

who were appointed to important Italian sees naturally took with them their German Pontificals. In this way many provincial customs and uses passed into the liturgy of the churches of Italy, including Rome; and as German political domination continued for a considerable time, the Gallicanised liturgy, for better or for worse, took firm root in the Eternal City.

As printing had not, of course, been invented at this period, there was room for revision in the production of every single new Pontifical.¹ The copies made in Rome from the German liturgical books underwent constant revision and pruning, to reduce them to a more tractable size, to simplify the rites, to make the prayers less repetitive, and to adapt the ceremonies to Roman customs and traditions. Thus the Romano-Germanic Pontifical developed gradually into the Roman Pontifical. But in the twelfth century it still had no firmly established name. Sometimes it was called *Ordo Romanus*, sometimes *Ordo Episcopalis*, sometimes just *Liber* ("The Book").

From the twelfth century onwards copies of the Roman Pontifical were made in large numbers for the cardinal bishops resident in Rome, for the hundred or so suffragan sees of the Papacy, and for bishops all over Europe. The prestige of the Papacy grew steadily in the twelfth century, and bishops and abbeys all over Europe were brought into much closer contact with the Holy See than ever before.² One result of this development was the rapid diffusion of the Roman Pontifical. But as bishops still retained a certain degree of liturgical autonomy, the Roman text was often adapted to local traditions.

The next great milestone in the history of the Pontifical is the composition of the Pontifical of Durandus in the last decade of the thirteenth century.³ Its author, Guillaume Durand, a celebrated canonist and liturgist of the Roman Curia and later Bishop of Mende (Mima) in Gévaudan, drew up this Pontifical for use in his own see. It was based on Roman Pontificals of the thirteenth century, but was adapted

¹ The ordination rites from about thirty-five manuscript Pontificals from various parts of Europe are printed in Morinus and Martène; they will be frequently quoted below.

² Cf. Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 16.

³ Called by its author *Pontificalis Ordinis Liber*; cf. Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 327.

to meet the needs of an ordinary local bishop, and to incorporate various non-Roman elements which Durandus thought would make the rites more impressive. At this point, therefore, the Pontifical received a fresh infusion of provincial ideas. In the course of the next century Durandus' Pontifical was accepted by numerous neighbouring bishops and made its way into Italy, receiving many additions and alterations in the process of its diffusion.¹ It eventually formed the basis of the first printed Pontifical edited by Augustino Patrizi Piccolomini in A.D. 1485. Piccolomini says in his Introduction:

Deterruit me ab hoc opere aliquandiu tum rei ipsius difficultas tum maxime Gulielmi Durantis Episcopi Mimatensis auctoritas, qui pontificalem librum quo maxime hoc tempore utuntur antistites edidit. . . . Cuius editioni manus apponere piaculum ducerem, nisi post ea tempora multaue addita pleraque intermissa, plurima vero viciata reperirentur, et nisi ipse Durantes non tam universalis ecclesie quam Mimatensis cui praeerat, in suo opere rationem habuisset. Nos vero illum quantum potuimus secuti, adhibitis pluribus ac diversis exemplaribus ritum atque ordinem quem sacrosancta servat apostolica sedes ubique tenentes, tamquam ex diversis floribus ad instar apum alia ex aliis excerpimus, atque unum quasi confecimus corpus.

I was for some time deterred from this task both by the very difficulty of it and especially by respect for the authority of Guillaume Durand, Bishop of Mende, who published the Pontifical that most bishops use nowadays . . . I should think it a crime to tamper with his text, except that many additions, omissions and corruptions of later date are found in books that purport to give his text; and besides Durand himself had in mind in compiling his work not the universal Church but rather the church of Mende, of which he had charge. We, however, following him as far as has been possible, and everywhere adhering to the ritual and ordinal of the Holy Apostolic See, have used many different manuscripts, and like bees that visit many flowers have gathered from different sources to build up a single body.

So far as the rite of ordination is concerned, it will be seen in later parts of this book that Piccolomini does not follow Durandus as closely as his professions of respect might lead one to expect.²

Piccolomini's Pontifical was officially adopted by Pope

¹ Cf. Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, pp. v-viii.

² Perhaps there was already some doubt as to what was the true Pontifical of Durandus—see *infra*, p. 149, n. 4.

Innocent VIII, who recommended it to all Churches in communion with Rome. It was revised and reprinted soon afterwards, in 1497 and 1511, with some interesting alterations in the rubrics for ordination. In 1520 the Venetian Giunta Press produced a fine edition lavishly illustrated with woodcuts, four of which (Plates 1, 2, 4 and 7) are of great interest as showing how some of the rubrics of the rite of ordination were interpreted at that date. The first edition of the Roman Pontifical to be made obligatory throughout the Latin rite was that authorized by Clement VIII in 1595. There have been further official revisions in 1644 (Urban VIII) and 1752 (Benedict XIV).

THE GENERAL PATTERN OF THE MODERN RITE

The rite of ordination, as prescribed in the Roman Pontifical of the present day, falls into four parts.

The first and essential part is a group of ceremonies inserted into the Mass immediately before the last verse of the Tract. The ordinands are presented to the bishop, who inquires about their worthiness. The clergy and people are asked to signify their approval of the ordinations to be performed. The bishop then reads the ordinands an exhortation on the duties of the priesthood. The litanies are sung to invoke the intercession of the saints. The bishop imposes hands, and the priests do the same. The bishop calls upon all present to pray for the ordinands and offers a prayer in the name of all. Then he reads the Prayer of Consecration, which includes the essential words of the form of the sacrament. Once these words have been spoken, the sacrament, the graces, the dignity, the powers, the rights and the duties of the priesthood have all been conferred. The new priests are at once clothed in the official vestments of their rank.¹ Then the bishop reads a long prayer asking God that the new priests may lead an exemplary life in the ranks of the priesthood.

The second part, which follows immediately upon the first, represents the conferring of power to offer the sacrifice of the

¹ This ceremony can be considered as completing the first part of the rite, or as beginning the second part—according as one regards the chasuble as the insignia of the presbyterate or as the vestment for Mass.

Mass. The new priests' hands are anointed "so that whatever they consecrate may be consecrated". Then each of them, while the holy oil is still on his hands, touches a chalice and paten which the bishop holds out to him, in token of his now having power to offer Holy Mass.

The third part is a representation of the Last Supper. The new priests concelebrate with the bishop; that is to say, they recite all the prayers—including the words of consecration—aloud with the bishop, to represent the intimate participation of the Apostles in the sacrifice of Christ our Lord at the Last Supper. After the new priests have received Holy Communion, the bishop reads out the words *Iam non dicam vos servos* ("No longer will I call you servants . . .") which our Lord spoke to His Apostles after He had given them power to say Mass at the Last Supper.

The fourth part is a group of ceremonies inserted between the *Iam non dicam* and the Communion prayer from the Mass of the day. These ceremonies are all concerned with the new priests' place and function in the Mystical Body of Christ. First they make a public profession of the faith they are going to teach. Then the bishop imposes hands again and says the words "whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven". Then their chasubles, which have hitherto been folded at the back, are let down, to signify that they have the full powers of their rank—power over the mystical as well as over the physical Body of Christ. They promise reverence and obedience, receive a further exhortation from the bishop, and a final blessing.

It is neither necessary nor possible here to trace in detail the extremely complex process of development of which this rite is the outcome. Before that can be done each part of the rite will have to be studied in all the extant Sacramentaries and Pontificals of Europe. A start has been made on that enormous task by an American liturgist's study, *Ordination Anointings in the Western Church before 1000 A.D.*¹ When the whole ceremony has been covered by a series of monographs of the same quality, it will at length be possible for someone

¹ By G. Ellard, S.J., Professor of Liturgy, St. Louis University School of Divinity; Publications of the Medieval Academy of America, Cambridge, Mass., no. 16.

to write a complete history of the rite. Meanwhile we must be satisfied with the rough idea of the process of development that can be had by picking out the main milestones on the road and seeing what shape the rite had taken at each of them.

ORDINATIONS BY THE APOSTLES

The New Testament does not describe in detail how the Apostles ordained their first presbyters. The Acts of the Apostles narrates the selection and ordination of the seven "deacons"¹ (who are nowhere called deacons in the text), and gives a description of what may be the episcopal consecration of Paul and Barnabas;² but on the subject of presbyteral ordination it tells us nothing. In the Epistles to Timothy there are two passing references to Timothy's ordination,³ which show that he was ordained by the laying-on of the hands of St. Paul and of the presbyters of some Church (perhaps Lystra),⁴ but no further details are given about the ritual employed.

HIPPOLYTUS

The earliest extant rubrics and prayers for presbyteral ordination are those of Hippolytus. The following translation is from the Ethiopic version, which is probably as close to the original Greek as any.⁵

Concerning the ordination of presbyters. If the bishop desires to ordain a presbyter, he shall lay his hand upon his head; and all the presbyters shall touch him and shall pray, saying: My God, the Father of our Lord and our Saviour Jesus Christ, look down upon this thy servant, and impart to him the spirit of

¹ Acts vi. 1-6.

² This opinion is maintained by F. Prat, Art. "Evêques" in *DTC*, V, 1684; it is rejected by Tixeront, *op. cit.*, p. 104, for the not inconsiderable reason that before receiving the imposition of hands Paul and Barnabas were already equal in rank to the other "prophets and doctors" who were present.

³ 1 Tim. iv. 14, and 2 Tim. i. 6.

⁴ Cf. Acts xvi. 1-3.

⁵ Cf. J. H. Crehan, *Early Christian Baptism and the Creed*, London, 1950, Appendix IV, "The Text of Hippolytus".

grace and the gift of holiness,¹ that he may be able to direct thy people with pure heart: as thou lookedst upon thy chosen people and commandedst Moses to choose presbyters whom thou filledst with the Holy Spirit which thou grantedst to thy servant and minister Moses, so now, Lord, give to this thy servant the grace which fails not, preserving to us the spirit of thy favour, and vouchsafe to us, whilst thou fillest us with thy worship in our heart, to glorify thee, through thy Son Jesus Christ, through whom to thee be glory and power, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit in the holy Church now and always and for ever and ever.

And all the people shall say: Amen and Amen. He is worthy of it.²

The whole ceremony would take only two or three minutes!

THE ROMAN SACRAMENTARIES

The prayers for the ordination of a priest in the Leonine and Gregorian Sacramentaries amplify and develop in noble rhythmic Latin the ideas contained in the prayers of Hippolytus. There is first an invitatory prayer (*Oremus, dilectissimi*, see p. 98) summoning all present to pray for the ordinands. This is followed by a prayer (*Exaudi nos*, see p. 99) which the bishop makes as mouthpiece of the congregation. The third prayer (*Domine sancte Pater*, substantially the same as the Preface on pp. 102-3) is made by the bishop speaking in his own person, or as representative of the episcopal order. These three prayers have remained virtually unaltered to the present day.

The Gregorian Sacramentary continued in use at Rome until the tenth century. Throughout that period the ordination rite consisted of one group of ceremonies inserted into the Mass before the Offertory. The *Ordines Romani* which were used in that period show that there were a few other ceremonies, not performed by the bishop—the presentation of the candidates,

¹ Duensing here translates the Ethiopic as "teile ihm den Geist der Gnade zu und den Rat des Presbytertums" (p. 30)—reading *gesesnā* (=priesthood) rather than *qedesnā* (=holiness).

² Horner, *Statutes of the Apostles*, pp. 143-4. For the Latin text see E. Hauler, *Didascalia Apostolorum*, Leipzig, 1900, I, pp. 108-9, and T. Schermann, *Ein Weiheritual der röm. Kirche am Schluss der ersten Jahrhunderts*, Munich, 1913, p. 25. (Schermann's dating of the document to the first century has not won acceptance.)

the appeal to the clergy and people for their consent, the vesting of the candidates in priestly garments—but the rite performed by the bishop retained its primitive simplicity in Rome for close on a thousand years.

THE EIGHTH-CENTURY GELASIAN RITE

In Gaul the ritual soon received accretions. In the eighth-century Gelasian Sacramentaries we find that the brief appeal to the clergy and people for their consent is enlarged into a fairly long address (*Quoniam, dilectissimi*, see p. 78). After the bishop's Prayer of Consecration there is another invitatory prayer (*Sit nobis, fratres, communis oratio*, see p. 120), summoning the people to pray that the new priests may continue to receive God's grace throughout their lives, and then follows a complementary collect (*Deus sanctificationum*, see p. 122). Thereupon the bishop invests the new priests with the chasuble, and anoints their hands.

THE ROMANO-GERMANIC PONTIFICAL

In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical the rite of ordination still consists of one group of ceremonies, inserted at the end of the Tract. In addition to all that the eighth-century Gelasian Sacramentary has, it includes the bishop's enquiry (*Scis illos dignos esse?*, see p. 74), the "tradition of instruments" (*traditio instrumentorum*), i.e., delivery of the paten and chalice, the final blessing (*Benedictio Dei Patris*, see p. 175), and the Kiss, which was probably an ancient tradition but is mentioned explicitly here.¹

The rite given in Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is practically identical with the Romano-Germanic.²

THE PONTIFICAL OF DURANDUS

In the Pontifical of Durandus the ceremonies of ordination are split into two groups, the first inserted at the end of the

¹ De Puniat, I, p. 293.

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, pp. 134-7 and II, pp. 343-50.

Tract and the second after the Communion of the Mass. The first group includes the presentation by the archdeacon, the bishop's enquiry about the worthiness of the candidates, his appeal to the people, and an exhortation to the ordinands about the duties of the priesthood (*Consecrandi*, see p. 80-1). Then he imposes hands and says the three prayers inherited from the Leonine Sacramentary, gives the priestly vestments, anoints the hands, and gives the chalice and paten.

In the Mass which follows there is no concelebration, but the antiphon *Iam non dicam vos servos* is included.

The second group of ceremonies consists of the profession of faith, the second imposition of hands and commission to absolve, the unfolding of the chasuble, the promise of reverence and obedience, the Kiss, the admonition *Quia res quam tractaturi* (see p. 172), and the final blessing.¹

THE FIRST PRINTED PONTIFICAL, 1485

In the printed Pontifical of Piccolomini it is fairly clear that the newly-ordained priests concelebrate with the bishop. In the revision of 1497 the rubrics leave no doubt whatever on this point.

Since then there has been no important development or alteration of the rite; the invention of printing put an end to private enterprise in the field of liturgical development. There can be little doubt that if printing had been invented in or before the pontificate of Pope Nicolas I the modern rite would be much simpler than it is.²

In brief, then, of the four divisions distinguished above, the first is the most ancient and goes back in substance to the Apostles. The second is of Gallican origin: the anointing appears in the seventh century, and the tradition of instruments in the tenth. The fourth part comes into the Roman tradition through Durandus, though it is built up of elements that had already existed in some cases for many centuries. The third part (the concelebration) is the latest of all and was not firmly

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, pp. 364-73.

² For the views of Pope Nicolas see *infra*, p. 127.

fixed in the Roman tradition until the very end of the fifteenth century.

In the primitive Roman rite great emphasis is laid on the dignity and holiness of life needed in one who is to be a helper of the successors of the Apostles; there is no direct mention of the power to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. As the rite developed, more and more emphasis was placed on the sacramental powers of the priesthood—first on the power to say Mass, and later on the power of absolution. This development reflected to some extent the development of the organization of the Church and the ever-growing participation of the priests in the administration of the sacraments.

III

ESSENTIALS AND NON-ESSENTIALS

From the twelfth century right down to 30 November 1947 it was a matter of dispute among theologians which of the ceremonies of the rite of ordination are essential for the validity of the sacrament and therefore at what moment of the ceremony the grace and the character of the priesthood are conferred. When Pope Pius XII published his Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* in 1947, he determined what are the essentials from 30 November of that year onwards; he explicitly refrained from deciding whether the same has always been so, or whether in previous centuries other ceremonies besides the imposition of hands and the Prayer of Consecration were necessary for validity. So it can still be maintained that the opinion (say) of St. Thomas or of Durandus was true of the rite of ordination as performed in their day.

A brief account will here be given of the variety of views that were expressed in the period during which the rite developed from its old Roman simplicity to its present degree of elaborateness. It will be seen that liturgical developments have exercised considerable influence on the opinions of dogmatic theologians; in a later section it will be suggested that the opinions of theologians—in particular of St. Thomas and perhaps also of Scotus—have likewise influenced the further development of the rite.¹

THE PRIMITIVE ROMAN RITE

In the simple rite practised at Rome during the first ten centuries according to the forms of Hippolytus, St. Leo and St. Gregory, there was no room for doubt: the essentials were the bishop's Prayer of Consecration and the imposition of hands.

¹ Cf. *infra*, p. 165.

THE GALLICANIZED GELASIAN RITE

If in the early Roman rite the laying-on of hands had taken place *after* the Prayer of Consecration (as seems to have been the custom in Apostolic times¹), there would have been no occasion for the disputes which arose in the Middle Ages as to when the sacramental sign is complete. Since, however, hands were imposed *before* the essential words, the imposition could not be held to mark the precise moment of the Holy Ghost's descent, and therefore the field was left open for any amount of speculation about what *did* mark that solemn moment. It might be the end of the Prayer of Consecration; but again, since the prayer *Deus Sanctificationum* does not say clearly whether the candidates are already priests, it might be the end of that prayer. Or again, when the anointing was added, it could be held that all the prayers led up to the anointing, and the anointing therefore was the climax of the whole ceremony.

As a matter of fact, during the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries, liturgical and theological writers do not seem to have been concerned about the precise moment of ordination; they were doubtless satisfied with the knowledge that the whole rite properly performed conferred the priesthood. It may be asked whether they were not perhaps right in this attitude: is it really of importance to know just when the sacrament is conferred? Experience has taught the Church that it certainly is. In the period of uncertainty preceding the Papal Decree of 1947 there were frequent cases of scruples about whether some detail of the rite had been correctly performed, and consequent petitions for conditional reordination. If the essentials of the rite are clearly known, the bishop, the ordinands and all others present can make a special effort to be hushed, reverent and specially attentive.

OPINIONS FROM THE NINTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Writers of the ninth to the twelfth centuries do not explicitly discuss what is the essence of the rite of ordination, but they

¹ Cf. Acts vi. 6: προσευξάμενοι (=when they had prayed) ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας: also Acts xiii. 3.

sometimes give a hint of their opinions in descriptions and explanations of the ceremonies.

Amalarius (c. A.D. 850) says in his *Liber Officialis*:

Presbyteri deputantur in loco filiorum Aaron. Scriptum est in libro Numerorum: *Haec nomina filiorum Aaron sacerdotum, qui uncti sunt, quorum repleta est consecratione manus, ut sacerdotio fungerentur.* Hunc morem tenent episcopi nostri: manus presbyterorum unguunt de oleo.

Presbyters are appointed in the place of the sons of Aaron. For it is written in the Book of Numbers: "These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests that were anointed, and whose hand was filled and consecrated, to do the functions of the priesthood." Our bishops maintain this custom: they anoint the hands of priests with oil.¹

From the prominence here given to the anointing one might easily conclude that Amalarius thought that it was the essential rite. However, he knew very well that the Gregorian Sacramentary, which Charlemagne had introduced into France and Germany about fifty years earlier, contained no anointing; and he is in fact here pleading for the retention of the anointing in the Gallican Church.² A little later in the same chapter he says:

Ipsi enim³ quando consecrantur, manus impositionem accipiunt.

When they [priests] are consecrated, they receive the imposition of hands.

So he probably recognized that the anointing was not the essential ceremony even in the Gelasian rite.

Early in the twelfth century Yves of Chartres describes the rite as follows:

Hi cum ordinantur, episcopo eos benedicente et manum super capita eorum tenente, omnes presbyteri qui praesentes sunt, manus suas iuxta manum episcopi super capita eorum levant, et Spiritum sanctum super eos qui ordinantur invocant: hi post invocationem

When they are ordained, the bishop blesses them and holds his hand over their heads, and all the priests who are present raise their hands over their heads alongside the hand of the bishop, and call down the Holy Ghost on those who are being ordained; these, after the

¹ Lib. II, cap. 13, ed. Hanssens, p. 226.

² Cf. Ellard, p. 43.

³ For *enim* perhaps *etiam* should be read.

sancti Spiritus, stolam super utrumque humerum accipiunt, quae in modum sustentaculorum dextrum latus munit et sinistrum; ut per hoc intelligant se per arma iustitiae a dextris et a sinistris esse munitos, ut eos nec adversa frangant, nec prospera extollant. Accipiunt et calicem cum vino et patenam cum hostia de manu episcopi quatenus his instrumentis potestatem accipiant placabiles hostias Deo offerendi.

invocation of the Holy Ghost, receive the stole on both shoulders, which like a defence work protects both their right and left flank, so that they may hereby understand that they are protected by the armour of justice to right and left, so that neither will adversity break them, nor prosperity exalt them. They receive also from the bishop's hand a chalice with wine and a paten with a host, in as much as they receive by these instruments power to offer propitiatory sacrifices to God.¹

From this last sentence one might be tempted to infer that Yves held that power to say Mass is given at the tradition of instruments. However, in his next sermon he appears to attribute the same efficacy to the anointing:

Unguntur praeterea manus presbyteris et episcopis, ut cognoscant se in virtute sancti Spiritus hoc sacramento gratiam consecrandi accipere et opera misericordiae erga omnes pro viribus exercere debere.

Further, the hands of priests and bishops are anointed, so that they know that they receive by this sacred rite and in the power of the Holy Ghost the grace of consecrating, and that they must perform works of mercy to all as far as they can.²

Hence one must conclude that he is speaking loosely in both passages, and is describing what the rites signify without necessarily meaning that they also effect what they signify.

A little later in the twelfth century Hugh of St. Victor, transcribing the above passages from Yves of Chartres into his work *On the Sacraments*, makes a significant alteration of tense:

Unguntur presbyteris manus sicut episcopis, ut cognoscant se hoc sacramento gratiam consecrandi accipere, et opera misericordiae erga omnes pro viribus exercere debere.

The hands of priests are anointed like those of bishops, so that they know that by this sacred rite they are receiving the grace of consecrating and that they must perform works of mercy to all as far as they can.

¹ Yvo Carnutensis, *Sermo II De Excellentia Sacrorum Ordinum*, PL, 162, 519. Stephen de Baugé, Bishop of Autun, writing about the same time, says: "Datur eis calix cum vino et patena cum hostia, in quo traditur eis potestas ad offerendum Deo placabiles hostias" (*Tractatus de Sacramento Altaris*, cap. IX, PL 172, 1281C).

² Yvo Carnut., *Sermo III*, PL 162, 526.

Accipiunt et calicem cum vino et patenam cum hostiis de manu episcopi, quatenus his instrumentis potestatem se accepisse agnoscant placabiles Deo hostias offerendi.

They also receive from the bishop's hand a chalice with wine and a paten with hosts, so that they recognize by these instruments that they *have received* power to offer propitiatory sacrifices to God.¹

Hence it appears that Hugh thought the power of consecration was given by the anointing.

In the middle of the twelfth century Peter Lombard transcribes Hugh's description of the rite into his *Sentences*, but again with an alteration, which may be significant:

Qui cum ordinantur, inunguntur eis manus, ut intelligant se accepisse gratiam consecrandi et charitatis opera debere extendere ad omnes.

When they are ordained, their hands are anointed, so that they will understand that they *have received* the grace of consecrating and must extend their works of charity to all.²

This suggests that Peter considered the priesthood to have been already conferred before the anointing. However, as he has said nothing whatever in this Distinction about the earlier parts of the rite, and as the text of this Distinction is simply a patchwork of quotations from Yves of Chartres, Hugh of St. Victor, and the Decree of Gratian,³ it is rash to attribute any definite opinion to him as his own.

OPINIONS IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

St. Bonaventure, in his *Commentary on Peter Lombard's Sentences* (finished in 1248), raises explicitly the question, at what part of the ceremony is the character imprinted? He introduces both historical *a posteriori* considerations and theoretical *a priori* arguments, and displays remarkable ingenuity in arriving at the same conclusion by both methods of reasoning. To show that the character is not imprinted at the blessing he appeals to history:

¹ Hugo Victorinus, *De Sacramentis*, II, iii, 12 (*PL* 176, 429).

² Petrus Lombardus, *IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 1: De Presbyteris.

³ Gratianus, *Decretum*, d. XXI, 12; XXV, 1, 8; XXI, 1, 1.

Videtur quod non in benedictione, quoniam semper in ordinibus fuit characteris impressio, et illud est ordini essentiale in quo imprimitur character; sed benedictio non est de essentia ordinum, cum non legatur talis solemnitas fuisse in Ecclesia primitiva; ergo.

It seems that it is not imprinted at the blessing, because there has always been the imprinting of a character in Orders, and that in which the character is imprinted is essential to Order; but the blessing is not of the essence of Orders, since we do not read that any such solemnity existed in the primitive Church.¹

The *a priori* principle from which he argues is as follows:

Cum signum debeat habere similitudinem ad signatum, in eo imprimitur character, quod exterius magis est in sacramento sibi simile.

Since a sign ought to have some resemblance to what it signifies, the character is imprinted at that part of the rite which resembles it most closely.²

He then argues that the conferring of a power is most clearly expressed by the tradition of the instruments by which the power is exercised; hence the powers of Holy Orders are given by the tradition of instruments. But as Aristotle observed and Isidore repeated, the hand is the "instrument of instruments". Hence the highest orders are given by the laying-on of the instrument of instruments!

St. Albert the Great, in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (written about the same time as Bonaventure's, or perhaps a little earlier³), introduces the Aristotelian terminology of matter and form into the discussion, asking, What is there for matter and form in the sacrament of Order? He replies that the matter is the tradition of instruments, arguing *a priori* as follows:

Sacramentum hoc habet pro materia in quo ostenditur per similitudinem eius actus et effectus: horum autem ordinum actus ostenduntur in instrumentis quae porri-

A sacrament has for its matter that in which is shown forth by way of likeness its act and effect: but the acts of these orders are shown forth in the instruments

¹ Bonaventura, *In IV Sent.*, d. 24, 2, a.l., q. 4.

² *Ibid.*

³ P. de Loë, "De Vita et Scriptis B. Alberti Magni" in *Analecta Bollandiana*, XX, 1901, p. 278, gives evidence that St. Albert was lecturing on the Sentences in 1245. O. Lottin, "Commentaire des Sentences et Somme théologique d'Albert le Grand" in *Recherches de Théol. anc. et méd.*, VIII, 1936, p. 119, says that the Commentary was finished by 1250.

guntur eis ab Episcopo.

which are delivered to them by the bishop.¹

The major premise is the same as Bonaventure's.

St. Thomas Aquinas, in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (1254-6), gives a much more penetrating analysis of the rite than any of his predecessors:

Principalis actus sacerdotis est consecrare corpus Christi; sed ad hoc datur sibi potestas in acceptione calicis. Ergo tunc imprimitur character.

Eiusdem est formam aliquam inducere et materiam de proximo prae preparare ad formam. Unde episcopus in collatione ordinum duo facit; prae parat enim ordinandos ad ordinis susceptionem, et ordinis potestatem tradit. Praeparat quidem et instruendo eos de proprio officio et aliquid circa eos operando ut idonei sint potestatem accipiendi, quae quidem prae paratio in tribus consistit, scilicet benedictione, manus impositione, et unctione. Per benedictionem divinis obsequiis mancipatur, et ideo benedictio omnibus datur. Sed per manus impositionem datur plenitudo gratiae, per quam ad magna officia sint idonei: et ideo solis diaconibus et sacerdotibus fit manus impositio, quia eis competit dispensatio sacramentorum, quamvis uni ut principali et alteri sicut ministro. Sed unctione ad aliquod sacramentum tractandum consecrantur, et ideo unctio solis sacerdotibus fit, qui propriis manibus corpus Christi tangunt, sicut etiam calix inungitur

The principal act of a priest is to consecrate the Body of Christ; but he is given power to do this at the delivery of the chalice. Therefore the character is imprinted at that moment.

It belongs to one and the same cause both to induce a form and to render the matter immediately ready for the form. Hence a bishop in conferring Orders does two things: he prepares the ordinands to receive the Order, and he confers the power of the Order. He prepares them both by instructing them about their office and by doing something to make them fit to receive the power; this preparation consists in three things: in the blessing, the laying-on of hands, and the anointing. By the blessing they are set aside for divine service, and therefore the blessing is given to all.² But by the laying-on of hands is given an abundance of grace whereby they are made fit for high offices; and therefore the imposition of hands is given only to deacons and priests, because the administration of the sacraments belongs to them—though to the one as principal agent and to the other as minister.³ But by the anointing they are consecrated

¹ Albertus Mag., *In IV Sent.*, d. 24, a. 38 (ed. Vives, XXX, p. 79).

² St. Thomas here refers to the blessing given during the litany to all who are to be ordained to any of the Orders.

³ Cf. *Concilium Nicaenum*, cn. 18 (Interpretatio Attici, ed. Turner, Oxford, 1904, p. 138): "Maneat diaconi in proprio ordine, scientes quod episcoporum quidem ministri sunt, presbiteris autem inferiores existunt." On the other hand, *Stat. Eccl. Ant.*, cn. 37 (Mansi 3, 954) says: "Diaconis ita se presbyteris ut episcopis ministrum noverit."

qui continet sanguinem, et patena quae continet corpus. Sed potestatis collatio fit per hoc quod datur eis aliquid quod ad proprium actum pertinet; et quia principalis actus sacerdotis est consecrare corpus et sanguinem Christi, ideo in ipsa datione calicis sub forma verborum determinata, character sacerdotalis imprimitur.

with a view to handling some sacrament, and therefore the anointing is given only to priests, who touch the Body of Christ with their own hands, just as a chalice is anointed to contain the Precious Blood and the paten to hold the Body of Christ. But the conferring of power is effected by the delivery to them of something that pertains to their proper action; and because the principal act of a priest is to consecrate the Body and Blood of Christ, therefore the sacerdotal character is conferred at the delivery of the chalice with a set form of words.¹

Since St. Thomas here says that an abundance of grace is given by the laying-on of hands and the sacerdotal character by the tradition of instruments, it seems that at the time of writing the *Commentary of the Sentences* he held that both these ceremonies are essentials of the rite. It is an extremely attractive interpretation of the rite as he knew it (i.e., virtually the rite of the Romano-Germanic Pontifical), and is perfectly compatible with what we can learn of ordinations from the New Testament. The Apostles received first their status of Apostles and later their power to say Mass. The presbyters of the early Churches received by the imposition of hands their hierarchic status, and later they might be commissioned by the bishop to say Mass. Probably many of the early presbyters never said Mass at all. Hence historically, St. Thomas's separation of the "abundance of grace" from the power to say Mass is quite justifiable. It can still be held, with St. Thomas, that in his day and subsequently down to 1947 the status of presbyter and preparatory graces were given by the imposition of hands, and the commission or authorization to say Mass, which made the presbyter a priest, was given later by the tradition of instruments.

In a short but important treatise *On the Articles of Faith and the Sacraments of the Church*, written in 1261-2 at the request of the Archbishop of Palermo in Sicily, St. Thomas applies the

¹ St. Thomas, *In IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 2, a. 3.

Aristotelian terminology of matter and form to the question (he had not done so in his earlier works¹):

Materia autem huius sacramenti est illud materiale, per cuius traditionem confertur ordo: sicut presbyteratus traditur per collationem calicis; et quilibet ordo traditur per collationem illius rei quae praecipue pertinet ad ministerium illius ordinis. Forma autem huius sacramenti est talis: *Accipe potestatem offerendi sacrificium in Ecclesia pro vivis et mortuis.*

The matter of this sacrament is that material thing by the giving of which the order is conferred: thus the priesthood is conferred by the giving of the chalice; and each order is conferred by the giving of that thing which principally pertains to the duties of that order. The form of this sacrament is as follows: *Receive power of offering sacrifice in the Church for the living and the dead.*²

Unless St. Thomas has changed his mind since writing the *Commentary on the Sentences*, it will follow that the grace of the priesthood is not conferred by the matter and form of the sacrament, but only the powers. The grace is given beforehand, by a separate ceremony (viz., the laying-on of hands), to make the candidate worthy of receiving the powers.

The opinion of Durandus, expressed in his *Explanation of the Divine Offices*, written a few years before he composed his famous Pontifical,³ is of particular interest, as he had such an important influence on the development of the rite.

Sane ei qui in presbyterum ordinatur, traduntur sub certis verbis stola et casula, calix cum patena, et etiam inungitur, quae res et verba sunt de huiusmodi sacramenti substantia. Caetera vero praecedentia et sequentia de solemnitate sunt.

To him who is ordained a priest, there are given, with set words, the stole and chasuble, the chalice and paten, and he is also anointed. These things and words belong to the substance of the sacrament. The rest that precedes and follows is for the sake of solemnity.⁴

According to Durandus, therefore, the imposition of hands does not belong to the substance of the sacrament! He gives no

¹ In the passage quoted *supra*, p. 42, he uses the concepts of matter and form but does not ask what are the matter and form of the sacramental rite.

² *In Articulos Fidei et Sacramenta Ecclesiae Expositio*, ed. Parma, 1864, XVI, Opusc. IV, p. 121.

³ The Pontifical was composed between 1293-5 (Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 10). The *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* was completed about 1290. So we look in vain for an interpretation of the Pontifical in the *Rationale*.

⁴ *Rationale*, II, 10, 10, p. 40.

indication of the reasoning that led him to this opinion. Evidently he was not much concerned with historical considerations, but chiefly with the pattern of the rite as it existed in his own day: the vesting, anointing, and tradition of instruments, performed consecutively then as now, can be regarded as parts of one ceremony of giving power to say Mass. He certainly knew of the second imposition of hands, since he incorporated it in his Pontifical, but he did not attribute sacramental efficacy to it—perhaps because he knew how recent was its origin.

Scotus, in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (finished in 1305–6),¹ is altogether unmoved by historical considerations:

Si quaeras, Quae verba vel quae forma? respondeo, illa quam episcopi habent in suis libris episcopalibus. Sed in sacerdotio videtur probabile quod ibi sunt duae formae partiales, in quarum altera confertur potestas conficiendi Eucharistiam, in reliqua potestas absolvendi in poenitentia. Et istis coniunguntur duae materiae, hoc est duo signa visibilia propria, formae primae traditio calicis et patenae cum hostiis *Accipe potestatem celebrandi*, etc; secundae formae impositio manus episcopi super caput *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*; ut sic episcopus concorditer agat cum summo episcopo Christo qui, ut dictum est, prius contulit potestatem apostolis [tam] conficiendi quam absolvendi.

If you ask, What words or what form? I reply: those that bishops have in their Pontificals. But in regard to the priesthood it seems probable that there are there two partial forms, at the first of which is conferred power to consecrate the Eucharist, and at the other power to give absolution in Penance. And with these partial forms are conjoined two matters, that is two special visible signs; with the first form "Receive power to offer Mass" etc. the delivery of a chalice and paten with hosts; with the second form "Receive the Holy Ghost" etc. the laying-on of the bishop's hand on the head. In this way the bishop acts in conformity with the supreme Bishop, Christ, our Lord, who, as was said above, gave the Apostles the power of consecrating before He gave them the power of absolving.²

From this it appears that according to Scotus bishops have power to determine the matter and form of the sacrament of Order. His theory is an apt interpretation of the advanced stage of development, exhibited for example in the Pontifical

¹ W. Lampen, Art. "Duns Scotus" in M. Buchberger, *Lexicon für Theol. und Kirche*, Fr. im Br., 1931.

² In *IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 1, 3 (*Opus Oxoniense*). The parallel pointed out in the last sentence had already been hinted at by St. Thomas, quoted *infra*, p. 165.

of Durandus, where the ceremonies of ordination are divided into two groups, one before the Offertory and the other after the Communion.

In answering the difficulty that if there are two distinct powers of the priesthood, the priesthood will be two Orders and not one, Scotus introduces a distinction between the Order and the powers of the Order:

Gradus eminent in Ecclesia dicitur in ordine ad actum ecclesiasticum eminentem, non sic quidem quia gradus sit potestas exsequendi actum illum, ut dixit prior opinio improbata, sed quia gradus sit disponens de congruo vel simpliciter ad exsequendum vel debite illum actum, ut sic possit ordo, ut hic loquimur de ordine, dici gradus praeeminens in Ecclesia disponens ad actum aliquem ecclesiasticum eminentem.

A grade in the Church is called eminent in respect of some eminent ecclesiastical act—not in the sense that the grade is the power of performing that act (as was maintained by the previous opinion which we condemned), but because the grade disposes the recipient aright, to perform the act either as a suitable person or as one to whom the act is due; thus an Order, in the sense of which we are now talking, can be said to be a pre-eminent grade in the Church disposing its holder to perform some eminent ecclesiastical act.¹

Thus elevation to the grade of the presbyterate is not the same thing as receiving power to say Mass and to absolve. It disposes the ordinand to receive those powers, but the grade of presbyter is not identical with the powers of the priesthood; it is presupposed by them. Unfortunately, Scotus does not say at what point in the rite the ordinands receive their eminent degree, but evidently they must receive it either by the tradition of instruments or before it, because they cannot receive power to perform the eminent act of consecrating the Eucharist unless they already have or simultaneously receive the eminent rank to which that act belongs.

Scotus's theory of the double matter and double form fits the fully developed Roman rite to perfection. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that it enjoyed very wide popularity from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth. Cardinal van Rossum, author of an important book *On the Essence of the*

¹ *In IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 1, 3 (*Opus Oxoniense*).

Sacrament of Order, lists one hundred and forty-eight theologians who followed Scotus's opinion in that period.¹ It fell into disfavour when the printing of early liturgical books opened the eyes of dogmatic theologians to the comparatively recent origin of the tradition of instruments and the second imposition of hands.

THE DECREE FOR THE ARMENIANS, 1439

The only official pronouncement on the matter and form of Orders made before the Council of Trent is contained in the famous Decree for the Armenians ratified in a solemn session of the Ecumenical Council of Florence on 22 November 1439, and signed by Pope Eugenius IV, eight cardinals, two patriarchs, five archbishops, thirty-five bishops, twenty-five abbots, and the Armenian envoys.²

The section of this decree dealing with ordination either conflicts, or at least appears to conflict, with the solemn and definitive pronouncement of Pope Pius XII in 1947. The Decree for the Armenians says:

Sextum sacramentum est Ordinis, cuius materia est illud, per cuius traditionem confertur ordo: sicut presbyteratus traditur per calicis cum vino et patenae cum pane porrectionem . . . Formae sacerdotii talis est: *Accipe potestatem offerendi sacrificium in Ecclesia pro vivis et mortuis, in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*

The sixth sacrament is that of Order; its matter is that by the giving of which the Order is conferred: thus the priesthood is conferred by the giving of a chalice with wine and of a paten with bread . . . The form of the priesthood is as follows: "Receive power to offer sacrifice in the Church for the living and the dead, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."³

But the Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* of 1947 says:

Suprema Nostra Apostolica Auctoritate quae sequuntur decernimus et constituimus: . . . In Ordinatione Presbyterali materia est Episcopi prima manuum impositio quae silentio fit . . . Forma

By our supreme apostolic authority we decree and determine as follows: . . . In ordination to the priesthood the matter is the first imposition of the bishop's hands which takes place in silence . . .

¹ Van Rossum, *De Essentia Sacramenti Ordinis*, pp. 28-32.

² Cf. G. Hofmann, "Documenta Conc. Florentini de Unione Orientalium", II, De Unione Armenorum, in *Textus et Documenta*, Ser. Theol., Rome, 1935, 19, p. 44f.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 35; Denz., 701.

autem constat verbis "Praefationis" quorum haec sunt essentialia ideoque ad valorem requisita: *Da, quaesumus, omnipotens Pater, in hunc famulum tuum Presbyterii dignitatem; innova in visceribus eius spiritum sanctitatis, ut acceptum a Te, Deus, secundi meriti munus obtineat, censuramque morum exemplo suae conversationis insinuet.*

The form consists of the words of the "Preface", of which the following are essential and are required for validity: *Bestow, we beseech Thee, almighty Father, on this Thy servant the dignity of the priesthood; renew in his heart the spirit of holiness, so that he may keep the office of second rank he has received from Thee, O God, and gently reproach the conduct of others by the example of his holy life.*¹

This apparent contradiction can be dealt with in two ways: either we can say, with Cardinal van Rossum,² that the Decree for the Armenians is in error, or else we must hold that the Church has power to determine and to alter the matter and form of the sacrament of Order.

Before proposing a solution to this delicate problem, it will be well to consider the historical background of the Decree. The Council of Florence met in the first place to effect reunion of the Greek Church with the Holy See. The inviting of the Armenians was something of an afterthought. The Armenian Church had been founded or developed by St. Gregory the Illuminator, a contemporary of Constantine the Great. It fell into schism, and embraced the monophysite heresy at the Synod of Vagharchat in A.D. 491.³ In the centuries that followed many attempts were made to achieve reunion with Constantinople, but without any durable success. Relations with Rome were resumed in the Middle Ages, and at times during the Crusades temporary reunion was brought about. From the year 1293, when the Patriarch, or "Catholikos" as he was called, transferred his residence from Greater Armenia, south-east of the Black Sea, to Sis in Little Armenia (Cilicia), relations with Rome were easier and more frequent. Franciscan and Dominican missionaries, who had their convents

¹ *AAS*, 1948, 40, p. 7.

² Van Rossum, *op. cit.*, p. 186. Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, apparently takes the same view, though he does not say so explicitly; cf. his thesis on p. 125. On p. 134 he suggests that the doctrine on the sacraments was not put to the Armenians as certain, but only as expressing an opinion prevalent among theologians. To the present writer this does not seem a satisfactory explanation; the Decree claims to set forth *ecclesiasticorum sacramentorum veritatem*, not probable opinions.

³ Cf. J. de Guibert, "Le Decret du Concile de Florence pour les Arméniens, sa valeur dogmatique" in *Bulletin de Littérature Ecclésiastique*, Toulouse, 1919, p. 157.

and monasteries in Armenia, acted as intermediaries. In the year 1328, in order to promote the cause of union, a Dominican called Bartholomew the Small and an Armenian named John of Kerna founded an Armenian Order of "Brothers of Unity" under Dominican rule. According to the Dominican archives in Rome, within thirty years of their foundation they had fifty monasteries in Armenia and about seven hundred Armenian members.¹ In the Crimea at Caffa, a Genoese colony, they had a house of studies, which of course became a centre for the spread of Thomism: various works of St. Thomas were translated into Armenian, including the whole of the *Summa contra Gentiles* and the *Tertia Pars* of the *Summa* (which contains, of course, St. Thomas's treatise on the sacraments).² These Dominicans made an immense contribution towards the reunion of Armenia with Rome, and the success of the Armenian negotiations at Florence in 1439 must be attributed in large measure to their patient labours in the preceding century.

However, the zeal of the missionaries sometimes showed a want of discretion. On more than one occasion they sent to Rome lists of "Errors of the Armenians" without distinguishing whether the false doctrines were held by the official Armenian Church of the Catholikos, or whether they were merely the opinions of dissident communities.³ In 1341, Pope Benedict XII, on receiving a request for military aid from the King of Armenia, replied that no help would be forthcoming so long as the Armenians adhered to a list of errors which he drew up. The most interesting of these errors is the ninety-second:

Et eodem modo dicti ordines presbyteratus et diaconatus confirmantur, scilicet per manus impositionem, dicendo quaedam verba hoc solummodo mutato, quod in ordinatione diaconi exprimitur ordo diaconatus, et in ordinatione presbyteri ordo presbyteratus.

The orders of presbyterate and diaconate are both conferred in the same way, namely by the imposition of hands and by saying certain words with only this difference, that in the ordaining of a deacon the Order of the diaconate is mentioned, and in the ordaining of a priest the Order of the presbyterate.⁴

¹ Cf. A. Balgy, *Historia Doctrinae Catholicae inter Armenos Unionisque Eorum cum Ecclesia Romana in Concilio Florentino*, Vienna, 1878, p. 79.

² De Guibert, art. cit., p. 162, n. 1.

³ Cf. De Guibert, art. cit., p. 159.

⁴ Denz., 547.

In 1344 a synod was held at Sis to reply to these charges and profess adherence to Catholic doctrine. In reply to number ninety-two they said that their rite of ordination *did* include the delivery of the chalice and paten, in accordance with instructions they had received from Rome two centuries before, that is, in the middle of the twelfth century. To show that there was no deception, they added a Latin translation of their rite of ordination.¹ (Since this came from Rome about the middle of the twelfth century, it must have been roughly identical with the rite of the Romano-Germanic Pontifical and therefore with the rite upon which St. Thomas's doctrine was based.²) After a good deal more coming and going, complete union was reached in 1355. However, when Lesser Armenia fell to the Turks twenty years later, the union was interrupted, and from then until the arrival of the envoys from Eugenius IV in 1438 Armenia was separated from Rome.

The Papal envoys sailed first to Constantinople and then on to Caffa, whence the Genoese governor, an ardent supporter of the cause of union, sent messengers to the Catholikos, Constantine VI, at Sis. Evidently Constantine was already entirely in favour of reunion, because he replied at once by giving plenipotentiary powers to four delegates who were to represent him at Florence and to accept "whatever the Holy Ghost should inspire this holy synod" to enjoin.³ The delegates accordingly made their way to Constantinople to join the Greek expeditionary party, but they were too late: the Emperor, the Patriarch of Constantinople and the bishops had already sailed for Venice. After being held up for many months by wintry weather and lack of shipping, the Armenian envoys at last set sail and arrived at Genoa at the end of July 1439. After a civic reception in that city, they were conducted to Florence, where they arrived on 13 August—to find that the main business of the council was over. A few days before, the reunion of the Greek and Roman Churches had been solemnly proclaimed.⁴

¹ Cf. De Guibert, art. cit., p. 207, n. 4.

² Cf. *supra*, p. 42.

³ "Quidquid Spiritus Sanctus hanc sanctam synodum illustraverit." Quoted by G. Hofmann, "Die Einigung der armenischen Kirche mit der kath. Kirche auf dem Konzil von Florenz" in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 1939, 5, p. 163.

⁴ Cf. De Guibert, art. cit., p. 160.

When the Armenian envoys were presented to the Pope, they made a speech, of which a Latin précis is preserved in a Vatican manuscript:

Christi sedem tenes. Christi vicarius es in sede apostolorum. Venimus ad Te, caput nostrum. Venimus ad pastorem nostrum. Tu es fundamentum ecclesiae. Omne membrum, quod elongavit se a Te, infirmatum est; et gregem, qui se a Te separavit, fera pessima devoravit eum. Ecclesia, quae Te non fuit secuta vel per Te sustentata, funditus fuit eversa. Tu caput, condole membris. Tu pastor, collige gregem. Tu fundamentum, confirma ecclesias. Tu, qui habes potestatem caelestium clavium, aperi nobis portam vitae aeternae.

Cum auctoritate patriarchae nostri et episcoporum et omnis gentis nostrae venimus ad Sanctitatem Tuam, et vidimus eam et laetati sumus.

Si est defectus in fide et in simbolo nostro, Tu doce nos.

Via tantum retinuit nos, et ideo tardavimus. Qui Tui sumus.

You occupy the seat of Christ. You are Christ's vicar on the seat of the Apostles. We have come to You as our head, we have come to our shepherd. You are the foundation of the Church. Every member that has separated itself from You has been weakened; every flock that has withdrawn from you the wild beast has devoured; every Church that has not followed You or has not been supported by You, has been utterly overthrown. You who are the head, have sympathy with the members. You who are the Shepherd, gather in the flock. You who are the foundation, strengthen the Churches. You who have the power of the keys of heaven, open to us the gate of eternal life.

With the authority of our patriarch and bishops and all our nation we have come to Your Holiness; we have seen You and are glad.

If there is any defect in our faith and in our creed, it is for You to teach us.

It was but the journey that delayed us, and that is why we are late—we who are your servants.¹

Eugenius IV must have heaved a great sigh of relief when he heard that! He at once set up a special commission to hold discussions with the Armenians. It included three cardinals and a number of theologians, one of whom was the Dominican John of Montenegro. It is not known for certain which of the theologians took the leading part in the discussions or in the formulation of the Decree of Union, but there are good reasons for thinking that the honour fell to this Dominican, John of Montenegro. In the earlier sessions of the Council three

¹ Text from Hofmann, *Doc. Conc. Flor. de Unione Armen.*, pp. 20-1.

Dominican theologians had been prominent—Montenegro, Chrysobergi, and Torquemada (not, of course, the Inquisitor). As the latter two were despatched elsewhere during the Armenian discussions, and yet the Decree contains whole sentences lifted bodily from St. Thomas, it does not seem rash to suppose that Montenegro had a considerable part in the preparation and formulation of the Decree. Further, the archives of Genoa show that the Doge had entrusted the Armenian envoys to the care of Montenegro during their stay in Florence, and that afterwards the Doge described him as “architect” of the union with the Greeks and Armenians.¹

Discussions were held in the Papal palace almost every day for about a month. The sacraments were certainly on the agenda,² but it seems unlikely that the matter and form of Orders caused any dispute, if a Roman Ordinal had been in use in Armenia since the middle of the twelfth century. Eventually the Decree of Union was drawn up. It consists of a number of documents wherein the Armenians will find an exposition of the Roman faith, followed by a number of liturgical injunctions about the date of Christmas and suchlike. After the Nicene Creed and definitions from the Council of Chalcedon, there comes the short treatise on the sacraments, introduced by the following sentence:

Quinto, ecclesiasticorum Sacramentorum veritatem pro ipsorum Armenorum tam praesentium quam futurorum faciliore doctrina sub hac brevissima redigimus formula.

Fifthly, to facilitate the instruction of Armenians both now and in the future, we bring together the truth about the sacraments of the Church in the following brief formula.³

What follows is a modified version of St. Thomas's short treatise *On the Articles of Faith and the Sacraments of the Church*.⁴

The historical evidence adduced above shows quite clearly that the purpose of the Decree was not simply to give the Armenians practical information about Latin customs.⁵ The

¹ Hofmann, art. cit., pp. 160-1.

² Cf. Mansi, 30, 1730.

³ Denz., 695.

⁴ The passage concerning Orders is quoted *supra*, p. 44.

⁵ Hofmann, art. cit., p. 170, calls it “eine praktische Unterweisung”. Nor does the Decree refer to the “accidental” or “accessory” matter, as some eminent

Armenians had been in contact with the Latins for a long time, for example at Caffa and in Cilicia; and St. Thomas was well known to them. Clearly the purpose was, as the above quotation shows, to give official sanction to a statement of doctrine on the sacraments that was to serve as a norm for purposes of teaching in Armenia.

But however convinced the Papal theologians may have been that St. Thomas's teaching about the matter and form of Orders was correct, how could they in conscience put it down as Catholic doctrine when so many theologians of note rejected it? And how did the Pope and the Fathers of the Council allow it to pass so easily? The answer that most commends itself to the present writer is that the section on the sacrament of Orders is, and was understood by the Council to be, an interpretation to be taught *to the Armenians* of the rite of ordination as then practised *in the Armenian Church*.

It is clear from another passage in the Decree that the Council held that the Church can determine and alter the matter and form of some sacraments.¹ In explaining Confirmation the Decree says that the Apostles gave the Holy Ghost by the laying-on of hands, and after quoting the Acts of the Apostles (viii. 14f.), it continues:

Loco autem illius manus impositionis datur in Ecclesia confirmatio.

In place of that laying-on of hands there is given in the Church Confirmation——²

by which is meant the anointing with chrism. Moreover, the Fathers of the Council knew very well that the Greeks ordained

theologians have suggested (Benedict XIV, *De Synodo*, VIII, 10, 8; St. Alphonsus, *Theol. Moral.*, VI, 1, 12)—this De Guibert rightly calls an "explication bien artificielle et bien difficile à concilier avec l'ensemble du texte d'Eugène IV" (art. cit., p. 94).

¹ Cf. P. Galtier, Art. "Imposition des mains" in *DTC*, VII, 1347f.

² Denz., 697. In the time of our Lord, "laying-on of hands" had not the precise meaning we give to it today. In Mark vii. 32 the people who bring the deaf-mute to our Lord ask Him to "lay his hand upon him". Our Lord fulfils their request by spitting on His fingers and touching the man's tongue—a sort of anointing. If then to "lay-on hands" is a wide, generic expression, susceptible of specification now in this way and now in that, why should not the anointing of the forehead in Confirmation, or the tradition of instruments in Orders, come within the meaning of the term, if our Lord specified "laying-on of hands" as the ceremony of ordination?

their priests without the tradition of instruments, yet there was no question in the Council about the validity of the Greek Orders. Hence, it is safe to conclude that the intention of the Council was to lay down what was the essential ceremony of the rite of ordination as practised in Armenia. It left the European controversy quite untouched. The first theologian who used it as an argument in the European controversy was Ruard Tapper in 1559! In the intervening hundred and twenty years the controversy had continued as before, and the Holy See had never suggested that the question had been closed by the Council of Florence.

The contradiction, therefore, between the Decrees of Eugenius IV and Pius XII is purely apparent, and there is no need to have recourse to Cardinal van Rossum's desperate remedy. Strictly speaking, it is not incompatible with the doctrine of Papal infallibility to say that Eugenius IV was in error and misled the Armenian Church, since in issuing the decree he was not acting as shepherd and teacher of *all* Christians but only of the Armenians. However, we should be extremely reluctant to allow that a Decree promulgated in a solemn session of an Ecumenical Council, ratified by a Pope and signed by numerous other ecclesiastical dignitaries, contains a doctrinal error. Nor is there any need to do so, unless one is determined to defend at all costs the historically untenable opinion that the Church has no power to alter the matter and form of any of the sacraments.¹ Moreover, it is (in the literal sense of the word) preposterous to argue that *because* the doctrine of the Decree is unacceptable, *therefore* it is not an infallible document.²

The Fathers of the Council of Trent did not regard the Decree for the Armenians as having settled the controversy in the Latin Church; they deliberately avoided defining the matter and form of ordination³—in accordance with their

¹ The Council of Trent laid down that the Church cannot alter the "substance of the sacraments" (Denz., 931). But what is the "substance" of a sacrament? The most satisfactory answer is that it is whatever part of it Christ our Lord determined. On the limits of the Church's power in this matter, cf. H. Lennerz, *De Sacramentis Novae Legis in Genere*, Rome, 1939, p. 291f.

² Cf. Billot, *De Ecclesiae Sacramentis*, II, pp. 301-3; and E. Hugon, "Etudes récentes sur le sacrement de l'Ordre" in *Revue Thomiste*, 1924, XXIX, p. 484.

³ Cf. Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, pp. 135-6.

general principle of condemning the errors of heretics but refraining from settling disputes between orthodox Catholic theologians.

The official adoption of the terminology of "matter" and "form" had the unfortunate effect of encouraging theologians to think that the essential rites of every sacrament must be unchangeable. In the physical world wherever there is a distinction of matter and of substantial form, there are distinct bodies: this form plus this matter makes this body, and that form plus that matter makes that body. Hence the terminology of matter and form, borrowed from Aristotle's analysis of things in the physical world, suggested that a change of the matter and form of the sacraments would mean the introduction of new sacraments—of sacraments other than those instituted by Christ our Lord! Hence it was concluded that the Church has no power to alter the matter and form of any of the sacraments. This erroneous conclusion led to great difficulties when the printing of early liturgical books made it more and more clear that the only part of the rite of ordination common to all parts of the Church in all times and places is the imposition of hands. Those who held that the matter and form of the sacraments are immutable inevitably came to the conclusion that the imposition of hands has always been the matter of Orders.

The Decree *Sacramentum Ordinis* of 1947 was not a speculative document giving official confirmation to a point of doctrine established by historical research. As has already been pointed out above, its purpose was practical; to put an end to scruples about the validity of Orders received by priests who felt that some possibly essential part of the long and complicated rite had not been properly performed in their cases. It deliberately avoided saying what had been the matter and form in the period preceding 1947. For the future it removes all disputes and controversy: the character, graces and powers of the sacrament are all conferred simultaneously by the first imposition of hands and the words *Da, quaesumus* . . . (see p. 48). The other ceremonies—the vesting, anointing, tradition of instruments and second imposition of hands—do not effect what they signify; they signify in detail what has already been effected by the matter and form.

IV

ORDINATIONS AND EMBERTIDE

In times gone by, it was easier than it is now for the laity to recognize the importance of ordinations in the life of the Church, because ordinations were held at fixed times in the year and were preceded by a period of fasting obligatory on all those of canonical age for fasting. These fixed times are what we now call "Embertide" or "Quarter Tense".¹ The history of the connexion between the Embertide fasts and ordinations deserves a little attention here, because it reveals how anxious the Popes have been throughout the centuries that the whole Church should interest itself in ordinations and participate in them.

The primitive Church had no special time for ordinations: they were performed whenever convenient by travelling apostles and missionaries. As the Church took root, it would be natural to wait for some important feast for the conferring of Orders. Soon it became customary to consecrate bishops only on Sundays and feasts of the Apostles—for the sake of solemnity and to ensure the presence of a large concourse of people. In Rome during the first ten centuries ordinations were performed by the Popes about once every two years and almost invariably at the December Embertide.² This has been put down to the Roman weather³—not a very convincing reason, since in Rome until at least the eighth century ordinations were performed at night during a vigil service, and they are now carried out there in the morning at all times of the year without excessive inconvenience. A more probable explanation is that a priest's ordination day was thought of as his "birthday";

¹ "Quarter Tense" is a corruption of the Latin *Quattuor Tempora*. So too in all probability are the German *Quatember*, and the English "Embertide".

² Cf. A. Harnack, "Über die Ordinationes im Papstbuch" in *Sitzungsberichte der kgl. preuss. Akad.*, Berlin, 1897, p. 761f.

³ Mabillon, *Comm. in Ord. Rom. Praevius* (PL 78, 909C): "Commodior esset tempestas ad levandum ordinantis et ordinandorum laborem."

thus in the old Sacramentaries there are special Masses to be said *In Natale Presbyteri* (on the birthday of a priest, i.e., on the anniversary of his ordination); and it may well have been felt appropriate that the priest's birthday should be placed as near as possible to the birthday of our Lord.¹ The same consideration explains the frequent choice of our Lady's birthday, September 8th, for ordinations in modern seminaries, where some fitting day has to be found between the end of one academic year and the beginning of the next.

It was Pope Gelasius who first laid down, in A.D. 494, that ordinations should take place at Embertide.² He was not the originator of the Embertide fasts; they had been in existence, as a form of periodic penance, for centuries before. The origin of the Ember fasts is extremely obscure: there is no agreement about it among the liturgical experts; and the scant evidence at our disposal hardly allows of anything more than plausible conjectures. Pope St. Leo (440-61) says in a sermon of one of the Ember fasts that it is of Jewish origin³—which has led some writers to think that all four Embertides come from Judaism.⁴ A puzzling sentence in the *Chronicles of the Popes* suggests that the Embertides were originally connected with the harvesting of corn, wine, and olives.⁵ Others think that the Embertides are a Christian substitute for the heathen festivals known as *feriae sementinae*, *feriae messis*, and *feriae vindemiales*⁶—just as the Greater Litanies of 25 April are a Christian substitute for the *Robigalia* of pagan Rome.⁷ Fortunately, it is not necessary here to discuss the merits of these theories or how far they are compatible with one another. It is sufficient to know that the Embertide fasts existed long before the time of Pope Gelasius, and that they were not originally fasts made in intercession

¹ Thus L. Fischer, *Die kirchlichen Quatember*, Munich, 1914, p. 105.

² Ep. S. Gelasii, IX, xi (*PL* 59, 52B); cf. Micrologus, *De Eccles. Observationibus*, c. 29, ed. Hittorp, Paris, 1610, col. 752.

³ St. Leo, *Sermo XC* (*PL* 54, 447).

⁴ e.g. H. C. Schüsler, *De Jure circa Jejunantes et Abstinentes*, Halle, 1722, p. 33. Cf. *Zach.* viii. 19.

⁵ *Liber Pontificalis*, I, 141 (ed. Mommsen, *MGH*, Auct. Ant., IX, 21, 6) of Pope Callistus I: "Hic constituit ieiunium die sabbati ter in anno fieri, frumenti, vini, et olei, secundum prophetiam" (= *Zach.* viii. 19?).

⁶ G. Morin, "L'Origine des quatre temps", in *Revue Bénédictine*, 1897, XIV, p. 340.

⁷ Cf. Duchesne, *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, p. 294.

for the ordinands. This explains why the Masses of the Ember-tides contain no reference to the ordinations.

Why, then, did Pope Gelasius decide to confine ordinations to Embertide? Probably for the simple reason that he wished Orders to be conferred in the presence of a large congregation and after a period of prayer and fasting. The ordinations to which allusion is made in the Acts of the Apostles took place after a fast, during Mass, in presence of a congregation, and with its consent.¹ Pope Gelasius may also have been moved by the consideration that if our Lord fasted before the beginning of His Public Ministry, it is fitting that those who are to prolong His Ministry should do likewise. The Ember fasts provided just such occasions as Pope Gelasius required, since they involved three fasting days, and the people all met together on the Saturday night for the final vigil.

In the days when the vigil service began about midnight, the ordinations would take place very early on the Sunday morning. In the eighth or ninth century, to lessen the rigours of the combined fast and vigil, it became customary to begin the service early on the Saturday evening.² In the eleventh century we hear of a rule that ordinations must not begin before three in the afternoon.³ This was still the custom in the time of Pope Innocent III (1198–1216).⁴ Eventually the whole service was transferred, like the Easter vigil service, to the Saturday morning.

In the course of the sixth and seventh centuries the restriction of ordinations to Embertide became a strict law. The penalty for receiving an Order outside the canonical times was suspension. So strictly was the law interpreted that if by accident some part of the ordination rite was omitted, it could not be supplied until the next Embertide.⁵

In the thirteenth century it became possible to obtain a

¹ Cf. Acts xiii, 2–3; xiv. 22; xv. 22; vi. 5.

² This development may have been encouraged by a sentence of Pope Gelasius: "ordinationes . . . sabbato circa vesperam noverint celebrandas." Cf. Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

³ Jean d'Avranches, *Liber de Officiis Ecclesiasticis*, PL 147, 59.

⁴ Decret. Gregor. IX, I, xi, 13, ed. A. Friedberg (*Decretalium Collectiones*, Leipzig, 1881, II, p. 121).

⁵ Decret. Gregor. IX, I, xvi, 3, ed. Friedberg, II, p. 135. This decretal is addressed to an archbishop who had omitted the imposition of hands! But it enunciates a general principle.

dispensatio in angariis, that is permission for ordination outside the canonical times. The granting of these dispensations was fatal to the importance of the Ember-tides in the life of the Church—especially when in the sixteenth century general dispensations were given to religious Orders and Congregations. Pope Gregory XIII (1572–85) gave such a dispensation to the Franciscans and Jesuits, and Gregory XIV (1590–2) to the Congregation of St. Bernard. In a provincial Synod at Rome in 1725 Benedict XIII extended it to all other Orders.¹ The modern Code of Canon Law still maintains the traditional connexion between ordinations and Embertide, but numerous exceptions are allowed.²

¹ Cf. A. Barbosa, *Juris Ecclesiastici Universi*, Lyons, 1677, I, xxiii, nn. 179–81, p. 351.

² *CIC*, 1006, 2 and 3.

PART II

DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF
THE MODERN RITE

V

PRELIMINARIES

ENTRY OF THE ORDINANDS

The deacons who are to be ordained to the priesthood vest themselves in amice, alb, cincture, maniple and stole (the stole being on their left shoulder and fastened at the right side); over their left arm they carry a folded chasuble, in their right hand they hold a lighted candle, and in their girdle is the linen cloth which will be used eventually for tying their hands.

This linen cloth, called the *mappula*, is what the maniple was originally—a handkerchief for purposes of cleanliness. We learn from the ninth-century liturgist Amalarius that in his day the maniple was of linen and was carried in the left hand. Early miniatures show that it was folded into a narrow strip and held between the thumb and index finger. However, in the course of time the *mappula* became more and more ornate and ceased to be used for practical purposes. At the beginning of the eleventh century it began to be worn on the arm, and in the following century this became the general practice.¹

The rubrics of the Roman Pontificals of 1485, 1497 and 1520 say that the ordinands should carry their linen cloths in their hands²—as the primitive maniple was carried. But the Pontifical of Clement VIII made a small alteration in the rubric:

Tenentes planetas super brachium [sinistrum, Urban VIII] complicatas, et in manu dextera candelas, ac mappulas albas pro ligandis manibus, ad Pontificem accedunt.

With chasubles folded over their left arm, and in their right hand candles, and white cloths for tying their hands, they approach the bishop.

¹ Cf. J. Braun, *Die priesterlichen Gewänder des Abendlandes*, Freiburg im Br., 1897, p. 67f.

² "Tenentes . . . in manibus candelas ac mappulas albas pro ligandis manibus."

Since this does not necessarily mean that the cloth is to be held in the right hand, it has become customary, for the sake of convenience, for the ordinands to carry it tucked in their girdles.

The deacons are led to the altar by the archdeacon. In one of the Roman Ordinals he leads the first of them by the hand,¹ to emphasize that they are being *led* to the altar and are not presenting themselves. Possibly there is here a reminiscence of the Book of Numbers: "Whereupon the Lord said to Moses, Choose out for me seventy Israelites of ripe age, men already known to thee as elders and officers of the people, bring [*duces*] them to the door of the tabernacle that bears the record of my covenant, and let them stand there at thy side."²

The lighted candles which the ordinands carry probably go back to the days when ordinations were performed at night during the Ember Saturday vigil. They may serve now to remind the ordinands of the words of Christ: "So let your light shine before men that they see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven";³ or perhaps more aptly: "Let your loins be girt and lamps burning in your hands"⁴—on which St. Gregory has a fine sermon that is read in the Divine Office in the Common of Confessors.

For a long time only white vestments were worn at ordinations;⁵ hence in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical the stole is referred to as a *stola candida* (white stole).⁶ The explanation is that besides signifying innocence and purity of life, white vestments are the most festive and therefore the most appropriate to this ceremony which is in some respects a kind of marriage.⁷ Nowadays the vestments of the ordinands should be of the colour of the day, but very few seminaries can have complete sets of ordination vestments in more than one colour. Hence the vestments worn are nearly always white.⁸

¹ Hallier, III, p. 399.

² Num. xi. 16.

³ Matt. v. 16.

⁴ Luke xii. 35.

⁵ Cf. Hallier, III, p. 379.

⁶ Cf. Morinus, II, 255D and 261D (*candidatam*).

⁷ In a Mainz Pontifical (Morinus, II, p. 279) the bishop says, when giving the chasuble: "Veste nuptiali induat te Dominus."

⁸ P. Martinucci, *Manuale Sacrarum Caeremoniarum*, Ratisbon, 1915, vol. III, p. 61: "The Pontifical does not prescribe what colour the ordinands' vestments should

THE ENTRY AND VESTING OF THE BISHOP

After a brief pause the bishop appears, accompanied by his assistant priests and led by a cross-bearer and acolytes. As the procession advances up the main aisle, it is usual, as for every solemn entry of a bishop, for the choir to sing the antiphon *Ecce Sacerdos Magnus*. Arriving before the altar, the bishop kneels and prays for a little while. Then he moves over to the throne or faldstool to vest.

After removing his pectoral cross and mantilla, he receives from his assistants his amice, alb, girdle, pectoral cross, stole, tunicle, dalmatic, gloves and chasuble; then his ring, mitre and crozier.

Members of the congregation may perhaps wonder, while the vesting is taking place, whether it would not be more becoming if all this were done in the seclusion of the sacristy. The *Caerimoniale Episcoporum*, which contains general directions for pontifical ceremonial, does consider it unbecoming for a bishop to vest before the public gaze, since it prescribes that where there are canons and other dignitaries present, these should form a "modesty-ring" round him for the vesting.¹ It also says:

Sed in Ecclesiis, ubi esset Secretarium, sive locus ubi Episcopus pareret, paramenta praedicta posent ibi praeparari, non autem super altari.

In churches where there is a sacristy, or a place where the bishop can make himself ready, the aforesaid vestments can be prepared there, instead of on the altar.²

be. I suppose this has been left free because it would be quite difficult to secure uniformity, should the number of ordinands be considerable. At Rome in the Lateran Basilica, where ordinations are held, they use vestments of the colour of the Office; which vestments were provided for the purpose by Pope Benedict XIII. Hence, care should be taken, as far as possible, to secure uniformity." Martinucci does not seem to have been aware that there was a reply of the S.C.R. on this subject (3832, 17 July 1894): "Dubium 6. Quinam esse debeat color paramentorum pro ordinandis in sacris? Ad 6. Color ipsius Celebrantis in Missa, nisi aliud postulat necessitas." Further, in the *Ritus Solemnis pro Clerico Faciendo et pro Ordinibus Min. et Mai. uni Tantum Conferendis*, Ratisbon, 1891, p. 46*, we find the ordinand to the priesthood described as *habentem planetam coloris albi complicatam super brachium sinistrum*. Presumably this was abrogated by the above reply.

¹ *Caer. Ep.*, I, xxi: "De circulis . . . faciendis ante Episcopum."

² *Caer. Ep.*, I, xii.

By a "sacristy" is here meant not just a room for vesting, but a private chapel. The bishop is to vest in a chapel, whether privately or publicly, because his vesting is itself a religious ceremony: the putting on of each vestment is accompanied by a special prayer, and each vestment is seen as a symbol of some virtue that should clothe the bishop's soul.

As the vesting is in no way proper to the ordination ceremony, there is no need to spend long here discussing the various mystical interpretations (often very forced) that medieval writers suggested. Suffice it to say that the alb is a symbol of sinlessness, the stole of the yoke of Christ. The tunicle is the vestment of subdeacons, the dalmatic that of deacons, and the chasuble that of priests; the bishop wears all three to signify that he has the fulness of the priesthood, in which the lesser orders participate in their own degrees. The chasuble is a symbol of charity; as this particular piece of symbolism is of considerable importance for the understanding of a part of the rite, more will be said about it below.

The mitre which the bishop receives at this point is the "precious" mitre, so called because it is decorated with rich embroidery and precious or semi-precious stones. Meanwhile on a credence table stands the golden mitre, which is of plain gold silk or satin without embroideries and ornaments. To explain why the bishop uses two mitres and why each is used when it is, a little digression into the history of the mitre will be necessary here.¹ There is no good evidence that bishops wore the mitre in the first thousand years of the Church's existence²; the mitre came into use in the eleventh century and has undergone considerable development both in shape and in height. Originally one mitre was used for all occasions. The custom of using two arose at a time when the precious mitre was frequently so richly ornamented that it became a burden to the wearer's head. For example, a mitre of the late Middle Ages, belonging to St. Peter's, Salzburg, is ornamented with about five hundred more or less costly precious stones, and weighs over five and a half pounds.

¹ Cf. J. Braun, *Die pontificalen Gewänder des Abendlandes*, Freiburg im Br., 1898, ch. 1.

² Cf. Plate 3.

The *Caerimoniale Episcoporum* gives the following directions:

Pretiosa utitur Episcopus in solemnioribus festis et generaliter quandocumque in officio dicitur hymnus *Te Deum laudamus* et in Missa *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. Nihilominus in eisdem festis etiam auriphrygiata uti poterit, sed potius ad commoditatem quam ex necessitate; ne scilicet Episcopus nimis gravetur, si in toto officio pretiosa utatur; propterea usu receptum est, tam in Vesperis, quam in Missis, ut pretiosa utatur Episcopus in principio et in fine Vesperarum et Missarum solemnium, ac eundo ad ecclesiam et redeundo ab eadem; et quando lavat manus et dat benedictionem solemnem.

The bishop uses the precious mitre on more solemn feasts and in general whenever the *Te Deum* is recited in the Office and the *Gloria* in the Mass. However, on these same feasts he can also use the golden mitre, but for convenience rather than of necessity—namely, so that he shall not be overburdened by using the precious mitre throughout the whole Office. Hence it is customary both at Vespers and at Mass for the bishop to use the precious mitre at the beginning and end of solemn Vespers and Mass, and for going to and returning from church; and when he washes his hands and gives the solemn blessing.¹

Piccolomini in the Introduction to the 1485 edition of the Roman Pontifical established the following rules for the wearing of the mitre at ordinations:

Nos re cum peritis mature discussa, convenire arbitrati sumus, ut cum Pontifex ordinandum monet sive characterem imprimit, aut ordinum insignia sive instrumenta tradit, sedeat infulatus. Cum vero populum alloquitur, sive circumstantes hortatur ad simul orandum, stet cum mitra. Idem faciat in exorcismis. Cum autem verba sua vertit ad Deum, tunc sine mitra stans simplex oret. Hunc ordinem per totum librum inconcusse servavimus.

Having discussed the matter at length with men of experience, we have judged it fitting that when the bishop is admonishing the ordinands or imprinting the character, or delivering the insignia or instruments, he should sit mitred. When he addresses the people or exhorts those about him to join in prayer, he should stand mitred. (He should do likewise at exorcisms.) But when he addresses his words to God, he should stand without mitre and pray as a suppliant. We have adhered strictly to this rule throughout the book.

Accordingly, in the 1485 Pontifical the bishop stands with mitre to say the invitatory prayer *Oremus, dilectissimi*; after which the mitre is removed for the prayer *Exaudi nos, quaesumus*,

¹ *Caer. Ep.*, I, xvii.

and for the Preface of Consecration. He sits with the mitre for the vesting, for the anointing, and for the tradition of instruments. He stands without it for the prayer *Deus sanctificationum*. He sits with mitre for the Offertory. He stands with mitre to receive the profession of faith, and sits with mitre for the promise of obedience and all that follows till the end of the final exhortation.

Piccolomini's rule that the bishop is to sit mitred while he imprints the character reveals that he did not think the imprinting of the character was effected by the imposition of hands (for which he stands mitred); he probably thought it took place at the tradition of instruments.

Strictly speaking, according to the above rules, for those parts of the litany which are addressed directly to almighty God, and in particular for the triple invocation, the bishop should stand without mitre. However, although he is addressing his words to God, he is also giving a solemn blessing. That, no doubt, is why he wears the mitre.

THE MASS BEGINS

After receiving the crozier, the bishop walks to the foot of the altar and at once gives the crozier to one of the servers. Clearly no "practical" explanation can be found for this: the crozier is not carried for the support it would give to an ageing bishop; on the contrary, the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* says that if the crozier is to be carried in a procession of some length, the bishop may have it carried for him by a server.¹ The carrying of it is simply the symbol of the bishop's being the shepherd of his flock.

After the *Confiteor* during the prayers at the foot of the altar, the bishop—as always in a Pontifical Mass—receives the maniple from the subdeacon. The reason for this custom is obscure.² Durandus collects five mystical and moral explanations, all extremely far-fetched; for example, the first is: "to signify that the bishop ought to receive and administer his

¹ *Caer. Ep.*, I, xvii.

² Cf. Jungmann, *Missarum Solemnia*, I, p. 360: "Die Herkunft des Brauches ist bisher nicht erklärt."

temporal revenues by the hand of another [e.g., his subdeacon] and not by his own hand.”¹ Perhaps a more likely explanation would be that the maniple, being originally a handkerchief used for wiping away tears (and hence called the “maniple of grief”, *manipulum doloris*) might at this point be needed, if a very holy bishop was moved to tears by the confession of his sinfulness.

After finishing the prayers at the foot of the altar, the bishop goes up to the predella and begins to sing or read the Mass proper to the day; there is no votive Mass for the ordination of a priest. After the collect of the day, he adds the following for the ordinands:

Exaudi, quaesumus, Domine, supplicum preces, et devoto tibi pectore famulantes perpetua defensione custodi; ut nullis perturbationibus impediti, liberam servitutem tuis semper exhibeamus officiis. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum . . .

Hear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the prayers of Thy suppliants, and guard with Thy constant protection them that serve Thee with loving devotion; so that unimpeded by any disturbance, we may give ourselves unhindered to Thy service. Through our Lord Jesus Christ . . .²

There is no mention of the priesthood in this collect or in the corresponding secret and postcommunion prayers, because they were composed for insertion in Embertide Masses at which several Orders were conferred. The bishop therefore prays for all the ordinands, and not just for those to be ordained to the priesthood.

The Mass proceeds normally to the end of the penultimate verse of the Tract, when the rite of ordination begins.

¹ *Rationale*, IV, vii, 4, p. 68.

² From the Gelasian Sacramentary, ed. Wilson, p. 29.

VI

FIRST PART OF THE RITE: THE ORDINATION PROPER

THE CALLING OF THE ORDINANDS

The bishop now takes his seat mitred on the faldstool, which has been placed for him before the middle of the altar. The Blessed Sacrament, if It is normally reserved at this altar, will have been removed before the beginning of the service.

The archdeacon then summons the ordinands with the formula:

Accedant qui ordinandi sunt ad
ordinem Presbyteratus.

Let those who are to be ordained
priests come forward.

They advance to the edge of the sanctuary. Then their names are read out one by one by the Notary or by an M.C. As each one's name is called, he replies *Adsum* ("Present") and steps forward.

The calling by the Notary should not be regarded simply as a roll-call to make sure that all are present and that there are no intruders—though it does serve this purpose as well. It is a formal expression of their calling by the bishop. No man becomes a priest by his own choice.¹ St. Paul states this principle in the Epistle to the Romans, and applies it even to our Lord: every priest's "vocation comes from God, as Aaron's did; nobody can take on himself such a privilege as this. So it is with Christ. He did not raise himself to the dignity of the priesthood; it was God that raised him to it, when he said, 'Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee this day', and so elsewhere, 'Thou art a priest for ever in the line of Melchisedech'."²

¹ Cf. Hallier, *De Sacris Ordinationibus*, III, p. 383.

² Heb. v. 4-5.

Therefore, however holy a man may be, however suitable, however desirous of becoming a priest, however convinced he may be that he has an "inner call"¹ to the priesthood, he is not thereby entitled to the priesthood; his suitability, inner conviction and so forth give him no *right* to ordination. No man can be ordained unless he is called by Christ through a bishop. The notary is of course only the bishop's mouthpiece; it is the bishop who calls them, and they should realise that the voice that calls them by name is the instrument of a divinely instituted authority. Just as our Lord called forth the Twelve by name when He made them His Apostles, so the ordinands are called forth by the bishop. By replying *Adsum* and stepping forward, they are signifying their acceptance of Christ's call to come and be one of His priests and apostles.

In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical, as will be seen below,² the ordinands were required to give a much more explicit expression of their willingness to be ordained. Nowadays each ordinand signs a written declaration of his intention some days before the ordination takes place.

THE INTERDICT

When all have answered to their names, one of the bishop's assistants reads out the following charge to the ordinands:

Reverendissimus in Christo Pater et Dominus, Dominus N., Dei et Apostolicae Sedis gratia Episcopus N., sub excommunicationis poena praecipit, et mandat omnibus et singulis pro suscipiendis Ordinibus hic praesentibus, ne quis forsan eorum irregularis aut alias a jure vel ab homine excommunicatus, interdictus, suspensus, spurius, infamis, aut alias a jure prohibitus, sive ex aliena dioecesi oriundus,

The Most Reverend Father and Lord in Christ, N.N., by the grace of God and the Apostolic See Bishop of N., commands and charges, under pain of excommunication, that no one here present for the purpose of taking Orders shall presume to come forward for ordination under any pretext if he be irregular, excommunicate in law or by judicial sentence, under interdict or suspension, illegitimate,

¹ This "inner call" is a psychological phenomenon that does occur in some cases, but it is not identical with vocation and is not necessary for vocation. A vocation consists in three things: desire for the Order, suitability for it, and the bishop's call. Cf. A. Vermeersch, Art. "Vocation" in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

² See p. 83.

sine licentia sui Episcopi, aut non descriptus, examinatus, approbatus, et nominatus, ullo pacto audeat ad suscipiendos Ordines accedere; et quod nullus ex Ordinatis discedat, nisi Missa finita et benedictione Pontificis accepta.

infamous, or in any other way disqualified, or of another diocese unless he has the licence of his bishop; and that none of the ordained shall depart until the Mass is over and the bishop's blessing has been received.

This rather grim document is a last warning to the ordinands that if anyone receives the sacrament under false pretences, he will incur the penalty of excommunication. It clearly dates from a period when there were no seminaries and ordinands were not nearly as well known to their ecclesiastical superiors as they usually are now. It is not given in the Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Durandus and Piccolomini both have a rubric indicating that an Interdict is to be read, but neither gives a set text. Our text appears first in the Roman Pontifical in 1497.

The injunction to remain until the end of Mass and to receive the bishop's blessing is altogether superfluous nowadays, and for newly ordained priests it was no less so in 1497, since then as now the new priests were required to concelebrate with the bishop. But the Interdict was composed to be read out to all the ordinands at Embertide ordinations, when several orders were to be conferred successively on the one morning. Particularly if the Mass of ordination was sung, the whole ceremony could be of very great length, and the temptation for the new doorkeepers, lectors, exorcists and acolytes to slip away before the end must have been considerable.¹ The prohibition was addressed primarily to them; the priests, who were ordained last, and the ceremonies of whose ordination continue till the very end of the Mass, would have no temptation to leave before the end.

The final phrase *nisi Missa finita et benedictione Pontificis accepta* is also slightly incongruous in the modern rite, since the Pontifical blessing now comes *before* the end of the Mass. In the Pontificals of Durandus of 1485 and of 1497 the Blessing

¹ e.g. the Diocesan Registers of Worcester show that Thomas de Cobham, Bishop of Worcester 1317-27, ordained at Ombersley on the Ember Saturday in Advent 1322 no less than 120 acolytes, 103 subdeacons, 50 deacons and 62 priests—a total of 335! Cf. E. H. Pearce, *Thomas de Cobham, Bishop of Worcester*, London, 1923, pp. 73 and 253.

of the Ordinandis was the very last thing before the bishop returned to the sacristy. The final rubric is:

Postremo benedicat eis genua
flectentibus, versus ad eos dicens
voce competenti *Benedictio Dei
omnipotentis . . .* Deinde intrant
sacrarium . . .

Lastly, let them kneel for the
bishop's blessing. Turning to them,
he says in a moderate voice: "May
the blessing of almighty God . . ."
Then they enter the sacristy . . .

THE ARCHDEACON'S PETITION AND TESTIMONY

The archdeacon then addresses the following petition to the bishop:

Reverendissime Pater, postulat
sancta Mater Ecclesia Catholica ut
hos praesentes diaconos ad onus
Presbyterii ordinetis.

Most Reverend Father, our holy
Mother the Catholic Church begs
you to ordain these deacons here
present to the burden of the
priesthood.

Some light is cast on the use of the phrase "Holy Mother Church" in this context by the fuller form of the petition given in some Pontificals:

Postulat haec sancta Mater
Ecclesia, reverende pater, hos viros
ordinibus aptos consecrari sibi a
vestra paternitate.

This holy Mother Church,
Reverend Father, begs that these
men, who are suitable for Orders,
be consecrated for her by Your
Paternity.¹

The author of this formula was clearly thinking of the sacrament of ordination as a kind of rebirth, in which Mother Church disposes her subject to receive a new form of life from the bishop, who therefore plays the part of a father (since in natural generation the father is the active principle). This analogy is not, on the whole, a happy one, as it forces us to try to think of the bishop as though he were not a part of Holy Mother Church, but stood to her in the relation of father to mother. Moreover, it fits poorly with the predominant idea of this the first of the four sections of the rite, viz., that the bishop is ordaining assistants for himself, to help him in the task of ruling the Church. Another slight incongruity is that the

¹ Cf. e.g. the Mainz Pontifical in Martène, II, p. 77.

archdeacon appears to be speaking as mouthpiece of the Church (i.e., the local Church), whereas the consent of the people has not yet been asked.

The phrase *onus presbyterii* ("the burden of the priesthood") in the modern formula may have been suggested by similar phrases in the Book of Numbers. Moses complains to the Lord: "Why hast thou laid the weight of all this people upon me?" And God replies that he will give him helpers, "that they may bear with thee the burden of the people."¹ It is the heavy task of the priesthood to help the bishops to support the faith and morale of the new Israel on its journey through the desert of this world to the Promised Land.

The bishop replies to the archdeacon's petition with the following question:

Scis illos esse dignos?

Do you know them to be worthy?

To which the archdeacon answers:

Quantum humana fragilitas
nosse sinit, et scio et testificor ipsos
dignos esse ad hujus onus officii.

So far as human frailty allows
one to know, I do know, and I
testify that they are worthy to
undertake the burden of this office.

The bishop replies *Deo gratias* ("Thanks be to God").

In the bishop's question there is perhaps another echo of the Book of Numbers: "And the Lord said to Moses: Gather unto me seventy men of the ancients of Israel, *whom thou knowest* to be ancients and masters of the people."² It is the bishop's duty to make sure that those whom he ordains are worthy of their office. By means of this question he shows, in ritual form, that he is mindful of this duty. There is no need, therefore, to suppose that the question dates from a period when prior to the actual service of ordination the bishop knew nothing at all about the ordinands. Ever since apostolic times, candidates for the priesthood have been carefully examined beforehand. St. Paul outlines to Timothy the enquiries he must

¹ Num. xi. 11.

² Num. xi. 17.

make before appointing presbyters in the new Churches of Crete.¹ St. Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, mentions the testing of candidates for ordination.² In A.D. 895 the Council of Nantes laid down for these tests or scrutinies a set of rules³ which passed into the Decree of Gratian and became part of the common law of the Church. The dialogue between the bishop and the archdeacon is, therefore, and probably always has been, a formality, the purpose of which is to express publicly, in presence of the assembled Church, the findings of the previous examination of the candidates. So when the bishop asks, "Do you know them to be worthy?" he is not so much asking for information, as asking the archdeacon to testify publicly to the favourable report of the canonical examiners.

It may happen that the archdeacon has no personal knowledge at all of some of the ordinands. Nevertheless, according to a decision of Pope Innocent III, he is allowed to testify to the worthiness of all the candidates—on the strength of the dismissional letters of the candidates in question.⁴

It is a little surprising perhaps that the office of testifying to the worthiness of the candidates should have been entrusted to a deacon (for in the first ten centuries the office of Archdeacon was always held by a deacon and never by a priest⁵). One might have expected that a senior priest or prelate would be called upon to witness. The explanation is that in those centuries the Archdeacon was an important and influential person in every diocese: besides performing some of the duties now assigned to the Vicar General, he was responsible for the training of the junior clergy. He was the nearest equivalent to the modern Rector of a seminary,⁶ and would therefore normally be in a better position than anyone else to testify.

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 7.

² Cyprianus, *Ep. XXIV, Ad Clerum*.

³ Mansi, 18, 169. Cf. Fischer, *Die k. Quatember*, p. 124.

⁴ Innoc. III, c. 1, X, *De Scrutinio in Ordine Faciendo*, I, 12; quoted by L. Eisenhofer, *Handbuch der kath. Liturgik*, Fr. im Br., II, 1933, p. 381.

⁵ Cf. A. Schröder, *Entwicklung des Archidiaconats bis zum elften Jahrhundert*, Augsburg, 1890, p. 24.

⁶ Cf. L. Thomassinus, *Vetus et Nova Ecclesiae Disciplina circa Beneficia*, I, ii, 18, 7, (ed. Mainz, t. II, 1787, p. 131).

THE PEOPLE GIVE CONSENT

In order to select the first seven "deacons" at Jerusalem, the Apostles held an election among the faithful.¹ But choice by popular election did not survive for long in the Church; no doubt it was found essential to the unity and good order of the Church that the bishop should control appointments and promotions. An incident in the life of St. Augustine will show the dangers of popular election. Although it was already an ancient tradition that the bishop should select candidates for the priesthood, the people of Carthage clamoured for the election of a Roman senator Pinianus, in the hope that he would give his wealth to the Church. When Augustine refused, the trouble-makers threatened to have Pinianus ordained by some other bishop, and Augustine was hard put to it to restrain them.² It was probably disorders of this sort that had led to the curtailment of the part played by the people in the choice of ordinands. Popular election was formally forbidden by the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 364).³

However, it continued to be the practice for bishops to consult the people and seek their consent. In the Greek Church we have an explicit statement of Theophilus of Alexandria (A.D. 385-412) that the bishop asked the people's consent.⁴ And in the Latin Church there is, for example, among the *Ancient Statutes of the Church*, the following rule:

Episcopus sine consilio clericorum suorum clericos non ordinet, ita ut civium conniventiam et testimonium quaerat.

A bishop should not ordain clerics without taking the advice of his clergy; and he should seek the testimony or silent consent of the people.⁵

It is said that the Roman Emperor Alexander Severus began to consult the Roman people before appointing civil magis-

¹ Acts vi. 5.

² Cf. C. Chardon, *Histoire des Sacramens*, V, p. 177.

³ Canon 13 (Mansi, 2, 565).

⁴ Theoph., *Commonitorium*, cn. 6 (PG 65, 39).

⁵ Canon 22 (Mansi, 3, 593).

trates because he thought it unfitting that the Christians should show more care in selecting their clergy than he in appointing his imperial officials.¹

The Gelasian Sacramentary gives the following brief formula for the bishop's appeal to the people:

Auxiliante Domino Deo et Salvatore nostro Iesu Christo, elegimus in ordine Presbyterii illum Diaconum de titulo illo. Si quis autem habet aliquid contra hos viros, pro Deo et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat et dicat. Verumtamen memor sit communionis suae.

With the help of the Lord our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, we have chosen for the order of the priesthood N., a deacon, from the Church of N. If anyone has anything against these men, in place of God and for the sake of God let him confidently come forth and speak. Only let him be mindful of his fellowship.²

By this formula, as by the one in the modern Pontifical (to be given shortly below), the people were told that their silence would imply consent. The sixth-century Missal of the Franks gives a formula in which the bishop asks the people to express their approval aloud:

Scimus tamen quod [est] (erit) acceptibilis Deo (si) aderit per Spiritum sanctum consensus unus omnium animorum, et ideo electionem vestram debetis voce publica profiteri.

We know that it will be more acceptable to God, if through the Holy Spirit there is unanimous consent; and therefore you ought to express your choice aloud and in public.³

The people would then signify their consent by some form of acclamation, e.g., by cries of *Dignus est* (He is worthy).

The present formula, a further elaboration of the brief address given in the Gelasian Sacramentary, was incorporated into the Roman rite through Gallican Pontificals of the tenth century.

¹ Aelius Lampridius, *Vita Alex. Sev.*, quoted by Chardon, op. cit., V, p. 171.

² Gelasian Sacramentary, ed. Wilson, p. 22. The word *communio* is difficult. Perhaps the phrase contains a threat of excommunication; perhaps it is just a reminder of the duty of charity within the Christian fellowship. Or perhaps it is a corrupt reading: throughout the Middle Ages, Pontificals vacillate between *communio* and *condicio*. Durandus adopted *condicio*, which thereafter became the normal reading.

³ Morinus, II, p. 212.

Quoniam, fratres carissimi, rectori navis et navigio deferendis eadem est vel securitatis ratio vel communis timoris, par eorum debet esse sententia, quorum causa communis existit. Neque enim fuit frustra a Patribus institutum, ut de electione illorum qui ad regimen altaris adhibendi sunt, consulatur etiam populus: quia de vita et conversatione praesentandi, quod nonnunquam ignoratur a pluribus, scitur a paucis; et necesse est ut facilius ei quis obedientiam exhibeat ordinato, cui assensum praebuerit ordinando. Horum siquidem diaconorum in presbyteros, auxiliante Domino, ordinandorum conversatio (quantum mihi videtur) probata et Deo placita existit, et digna (ut arbitrator) ecclesiastici honoris augmento. Sed ne unum fortasse, vel paucos, aut decipiat assensio vel fallat affectio, sententia est expetenda multorum. Itaque quid de eorum actibus aut moribus noveritis,¹ quod de merito sentiatis, libera voce pandatis; et his testimonium sacerdotii magis pro merito quam affectione aliqua tribuatis. Si quis igitur habet aliquid contra illos, pro Deo et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat et dicat; verumtamen memor sit conditionis suae.

Since, my dear brethren, both the captain of a ship and its passengers have the same reasons for feeling safe or the same grounds for fear, they ought to be of the same mind, because their interests are the same. Not for nothing did the Fathers decree that the people too should be consulted about the choice of those who are to be applied to the ministry of the altar; for occasionally something of the life and behaviour of a candidate that is unknown to the majority is known to a few; and everyone necessarily renders obedience more willingly to a person to whose ordination he gave his consent. The conduct of these deacons who are, with God's help, to be ordained priests, is, as it seems to me, of proved goodness and pleasing to God, and is worthy, in my opinion, of ecclesiastical promotion. However, lest one person, or several, be deceived by favour or partiality, the opinion of the many must be sought. So then, speak out freely anything you may know of the behaviour and character of the ordinands, and what is your opinion of their worth. In testifying to their worthiness of the priesthood be guided by their deserts rather than by any affection you may have for them. If, then, anyone has anything to say against them, in place of God and for the sake of God let him confidently come forth and speak; only let him be mindful of his station.

After reading this address, the bishop casts his eye over the congregation to see whether anyone will object. A moment of tense silence ensues.

¹ *Noveritis*, because this is the perfect subjunctive, not the future perfect indicative. (Cf. Ennius' hexameter: *Non aurum posco, nec mi pretium dederitis.*)

THE BISHOP'S ADDRESS TO THE ORDINANDS

The *Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua* ("Ancient Statutes of the Church") prescribe that the bishop should warn acolytes and subdeacons of the duties of their offices before ordaining them.¹ No doubt it meant him to do the same for the other Orders as well. For a long time there were no set formulae for such exhortations. In the Roman Pontificals of the thirteenth century the bishop simply reads out a brief list of the functions of each order, e.g., for the priesthood:

Sacerdotem oportet offerre, benedicere, praeesse, praedicare et baptizare.	The duties of a priest are to offer [Mass], to bless, to preside, to preach and to baptize. ²
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This list is taken from the so-called *Constitutions of the Apostles*, composed at the end of the fourth century, in which the duties of the various grades of the hierarchy are defined. The relevant passage is as follows:

Nec presbyter nec diaconus clericos ex laicis ordinent; sed solummodo presbyter doceat, offerat, baptizet, benedicat populo; diaconus vero ministret episcopo ac presbyteris.	Neither a priest nor a deacon may ordain laymen to the state of cleric. A priest's duties are to teach, to offer [Mass], to baptize, and to bless the people; a deacon should minister to the bishop and priests. ³
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To the modern reader this seems a curious list in view both of what it includes and of what it omits: why does it mention the offices of blessing and baptizing without saying anything of the power of absolution? The answer is, as was indicated above, that there has been a process of evolution in the powers of the priesthood, as the Church has grown and adapted herself to the changing world; the list given in the *Constitutions of the*

¹ For the text see Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, p. 51. The *Statuta* are referred to in Medieval Pontificals as "Canons of the Fourth Council of Carthage", but they were probably compiled about A.D. 500 in S. France—or perhaps in Italy (cf. D. B. Botte, "Le Rituel d'ordination des Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua" in *Recherches de Théol. anc. et méd.*, 1939, XI, pp. 223-41).

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, II, p. 341.

³ *Const. Apost.*, III, 20 (ed. Funk, I, p. 217); cf. *Conc. Nicaenum*, quoted *supra*, p. 42.

Apostles reflects a stage of development which we have long left behind.

The prescriptions of the *Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua* could be taken to mean that the bishop should exhort the ordinands to live in a manner worthy of the high office they are about to receive; and in fact the bishop's address is precisely such an exhortation. The above-mentioned list of liturgical duties has been inserted into it, without really being worked into the sequence of thought. The present text is as follows:

Consecrandi filii dilectissimi in presbyteratus officium, illud digne suscipere, ac susceptum laudabiliter exsequi studeatis. *Sacerdotem etenim oportet offerre, benedicere, praeesse, praedicare et baptizare.* Cum magno quippe timore ad tantum gradum ascendendum est, ac providendum ut caelestis sapientia, probi mores, et diuturna iustitiae observatio ad id electos commendent. Unde Dominus praecipiens Moysi ut septuaginta viros de universo Israel in adiutorium suum eligeret, quibus Spiritus Sancti dona divideret, suggestit: Quos tu nosti quod senes populi sunt. Vos siquidem in septuaginta viris et senibus signati estis, si per Spiritum septiformem Decalogum legis custodientes, probi et maturi in scientia similiter et opere eritis.¹ Sub eodem quoque mysterio et eadem figura in novo Testamento Dominus septuaginta duos elegit, ac binos ante se in praedicationem misit, ut doceret verbo simul et facto, ministros Ecclesiae suae fide et opere debere esse perfectos, seu geminae dilectionis, Dei scilicet et proximi, virtute fundatos. Tales itaque esse studeatis, ut in adiutorium Moysi et duodecim Apostolorum, Episcoporum videlicet catholicorum qui per Moysen et Apostolos figurantur, digne, per gratiam Dei, eligi valeatis.

Hac certe mira varietate Ecclesia

Dearly beloved sons, who are to be consecrated to the priesthood, endeavour to receive that office worthily, and once received, to carry it out in a praiseworthy manner. A priest's duties are to offer sacrifice, to bless, to preside, to preach, and to baptize. So high a dignity should be approached with profound reverence, and care must be taken that those chosen for it are commended by unworldly wisdom, by an upright character, and by a long record of virtuous conduct. Thus it was that when the Lord commanded Moses to choose out of all Israel seventy men for his assistance, to whom He would impart the gifts of the Holy Spirit, he added "men whom thou knowest to be elders of the people". Now you are prefigured in those seventy elders, if through the sevenfold Spirit you keep the Ten Commandments and display soundness and maturity of knowledge and of action. In fulfilment of the same mystery and the same figure, Christ our Lord in the New Testament chose the seventy-two, and sent them before Him two by two to preach, teaching us thereby both in word and by His action that the ministers of his Church should be perfect both in faith and in works; that is, their lives should be founded on a twofold love—love of God and of their neighbour.

¹ A bad clausula: eleven successive short syllables!



The Calling of the Ordinands: Roman Pontifical, 1520

sancta circumdatur, ornatur et regitur, cum alii in ea Pontifices, alii minoris ordinis sacerdotes, diaconi, et subdiaconi, diversorum ordinum viri consecrantur, et ex multis et alternæ dignitatis membris unum corpus Christi efficitur.

Itaque, filii dilectissimi, quos ad nostrum adiutorium fratrum nostrorum arbitrium consecrandos elegit, servate in moribus vestris castæ et sanctæ vitæ integritatem. Agnoscite quod agitis; imitamini quod tractatis; quatenus mortis Dominicæ mysterium celebrantes, mortificare membra vestra a vitiis et concupiscentiis omnibus procuretis. Sit doctrina vestra spiritualis medicina populo Dei; sit odor vitæ vestræ delectamentum Ecclesiæ Christi; ut prædicatione atque exemplo aedificetis domum, id est, familiam Dei; quatenus nec nos de vestra provectione, nec vos de tanti officii susceptione damnari a Domino, sed remunerari potius mereamur. Quod ipse nobis concedat per gratiam suam. R̄. Amen.

Strive then to be such that by God's grace you may be worthily chosen to assist Moses and the Twelve Apostles, that is, the Catholic bishops who are pre-figured by Moses and the Apostles.

Then indeed is Holy Church surrounded, adorned and ruled with wondrous variety, when some in her are consecrated bishops, others priests of lesser order, others deacons and subdeacons, each in his own rank, and when the Body of Christ is made up of many members differing in dignity.

Therefore, dearly beloved sons, whom our brethren have chosen for consecration as our assistants, preserve in your behaviour perfect chastity and holiness of life. Recognise what it is that you do; imitate that which you touch; and as you celebrate the mystery of the Lord's death, be earnest in mortifying your members of all vice and concupiscence. Let your teaching be spiritual medicine for God's people; let the fragrance of your lives be the delight of Christ's Church, that by your preaching and example you may build up the household and family of God, so that we shall not deserve the Lord's condemnation for conferring, nor you for receiving, this high office, but rather may we both deserve His reward. May He grant us this by his grace. Amen.

This exhortation, which is of great spiritual value and deserves to be carefully meditated by all who aspire to the priesthood, owes its presence in the Roman Pontifical to Durandus;¹ it is not found in the Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The ordinands are told in what spirit they should approach their ordination: "with profound reverence"; what the Church expects of them: "soundness and maturity of knowledge and of action"; what model

¹ Cf. Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, pp. 365-6.

they should set before themselves: "imitate that which you handle"; and how they should edify the Church—so that neither they nor he, the bishop, will ever have cause to regret their ordination.

The exhortation falls into three somewhat disparate parts. Originally the first paragraph of it may have been part of an instruction to be given to prospective candidates some time before their ordination. This is strongly suggested by the words "Strive to be such that you may be worthily chosen" (*eligi valeatis*),¹ because the ordinands now kneeling before the bishop have already been chosen, and the bishop has already testified to the people that as far as he can tell, their conduct is exemplary and deserving of higher ecclesiastical dignity. The second paragraph is not closely connected with what precedes or what follows. The third, a fine piece of Latin, probably does not come from the same source as the first, since it speaks of the ordinands as already chosen.

In the first paragraph, the mystical arithmetic is reminiscent of St. Augustine,² and the explanation of why Christ our Lord sent out His disciples two by two is almost certainly derived from a well-known sermon of Pope St. Gregory—well known, because it is read in the Breviary in the Common of Evangelists:

Dominus et Salvator noster, fratres carissimi, aliquando nos sermonibus, aliquando vero operibus admonet. Ipsa etenim facta eius praecepta sunt; quia dum aliquid tacitus facit, quid agere debeamus innotescit. Ecce enim binos in praedicationem discipulos mittit; quia duo sunt praecepta caritatis, Dei videlicet amor et proximi.

Our Lord and Saviour, my dear brethren, sometimes admonishes us by words and sometimes by His actions. For His very actions are precepts, because while He does something without speaking, it is made plain to us what we ought to do. See now! He sends His disciples to preach two by two, because there are two precepts of charity, namely love of God and love of one's neighbour.³

The idea of the "twofold love, of God and of man" will appear again in a later part of the rite.

¹ Cf. the old Roman formula *Auxiliante Domino*, quoted *supra*, p. 77. Perhaps what the author was trying to say was: *Tales esse studeatis . . . ut digne electi esse videamini.*

² Cf. Aug., *Sermo cccxlix*, Maurist edn., col. 1030.

³ Greg. Mag., *Hom. in Evang.*, 17, PL 76, 1139A.

The striking phrase *imitamini quod tractatis* ("Imitate that which you touch") may have been suggested by the collect of St. Stephen given in the Gregorian and in some Gelasian Sacramentaries and still in use:

Da nobis, quaesumus, Domine,
imitari quod colimus, ut discamus
et inimicos diligere . . .

Grant us, O Lord, we beseech
Thee, to imitate that which we
worship, so that we learn to love
even our enemies . . .¹

* * * * *

In a Romano-Germanic Pontifical of the tenth century, now in the British Museum, the bishop's exhortation is immediately followed by a dialogue between the bishop and each ordinand. It is based on the type of Roman contract called *stipulatio*, concluded verbally in the form of question and answer.²

Vis presbyterii gradum in
nomine Domini accipere?

Volo.

Vis in eodem gradu quantum
praeuales et intelligis³ secundum
canonum sanctiones iugiter
manere?

Volo.

Vis episcopo tuo, ad cuius
parochiam ordinandus es, obediens
et consentiens esse secundum iusti-
tiam et ministerium tuum?

Volo, et hoc Deo et sanctis eius
ita in praesenti promitto, prout
scio et implere valeo: ita me Deus
adiuvet et sancti eius.

Et episcopus dicat: Voluntatem
tuam bonam et rectam ad per-
fectionem sibi beneplacitam Deus
perducere dignetur.

R̄. Amen.

Will you, in the name of the
Lord, receive the rank of priest?

I will.

Will you remain in the same
rank, so far as you are able and
know how, according to the laws
of the canons?

I will.

Will you be obedient and agree-
able to your bishop for whose
diocese you are to be ordained,
according to justice and according
to your grade of ministry?

I will, and I do at present
promise it to God and His saints,
so far as I know and am able to
fulfil it; so help me God and His
saints.

And let the bishop say: May God
vouchsafe to bring your good and
righteous will to the perfection that
is pleasing to Him.

R̄. Amen.

¹ Gregorian Sac., ed. Wilson, p. 13, and Gelasian Sac., ed. Wilson, p. 318.

² Cf. A. Berger, Art. "Stipulatio" in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*; and D. Elias, *Roman Law in a Nutshell*, London, 1945, p. 44.

³ This clause, and the corresponding *prout scio et implere valeo* are Frankish additions to the old Roman style of *stipulatio*—cf. I. Herwegen, "Geschichte der benediktinische Professformel" in *Beiträge zur Gesch. der alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinordens*, Münster, 1912, 3, 2, p. 24f.

The third question and answer have been preserved, thanks to Durandus, though with slight alterations, in a later part of the rite. The whole dialogue fitted admirably in its original position: immediately after informing the ordinands of the duties of the priesthood, the bishop asked them for a formal and explicit profession of their willingness and intention to undertake those duties.

THE LITANIES

In the days when all Orders were conferred on the Ember Saturdays, it was common to ordain candidates to the subdiaconate, diaconate and priesthood all in one service. The three ordination rites were preceded by a litany which was offered on behalf of the candidates to all of the Orders. The ceremonies of ordination were then performed in the following order:

1. Subdiaconate:
 - a. Exhortation on the duties of the subdiaconate.
 - b. Tradition of instruments (matter).
 - c. Special prayer for the *subdiaconandi*.
 - d. Prayer of ordination (form).
 - e. Giving of vestments.
2. Diaconate:
 - a. Exhortation on the duties of the diaconate.
 - b. Imposition of hands (matter).
 - c. Special prayer for the *diaconandi*.
 - d. Prayer of ordination (form).
 - e. Giving of vestments.
3. Priesthood:
 - a. Exhortation on the duties of the priesthood.
 - b. Imposition of hands (matter).
 - c. Special prayer for the *presbyterandi*.
 - d. Prayer of ordination (form).
 - e. Giving of vestments.

On a day when there are no ordinations to the subdiaconate or diaconate, the logical procedure would be to sing the litanies as soon as the ordinands have been called out, and therefore *before* the exhortation on the duties of the priesthood. Durandus gave no indication in his Pontifical about what should

be done on such an occasion;¹ the Pontificals copied from it put the litanies sometimes before and sometimes after the exhortation.² The latter practice, which is clearly the less logical, prevailed and is continued in our modern Pontifical. The explanation of its origin may perhaps be this: when there are subdeacons to be ordained, before the litany begins the bishop makes a preliminary address to the subdeacons, warning them that they are about to take an irrevocable step, since reception of the subdiaconate entails the solemn obligation of celibacy. The person who introduced the litany into the rite of ordination to the priesthood in its present position may have argued falsely by analogy that since the litany comes after the bishop's first address to the *subdiaconandi*, it should likewise come after his first address to the *presbyterandi*.

The prostration of the ordinands during the litanies hardly requires any explanation: it is a mark of great devotion and earnest supplication. If we look at the Bible, we see that the Jews normally stood to pray; they knelt down only in moments of great stress;³ very rarely they lay prostrate—as for example the people did before the High Priest for his solemn blessing on the Day of Atonement,⁴ and as our Lord did in the agony in Gethsemane. However, as the ordinands have just been told that “as they celebrate the mysteries of the Lord's death, they must be earnest in mortifying their members of all vice and concupiscence”, it will not be inappropriate for them to recognize in their prostration a symbol of the mystical death they must die, so that when they rise up to receive the priesthood in a few moments, they rise as if from a tomb in which they have left behind their vices and concupiscences.

The singing of the litanies while the ordinands lie prostrate before the altar is one of the most impressive and moving parts of the whole ceremony. The living Church is there arranged in its hierarchic order, with the bishop at its head, his clergy just behind him, the young men stretched out on the ground in their white albs, and behind them the congregation of the faithful,

¹ Cf. Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 367. So the present anomaly should not be attributed to Durandus—cf. De Puniët, I, p. 238.

² A Metz and a Paris Pontifical; cf. Andrieu, *ibid.*, n. 50.

³ e.g. St. Stephen in Acts vii. 59, and St. Peter in Acts ix. 40.

⁴ *Ecclus.* i. 19-26.

calling upon the Divine Persons, the Blessed Virgin, the archangels, angels and saints in their due order of precedence for the blessing, sanctification and consecration of these lives that are being dedicated to the service of God and His Church.

From Pontificals of the eleventh century it appears that sometimes the bishop and archdeacon prostrated themselves along with the ordinands.¹ However, this custom has never been normal. The bishop now kneels at his faldstool on the predella and follows the litany in his Pontifical. The archdeacon kneels at his priedieu.

The litany now used at ordinations is not printed here on account of its length. Moreover, apart from three special invocations inserted for the ordinands, it is not proper to the rite of ordination, but is identical with that sung on Holy Saturday. However, as it is of interest to see how simple and brief the litany was a thousand years ago, here is an example from a tenth-century manuscript:

Kyrie eleison	Omnes S. Confessores orate.
Christe eleison	S. Agnes ora.
Christe audi nos	S. Agatha ora.
S. Maria ora.	Omnes S. Virgines orate.
S. Michael ora.	Omnes S. orate.
S. Gabriel ora.	Propitius esto, libera nos Dom.
S. Raphael ora.	Per adventum tuum lib. nos D.
Omnes S. Ang. orate.	Per Nativitatem tuam lib. nos D.
S. Ioannes ora.	Per Circumcisionem tuam lib.
S. Petre ora.	nos D.
S. Paule ora.	Per Baptismum tuum lib. nos D.
S. Andrea ora.	Per Jejunium tuum lib. nos D.
Omnes S. Apostoli orate.	Per Crucem tuam, lib. nos D.
S. Stephane ora.	Peccatores te rogamus,
S. Line ora.	Ut Apostolicum nostrum,
S. Clete ora.	Ut Regem nostrum,
Omnes S. Martyres orate.	Ut episcopum nostrum,
S. Sylvester ora.	Fili Dei, te rog.
S. Leo ora.	Agnus Dei, qui tollis.
S. Ambrosi ora.	Christe audi, audi nos. ²
S. Augustine ora.	

Before use of the Roman Pontifical was made universally obligatory, it was customary for each Church to add its own

¹ Morinus, II, p. 257: "Tunc prosternat se Pontifex cum Archidiacono ante altare super stramenta cum his qui consecrandi sunt."

² Morinus, II, p. 246.

patron saint and any others of its predilection to the litany. Durandus, for example, inserted in his Pontifical two invocations to St. Privatus, who was one of his predecessors in the see of Mende. In Pontificals copied from that of Durandus each copyist made his own additions; among the saints who at one time or another have had their names in such litanies are Saints Fredaldus, Maurice, Vitus, Wenceslas, Veranus, Egidius, Maurus, Armandus, Eulalia, Genovefa, etc.¹

The practice of inserting special petitions for the ordinands goes back at least to the eleventh century. We find in a Victorine manuscript dating from that century:

At tunc agatur litania; dicatur et inter alia: *Ut fratres nostros ad sacrum ordinem electos in vera religione conservare digneris, te rogamus, audi nos.*

Then comes the litany, and among the rest is said: *That Thou wouldst deign to preserve in the true religion these our brothers who have been chosen for this sacred order, we beseech Thee to hear us.*²

This was evidently to be sung by the cantors, and there is no indication that the bishop rose to bless the ordinands at this point. In Roman Pontificals of the twelfth century we find:

Prope vero finem litaniae, ubi bis dicitur: *Ut hos electos benedicere et consecrare digneris, et bis a choro repetitur, pontifex in utraque repetitione debet signare ipsos electos.*

Towards the end of the litanies, when the invocation *That Thou wouldst deign to bless and consecrate these chosen ones* is said twice and repeated twice by the choir, the bishop should at each repetition make the sign of the cross over the chosen ones.³

In the Pontifical of Durandus the special invocations have arrived at the form that is still used, viz., before the final petition (*Ut nos exaudire digneris*) the bishop rises from the faldstool, receives his crozier, turns to the ordinands, and chants:

Ut hos electos bene ✠ dicere digneris, *Te rogamus, audi nos.*
Ut hos electos bene ✠ dicere et

That Thou wouldst deign to bless these chosen ones, *We beseech Thee to hear us.*

¹ See the critical apparatus in Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, pp. 350-1.

² Morinus, II, p. 272.

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 131.

sancti ✠ ficare digneris, *Te rogamus, audi nos.*

Ut hos electos bene ✠ dicere, sancti ✠ ficare, et consec ✠ rare digneris, *Te rogamus, audi nos.*

That Thou wouldst deign to bless and sanctify these chosen ones, *We beseech Thee to hear us.*

That Thou wouldst deign to bless, sanctify, and consecrate these chosen ones, *We beseech Thee to hear us.*

The bishop then kneels down again at the faldstool and the litany is finished in the ordinary way.

Although the Holy Saturday litany is a prayer for the general well-being, both temporal and spiritual, of the Church at large, there are few parts of it that are not strictly relevant to the circumstances of an ordination, or that do not take on a special colouring from those circumstances. The prayer that God will bless our benefactors, for example, acquires a more particular meaning when one calls to mind the generosity of those who have supported the ordinands during their long studies; and the prayer for the recall of heretics and the conversion of schismatics can be offered with fresh hope when one sees all these new apostles offering themselves to the Lord of the harvest.

THE LAYING-ON OF HANDS BY THE BISHOP

After the litanies all stand up, and the ordinands kneel successively in pairs before the bishop. In silence he lays both hands on the head of every ordinand in turn. This is the essential action of the whole rite; the imposition of hands is the "matter" of the sacrament.

The laying-on of hands has been and is part of the ritual in other sacraments besides Orders—in Baptism, Confirmation, the reconciliation of penitents in Penance, and Extreme Unction. The custom was inherited by the Church from Judaism. In the Book of Genesis Jacob puts his right hand on the head of Ephraim and his left hand on the head of Manasse and then pronounces a blessing.¹ Aaron and his sons placed their hands on the heads of victims to be offered in sacrifice.² Witnesses laid their hands on the head of a person who was to die by their testimony, as, for example, the two

¹ Gen. xlviii. 14-15.

² Lev. i. 4; and iii. 2.

elders laid their hands on the head of Susanna in the Book of Daniel.¹ In the Book of Numbers, when Moses asks the Lord to appoint a new ruler to be shepherd of the people after his death, the Lord replies: "Take Josue, the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and put thy hand upon him."² In the Book of Leviticus, Aaron, after offering sacrifice, "stretched out his hands over the people and blessed them."³

In all these uses the essential function of the imposition of hands is *to designate some person or thing*—the person for whom one is praying, the victims one is offering, the person one is appointing, the person against whom one is testifying. It is highly probable that the Jews came to think of the imposition of hands as exercising a sort of physical causality (though of course they did not use such terminology); they thought that virtue flowed out through the hand of the person giving the blessing into the person of the recipient. Such a "flowing power" (*virtus fluens*) as St. Thomas calls it, was named a *ma'na* among Semitic peoples.⁴ This concept passed into medieval theology through the works of the Arab philosopher Avicenna; *ma'na* was translated by the Latin *intentio*, and thus arose the ambiguous and misleading expression "the intentional causality of the sacraments". Not all theologians today accept the "intentional" theory of sacramental efficacy; it is a matter of free opinion. To apply it to the rite of ordination as we have it today is exceedingly difficult, since the sacrament is not yet conferred at the imposition of hands in our rite.

The imposition of hands was used by our Lord Himself when He blessed the children,⁵ when He cured the deaf mute,⁶ and probably again when He blessed His Apostles and disciples at the Ascension.⁷ We are not told if He imposed hands when He appointed the Twelve Apostles;⁸ nor is there any indication that He did so at the Last Supper, when, as the Council of

¹ Dan. xiii. 34.

² Num. xxvii. 18.

³ Lev. ix. 22.

⁴ Cf. M. Untersteiner, *The Sophists*, Oxford, 1954, pp. 31 and 107.

⁵ Mark x. 13; Luke xviii. 15.

⁶ Mark vii. 32.

⁷ Luke xxiv. 50.

⁸ Mark iii. 13-19.

Trent laid down, the Apostles were ordained priests.¹ An ecclesiastical writer of the end of the fourth century, who is known as Ambrosiaster, does indeed say:

Nemo ignorat episcopos Salvatore
torem ecclesiis instituisse; ipse
enim, priusquam in coelos ascen-
deret, imponens manum apostolis,
ordinavit eos episcopos.

No one is unaware that our
Saviour instituted bishops for the
Churches; for He Himself, before
He ascended into heaven, laying
His hand upon them ordained them
bishops.²

This opinion of Ambrosiaster was defended at Trent by Salmeron, but the Council abstained from deciding the point.³ It is possible that Christ may have ordained the Apostles by the ceremony of laying-on hands, just as it is possible that He may have baptized them, but the view commonly held among theologians is that Christ conferred the sacraments—or rather the effects of the sacraments—on the Apostles without using the sacramental signs, by means of His “power of excellence”.⁴

After the time of the Babylonian captivity, the Jews began to use the laying-on of hands as their ceremony for appointing rabbis to rule the Jewish communities of the diaspora,⁵ and for appointing members of their Sanhedrin, whom they regarded as the successors of Moses’ seventy-two helpers.⁶ The Apostles appear to have borrowed the title “presbyter” (= *zagen*) from the synagogue, and they may perhaps have modelled their ceremony of ordination on that of the appointment of Jewish rabbis.⁷ But there were considerable differences between the Jewish ceremony and the Christian: the climax of the Jewish rite was not the laying-on of hands but enthronement or installation in a chair; only three rabbis imposed hands; and the person ordained was raised to equal rank with his ordainers. Hence it is probably more accurate to say that the Apostolic Church and the contemporary synagogue were appropriating,

¹ *Conc. Trid.*, Sess. XXII, Denz., 938 and 948.

² Ambrosiaster, *Lib. Quaestionum*, cap. 97 (*PL* 35, 2296); cf. Luke xxiv. 50.

³ *Conc. Trid.*, ed. Goerres, IX, p. 7.

⁴ Cf. Billot, *De Sacramentis*, I, pp. 171–5.

⁵ Morinus, III, p. 112.

⁶ Schermann, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁷ This is the view of F. Gavin, *The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments*, London, 1928, p. 101, and is maintained by E. Lohse, *Die Ordination im Spät-Judentum und in Neuen Testament*, Göttingen, 1951.

each in its own way, precedents afforded by the Old Testament.¹ Since it is clear that our Lord pointed to Moses' seventy-two elders as a type, it is likely enough that He also pointed to the imposition of hands by Moses on Aaron as another type.² And this likelihood is greatly increased when we reflect that in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul the laying-on of hands is the regular and essential rite for the appointment of deacons, presbyters and bishops.

Pope Pius XII, in his Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis*, says that the imposition of hands and accompanying prayers sufficiently express the grace and the power of the sacrament. What then is the precise symbolism of the laying-on of hands? According to Pseudo-Denis the Areopagite,³ the imposition of hands signifies divine assistance, protection and guidance—assistance, because the hand is the symbol of action, being (as Aristotle said) the instrument of instruments; protection and guidance, because in Old Testament language to say of a man that the hand of the Lord is with him is to say that God protects and guides him.⁴ This explanation is not satisfactory; the sacraments "effect what they signify, and signify what they effect". But the effect of the sacrament of Orders is not simply to put the ordinands under the special care and protection of God. Hence this cannot be what they primarily signify.

It seems better, therefore, to say that the laying-on of hands simply serves to designate the precise persons upon whom the blessing of ordination is being called down,⁵ and to express the will of the bishop that they should receive it. Imposition of hands, which, as has been said above, is common to several sacraments, is in itself indeterminate: it simply designates who is to receive the blessing; the exact nature of the blessing is specified by the words of the form. The decree of Pope Pius XII does not say that the imposition of hands alone sufficiently

¹ Cf. A. Ehrhart, "Jewish and Christian Ordination", in *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 1954, pp. 125-38.

² Cf. Acts i. 3, and *supra*, p. 12, n. 2.

³ *De Eccl. Hierarchia*, cap. 5 (PG 3, 511), quoted with approval by Hallier, III, p. 414.

⁴ Cf. 2 Kings iii. 12 and Ps. lxxxviii. 6.

⁵ Cf. Claude de Vert, *Explication simple, littérale et historique des Cérémonies de l'Eglise*, Paris, 1710, II, p. 149.

expresses the effects of the sacrament, but that it does so in conjunction with the accompanying prayers.

The solemn imposition of hands is nowadays performed in silence. But this has not always been so. For example, according to a thirteenth-century Mainz Pontifical, the bishop is to say:

Spiritus sanctus superveniat in te, et virtus Altissimi sine peccato custodiat te.

May the Holy Ghost come upon you, and may the power of the Most High keep you without sin.¹

A Toulouse Pontifical of about the same age gives the following information:

Postea episcopus stans imponit manus super capita singulorum, nihil dicens secundum consuetudinem Romanae Ecclesiae: et similiter omnes presbyteri qui assistunt. Secundum vero consuetudinem quarundam Ecclesiarum dicunt, *Accipite Spiritum; quorum remisieritis*, etc.

Then the bishop stands up and lays his hands on the head of each, saying nothing according to the custom of the Roman Church; all the priests who are present do likewise. But according to the custom of some Churches, they say: *Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive*, etc.²

The furnishing of a form of words to accompany the laying-on of hands is in accordance with a universal law of liturgical development that appropriate words tend to be fitted to every liturgical act.³ How then are we to explain the old Roman custom of preserving complete silence during the imposition of hands? Most probably it was felt desirable as a mark of profound reverence for the special presence of the Holy Ghost at the most solemn moment of the rite.⁴

THE LAYING-ON OF HANDS BY THE PRIESTS

After the bishop, all the priests who are present lay their hands on the heads of the ordinands in turn.

¹ Martène, II, p. 220.

² Morinus, II, p. 281. This undoubtedly refers to the first imposition of hands; the text continues: "Ea pronuntiata, hic reflectat orarium."

³ Cf. C. de Vert, op. cit., I, pp. 144-5.

⁴ Cf. Hippolytus, *Traditio Apostolica*, ed. Funk, II, p. 103, of the consecration of a bishop: "Omnes autem silentium habeant orantes in corde propter descensionem Spiritus."

The participation of the priests appears to be as old as the Church, because when St. Paul tells Timothy not to neglect the grace that is in him through the imposition of the hands of the presbyters, he implies that when Timothy was ordained, he received the imposition not only of the Apostle's hands, but of those of all the presbyters of the church in which the ordination took place.¹ It has been suggested that these presbyters enjoyed the fulness of the priestly powers, including power to ordain, and were therefore able truly to "concelebrate" in the act of ordination²—just as nowadays the new priests concelebrate in the Mass of Ordination.

Before forming an opinion on this theory, it will be well to consider a useful distinction that has been made between "sacramental" and "ceremonial" concelebration.³ When two or more ministers perform together a sacramental rite with the intention of doing what the Church does by that rite, their concelebration of the rite is said to be sacramental, because each is as much as the other the cause of the sacramental action. Thus when the bishop and the newly-ordained priests pronounce together the words of consecration in the Mass of Ordination, they concelebrate sacramentally. On the other hand, when ministers of different rank co-operate each in his own rank, and only the chief among them performs the sacramental act (matter and form) with the intention of doing what the Church does, their concelebration may be called ceremonial; in this sense the subdeacon and deacon may be said to concelebrate with the priest at a High Mass.

Applying this distinction to the rite of ordination, we must ask whether the participation of the priests in the laying-on of hands is sacramental or ceremonial. Reasons were given above for thinking that a priest by his ordination receives no power whatever to ordain but is raised to a status in which it can be given him by Papal authority.⁴ If the priests also

¹ Cf. 1 Tim. iv. 14 and 2 Tim. i. 6.

² Cf. De Puniel, I, p. 266: "Il est fort possible que primitivement les colléges des *presbyteroi* . . . qui administraient les églises sous la direction et la présidence des apôtres, aient joui de la plénitude des pouvoirs sacerdotaux, et qu'ils aient pu concélébrer réellement pour l'ordination." Cf. *supra*, p. 13-14.

³ By I. M. Hanssens, "De Concelebratione Eucharistica", in *Periodica de Re Morali, Canonica, Liturgica*, Rome, 1927, XVI, p. 144*.

⁴ *Supra*, p. 14.

recited the form, it could be maintained that they are for the occasion given power to ordain by the rubric of the Pontifical which allows them to impose hands. But since they do not recite the Preface of Consecration with the bishop, they do not perform the whole sacramental sign, and therefore do not concelebrate sacramentally.

However, in Roman Pontificals of the twelfth century the priests did recite the words of the form, as can be seen from the following rubric:

Et omnes presbiteri qui adsunt cum eo pariter super caput ipsius manus imponant. Et pontifex dat orationem super eum voce media, presbiteris idipsum prosequentibus voce suppressa.

And all the priests who are present should likewise impose hands with the bishop on the head of the ordinand. And the bishop recites the prayer over him in a moderate voice, while the priests accompany him saying the same in a low [?] voice.¹

If the "prayer" referred to includes the Prayer of Consecration, this rubric seems to enjoin true concelebration in the act of ordination. The custom was not adopted by Durandus, and from his day onwards the participation of the priests, who say nothing at all, is purely ceremonial.

The non-sacramental participation of the priests is attested in the early third century by the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus.² In the fifth century, the famous *Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua* established the following rules (based on the *Apostolic Tradition*) for the participation of the clergy in ordinations:

Episcopus cum ordinatur, duo episcopi ponant et teneant Evangeliorum codicem supra caput et cervicem eius; et uno super eum fundente benedictionem, reliqui omnes episcopi qui adsunt manibus suis caput eius tangant.

Presbyter cum ordinatur, Episcopo eum benedicente et manum super caput eius tenente, etiam omnes presbyteri qui praesentes sunt, manus suas iuxta manum episcopi super caput illius teneant.

When a bishop is ordained, let two bishops place and hold the book of Gospels over his head and shoulders; and while one of them utters the blessing, let all the other bishops who are present touch his head with their hands.

When a priest is ordained, while the bishop blesses him and holds a hand over his head, let all the priests who are present hold their hands over his head beside the hand of the bishop.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 135.

² Funk, II, p. 102.

Diaconus cum ordinatur, solus episcopus qui eum benedicit, manum super caput illius ponat; quia non ad sacerdotium sed ad ministerium consecratur.

When a deacon is ordained, let the bishop alone who is blessing him, hold a hand over his head; because he is consecrated not to the priesthood but to the diaconate.¹

These canons were incorporated in innumerable Pontificals and eventually in the Pontificals of the Roman Curia. They are clearly based on a principle of gradation: the priest's ordination is made more solemn than the deacon's by the additional imposition of the hands of the priests, and the bishop's more solemn than the priest's by the participation of at least three bishops.

The Carolingian liturgist Amalarius did not approve of this gradation: he writes as follows:

Est libellus quidam apud nos de sacris ordinibus nescio cuius auctoris, qui dicit solum episcopum debere manus imponere super diaconum, "quia non ad sacerdotium consecratur, sed ad ministerium". Numquid scriptor libelli doctior atque sanctior apostolis? qui posuerunt plures manus super diaconos quando consecrabantur.

We have a booklet about sacred orders by someone whose name I do not know, who says that only the bishop should lay his hands on a deacon "because he is consecrated not to the priesthood, but to the diaconate". Is then the writer of this booklet more learned and holier than the Apostles? For several of them laid their hands upon the deacons when they were consecrated.²

It would appear that Amalarius himself favoured the participation of as many priests and bishops as possible even in the ordination of a deacon.

If we hold, then, that the co-operation of the priests in the laying-on of hands is purely ceremonial, it remains to consider what is the significance of this ceremony. If we consider first the bishop: by imposing his hands he virtually says: "As my hands descend upon your head, so may the Holy Spirit descend upon your soul",³ and because he has the office of bishop (and therefore *ex officio* power to ordain) his prayer is sacramentally effective. When the priests lay on their hands, they too by

¹ Text from Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, p. 51.

² Amalarius, *Lib. Off.*, II, 12, ed. Hanssens, II, p. 224.

³ Cf. St. Augustine, *De Baptismo*, III, 16, 21 (*PL* 43, 149), of the laying-on of hands: "Quid est enim aliud nisi oratio super hominem?"

their action give expression to the same desire that the Holy Ghost may descend upon the ordinand, but because they have not power to ordain (neither *ex officio* nor by special commission) their action is not sacramentally effective; it is however, a prayer, and has efficacy *ex opere operantis*. Further, by publicly making this prayer for the ordinands, the priests give public approval to the promotion of the candidates to participation in the powers and graces of the priesthood, and publicly testify their acceptance of the new priests into their own rank of the hierarchy.

Amalarius, who is followed on this point by Durandus, goes a little further. After quoting from the Book of Numbers: "And the Lord came down in a cloud and spoke to him, taking away of the spirit that was in Moses, and giving to the seventy men",¹ he comments as follows:

Neque hic dixit quia Moyses daret, sed Dominus dedit. Per impositionem manuum opera Spiritus Sancti intelligimus. Non enim adhuc est Deus omnia in omnibus. In aliquo est sapientia, in aliquo fides, in aliquo pietas, in aliquo castitas, in aliquo humilitas. Hoc valent plurimae manus super caput eius qui consecratur, ut unusquisque deprecetur Dominum, quatenus partem de spiritu suo det ei.

He said not that Moses gave, but that the Lord gave. By the imposition of hands we understand the works of the Holy Ghost. For God is not yet all in all. In one man He is wisdom, in another faith, in another piety, in another chastity, in another humility. The meaning of the imposition of many hands on the head of him who is consecrated is that each one prays the Lord to give to the ordinand a share in His own spirit.²

That is to say, each priest imposes hands as a petition to almighty God to communicate to the new priests a share in the gifts of the Holy Ghost which his own ordination brought to him. The imposition of hands by all the members of the presbyterate of a local Church (as in the days of St. Paul) or by all the priests who are present (as at the present day) is a prayer that the new priests may share in all the gifts and graces of the presbyterate.³ It is a sign of complete and ungrudging acceptance.

¹ Num. xi. 25.

² Amalarius, *Lib. Off.*, II, 12, 12-13, ed. Hanssens, II, p. 225.

³ Cf. Catalanus, p. 130.



The Laying-On of Hands: Roman Pontifical, 1520

THE INVITATORY AND COLLECT

One of the most ancient forms of liturgical prayer is the invitatory-and-collect.¹ The invitatory is an invitation to the congregation to pray for some special purpose; it begins: "Let us pray, my dear brethren, that . . ." At the end the word *Oremus* ("Let us pray") is repeated. Ancient manuscripts often call the invitatory formula the "preface", which is a highly suitable name, since the invitatory does preface or introduce the collect which follows it. But as the name "preface" has unfortunately come to be used for a eucharistic prayer (or any other prayer preceded by *Sursum Corda*, etc.), to avoid confusion it is better to retain the clumsy word "invitatory". After the celebrant has chanted the invitatory, the deacon chants *Flectamus genua* ("Let us kneel"), and all kneel down to pray silently for a few moments. Then the subdeacon chants *Levate* ("Arise") and the congregation rises to its feet. Then the celebrant puts the petition of all into the form of a collect.

After imposing hands on all the ordinands, the bishop remains standing where he is on the predella, keeping his right hand extended,² so as to continue the imposition of hands, and addresses the following invitatory to the people:

Oremus, fratres carissimi, Deum Patrem omnipotentem, ut super hos famulos suos, quos ad Presbyterii munus elegit, caelestia dona multiplicet; et quod ejus dignatione suscipiunt, ipsius consequantur auxilio. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. R. Amen.

Dearly beloved brethren, let us pray God the Father almighty to multiply His heavenly gifts in these His servants whom He has chosen for the office of the priesthood; and by His help may they attain to what they are undertaking. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

This formula is extremely ancient, being virtually identical with the invitatories given in the Leonine, Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries. The text of the second half now

¹ Cf. Duchesne, *Origines*, p. 107.

² It seems to hover like a bird, symbolizing the presence of the Holy Spirit. In the Armenian Church this symbolism has been made more obvious: the bishop shakes his hand as he lays it on the ordinand's head—to imitate the fluttering of the dove, figure of the Holy Ghost (cf. P. Hindo, *S.C. per la Chiesa Orientale*, Fonti, Rome, 1941, II, 27, p. 75).

in use is almost certainly corrupt, since it hardly makes sense to pray that the ordinands "may attain to what they are undertaking"—if they are now undertaking it (the office of the priesthood), they have already attained to it. The text of the Leonine Sacramentary is much more satisfactory from the point of view of sense:

. . . caelestia dona multiplicet,
quibus quod eius dignatione susci-
piunt eius exsequantur auxilio.

. . . His gifts, by means of which
they may carry out with His aid the
office they are undertaking by His
favour.¹

However, there are two objections to this from the point of view of Latinity: (1) the repetition of *eius . . . eius* is a serious stylistic blemish in a set of prayers where the style is very highly polished; and (2) the instrumental ablative *quibus* renders the further instrumental ablative *eius auxilio* redundant. In the course of the centuries copyists have made numerous efforts to remove these blemishes.² The most satisfactory text is that of a Sens Pontifical:

Oremus, dilectissimi, Deum
Patrem omnipotentem, ut super
hos famulos suos quos ad presby-
terii munus elegit, caelestia dona
multiplicet; et quod eius dig-
natione suscipiunt ipsius exsequan-
tur auxilio.

Dearly beloved, let us pray God
the Father almighty to multiply
His heavenly gifts in these His
servants whom He has chosen for
the office of the priesthood; and
may they carry out with His aid
the task they are undertaking by
His favour.³

In this form the invitatory is theologically perfect, because the graces of the sacrament of Order are precisely those which make the recipient worthy to perform the office of the priesthood.⁴ The congregation, therefore, is being invited to pray that the ordinands may receive the graces of the sacrament in great abundance both now and in the future. This idea is unfortunately obscured by the corrupt text in use today.

¹ *The Leonine Sacramentary*, ed. Feltoe, p. 122.

² Cf. the versions of this prayer in Morinus, II, 214, 217, 221, 227, 233—all different.

³ Morinus, II, p. 241.

⁴ St. Thomas, *Summa*, Suppl., 37, 5: "Per manus impositionem datur plenitudo gratiae, per quam ad magna officia sunt idonei."

It may seem that this invitation to pray for the ordinands is redundant, or at least out of place, because only a few minutes before, all have sung the litanies as an act of intercession for the ordinands. The explanation is, as was indicated above, that the litanies were introduced at a time when ordinations to all the major orders took place on the same day, and were intended as a prayer for the ordinands to all the orders together; the invitatory and collect are a special prayer for those who are to receive the priesthood.

After singing the invitatory the bishop turns to the altar and sings *Oremus*. Then one of the assistant priests sings *Flectamus genua*, and according to the present practice there is no pause for private prayer, but another assistant sings *Levate* at once. In the new Office for the Easter Vigil it is prescribed that there shall be a pause between the *Flectamus genua* and the *Levate*. Perhaps in years to come this practice will be restored in other ceremonies.

Turning back to the ordinands, the bishop chants the collect, no longer with his right hand outstretched, but with both hands raised to his shoulders. It is of course anomalous that the imposition of hands should be continued during the invitatory and then cease.¹ Until quite late in the Middle Ages it was continued through the collect and on to the end of the "Preface" of Consecration, which is the form of the sacrament. Durandus's rubric prescribes that the bishop should say or sing the "Preface" "with hands joined before his breast".² The modern Pontifical says "with hands extended before his breast".³

The present text of the collect is as follows:

Exaudi nos, quaesumus, Domine
Deus noster, et super hos famulos
tuos bene ✠ dictionem Sancti
Spiritus, et gratiae sacerdotalis in-
funde virtutem, ut quos tuae
pietatis aspectibus offerimus con-
secrandos, perpetua muneris tui
largitate prosequaris. Per Dominum
nostrum, etc.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, O
Lord our God, and pour down on
these Thy servants the blessing of
the Holy Ghost and the power of
priestly grace, that Thou mayest
accompany with an unfailling abun-
dance of Thy gift those whom we
bring before Thy sight, O faithful
God, for consecration.

¹ Cf. De Puniel, I, p. 264.

² Andrieu, III, p. 368: *Iunctis manibus ante pectus*.

³ *Extensis manibus ante pectus*—this dates from 1485 and was confirmed by a decree of the S.C.R., no. 2851, 18 Feb. 1843.

Here again the text may be slightly corrupt. In place of *infunde* ("pour in"), the Leonine, Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries all have *effunde* ("pour out"), which goes much better with the phrase *super hos famulos tuos*, i.e., "pour out upon these Thy servants" rather than "pour in upon . . ."¹

The collect addresses to God exactly the petitions proposed in the invitatory, as can be seen by putting the two side by side:

Dearly beloved, let us pray God
the Father almighty

to multiply His heavenly gifts
in these His servants, whom He
has chosen for the office of the
priesthood,

and may they carry out with
this aid the task which by His
favour they are undertaking.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, O
Lord our God,

and pour down upon these Thy
servants the blessing of the Holy
Ghost and the power of priestly
grace;

and² mayest Thou accompany
with an unending abundance of
Thy gift those whom we bring
before Thy sight, O faithful God,
for consecration.

The second half of the prayer asks that the ordinands may continue to receive the graces of the priesthood throughout their priestly life. This explains why the author of the prayer refers to God's *pietas* (loyalty, or faithfulness) rather than to His mercy or majesty: *pietas* means, not "piety" in the modern sense, but steadfast affection and enduring loyalty to a person, a city, or an idea. God is fittingly reminded of His *pietas* in a petition for the long-continuance of His present gifts.

THE "PREFACE" OF CONSECRATION

After the people have joined with the bishop in a special prayer for the ordinands, the bishop recites the so-called "Preface" of Consecration. In this prayer he speaks not as head of the local Church, but as representative of the episcopal order, saying in effect: "Since we bishops have need of helpers

¹ Cf. St. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XV, 26 (*PL* 42, 1094): "Nos autem accipere hoc Donum [= Spiritum Sanctum] possumus pro modulo nostro; effundere autem super alios non utique possumus; sed ut hoc fiat, Deum super eos, a quo hoc efficitur, invocamus."

² Reading *et* instead of *ut*, because what follows is not a consequence-clause; it is a separate petition for *future* graces, whereas the previous petition was for a *present* increase of heavenly gifts.

in our work of ruling and sanctifying the Church, may God fill these ordinands with the Holy Spirit, so that they may be worthy helpers of our order."

In the Leonine, Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries, this prayer is not in the form of a "preface", i.e., it is not preceded by the introductory dialogue *Dominus vobiscum*, etc., but begins at *Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeternae Deus*. The preface-form appears in the above-mentioned Pontifical of Sens, written about A.D. 900.¹ It was adopted by the Romano-Germanic Pontifical, and passed thence to the curial Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, to the Pontifical of Durandus, and so to the printed Roman Pontificals.

However, the preface-form is not really appropriate here, because the Prayer of Consecration is not a common prayer of the whole Church, nor is it a eucharistic prayer, i.e., a prayer of thanksgiving.² A eucharistic prayer always begins by thanking God for His past benefits. It is true that in the first half of the Prayer of Consecration some of the past deeds of almighty God are commemorated, but not as matter for gratitude; rather, as instances confirming the principle in virtue of which a new petition is now being made. This will become plain from the analysis of the prayer to be given below. It seems likely that the preface form was introduced by copyists who did not understand the relation of this prayer to the other parts of the rite, and thought that the bishop was again speaking here as the mouthpiece of the congregation present at the ordination.

In the Book of Numbers, when the Lord gives Moses instructions about the appointment of the seventy elders, He says: "Bring them to the door of the tabernacle that bears record of my covenant, and let them stand there at thy side. *I will come down and converse with thee there; taking away some of the spirit which rests upon thee and giving it to them.*"³ The Prayer of Consecration corresponds to that private conversation of the Lord with Moses. It is true that in the rite of ordination only the human voice of the bishop is heard, but as all good

¹ Morinus, II, p. 241.

² Cf. Duchesne, *Origines*, p. 109.

³ Num. xi. 16-17.

thoughts and aspirations are from God, and it is the Holy Spirit who prays in the bishop and by his voice, the voice of God is somehow made audible in the voice of the bishop.

The sequence of thought in the Prayer of Consecration is as follows:

1. God is invoked as the source of all honours and dignities, as also of all growth and order.
2. A principle is stated: in rational creatures there is constant progress and improvement through a wisely planned progression of stages.
3. Hence a general inference: this principle accounts for the institution of a second order of priests to assist the first
 - (a) in the Old Testament:
Moses and the seventy elders;
Aaron and his sons;
 - (b) in the New Testament:
the Apostles and their assistants.
4. Hence a petition: grant to us bishops in the same way helpers of second rank.
5. Invocation of the Holy Ghost upon these particular ordinands.

The text as it stands in the modern Pontifical is as follows:

Vere dignum et justum est, aequum et salutare, nos tibi semper et ubique gratias agere, Domine sancte, Pater omnipotens, aeternae Deus, honorum auctor et distributor omnium dignitatum; per quem proficiunt universa, per quem cuncta firmantur, amplificatis semper in melius naturae rationalis incrementis, per ordinem congrua ratione dispositum. Unde et Sacerdotales gradus atque officia Levitarum, Sacramentis mysticis instituta creverunt: ut cum Pontifices summos regendis populis praefecisses, ad eorum societatis et operis adjumentum, sequentis

It is truly right and just, fitting and profitable that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee, O holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God, source of all honours and distributor of all dignities, through whom all things make progress, through whom all things are strengthened; who in Thy rational creation dost ever produce improvement by advances through a wisely planned progression; in accordance with this plan the grades of the priesthood and the offices of the Levites, instituted with sacred mysteries, grew and developed; for after appointing

ordinis viros et secundae dignitatis eligeres. Sic in eremo per septuaginta virorum prudentium mentes, Moysi spiritum propagasti; quibus ille adjutoribus usus, in populo innumeras multitudines facile gubernavit. Sic et in Eleazarum et Ithamarum filios Aaron paternae plenitudinis abundantiam transfudisti, ut ad hostias salutares et frequentioris officii sacramenta, ministerium sufficeret Sacerdotum. Hac providentia, Domine, Apostolis Filii tui doctores fidei comites addidisti, quibus illi orbem totum secundis praedicationibus impleverunt. Quapropter infirmitati quoque nostrae, Domine, quaesumus, haec adjumenta largire, qui quanto fragiliores sumus, tanto his pluribus indigemus.

Da, quaesumus omnipotens Pater, in hos famulos tuos presbyterii dignitatem; innova in visceribus eorum spiritum sanctitatis; ut acceptum a te, Deus, secundi meriti munus obtineant, censuramque morum exemplo suae conversationis insinuent. Sint providi cooperatores Ordinis nostri; eluceat in eis totius forma justitiae, ut bonam rationem dispensationis sibi creditae reddituri, aeternae beatitudinis praemia consequantur. Per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia saecula saeculorum. R. Amen.

chief priests to rule Thy peoples, Thou didst choose men of lesser degree and second rank to share their company and their task. Thus in the desert didst Thou propagate the spirit of Moses through the souls of the seventy, with whose assistance among the people he governed countless multitudes with ease. Thus too, didst Thou transfuse into Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, the abundant graces of their father, so that the order of priests might be sufficient in numbers for salutary sacrifices and for the more frequent celebration of the sacred rites. According to the same design, O Lord, Thou didst give associates to the Apostles of Thy Son to be teachers of the faith, and by means of them the Apostles filled the world with additional preachers. Wherefore, we beseech Thee, O Lord, bestow the same help on our weakness; and the weaker we are, the more we need of these helpers.

Bestow, we beseech Thee, almighty Father, on these Thy servants the dignity of the priesthood; renew in their hearts the spirit of holiness, so that they may keep the office of second rank they have received from Thee, O God, and gently reproach the conduct of others by the example of their holy life. May they be prudent fellow-workers of our Order; and may the beauty of perfect justice so shine out in them, that after giving a good account of the stewardship entrusted to them, they may attain the rewards of eternal blessedness. Through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. R. Amen.

The first paragraph of this prayer is not precisely a prayer for the ordinands; it is a prayer for the strengthening of the

ecclesiastical hierarchy. In this it closely resembles the prayer of ordination given in the *Apostolic Constitutions* (a liturgical collection based on Hippolytus and compiled about A.D. 370), which has much the same train of thought, though more clearly expressed: O God, whose providence guides the development of all things, increase Thy Church. Therefore, increase the number of its rulers for the building up of Thy people. Therefore, look upon this newly-elected presbyter and fill him with grace, so that he can rule Thy people, etc. Here, for comparison, is a translation of the prayer in the *Apostolic Constitutions*:

O Lord almighty, our God, who didst create all things through Christ and through Him dost make provision for all things according to their different natures (for He that has power to make differences of degree has also power to provide in the highest degree), through Him, O God, Thou dost make provision for immortal natures by conservation alone, and for mortal natures by succession, providing for their souls by meditation of the law, and for their bodies by supplying of their wants. Look, therefore, upon Thy holy Church and give it increase; grant it an abundance of rulers, and give them strength to labour by word and deed for the building up of Thy people.

Look now also upon this Thy servant, who has been promoted to the presbyterate by the vote and verdict of all the clergy; fill him with the spirit of grace and counsel, so that he may guide and govern Thy people with a pure heart—as Thou didst look upon Thy Chosen People and enjoin upon Moses to choose out elders, whom Thou didst fill with the Spirit.

And now, O Lord, give and for ever preserve in him the spirit of Thy grace, so that filled with powers of healing and words of instruction, he may teach Thy people in meekness of heart, and serve Thee sincerely with a pure mind and a willing soul, and blamelessly fulfil his sacred offices for Thy people. Through Christ our Lord.¹

In the text of the Roman Prayer of Consecration several points of detail call for comment. Readers who do not know Latin are advised to pass on at once to the next section.

¹ *Const. Apost.*, VIII, 17 (ed. Funk, I, pp. 522-4).

honorum auctor et distributor omnium gratiarum. (a) The insertion of *omnium* with the second noun but not with the first upsets the balance of this chiasmic phrase. Both the Leonine and Gelasian Sacramentaries are without this flaw; they read: *honorum omnium et omnium dignitatum quae tibi militant distributor.* The solitary *omnium* in our text is a relic of this more ancient reading, which means: "distributor of all offices and dignities in Your service." Our reading appears first in the Gregorian Sacramentary. (b) The noun *auctor*, though derived from the verb *augere*, commonly means also "originator".

per quem proficiunt universa, per quem cuncta firmantur. Another deliberate chiasmus, since from the point of view of rhythm *universa proficiunt* (- 0 2 0 1 - 3 0 -) is quite as good as *proficiunt universa* (- 3 0 - 1 - 0 2 0).¹

amplificatis semper in melius naturae rationalis incrementis. The emphatic words here are *melius* and *rationalis*: whereas growth in irrational creatures takes the form of enlargement in size (*in maius*), growth in rational creatures takes the form of improvement (*in melius*) through an orderly progression of stages.

Unde. In accordance with the principle enunciated above, viz., that all things grow and advance by the power and providence of God. A particular case of this law is that the orders of the priesthood and the offices of the Levites have grown under God's providence. Hence *unde* = "by whose providence".

ut cum Pontifices summos. The specific principle is then explained, still in general terms which are applicable alike to the priesthood of the Old and of the New Testament. God first appointed High Priests to rule His peoples (i.e., the old and the new Israel), and then added to them men of inferior rank and dignity. This generalization is then illustrated by examples: Moses, Aaron, and the Apostles.

Pontifices summos. This title has an Old Testament ring about it, but was sometimes used for bishops; e.g. a False Decretal attributed to Pope Melchiades says that the sacrament of Confirmation

¹ On St. Leo's prose-rhythm see T. Steeger, *Die Klauseltechnik Leos des Grossen in seinem Sermonen*, Hassfurt a. M., 1908. Leo takes account of quantity as well as of stress, and adheres quite closely to Cicero's usage, on which see A. G. Clark, *Fontes Prosaе Numerosae*, Oxford, 1909.

unum esse quod a maioribus fit, id est a summis pontificibus, quod a minoribus perfici non potest. is one that is conferred by the greater, that is the Chief Priests, and cannot be conferred by the lesser ones.¹

It would, therefore, be incorrect to suppose that *Pontifices summi* are Popes, or that they are the High Priests of the Old Law. The sentence in which the phrase occurs is about the chief priest of both dispensations.

per septuaginta viros. This could mean that the Lord propagated the spirit of Moses *through* the seventy *into* the people at large. But the narrative in the Book of Numbers and the parallel examples in this prayer show that such is not the meaning intended. *Per* has the force of *in* here, and is probably preferred for stylistic reasons: another *in* immediately after *in eremo* would be awkward, and would produce an unpleasant hiatus *eremo-in*.

usus, in populo. Better sense and a better clausula would be obtained by placing the comma *after* the phrase *in populo*, viz., "using the seventy as his helpers among the people, he governed countless multitudes with ease."

secundis praedicationibus impleverunt. The word *praedicationibus* is almost certainly a corruption of *praedicatoribus*, which is the reading of the Leonine, Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries, and gives much better sense, i.e., "with whom as second preachers [preachers of second rank] they [*illi*, the Apostles] filled the whole world." If *praedicationibus* were correct we should expect *per quos* in place of *quibus*. Reading *praedicatoribus*, we can take the ablative closely with *impleverunt*: "with whom they filled the world."

tanto his pluribus indigemus. Not "so much the greater is our need of them", but "for this reason we need greater numbers of them". This is not the same as saying: "The more we have of them the better." At the time of the Reformation, far too many were ordained to the priesthood. St. Robert Bellarmine, in criticizing this abuse, points out how few were the priests ordained by the early Popes—the *Liber Pontificalis* gives details of the number who

¹ P. Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, Leipzig, 1863, p. 245.

were ordained by each Pope, and the figures are surprisingly small.¹

secundi meriti munus. This phrase is a little difficult to translate. In place of *meriti* some manuscript Pontificals read *ministerii*, which gives a simpler text. *Ministerium* can mean a rank or order in God's service, as in the phrase *ut . . . ministerium sufficeret sacerdotum* earlier in this Preface, where the Leonine Sacramentary has the improbable variant *sufficeret meritum sacerdotum*. Moreover, in the prayer *Deus Sanctificationum* (see p. 107) *ministerium* occurs again in the same sense in the phrase *immaculatum ministerii sui donum custodiant*, where *ministerii* is clearly a defining genitive ("the gift of their ministry" = the gift which is their ministry). Such it would also be if read here. However, the reading *meriti*, though more difficult, is probably not corrupt. In the Codex Theodosianus, 8, 5, 2 (A.D. 438) occurs the phrase *aedificia maioris meriti* (buildings of greater worth or importance); and Palladius Rutilius Taurus (about A.D. 350) provides a close parallel in the sentence: "Primi saporis mella thymi sucus effundit, secundi meriti thymbra, tertii meriti rosmarinus" (I, 37, 3).

cooperatores Ordinis nostri. Here the Church gives us a definition of the place of the priesthood in the structure of the ecclesiastical body: priests are "co-operators of our order", i.e., of the episcopal order. The ordinands are not ordained to be assistants of any particular bishop, but of the episcopal order. They must always be dependent on some bishop or they are meaningless. Exempt religious priests are immediately dependent both on the Pope and on any bishop who gives them faculties in his diocese. Pope Pius XII has recently re-emphasized this point; he says: "It is undoubtedly required by divine law that a priest, whether secular or religious, must perform his duties as the assistant of a bishop and in subordination to a bishop. This is the custom and practice of the Church; and the prescriptions of the Code of Canon Law concerning religious who are parish priests and local ordinaries, declare the same in terms that are by no means obscure. Moreover, it is not of rare occurrence that in missionary territories the whole clergy of a place, not excepting the bishop, belongs to the

¹ Bellarmine, *Opera Oratoria Postuma*, ed. Tromp, Rome, 1947, III, pp. 304-6. A. Harnack, "Über die Ordinationes im Papstbuch" in *Sitzungsberichte der kgl. Preuss. Akad.*, Berlin, 1897, pp. 761-78, collects statistics. Cf. Conc. Trid., Sess. XXIII, c. 16, ed. Goerres, IX, p. 627.

Church's regular militia. And nobody should think that this situation is entirely extraordinary and irregular, or that it is only a temporary arrangement, and that the sacred ministry should be handed over to the secular clergy as soon as possible."¹

Since the verb *operari* can mean "to offer sacrifice", the phrase *cooperatores Ordinis nostri* may contain an allusion to the priests' power to say Mass; or it may originally have referred to their ceremonial concelebration with the bishop. But more probably *cooperatores* should be taken in the simple sense of "cooperators" or "helpers" or "fellow-workers", because the prayer is that they may be *providi cooperatores*—"prudent fellow-labourers" rather than "prudent concelebrators", since there is not much scope for the exercise of prudence in the concelebration of Mass.

totius forma iustitiae. *Forma* can mean either the Platonic "form" or "idea" of justice, or more simply "the beauty of justice". "Justice" is here to be understood in the Biblical sense of complete righteousness, the fulfilment of all duties both to God and to man. In this sense St. Joseph is called a "just man" (Matt. i. 19).

THE INVESTITURE OF THE NEW PRIESTS

After finishing the Prayer of Consecration, the bishop sits down on the faldstool and the ordinands, who are now priests (and will hereinafter be referred to as "the new priests") kneel before him one by one. Hitherto they have been wearing the stole deaconwise from the left shoulder across their breast to join at the right side. With the aid of one of his assistants the bishop now brings the stole over the new priest's right shoulder and crosses it over the breast, saying:

Accipe jugum Domini; jugum	Take thou the yoke of the Lord,
enim ejus suave est, et onus ejus	for His yoke is sweet, and His
leve.	burden light.

He then vests the new priest with the chasuble, leaving it folded at the back, but hanging down at the front, saying:

¹ From the Address of His Holiness to the Convention of Religious on 8 Dec. 1950, *AAS*, 1951, XLIII, p. 28. The canons referred to are 626-31 and 454-5.

Accipe vestem sacerdotalem, per quam charitas intelligitur; potens est enim Deus, ut augeat tibi charitatem, et opus perfectum.

Take thou the garment of the priesthood, which signifies charity; for God is able to advance you in charity and in perfection.

The vesting of the newly-ordained priests in the vestments proper to their rank is almost as old as the practice of having special liturgical vestments for each of the sacred Orders. The first traces of the chasuble as an ecclesiastical vestment are found in the first half of the sixth century, but it was not at first distinctive of the priesthood.¹ The eighth *Ordo Romanus* distinctly prescribes that acolytes should receive the *planeta* (the old name for the chasuble) at their ordination, and Amalarius declares that the chasuble belongs to all clerics.² Yet almost all ancient writers who refer to the ecclesiastical use of the chasuble regard it as the distinctive dress of the priests.

The idea that each Order of the hierarchy should have its own dress may have been suggested by the Roman civil custom of assigning a special dress to the senatorial and equestrian orders and to the consuls.³

The investiture of new priests in the garments of their rank is mentioned in the eighth *Ordo Romanus*⁴ and in the Ordinal of St. Amand⁵ (about A.D. 800); since, however, it was to be performed not by the bishop but by the archdeacon, and without any accompanying prayer, it would seem that in the churches where these *Ordines* were in use, the vesting was not regarded as being strictly a part of the rite of ordination. In Spain it had become a formal part of the rite at a much earlier date. The fourth Council of Toledo (A.D. 633) laid down the following canon:

Episcopus, presbyter, aut diaconus, si a gradu suo iniuste deiectus in secunda synodo innocens reperiatur, non potest esse quod fuerat, nisi gradus amissos recipiat coram altario de manu episcopi,

If a bishop, priest, or deacon, who has been unjustly deposed from his grade, is found innocent at a second synod, he cannot be what he was before, unless he receives the grade he has lost from the hand

¹ Andrieu, *Ordines*, II, p. 322. Cf. J. Braun, *Die Liturgische Gewandung*, Freiburg im. Br., 1907, p. 172.

² *Lib. Off.*, II, 19, 2 (ed. Hanssens, II, p. 242).

³ Cf. Herwegen, p. 335.

⁴ *Ordo VIII*, 4; cf. De Puniet, I, p. 236.

⁵ Printed in Duchesne, *Origines*, p. 477.

(si episcopus fuit) orarium, annulum et baculum; si presbyter, orarium et planetam; si diaconus, orarium et albam; si subdiaconus, patenam et calicem; sic et reliqui gradus ea in reparationem sui recipiant quae cum ordinarentur perceperunt.

of the bishop and before the altar: if he was a bishop, let him receive back the stole, ring and crozier; if a priest, the stole and chasuble; if a deacon, the stole and alb; if a subdeacon, the paten and chalice; thus too the other orders receive back, when reinstated, the things received when ordained.¹

From this it can be safely inferred that already in 633 the vesting had become part of the ceremony of ordination in Spain—nearly a century and a half before it appears as such in any extant Sacramentary or Pontifical.²

The reason why the vesting was made into a part of the rite is probably twofold: in the description of the ordination of Aaron and his sons in the Book of Leviticus, Moses gives the priestly vestments as part of the ceremonial;³ and in Christian times, as the liturgical vestments acquired mystical and symbolical meanings, the act of putting on a vestment became a religious rite.

In some of the earliest Pontificals that mention the new practice, the bishop says nothing while actually altering the stole and giving the chasuble, but recites a prayer as soon as he has finished:

Per haec indumenta stolam et casulam salutis indui merearis, et aeternae perpetuitatis plenitudinem cum sanctis sacerdotibus, Christo ministrante, capescere valeas.

By these vestments mayest thou deserve to be clad with the stole and chasuble of salvation, and mayest thou be able, with Christ's help, to receive the fulness of eternal life with His holy priests.⁴

Neither the symbolism nor the language is particularly clear. The modern formulae *Accipe iugum* and *Accipe vestem* appear about the same time, e.g., in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical.⁵

The great liturgist Morinus remarks of these formulae that

¹ Canon 28, Mansi, 10, 627.

² Herwegen, pp. 335-6, claims that the custom of conferring an office by the delivery of the insignia and instruments that belong to it is of German origin, but he furnishes no clear evidence. His work is not unaffected by national prejudices.

³ Lev. viii. 7 and 13. Cf. Hallier, III, p. 349.

⁴ From a tenth-century Corbie manuscript (Morinus, II, p. 243).

⁵ Morinus, II, p. 262, and De Puniet, I, p. 292.

the imperative *Accipe* ("Take!") is used in preference to any such words as *Trado tibi* ("I deliver to you") in order to signify that the handing over of these vestments is an act of power and authority, and that the recipient is taking to himself the powers and duties that go with the vestments.¹

THE STOLE

The vestment now called the stole was until the ninth century known as the *orarium* (originally a handkerchief or scarf for wiping the face—*os, oris*). The Council of Laodicea (A.D. 364) forbade clerics in minor Orders to wear it.² A sermon attributed to St. John Chrysostom of about the same date talks of the deacons as having strips of thin linen on their left shoulders.³ In the Latin Church the *orarium* first appears as a sacred vestment in Spain: the Council of Braga in 563 speaks of the *orarium* as worn by deacons;⁴ the canon of the fourth Council of Toledo quoted above recognized the *orarium* as a vestment of bishops, priests and deacons; another Council of Braga in 675 mentions the present custom according to which priests wear the stole crossed over the breast.⁵ By these decrees the stole and the manner of wearing it became distinctive marks of deacons and priests:

A Council of Mainz in 813 decreed that priests should wear the stole always:

Presbyteri sine intermissione utantur orario propter differentiam sacerdotii dignitatis.	Priests must use the stole without intermission, to distinguish their sacerdotal dignity. ⁶
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This was taken so literally by some that they wore it even at night: we read of St. Odo, Abbot of Cluny, that during the

¹ Morinus, III, p. 119.

² Canons 22-3; J. Harduin, *Acta Conciliorum*, Paris, 1715, I, p. 786.

³ *De Filio Prodigio*, PG 59, 520.

⁴ Canon 9, Mansi, 9, 778: "Item placuit ut quia in aliquantis huius provinciae ecclesiis diacones absconsis infra tunicam utuntur orariis, ita ut nihil differre a subdiacono videantur, de cetero superposito scapulae (sicut decet) utantur orario"—which shows that the deacon's stole was intended to be a mark distinctive of his rank. Cf. Plate 1.

⁵ Canon 4, Mansi, 11, 157, quoted *infra*, p. 112.

⁶ Canon 28, Mansi, 14, 72.

night after his ordination he woke up, and feeling the stole about his neck, began to weep.¹

The symbolism of the stole as worn by the priests, i.e., hanging down in front at both sides, is interpreted in the bishop's formula in a simple and pleasing way: the band of cloth pressing gently on the priest's neck and shoulders represents the sweet yoke of Christ. John of Salisbury writes of St. Thomas of Canterbury that he "wore the stole, the sweet yoke of Christ, about his neck both by day and by night."² However, the earliest extant explanation of the symbolism of the stole is that given by the above-mentioned fourth Council of Braga:

Cum antiqua ecclesiastica noverimus institutione praefixum, ut omnis sacerdos cum ordinatur, orario utroque humero ambiatur, scilicet ut qui imperturbatus praecipitur consistere inter prospera et adversa, virtutum semper ornamento utrobique circumsaepus appareat: qua ratione tempore sacrificii non assumat, quod se in sacramento accepisse non dubitatur? Proinde modis omnibus convenit, ut quod quisque percepit in consecratione, hoc et retinet in oblatione vel perceptione suae salutis; scilicet ut cum sacerdos ad solemnia missarum accedit, aut pro se Deo sacrificium oblaturus, aut sacramentum corporis et sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi sumpturus, non aliter accedat, quam orario utroque humero circumsaepus, sicut et tempore ordinationis suae dignoscitur consecratus: ita ut de uno eodemque orario cervicem pariter et utrumque humerum premens, signum in suo pectore praeferat crucis. Si quis autem aliter egerit, excom-

Since we know that it is established by ancient ecclesiastical usage that every priest at his ordination has a stole placed about both his shoulders (namely, because being bidden to stand unperturbed amid prosperity and adversity alike, he must always be seen as fortified by the ornament of virtue on this side and on that), why should he not wear at the time of sacrifice that which he received in the sacred rite? So it is in every way fitting that each one should retain at the offering or receiving of his salvation that which he received at his consecration; that is to say, whenever a priest approaches the sacred mysteries, whether himself to offer sacrifice to God or to receive the sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, he should always approach with the stole about both his shoulders, just as when he was consecrated at his ordination; and he should wear it in such a way that he presses his neck and both shoulders with the one stole and

¹ Cf. Martène, *ibid.*

² Cf. Martène, *ibid.*, and Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma Animae*, c. 181 (*PL* 172, 599): "Iugum Domini suave eis imponit dum collum illorum cingit, quatenus sic legi Dei obediunt, ut alios regere queant."



Quoniam sanctatur manus istae quoniam per hanc unguentum et infusam benedictionem
 qua quis cumque benedixerit benedicta erit. Et quis cumque scilicet cauebitur
 scilicet benedictur. ^{dicti qui} per hunc exemplum data est quod non admittat. **D**e quibus presbiter.
 Post consecrationem manus ^{accipit ep. saltem et circumspicit in illa luce.} **A**ctus presbiter dicitur factus de
 sequitur **l**ex apostoli de hereticis et euariis. **O**mnes enim qui se uolunt sanctificare
 et puri qui sunt spiritus sancti amine dicitur. ^{et respiciunt ad omnes.}

The Anointing: Pontifical of Bishop Landolf of Benevento, 10th Century

municatione debite subiacebit.

carries the sign of the cross upon his breast. If anyone does otherwise, he will be subject to excommunication, as he deserves.¹

This explanation—that the stole is a symbolic defence against both prosperity on the right and adversity on the left—was accepted and copied out by liturgical writers century after century—by Yves of Chartres, Hugh of St. Victor, Peter Lombard, and Durandus²—although the formula *Accipe jugum* had long been in use.

The rubrics given in Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries do not say that the stole is to be crossed over the breast; they merely say:

Hic flectat orarium super humerum dextrum dicens ad eum: <i>Accipe jugum . . .</i>	Here he brings the stole over the right shoulder, saying to him: <i>Receive thou the yoke . . .</i> ³
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This explains why the above-mentioned liturgical writers, in their accounts of the ordination ceremonies, say nothing about the crossing of the stole, although they are all ultimately dependent on the Council of Braga quoted above. Durandus says in his *Rationale* that in his day it was not the universal practice for priests to cross their stoles for saying Mass;⁴ but in his Pontifical he inserted the rubric:

Et paratur cuilibet stola ante pectus in modum crucis prout mos est fieri.	And each one's stole is so arranged as to form a cross over his breast, in the customary way. ⁵
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The Spanish custom of crossing the stole over the breast has been variously explained. Those who prefer practical explanations see in it a simple device for covering up part of the alb which would otherwise be showing round the priest's neck above the top of the chasuble, i.e., its purpose is the same as that of the ornaments on apparelled amices and albs.⁶ But

¹ Conc. Bracarense IV, A.D. 675, cn. 4 (Mansi, II, 156-7).

² Yvo Carnut., *Sermo II*, (PL 162, 519); Hugo Vict., *De Sac.*, II, 12, 12 (PL 176, 429); P. Lomb., *IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 1; Durandus, *Rationale*, II, 10, 11, p. 40.

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 136; II, p. 345.

⁴ *Rationale*, III, 5, 3, p. 45^v.

⁵ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 368.

⁶ Cf. C. de Vert, op. cit., p. 327.

the Fathers of the Council of Braga say nothing of any such considerations, and attribute the custom to the desire that the priest should wear the cross upon his breast while saying Mass. A bishop, who wears a pectoral cross at Mass, does not cross his stole, but has it hanging straight down on each side.

But how did the idea arise that it would be fitting to wear a cross upon the breast at Mass? A clue is given us in another canon of the fourth Council of Toledo:

Orariis duobus nec episcopo
quidem licet nec presbytero uti,
quanto magis diacono, qui minister
eorum est . . . Caveat igitur amodo
Levita gemino uti orario, sed uno
tantum et puro, nec ullis coloribus,
aut auro ornato.

Neither bishops nor priests may
wear two stoles, still less deacons . . .
Let the Levites now refrain from
wearing two stoles; they must use
only one, and that uncoloured and
not adorned with gold.¹

It seems that priests and bishops, to distinguish themselves from deacons, had taken to wearing two stoles, one on the left shoulder joined deaconwise at the right side, and the other on the right shoulder joined at the left, thus forming a cross on their breast and another behind their back. To justify this addition to their insignia, they may have pointed out the suitability of wearing a cross upon one's breast when celebrating. The crossing of the single stole may be a relic of the double stole condemned at Toledo.

THE FOLDED CHASUBLE

From the twenty-eighth canon of the fourth Council of Toledo, quoted above,² it is clear that the giving of the chasuble was already in the early seventh century a part of the rite of ordination, at least in Spain. The chasuble was not, however, at that time folded, and we have no indication what form of words the bishop used.

In a ninth-century manuscript of St. Germain des Prés, after the brief and ungrammatical rubric *Hic vestis et casulam* and before the anointing of hands occurs the blessing which is now given at the end of the Mass:

¹ Canon 40 (Mansi, 10, 630).

² *Supra*, p. 109-10.

Benedictio Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti descendat super te, ut sis benedictus in ordine sacerdotali, et offeras placabiles hostias pro peccatis et offensionibus populi omnipotenti Deo. Cui sit honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum.

May the blessing of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost descend upon you, so that you may be blessed in the priestly Order and offer propitiatory sacrifices for the sins and offences of the people to almighty God. To whom be honour and glory for ever and ever.¹

If this blessing is to be closely connected with the vesting that precedes it, it would seem that the author of the blessing regarded the giving of the chasuble simply as the expression of the new priest's incorporation "in the priestly order".

An English manuscript of about A.D. 900 gives a slightly longer form of the same blessing, which has additional interest because it attributes a mystical meaning to the chasuble:

Benedictio Dei Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti descendat super te, et hac sacerdotali veste indutus, protectus et munitus esse valeas ab omnibus impugnationibus malignorum spirituum; et sis benedictus et offeras hostias placabiles pro peccatis atque offensionibus populi omnipotenti Deo, cui est honor et gloria.

May the blessing of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost descend upon you, and, clad in this priestly garment, may you be protected and defended from all attacks of evil spirits; and may you be blessed and offer propitiatory sacrifices for the sins and offences of the people to almighty God, to whom is honour and glory.²

This interpretation of the chasuble is closely akin to that of the stole given by the Council of Braga:³ the chasuble, like the stole, is regarded as a part of the armour of the priest, who is a warrior of God. Another example of the same allegorical type of interpretation is to be found in the prayer which a priest says when putting on the amice:

Impone, Domine, capiti meo galeam salutis ad impugnandos diabolicos incursus.

Place, O Lord, upon my head the helmet of salvation, to withstand the assaults of the devil.

¹ Morinus, II, p. 222. It is also given as a variant in the "Pontifical of Egbert", Surtees Society, vol. 27, p. 23, on which see Ellard, p. 80.

² Morinus, II, p. 233.

³ Cf. *supra*, p. 112.

This allegorical explanation gave place to a moral interpretation which remains to the present day.¹ In a Victorine Pontifical of about A.D. 1200 appears a formula almost identical with the one that is still in use:

<p>Accipe vestem sacerdotalem, per quam caritas intelligitur; potens est enim Deus, ut augeat tibi caritatem.</p>	<p>Take thou the garment of the priesthood, which signifies charity; for God is able to advance you in charity.²</p>
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The formula now in use (see above, p. 109), has the phrase *et opus perfectum* added at the end. Its meaning is not too clear. If *opus perfectum* means "perfection" here (cf. Jas. i. 4), we should expect *ad opus perfectum* (God is able to advance your charity to perfection). Perhaps the addition was first made when the giving—or unfolding³—of the chasuble marked the end of the rite; in which case *et opus perfectum* could mean: "and now our task [of ordaining you] is complete."

Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1142) explained why the chasuble signifies charity in the following obscure sentence:

<p>Casula caritatem exprimit, quae loco prudentiae ponitur, quia plenitudo legis est dilectio.</p>	<p>The chasuble expresses charity, which is put in place of prudence, because the fulfilment of the law is love.⁴</p>
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The idea seems to be that as the priest's body is clothed with vestments (*habitus*), so his soul is clothed with virtues (*habitus operativi boni*); and as charity is the perfection and consummation of all other virtues for a Christian, superseding the prudence

¹ J. Braun, S.J., author of the classic work *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient*, Freiburg im Br., 1907, distinguishes three types of explanation: moral, allegorical, and typico-dogmatic. This last type sees the sacred vestments as memorials of Christ's Passion; thus, for example, the chasuble is a symbol of the purple robe in which our Lord was clothed and mocked by Pilate's soldiers.

² Morinus, II, p. 274.

³ In a Toulouse Pontifical of about 1300 (Morinus, II, p. 281) the form ". . . ut augeat tibi caritatem et opus perfectum" accompanies the unfolding of the chasuble after the Communion; the unfolding is a sign that "the work is now complete".

⁴ Quoted by Catalanus, I, 134; cf. Hugh, *De Sacramentis*, II, 4, 11 (PL 176, 437). St. Thomas, *In IV Sent.*, d. XXV, q. 2, says: "[Sacerdos] habet etiam casulam quae significat caritatem, quia sacramentum consecrat caritatis, scilicet Eucharistiam."

of the natural man, so the chasuble is the completion of the priestly vestments, covering up all other clothes and vestments beneath. Durandus says much the same: the chasuble signifies charity,

sine qua sacerdos est sicut aes sonans aut cymbalum tinniens. Sicut enim charitas operit multitudinem peccatorum, et omnia legis et prophetarum mandata continet, dicente Apostolo *plenitudo legis est charitas*, sic et haec vestis cuncta planat et alia omnia indumenta intra se claudit et continet.

without which a priest is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. For just as charity covers a multitude of sins, and contains within itself the Law and the prophets (for the Apostle says the fulfilment of the Law is charity), so also this vestment encircles all and encloses and contains within itself all other garments.¹

This last sentence is a reminder that the chasuble was originally, and remained for many centuries, a much more ample garment than it usually is today. It was developed from the *paenula*, a calf-length cloak, sometimes buttoned at the front, and sometimes sewn up²—rather in the fashion of a modern cycling cape. Because it presented a certain resemblance to a portable tent or house, this all-enveloping cloak came to be called a *casula* or “little house”. If the wearer wished to free his hands, he had to gather up the sides into folds on his forearms. When the garment had become an ecclesiastical vestment, for a long time it retained its primitive amplitude—as can be seen, for example, from Plate 3—but from the twelfth century onwards, in order to enable the sacred ministers to use their hands and arms freely, the sides were steadily cut away more and more, until what is now known as the “Roman” chasuble was reached, a vestment that bears little resemblance to a real *casula*.

The first indication that the chasuble should be folded at ordinations is given in Roman Pontificals of the thirteenth century. After the rite of ordination they add a special rubric for cardinal priests (i.e., priests ordained to take charge of the titular churches in Rome):

¹ *Rationale*, III, 7, 1, p. 46v. In the translation *planat* is taken as equivalent to the Greek *πλανᾶται* (“it wanders”)—cf. Durandus, *ibid.*

² For illustrations see H. Norris, *Church Vestments*, London, 1949, figs. 71 and 78.

Si cardinalis fuerit qui presbiter ordinatur, iam ordinatus induit omnia pontificalia cum planeta plicata super scapulas.

If a cardinal has been ordained to the priesthood, after ordination he puts on all the pontifical insignia with the chasuble folded on his shoulders.¹

It has been suggested that the original reason for the folding was to leave the priest's hands free and keep the copious vestment out of his way during the anointing of his hands and the touching of the chalice.² But that cannot be correct, since there is no evidence that the folds were ever at the front or at the sides, and folds at the back do not serve the practical purpose suggested. Moreover, in the above rubric the cardinal priests put on the folded chasuble after the anointing and tradition of instruments.

The custom of wearing the chasuble folded arose at a time when ministers in minor Orders were allowed to wear it at sacred functions: they wore it folded up, to distinguish them from priests, and to show that they had not themselves been raised to the priesthood. Folded chasubles are still worn by deacons during Holy Week; and the first of the *Ordines Romani* significantly says that if a priest performs the functions of one of these deacons he does not wear his chasuble folded.³ The folded chasuble was, therefore, originally a sign that its wearer was not a priest.⁴

Similarly, the folding of the cardinal priest's chasuble in the thirteenth-century Pontificals was a sign that he was not a complete bishop. It is easy to see why the folding of the chasuble was extended to priests who were not cardinals: if they had worn unfolded chasubles while the cardinal priests wore theirs folded, it would have seemed that the cardinals were of lower rank. Therefore the chasubles of all were folded.⁵

In the Pontifical of Durandus the rubric for the vesting of all priests is as follows:

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, II, p. 349. Cf. Martène, II, p. 85, whose text adds "iuxta morem Romanæ Ecclesiæ". According to Andrieu, this phrase belongs to the following sentence.

² Cf. Eisenhofer, *Handbuch der Liturgie*, II, p. 381.

³ Ordo I, 51 (*PL* 78, 960).

⁴ Cf. Braun, *Die liturgische Gewandung*, p. 169.

⁵ Cf. *infra*, p. 161.

Postea imponit cuilibet successive casulam usque ad scapulas, quam quilibet teneat super humeros complicatam, a parte anteriori deorsum dependentem, dicens cuilibet, *Accipe*, etc.

Afterwards he vests each in turn with the chasuble as far as the shoulder-blades; each is to keep it folded on his shoulders hanging downwards at the front.¹

Plate 2 shows what Durandus had in mind: the back of a wide chasuble was to be folded up into a roll, and this roll was to be placed over the new priest's shoulders with the ends hanging down at the front.

The folding of the chasuble gave rise to mystical interpretations, which in turn gave rise to further developments of the rite and of the theology of the sacrament. Unfortunately, Durandus does not explain the folding in his *Rationale* (which he composed before his Pontifical). However, his chapter in the *Rationale* on the significance of the chasuble contains a valuable hint:

Quod vero casula in extensione manuum in anteriorem et posteriorem partem dividitur, signat duo brachia charitatis, ad Deum scilicet et ad proximum.

When the hands are stretched out the chasuble is divided into two parts, the front and the back, which signify the two arms of charity—charity towards God and charity towards one's neighbour.²

The chasuble certainly signifies charity in the rite of ordination, since the bishop says so. Hence the giving of the front half of the chasuble evidently signifies the giving of that part of the priestly office which looks directly towards God, and the giving of the back part later in the ceremony signifies the giving of the remaining part of the priestly office, which is directly concerned with men. The present stage of the ceremony (from the vesting to the tradition of instruments) is wholly concerned with the power of offering sacrifice to God; hence only the front half of the chasuble is given here. At a later stage, when the priest is commissioned to preach to the people and to forgive their sins, the back of the chasuble is let down to signify that he now has the powers of the priesthood that are directly concerned with his fellow men.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 368.

² *Rationale*, III, 7, 2, p. 46v.

This arrangement of the rite probably gave rise to the theory of Scotus that the priesthood consists of two distinct sets of powers—power over the physical Body of Christ (i.e., power to say Mass), and power over the Mystical Body of Christ (i.e., power to absolve)—and that the former of these powers is conferred at the delivery of instruments and the latter after the Communion at the second imposition of hands.¹ According to this theory (which since 1947 is no longer tenable²), at the offertory the ordained is only half a priest, because he has only half of the powers of the priesthood, and accordingly he receives only half of the priestly vestment; he receives the right to wear the other half of it by receiving the remaining powers after the Communion.

Scotus's theory is most probably an *a posteriori* explanation of the rite as he knew it. Hence it would be altogether wrong to conclude that the present arrangement of the rite in two parts, one before the Mass proper and the other after it, is based on a theological mistake; rather, the theological mistake is based on the present arrangement of the rite. As was suggested above, this arrangement probably arose from a desire to make the ordination of a priest re-enact the stages of the ordination of the Apostles.

THE PRAYER OF CONSUMMATION

The prayer that follows the vesting is called in many Pontificals the *Consummatio*, that is, the prayer for finishing off.

In the Gelasian Sacramentary, where it first appears, as also in the Romano-Germanic and many other early Pontificals, it is preceded by an invitatory:

Sit nobis, fratres, communis oratio, ut his qui in adiutorium et utilitatem vestrae salutis eliguntur, presbyteratus benedictionem divini indulgentia muneris consequatur, ut Sancti Spiritus gratia sacer-

Brethren, let us offer a common prayer for these who are being set aside for our assistance and for your salvation, that an abundance of God's gift may follow their ordination to the priesthood, so

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 45.

² i.e. of ordinations performed since 1947; it is tenable of ordinations performed between the thirteenth century and 1947.

dotalia dona privilegio virtutum, that by the grace of the Holy
 ne impares loco deprehendantur, Ghost they may preserve by their
 obtineant. eminent virtues the gifts of the
 priesthood, lest they be found
 unworthy of their office.

There are many variant readings; those adopted here have been chosen (*a*) to give sense, and (*b*) to give sense that is appropriate at this point of the ceremony. The congregation is being invited to pray for the newly-ordained that the divine liberality will follow up "the blessing of the priesthood" (i.e., their ordination) with further graces, so that they will preserve the gift they have just received. It is assumed that they are already priests; the petition now to be made is that they will live worthily of the honour they have received.

When the following prayer *Deus sanctificationum* is read in the light of this invitatory, it no longer appears as a redundant addition to the rite. In the Prayer of Consecration the bishop prayed alone that God would make these men worthy helpers of the episcopal order. Now he invites the people to join with him in a common prayer (*communis oratio*, which the Prayer of Consecration was not) for these priests who are chosen to be helpers in the work of their salvation.

The invitatory *Sit nobis fratres* is the only part of the old Gelasian rite that has failed to survive.¹ Its exclusion is to be regretted, because without it there is great difficulty in seeing the relationship of the prayer *Deus Sanctificationum* to the Preface of Consecration. The explanation of its omission is probably to be found in the corrupt readings introduced by copyists. For example, the Gelasian Sacramentary itself has the following text:

Sit nobis, fratres, communis oratio, ut *hi* qui in adiutorium et utilitatem vestrae salutis eliguntur, presbyteratus benedictionem divini indulgentia muneris consequantur, ut . . . obtineant.

Brethren, let us offer a common prayer that these who are being set aside for our help and for the sake of your salvation may attain the blessing of the priesthood . . .²

¹ Unless the *infra actionem* prayer (see p. 151) is to be considered as part of the rite of ordination.

² Ed. Wilson, p. 24.

This makes sense, but sense that is quite intolerable at this point of the ceremony: it implies that the candidates have not yet received "the blessing of the priesthood", i.e., are not yet ordained; and if *obtaineant* was taken (wrongly) to mean "obtain", the last clause too would carry the same implication.

The common prayer which the invitatory was designed to introduce has the following form in the Roman Pontifical of today:

Deus sanctificationum omnium auctor, cujus vera consecratio, plenaque benedictio est, tu, Domine, super hos famulos tuos, quos ad Presbyterii honorem dedicamus, munus tuae benedictionis infunde; ut gravitate actuum et censura vivendi probent se seniores, his instituti disciplinis, quas Tito et Timotheo Paulus exposuit; ut in lege tua die ac nocte meditantes, quod legerint, credant; quod crediderint, doceant; quod docuerint, imitentur; justitiam, constantiam, misericordiam, fortitudinem, ceterasque virtutes in se ostendant; exemplo praebeant; admonitione confirmet; ac purum et immaculatum ministerii sui donum custodiant; et in obsequium plebis tuae, panem et vinum in corpus et sanguinem Filii tui immaculata benedictione transformet; et inviolabili caritate in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi, in die justi et aeterni judicii Dei, conscientia pura, fide vera, Spiritu Sancto pleni resurgant. Per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate ejusdem Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia saecula saeculorum. *R.* Amen.

O God, the source of all sanctity, whose consecration is ever effective, whose blessing is ever fulfilled, do Thou, O Lord, pour down upon these Thy servants, whom we are dedicating to the priesthood, the gift of Thy blessing, that by the gravity of their conduct and the example of their lives they may prove themselves elders, following the rules that Paul explained to Titus and Timothy: meditating day and night upon Thy law, may they believe what they have read, and teach what they have believed, and live up to what they have taught; may they show in themselves justice, constancy, mercy, courage and all the other virtues; may they give good example, and confirm it by their admonitions, and keep the gift of their ministry pure and unspotted. And for the service of Thy people, may they transform bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Thy Son with a spotless blessing; and with unflinching charity may they rise again on the day of justice and of God's eternal judgment "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ" with a pure conscience, with the true faith, and full of the Holy Ghost. Through the same Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God world without end. *R.* Amen.

The latter part of this prayer has undergone considerable alterations in the passage of time. In the Gelasian Sacramentary the text is as follows:

Et per obsequium plebis tuae corpus et sanguinem Filii tui immaculata benedictione transforment, et inviolabili caritate in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi in die iustitiae et aeterni iudicii conscientia pura, fide plena, Spiritu sancto pleni persolvant.¹

The difficulties in this text, which have given rise to numerous emendations, are chiefly these: (1) it sounds heretical to say that the priest "transforms" the Body and Blood of Christ in the act of consecration, since it is the bread and wine that are changed, not the Body and Blood of Christ. (2) It is not clear how the phrase *inviolabili caritate* fits into the syntax of the sentence. (3) It is not clear how the phrase *in virum perfectum in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi* (a quotation from Eph. iv. 12) can be construed with the verb *persolvant*. (4) The repetition of *plena . . . pleni* is awkward. (5) *Persolvant* appears to have no object.

One of the more successful attempts to deal with these difficulties is found in an English Pontifical of the tenth century:

Et per obsequium plebis tuae corpore et sanguine Filii tui immaculata benedictione transformetur ad inviolabilem charitatem; et in virum perfectum, in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi, in die iusti et aeterni iudicii, conscientia pura, fide plena, Spiritu sancto plenus appareat.²

However, this is not entirely satisfactory: (1) It has destroyed a strong clausula *benedictione transforment*, which must surely mark the end of a clause. (2) The juxtaposition of the two instrumental ablatives *corpore et sanguine Filii tui* and *immaculata benedictione* is awkward. (3) The phrase *in virum perfectum . . . appareat* is hardly grammatical. Since *appareat* is not (like *occurramus* in Eph. iv. 12) a verb of motion, it should have *in viro perfecto*.

The text of the modern Pontifical differs from the Gelasian in four points: (1) It reads *in obsequium plebis tuae* ("for the service of Thy people") instead of *per obsequium* ("in their service of Thy people"). But as this part of the prayer is calling down blessings on the new priests (rather than on the Church through the priests), the reading *per* seems preferable; the emphatic word in this petition is *immaculata*. (2) It alters the phrase *corpus et*

¹ Ed. Wilson, p. 24.

² Morinus, II, p. 233.

sanguinem Filii tui . . . transforment to panem et vinum in corpus et sanguinem Filii tui . . . transforment. This change, which makes its appearance in the Roman Pontificals in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was a wise one. The phrase *corpus et sanguinem transformare* occurs in a number of Gallican prayers, and is doubtless susceptible of an orthodox interpretation.¹ (It has been suggested that *transforment* in this context is probably a Latin equivalent for μετατυπῶσιν,² i.e., that it means to change from one "type" to another, to replace the type by the antitype, to replace the bread and wine, which in the sacrifice of Melchisedech were types of the future clean oblation, by the antitype or fulfilment of the type, viz., the Clean Oblation itself. With such a verb the accusative *corpus et sanguinem* could have the function of defining the nature of the antitype; it performs a similar function in the phrase *corpus et sanguinem repraesentare*, which has likewise passed out of ecclesiastical use because it is so easily misinterpreted.³) When, however, in the passage of time the origins of the verb *transformare* were forgotten, it was certainly desirable that the prayers in which it occurred should be emended or abandoned. (3) The modern Pontifical reads *resurgant* in place of the Gelasian *persolvant*. This is a very late emendation; the first Roman Pontifical to adopt it was that of Clement VIII (1595). The reading *persolvant* could perhaps be retained if some such verb as *crescentes* (cf. Eph. iv. 15) or *occurrentes* (cf. Eph. iv. 13) were supplied above after *caritate* (since *in virum perfectum*, etc., cannot be construed with *persolvant*); its object would then be *debitum* understood (as in Cic., *Ad Att.*, XIV, 20, 2), and the meaning would be "when they render their accounts at the Last Day, may they be fully [*per-*] solvent". The Prayer of Consummation would thus end, like the Preface of Consecration, with a reference to the final reckoning that every priest must give of his stewardship. (4) The repetition of *plena . . . pleni* is removed by reading *fide vera*. Since the author of the prayer clearly had in mind 1 Tim. i. 5: "Finis autem praecepti est caritas de corde puro et conscientia bona et fide non ficta", *fide plena* is, in itself, better than *fide vera*, since *fides*

¹ Cf. the examples quoted by M. Rule, "*Transformare and Transformatio*", in *JTS*, XII, 1911, 417-19; e.g. from the *Missale Francorum*, ed. Neale and Forbes, p. 11: "Descendat, Domine, plenitudo maiestatis, divinitatis, pietatis, virtutis, benedictionis et gloriae tuae super hunc panem et super hunc calicem; et fiat nobis legitima eucharistia in transformatione corporis et sanguinis Domini . . ."

² Cf. Rule, *ibid.*, p. 215.

³ Used about fifty times by Tertullian. Cf. H. B. Swete, "Eucharistic Belief in the Second and Third Centuries", in *JTS*, 1902, III, p. 173.

non ficta means faith in which there is no surreptitious admixture of error; the prayer is not simply that the priests may keep the true faith to the end, but they may keep it in its integrity. Hence, if emendation is necessary, it would perhaps have been better to emend the *pleni* rather than *plena*. But as it is hard to think of any substitute for *pleni* (except *repleti*, which would be no improvement), and as the author seems to have been deliberately striving after an assonance of p's (*pura . . . plena . . . pleni persolvant*), there is considerable likelihood that the Gelasian text in this clause, though stylistically imperfect, is not corrupt.

The Prayer of Consummation is a fitting complement to the Preface of Consecration: what was there expressed in Old Testament language and imagery is here expressed in phrases from the Pauline Epistles; there the priest's task is described as being to help the bishop in his work of ruling the new Israel; here it is seen as the building up of the Mystical Body of Christ.

VII

SECOND PART OF THE RITE: COMMISSION TO SAY MASS

THE ANOINTING OF HANDS

Next the bishop kneels without his mitre before the altar and intones the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, which is taken up by the choir. At the end of the first verse, he rises and takes his seat mitred on the faldstool. He removes his gloves, removes his ring, and a "gremial" or apron is put across his lap. Then the new priests kneel one by one before him, and he anoints the hands of each in the form of a cross, tracing with his right thumb two lines, one from the thumb of the right hand to the index finger of the left, and the other from the thumb of the left to the index finger of the right; then he anoints the hands all over. Meanwhile he says:

Consecrare et sanctificare digneris, Domine, manus istas per istram unctionem, et nostram benedictionem. R̄. Amen.

Be pleased, O Lord, to consecrate and hallow these hands by this anointing and our blessing. R̄. Amen.

Then he makes a sign of the cross with his right hand over the hands of each and continues:

Ut quaecumque benedixerint, benedicantur; et quaecumque consecraverint, consecrentur et sanctificentur, in nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi. R̄. Amen.

That whatsoever they bless may be blessed, and whatsoever they consecrate may be consecrated and hallowed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. R̄. Amen.

Then the bishop closes each one's hands, and, says the rubric, "one of his assistants binds the hands so joined, namely right over left, with the white linen cloth; thereupon each returns to his own place, keeping his hands closed and tied in this way".

The origin and history of this part of the rite are better known than any other part of it, because, as was mentioned above, ordination anointings in the Western Church before A.D. 1000 have been made the object of a thorough and most scholarly enquiry by an American professor of liturgy. From his monograph most of the following information is taken.

There is no good evidence that the rite of ordination to the priesthood as performed at Rome included the anointing of hands until the pontificate of Pope John X (914-28). Earlier Pontiffs, when it was brought to their notice that such anointings had been introduced in Churches beyond the Alps, expressed sharp disapproval. Archbishop Rudolf of Bourges wrote to Pope Nicolas I (858-67) to enquire whether the anointing should be given to deacons as well. Nicolas replied in 864 as follows:

Praeterea sciscitaris utrum solis presbyteris, an et diaconibus debeant, cum ordinantur, manus chismaticis liquore perungi. Quod in sancta hac Romana, cui Deo auctore deservimus, Ecclesia, neutris agitur. Sed et quia sit a novae legis ministris actum, nusquam nisi nos fallat oblivio legimus. Ergo ad beati Innocentii papae canonica decreta sanctitatem tuam transmittimus; et quae tibi in consecrationibus et ordinationibus observanda, principia paginae ad Decentium Eugubinum episcopum missae affatim edocebunt.

You also ask whether only priests, or deacons as well, should have their hands anointed with chrism at ordination. In this holy Roman Church, which by God's disposition we serve, it is not done for either. And (unless our memory is at fault) we have nowhere read of its having been done by the ministers of the New Law. Therefore, we are sending Your Holiness the canonical decrees of blessed Pope Innocent, and the beginning of his Letter to Decentius, Bishop of Gubbio, will tell you exactly what is to be observed at consecrations and ordinations.¹

The letter of Innocent I here referred to was a rebuke to the Bishop of Gubbio for introducing liturgical novelties.² John X, who probably introduced the anointing at Rome, was not bred

¹ Mansi, 15, p. 882. At about the same period, an attempt was being made to introduce the anointing into the Armenian Church and was meeting with similar opposition. Cf. John of Dara in *Disciplina Antiochena Antica Siri, S.C. per la Chiesa Orient.*, Fontes II, Rome, 1941, 27, p. 235: "Les prêtres et les diacres ne sont pas ordonnés avec l'huile du myron comme fit Moïse avec Aaron, mais les évêques leur imposent la main de l'onction spirituelle par laquelle ils reçoivent la grâce du Saint-Esprit."

² Mansi, 3, p. 1028.

up in the strict Roman tradition and did not share his predecessors' conservatism.

The early history of anointing as part of the rite of ordination was not one of smooth development and steady diffusion. Several liturgists of repute have maintained that ordination anointings took their origin in the British Isles, but incorrectly.¹ The principal piece of evidence that has been adduced by the holders of this view is the following sentence from a treatise *On the Ruin and Conquest of Britain* by Gildas the Wise, written about A.D. 545. Rebuking evil priests, he says to them:

Recurrere tandem aliquando usque ad lectiones illas, quae ad hoc non solum ut recitentur, sed etiam adstipulentur benedictioni, qua initiantur sacerdotum vel ministrorum manus, eosque perpetuo doceant, uti ne a mandatis, quae fideliter continentur in eis, sacerdotali dignitate degenerantes recedant, ex omni paene sanctarum scripturarum textu merito excerptae sunt, necessarium duximus.

Finally, we have thought it necessary to have recourse to those Lessons, which are collected from nearly the whole of the Bible, not only to be read out, but to be conjoined in the act of blessing by which the hands of priests or deacons are initiated, and to teach them perpetually not to depart from the precepts faithfully contained therein, nor to degenerate from their sacerdotal dignity.²

However, it has been shown that there are very good reasons for doubting whether Gildas here refers to a physical anointing with oil. Probably he is simply borrowing a vivid phrase from the Book of Leviticus:

Expiabit autem sacerdos qui unctus fuerit, et cuius manus initiatae sunt ut sacerdotio fungeretur pro patre suo.

And the priest that is anointed, and whose hands are consecrated to do the office of the priesthood in his father's stead, shall make atonement.³

One argument which, although it is an argument from silence, seems to the present writer particularly strong, is that when St. Augustine came to England fifty or sixty years after the date of Gildas' writing, though he regarded ceremonial differences from Roman use as badges of heresy, nevertheless preserved complete silence in regard to ordination anointings.

¹ Cf. Ellard, pp. 9-10, for references.

² Gildas, *De Excidio et Conquestu Brit.*, MGH, Auct. Ant., XIII, p. 82.

³ Lev. xvi. 32.



The Tradition of Instruments: Roman Pontifical, 1520

The earliest liturgical book containing an anointing of the priest's hands is the so-called "Missal of the Franks", a Mass-book compiled for the Cathedral of Poitiers early in the eighth century. It gives two forms of words, the first of which is very close to the one still in use today:

Consecrentur manus istae et sanctificentur per istam unctionem et nostram benedictionem ut quaecumque benedixerint benedicta sint et quaecumque sanctificaverint sanctificentur per dominum.

May these hands be consecrated and sanctified by this anointing and our blessing, that whatever they bless may be blessed, and whatever they sanctify may be sanctified. Through our Lord.¹

The later insertion of *consecraverint . . . consecrentur* into this blessing (see above, p. 126), which goes back at least to Roman Pontificals of the twelfth century, is another instance of the tendency already pointed out of making ever more and more explicit mention of the priest's power of consecrating the Eucharist.

The second form of blessing is as follows:

Unguantur manus istae de oleo sanctificato et crismate sanctificationis. Sicut unxit Samuhel David in regem et prophetam ita unguantur et consummentur in nomine Dei Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti, facientes imaginem sanctae crucis Salvatoris nostri Domini nostri Jhesu Christi, qui nos a morte redemit et ad regna caelorum perducit. Exaudi nos pie Pater omnipotens aeternae Deus, et praesta quid te rogamus.

Let these hands be anointed with blessed oil and the chrism of sanctification. Even as Samuel anointed David king and prophet, even so may they be anointed and made perfect in the name of God the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, making the image of the holy cross of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who redeemed us from death and brings us to the kingdom of heaven. Hear us, ever-loving Father almighty, eternal God, and grant our prayer.²

Since the Missal of the Franks contains no anointing in its rite of consecration for a bishop, Ellard concludes that the anointing of priests is earlier than that of bishops. But this is by no means certain. The second form of blessing given above is obviously much more suitable for the anointing of a bishop, who is a monarch in his own Church and can reasonably be compared to David, than for a priest who is not a monarch

¹ Ellard, p. 20.

² Ellard, p. 20.

but a minister of second rank. Ellard concedes that it is not appropriate, and suggests that its original use was as a prayer for the anointing of the dying! But that is even less appropriate.¹ It seems more reasonable to suppose that the formula was originally meant to accompany the anointing of a bishop, and is misplaced in the Missal of the Franks—in which case that Missal does not provide evidence that the anointing was inserted into the ordination of priests before it was part of the consecration of bishops. In sacramentaries made later in the same century the second formula is used for the anointing of a bishop, and it has continued to be so used, with only the slightest alterations, to the present day.

By the end of the eighth century the anointing of the priest's hands had become so common that Bishop Theodulf of Orleans could write in an exhortation to his clergy on the dignity of the priesthood:

Oportet vos semper memores esse tantae dignitatis, memores vestrae consecrationis, memores sacrae quam in manibus suscepistis unctionis . . . ut nec ab eadem dignitate degeneretis, nec vestram consecrationem irritam faciatis, nec manus sacro unguine delibutas polluatis.

You should always be mindful of your great dignity, mindful of your consecration, mindful of the holy anointing that you received upon your hands . . . so that you will not degenerate from that dignity, nor make void your consecration, nor defile those hands anointed with the sacred

However, within a few years of the writing of that letter, the anointing at ordinations was banned by an Edict of Charlemagne! It was not that he had any objection to anointing as such; but, being anxious to secure liturgical uniformity throughout his empire, he imposed the use of the Gregorian Sacramentary obtained from Pope Hadrian. This Sacramentary did not contain the anointings.

In an age when there was no printing and therefore no mass production of liturgical books, it was impossible to secure immediate and universal acceptance of the new Sacramentary. In fact the Gregorian never completely ousted the Gelasian

¹ Ellard, p. 21. He quotes the Bobbio Missal, which gives as a prayer for the dying the words: "Ungo te oleo sanctificato sicut unxit samuhel david in rege et propheta."

² *Theodulfi Opera*, ed. Sirmond, II, p. 924; quoted by Ellard, p. 33.

Sacramentary, and as Charlemagne's successors did not insist on use of the pure Gregorian ritual, the new Sacramentary was soon fused with native Gallican elements and the anointings gradually returned.

Amalarius, who was one of the court favourites of Louis the Pious, Charlemagne's son and successor, was strongly in favour of the anointings at ordination. As was mentioned above, in the chapter on the priesthood in his great work *On the Offices of the Church* (written about 827) he says:

Presbyteri deputantur in loco filiorum Aaron. Scriptum est in libro Numerorum: *Haec nomina filiorum Aaron sacerdotum, qui uncti sunt, quorum repleta est consecratione manus, ut sacerdotio fungerentur.* Hunc morem tenent episcopi nostri: manus presbyterorum unguunt de oleo.

Presbyters are appointed in the place of the sons of Aaron. For it is written in the Book of Numbers: "These are the names of the sons of Aaron, the priests that were anointed, and whose hand was filled and consecrated, to do the functions of the priesthood." Our bishops maintain this custom: they anoint the hands of priests with oil.¹

This has been proved to be a highly tendentious statement: of the fourteen extant Sacramentaries that can be safely dated between 800-50 only two have the anointing of hands in the ordination of priests. Amalarius "under guise of relating what was current usage, is deliberately pleading for the general introduction of anointing at Holy Orders".² In the tenth century Amalarius's writings acquired great popularity and authority;³ they probably speeded the spread of the ordination anointings.

Another of the protagonists of anointing at ordinations was the forger of the notorious Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals. In order to vanquish the authority of the Gregorian Sacramentary by a greater authority, he composed a letter in the name of Pope Anacletus, describing how James, Brother of the Lord, was consecrated first Archbishop of Jerusalem by Saints Peter,

¹ *Lib. Officialis*, II, 13, 1 (ed. Hanssens, II, pp. 226-7). Isidore of Seville had prepared the way by quoting Exod. xxix. 7: "Et oleum unctionis fundes super caput eius, atque hoc ritu consecrabitur" in the chapter *De Sacerdotio* of his *De Eccles. Off.*, II, 5 (PL 83, 781).

² Ellard, p. 40.

³ Ellard, p. 67.

James and John; the consecration included an anointing of the head.¹ The forger does not mention the anointing of priests, but as the two anointings inevitably stood or fell together, it is not unreasonable to say that the False Decretals contributed towards the diffusion of this ceremony.

In spite of the disapproval of Pope Nicolas I mentioned above, the anointing made its way to Rome early in the tenth century. A manuscript in the British Museum, written probably in the first quarter of that century, gives a Roman ordination ritual including the following rubric and prayer:

Hac expleta, imponet ei pontifex orarium in collo et unguet ei manus in cruce apud chryisma ita dicendo: Consecrentur et sanctificentur manus iste per istam unctionem et nostram benedictionem. Ut quecumque recte sanctificaverint vel benedixerint sint sanctificata et benedicta. Amen.

Hereupon, the bishop will put the stole about his neck and anoint his hands with chrism in the form of a cross, saying: May these hands be consecrated and sanctified by this anointing and our blessing, that whatever they have correctly blessed or sanctified may be blessed and sanctified. Amen.²

It seems highly likely that Pope John X (914-28) brought this rite with him to Rome from Ravenna.

The Romano-Germanic Pontifical included the anointing of the priest's hands, and from that source it has passed straight on into our Roman Pontificals.

In the course of the centuries there have been many variations in the manner of performing the anointing. First, the new priests originally received it standing, as can be seen from the illustration (Plate 3) taken from the Pontifical of Bishop Landolf of Benevento (957-83). The first Pontifical known to the present writer which says explicitly that they should kneel is that of Durandus.³

Secondly, for centuries it was disputed whether the anointing should be done with oil of the catechumens or with chrism. Among those that specify chrism are the Ambrosian Pontifical,⁴

¹ P. Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, Leipzig, 1863, p. 75, quoted by Ellard, pp. 52-3.

² B.M. MS. Addit. 15222; Ellard, p. 76.

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 369.

⁴ Ed. M. Magisretti, Milan, 1897, pp. 48-9. Ellard, p. 74, dates this Pontifical *circa* 950.

the English "Egbert" Pontifical,¹ and the British Museum manuscript mentioned just above. Roman Pontificals of the twelfth century specify simply *oleum* (oil), and in the following century they say distinctly "oil of the catechumens".² Durandus's Pontifical is even more explicit: "Not with chrism, but with oil of the catechumens."³ In two English Pontificals of later date we find a typical British compromise: the bishop uses a mixture of both oils! They are the York (or Bainbridge) Pontifical of the thirteenth or fourteenth century,⁴ and the Lacy Pontifical (from Exeter) of the fifteenth.⁵ The York Pontifical gives a reason for using chrism:

Accipiat oleum sanctum, cui
miscetur chrisma, pro eo quod
in consecratione chrismatis fit
mentio de ordinibus ecclesiasticis
per ipsum conficiendis.

Let him take holy oil, to which
chrism should be added, since in
the consecration of chrism there is
mention of ecclesiastical orders to
be conferred by means of it.⁶

Since the time of Durandus, chrism has been reserved for episcopal consecrations—evidently for the sake of greater solemnity.

Thirdly, an attempt was made at the end of the tenth century to introduce an anointing of the new priest's head, as well as of his hands. This innovation appears first in a group of English manuscripts: the "Pontifical of St. Dunstan" (992-1001), the "Benedictionary of Archbishop Robert" (from Winchester, late tenth century), the Lanalet Pontifical (about 960),⁷ and the "Pontifical of Egbert" (about 1000).⁸ They also have a preliminary blessing of hands, to be given before the anointing.⁹ The practice of anointing the head spread to France, but never to Rome, and was gradually relinquished in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

¹ Ed. W. Greenwell, Surtees Society, vol. 85, p. 24.

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 136; II, pp. 346-7.

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 369.

⁴ Ed. Henderson, Surtees Society, vol. 61, p. 40.

⁵ Ed. R. Barnes, Exeter, 1847, p. 90.

⁶ Cf. the prayer for the consecration of chrism in the Gelasian Sacramentary, ed. Wilson, p. 70.

⁷ Ellard, p. 80; or perhaps as early as 925—cf. G. H. Doble, *The Lanalet Pontifical*, HBS, 1937, p. xvii.

⁸ Cf. Ellard, pp. 78-80.

⁹ Possibly this is the blessing to which Gildas refers in the passage quoted *supra*, p. 128.

Fourthly, the singing of the *Veni Creator* during the anointing of hands is a very late development. The singing of the *Veni Sancte Spiritus* appears first in Gallican Pontificals of the eleventh century, but does not for some time pass into the Roman rite. The Pontifical of Durandus has the rubric:

Tunc episcopus ad altare conversus flexis genibus incipiat ante medium altaris alta voce: *Alleluia. Veni sancte Spiritus*, vel si est infra octavam pentecostes, hymnum *Veni creator Spiritus*.

Then the bishop, turning to the altar, kneels down before the middle of the altar and begins in a loud voice: *Alleluia. Veni sancte Spiritus*, or, if it is within the octave of Pentecost, the hymn *Veni creator Spiritus*.¹

The Pontificals of 1485, 1497, and 1520 similarly mention both the *Veni Sancte*² and the *Veni Creator*. The recension of Clement VIII omitted the *Veni Sancte*—presumably on account of its brevity—and no change has been made in later revisions.

Fifthly, the Pontifical of Durandus prescribed that the new priests should keep the oil on their hands until the end of the Mass, though he mentions that in some Churches the custom was to wash it off immediately after the Gospel:

Tunc episcopus claudit seu iungit manus cuiuslibet successive. Et mox unusquisque ad ordinem suum redit et sic clausas, dextram videlicet super sinistram, usque in finem missae tenet. In quibusdam tamen ecclesiis statim lecto evangelio manus lavant.

Then the bishop closes or joins the hands of each in turn. Each goes back to his place and keeps his hands closed in this way—with his right over his left—till the end of the Mass. But in some Churches they wash their hands immediately after the reading of the Gospel.³

This is one of the points on which the later Roman Pontificals did not follow Durandus. But traces of his rubric remain at a later point of the rite, as will be seen below.

Sixthly, the tying of the anointed hands with a linen band is later even than the Pontifical of Durandus. It appears in Piccolomini's edition of 1485, and will be explained in the next section.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 369.

² This means the brief antiphon: "Veni sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium et tui amoris in eis ignem accende."

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, 369.

There remains the fundamental question of *why* the anointing was ever introduced. Amalarius, who, as was shown above, was one of those largely responsible for its survival, valued it for its symbolism. After quoting the Old Testament precedent, he explains:

Hunc morem tenent episcopi nostri: manus presbyterorum unguunt de oleo. Manifestum est cur hoc faciant, ut mundae sint ad offerendam hostiam Deo, et largae ad cetera officia pietatis. Utrumque designatur per oleum, et gratia curationis et charitas dilectionis.

Our bishops maintain this custom: they anoint the hands of priests with oil. It is obvious why they do this, namely, that their hands may be clean for offering sacrifice to God and open for the offices of piety. Both are signified by the oil—the grace of curing, and charity or love.¹

Hugh of St. Victor and Peter Lombard say much the same.² More fundamentally, any bestowing of the Holy Ghost is symbolized by the anointing with oil: it is part of the rites of Baptism, Confirmation, and Extreme Unction, in which the Holy Ghost is given. The imparting of the Spirit gives a sheen and brilliance to the soul comparable to the physical effect of anointing the body with oil.

Another hint towards understanding the mentality of those who introduced and defended the anointing is furnished by the letter of Pseudo-Anacletus in the False Decretals:

Omnis sanctificatio constat in Spiritu Sancto, cuius virtus invisibilis sancto est crismate permixta.

Every sanctification depends on the Holy Ghost, whose invisible power is mixed with the holy Chrism.³

This reminds us that in bygone centuries the chrism has been treated with almost as much reverence as the Blessed Sacrament—almost as though it were transubstantiated into the Holy Ghost!⁴ To such a mentality it would be difficult to conceive how the Holy Ghost could be given without the chrism.

¹ *Lib. Officialis*, II, 13, 1 (ed. Hanssens, II, p. 227).

² Hugh, *De Sac.*, II, 3, 12 (*PL* 176, 429); P. Lomb., *IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 1.

³ Hinschius, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁴ Cf. P. Bernard, Art. "Chrême" in *DTC*, II, 2408-9.

THE DELIVERY OF INSTRUMENTS

The delivery or "tradition" of instruments is a continuation of the investiture ceremony. The bishop is given first a chalice into which wine and water are poured, then a paten on which there is a large host. The new priests then come before him one by one to "receive" these instruments of the priestly office, in token of their having received power to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. With their hands bound together, all they can do is to touch the chalice and paten with their index and middle fingers as in Plate 6, where, however, the new priests' hands are united before the touching.

According to the *Ancient Statutes of the Church*, quoted above, the sacred orders of the episcopacy, priesthood and diaconate were to be conferred by the laying-on of hands; but, they continue:

Subdiaconus cum ordinatur, quia manus impositionem non accipit, patenam de manu episcopi accipiat vacuam et vacuum calicem.

When a subdeacon is ordained, since he does not receive the laying-on of hands, let him receive from the bishop's hand an empty paten and an empty chalice.¹

The ceremonies prescribed in these Statutes are, therefore, partly of Jewish and partly of European origin: the laying-on of hands, which is reserved to the three sacred Orders, is, as was shown above, Jewish—while for the minor Orders and subdiaconate, which are not of Apostolic origin,² a European investiture ceremony is supplied.³

The canon of the fourth Council of Toledo (A.D. 633), quoted above,⁴ shows that from a very early period the rites of ordination to the sacred Orders were amplified by the addition of an investiture ceremony of some sort: bishops received a stole, ring and crozier, priests a stole and chasuble, deacons a stole and alb. The introduction into these investiture ceremonies of a chalice with wine and a paten with hosts cannot be dated with accuracy. It appears first in a Gregorian Sacramentary

¹ Text from Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, p. 51.

² Cf. Lennerz, *De Sac. Ord.*, p. 114f.

³ Cf. Herwegen, p. 335.

⁴ *Supra*, p. 109.

preserved in the Vatican Library, in a rubric for the consecration of a bishop:

Episcopus cum ordinatur, duo episcopi ponant et teneant Evangeliorum codicem super caput eius, et uno super eum fundente benedictionem, reliqui omnes episcopi qui adsunt, caput eius tangant. Hoc facto, accipiat patenam cum oblatiis, et calicem cum vino, et det ei dicens, Accipe potestatem offerre sacrificium Deo Missamque celebrare tam pro vivis quam pro defunctis.

When a bishop is ordained, let two bishops place and hold the Book of Gospels over his head, and while one of them utters the blessing, let all the other bishops who are present touch his head. Then let him take a paten with altar-breads and a chalice with wine, and give it to him, saying: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass for the living and the dead."¹

This departure from the ancient rules may have been due simply to a desire to make the ceremony more impressive and expressive; its author may have felt that power to say Mass, being the chief of the bishop's powers,² should have special prominence in the ceremony.

The insertion of a tradition of instruments into the rite of ordination to the priesthood had already begun in the tenth century, since it is found in the Romano-Germanic Pontifical.³ But it is not mentioned in liturgical writings until the twelfth century: Isidore, Alcuin, Amalarius, Rhabanus Maurus, Walfridus Strabo, and even Honorius of Autun, who died in 1122, say nothing of it when they discuss Orders and ordinations. In the twelfth century, when the practice was becoming widespread, it finds mention in Yves of Chartres, Stephen de Baugé, Bishop of Autun, Hugh of St. Victor and Peter Lombard.⁴

An eleventh-century Pontifical of Beauvais contains an unusual form of words to accompany the giving of the chalice:

Accipite calicem et habetote potestatem atque licentiam offerre sacrificium Deo, tam pro vivis, quam pro defunctis fidelibus.⁵

Receive this chalice, and have power and permission to offer sacrifice to God, both for the living and for the faithful departed.⁵

¹ Morinus, III, p. 106.

² Cf. Morinus, *ibid.*: "Sacrificium episcopo primum convenit, deinde presbytero, permittente episcopo."

³ Morinus, II, p. 262. It is added by a later hand between the lines in the Pontifical of Bishop Landolf of Benevento—see Plate 3.

⁴ Quoted *supra*, p. 38. Cf. Van Rossum, p. 140.

⁵ Morinus, II, p. 271.

This was probably designed to avoid the apparent implication of the usual formula that the delivery of instruments actually effects the delivery of power to say Mass.

From a Mainz Pontifical we learn that in the early days, when this part of the ceremony was first introduced, a bishop might present the chalice and paten to only one or two of the new priests, and pronounce the formula only once for all—in the plural of course: *Accipite potestatem* . . .¹ Such abbreviations were ruled out by the rubric preserved in seven copies of the Roman Pontifical of the thirteenth century:

Hoc facto, inunctus iungat ambas manus et teneat dexteram super sinistram. Pontifex vero abstersis manibus cum bombace vel per-fusorio accipiat patenam cum oblatio et calicem cum vino. Et ponat in manibus ordinati, qui recipiat et teneat cupam calicis et patenam inter digitos indices et medios manibus iunctis; et dicat ordinator singillatim cuilibet si sint plures: *Accipe potestatem*. . . .

After this, the anointed closes both his hands and holds the right over the left. The bishop, having cleansed his hands with a piece of wadding or with a ewer, receives a paten with altar-breads and a chalice with wine. And let him place them in the hands of the new priest, who is to receive and hold the cup of the chalice and the paten between the index and middle fingers with joined hands; and let the ordaining prelate say, singly to each if there are several: "Receive power . . ."²

To carry out this rubric literally is a physical impossibility: if the new priest is to receive *and hold* the cup of the chalice and the paten between his index and middle fingers, he must separate his hands. It is impossible for him to do it "with joined hands", as the rubric says. Hence it seems very probable that *manibus iunctis* ("with joined hands") is here a corrupt reading for *manibus unctis* ("with his anointed hands").

Durandus, after saying that the new priests are to keep their hands anointed and closed right over left till the end of the Mass,³ lays down the following:

¹ Cf. Chardon, *Hist. des Sacremens*, V, p. 239.

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, II, pp. 347-8. One copy of this Pontifical has the following explanation in the margin: "Pontifex debet facere poni sacerdoti digitos pollices et indices super hostiam et patenam, ipsa existente super calicem; medios vero alii[s] iunctis debet facere tangi gulam ipsius calicis quae cupa nuncupatur. Et tunc dicat pontifex: *Accipite potestatem*, ut supra, et cet."

³ Cf. the rubric quoted *supra*, p. 134.

Quo facto tradit cuilibet successive calicem cum vino et aqua et patenam superpositam cum hostia; et ipsi illa accipiunt inter indices et medios digitos utriusque manus, primo videlicet pedem calicis et post oram patenae, dicens cuilibet: *Accipe potestatem . . .*

Thereupon the bishop gives to each one in turn a chalice with wine and a paten placed upon it with a host; and they receive it between the index and middle fingers of each hand, namely first the foot of the chalice and then the edge of the paten; and he says to each: "Receive power . . ."¹

Evidently he meant the ordinand to open his hands for the delivery of the chalice, and then close them again afterwards.

The phrase "right hand over left" was retained in the Pontifical of Piccolomini (1485), which also prescribes the binding of hands (not mentioned in Durandus). This rubric has passed into the present-day Pontifical, with only the slightest changes:

Tum Pontifex claudit seu iungit manus cuiuslibet successive, quas sic consecratas aliquis ministrorum Pontificis albo panniculo lineo simul, videlicet dexteram super sinistram, alliget; et mox unusquisque ad ordinem suum redeat, et sic clausas et alligatas manus teneat. Omnium manibus unctis et consecratis, Pontifex manus lavat et tergit. Quo facto tradit cuilibet successive calicem cum vino et aqua, et patenam superpositam cum hostia, et ipsi illam accipiunt inter indices et medios digitos utriusque manus, ita quod cuppam calicis et patenam simul tangant, dicens cuilibet:

Accipe potestatem offerre Sacrificium Deo, Missasque celebrare tam pro vivis quam pro defunctis in nomine Domini. R̄. Amen.

Then the bishop closes or joins the hands of each in turn, and, anointed as they are, one of the bishop's servers shall then bind them together, right over left, with the linen cloth; then each is to return to his place, and keep his hands closed and bound in this way. When the hands of all have been anointed and consecrated, the bishop washes his hands and dries them. Then he gives to each one in turn a chalice with wine and water, and a paten placed thereupon with a host; and they receive it between the index and middle fingers of each hand, so that they touch both the cup of the chalice and the paten at the same time; and he says to each:

Receive power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate Masses for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord. R̄. Amen.

A later rubric in the present-day Pontifical mentions that the new priests may wash their hands during the singing of the Offertory, but it does not specify exactly when their hands

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 370.

are untied. If the phrase "right hand over left" should mean that they clasp their hands together with the right over the left, and if their clasped hands are meant to be bound together—or even completely muffled (as in Plate 5)—it is clearly necessary for the hands to be unbound *before* they touch the chalice, i.e., almost as soon as they have been bound! That is how the rubric was interpreted by the artists who drew the illustrations in the Pontificals of 1520 (Pl. 4), 1595 (Pl. 5) and 1664 (Pl. 6). But it is not the way it is interpreted today; it is now customary to leave the hands tied until after the touching of the chalice.

The modern practice presents two problems. First, why are the new priests told to touch the chalice "with hands joined"? And secondly, why are their hands tied together?

The instruction to touch the chalice "with hands joined" may simply have arisen from a copyist's error. In the York Pontifical they are told to do it *manibus remanentibus unctis*—"while their hands remain anointed", i.e., before wiping off the oil with which they were anointed.¹ This phrase may have been shortened to *manibus unctis*—"with anointed hands", and this can easily have been copied as *manibus iunctis*—"with hands joined". If, on the other hand, it is the York Pontifical that is in error, and *manibus iunctis* is what was originally meant, the reason may simply have been to avoid getting too much oil on the chalice and paten. But it is curious that the illustrations in printed Pontificals down to 1664 continued to show the new priest touching the chalice with hands parted.

In default of detailed evidence from fourteenth-century Pontificals, no certain explanation can be given of how or where or why the binding of the hands was introduced. However, it may reasonably be conjectured that it took its origin in some Church where, in accordance with Durandus' preference, the new priests kept the oil on their hands until the end of the Mass. The purpose would then be a practical one—to prevent the new priests from touching anything with the holy oil on their hands; for example, one of them, kneeling at

¹ The York Pontifical (XIII–XIV century), Surtees Society, vol. 61, p. 34: "Hoc facto unctus [i]jungat ambas manus. Et postea episcopus lavet et tergat manus, suas, et accipiat patenem cum oblatis et calicem cum vino et det singulis inter indices et medios cuppam calicis cum patena, remanentibus manibus unctis."

his priedieu during the Mass that follows might thoughtlessly rest his chin in his hand, and so get the holy oil on his face, which would be, in the medieval sense, inconvenient. This practical purpose would be adequately served by tying the cloth round the wrists, as in the woodcut from the 1520 Pontifical; the new priest could then open his hands to touch the chalice while his wrists remain tied together, and then he could again clasp his hands, right over left, and keep them so during the rest of the Mass.

In Churches where the oil was washed off during the Offertory, there was no real need for the binding, since the new priests could surely be trusted to be careful with their hands in the very few minutes between the anointing and the Offertory. Nevertheless, such Churches seem to have followed the practice of the others.

At a corresponding point in the consecration of a bishop, there has been, also since 1485, a similar rubric prescribing that the new bishop after the anointing of his hands shall wrap them in a linen cloth.¹ Here a practical purpose is served: the bishop does not wash his hands until considerably later—after receiving the crozier, ring and Book of Gospels.

¹ *Pontificale Romanum*, Venice, 1485, fol. 42: "Consecratus iungat ambas manus et eas imponat mappulae a collo dependenti."

VIII

THIRD PART: REPRESENTATION OF THE LAST SUPPER

THE MASS IS RESUMED

When all have received the instruments, the portion of the rite which exhibits the conferring of power to say Mass is over and complete. The new priests now leave the sanctuary for a few minutes to untie their hands and wash away the oil.

Meanwhile, the bishop resumes the Mass and continues as far as and including the Creed (if the Mass of the day has a Creed) and Offertory. Towards the end of the Creed, or of the Gospel if there is no Creed, the new priests return, each carrying a lighted candle.

THE OFFERING OF CANDLES

After reading the Offertory prayer, the bishop takes his seat on the faldstool in the middle of the predella, and receives the candles from all who have been ordained. They come before him two by two and kneeling present their candles, kissing his hand as they do so.

To understand the origin and meaning of this rite, it is necessary to know a little about the history of the Offertory at Mass.¹ In the first three or four centuries, when churches had no fixed revenues, the faithful used to bring to Mass not only bread and wine for the Mass, but also other offerings in kind—honey, milk, cakes, fowl, vegetables, etc.—for the support of the clergy and the poor. However, as it seemed unbecoming to have all these things on or at the altar during the Holy Sacrifice, it was early decreed that the only things to be offered at the altar were things needed for the celebration

¹ Cf. Martène, I, p. 139.

of Mass, namely, grapes or wine, wheat or bread, oil for the lamps, and incense.¹ Other offerings were to be handed in at the bishop's residence.

For many centuries it remained customary for the laity to offer bread and wine at the Offertory. St. Caesarius of Arles found the custom languishing in his diocese and preached a sermon to revive it, in which he said:

Oblationes quae in altario consecrentur offerte. Erubescere debet homo idoneus, si de aliena oblatione communicaverit.

Offer oblations to be consecrated on the altar. A man of sufficient means should blush, if he has received Communion from another's offering.²

Later in the sixth century the Council of Mâcon (A.D. 585) prescribed that both men and women should make an offering of bread and wine at least every Sunday.³ The Council of Mainz in A.D. 813 made a canon saying that the people must be constantly exhorted to make this offering at Mass.⁴ Nevertheless, the practice gradually became rarer, and was more and more reserved to the great feast days. The idea persisted that those especially who are going to communicate should make an offering. Even in the eighteenth century it was still customary in some churches on the Continent for those who intended to communicate to make an offertory on the feasts of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, All Saints, and on the chief feasts of our Lady.⁵

In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical the rubric prescribing that the ordinands should make an offering connects the offering with their Communion.

Omnes vero qui ordinati sunt oblationes deferant ad manus episcopi et ab eo postmodum communicentur.

All who have been ordained should bring offerings to the hands of the bishop, and should afterwards receive Communion from him.⁶

¹ *Constitutiones Apostolorum*, 3-4 (circa A.D. 400), ed. Funk, I, p. 564.

² *Sermo cclxv Appendicis S. Augustini*.

³ *Concilium Matisconense*, cn. 4 (Mansi, 9, 951).

⁴ *Concilium Moguntinum*, cn. 44 (Mansi, 14, 74).

⁵ Cf. Martène, loc. cit.

⁶ Hittorp, col. 100c. So also in the *Ordo* of St. Amand; Duchesne, *Origines*, p. 477.

A special reason for this close connexion will become evident later in this section. The phrase *ad manus episcopi* ("to the hands of the bishop") is used in preference to *ad episcopum* ("to the bishop") because there was a custom peculiar to Rome, whereby offerings other than those of bread for the Mass and offerings for the dead, were laid at the Pope's feet, in remembrance of the practice recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, whereby the early disciples sold their property and "brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the Apostles".¹

The above rubric passed into the Roman Pontificals of the twelfth century, where we find the following details added:

Iuxta morem vero Romanæ ecclesie, presbyteri cardinales quisque duos cereos dextra laevaue tenere debent accensos, et duos panes in manutergio inter brachia sua positos, quos simul cum ceteris offerre debent pontifici.

But according to the custom of the Roman Church, cardinal priests should have two lighted candles, one in the right hand and one in the left, and two loaves wrapped in a towel between their arms; these they should offer to the Pontiff along with the rest.²

Roman Pontificals of the thirteenth century say that all new priests, whether cardinals or not, should offer two candles, two loaves and two small bottles of wine.³

Durandus omitted the Offertory procession altogether from his Pontifical. His reason was that he wished his new priests to keep their hands anointed and clasped until the very end of the Mass. However, the printed Pontificals do not follow Durandus on this point. The first of them (1485) prescribes that the new priests wash their hands during the chanting of the Offertory "so that they can offer with washed hands". It also prescribes that they should offer just one candle. This rubric has remained to the present day.

Why was the Offertory procession retained in spite of the authority of Durandus? Piccolomini gives no reason in his Pontifical; for him it may have been sufficient that the Offertory procession at ordinations had long been traditional at

¹ Acts iv. 34-5. Cf. Durandus, *Rationale*, IV, 30, 38, p. 95.

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 137.

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, II, p. 349.



The Tradition of Instruments: Roman Pontifical, 1595

Rome. But there is a passage in Durandus's *Rationale* which suggests a reason why it is particularly appropriate to have such an offertory in the ordination rite:

Offerens vero panem et vinum significat discipulos qui praeveniunt parare necessaria ad Pascha.

He who offers bread and wine signifies the disciples who went ahead to prepare what was necessary for the Pasch.¹

The Apostles who were sent ahead by our Lord to prepare the Upper Room, made ready the bread and wine which He consecrated and gave to them at the Last Supper. As the Mass of Ordination has been made in several other ways to resemble the Last Supper, it seems likely that the retaining of the Offertory procession was due to a desire to recall the preparations made by the Apostles for their Mass of Ordination.

THE CONCELEBRATION

After the Offertory procession the newly-ordained priests begin to celebrate Mass with the bishop, saying the prayers with him, beginning from the *Suscipe, sancte Pater*. They even say the words of consecration with him, and by so doing they co-operate with him in consecrating the bread and wine. This joint action is known as "concelebration".

The theological difficulty presented by concelebration, namely that if one celebrant is sufficient, the concelebrants would appear to be superfluous and therefore ineffective, is solved by St. Thomas as follows: "If each of the priests operated by his own strength, the remaining celebrants would be superfluous, since one celebrant is enough; but as the priest consecrates only in the person of Christ, and the many priests are one in Christ, it does not matter whether this sacrament is consecrated by one or by many—save that the Church's rite must be observed."²

¹ *Rationale*, IV, 30, 35, p. 95.

² *Summa*, IIIa, 82, ¶ ad. 2. St. Albertus Magnus, *In IV Sent.*, d. 13, q. 1, a. 1, q. 2 (ed. Parma, 1858, p. 872), held the opposite view: "Sine praeiudicio sententiae melioris, dicendum quod plures sacerdotes nec debent nec possunt simul unam consecrare hostiam." Cf. Hanssens, *Periodica*, XXI, p. 203*.

Concelebration is very rare in the Latin liturgy. The Code of Canon Law lays down the following rule:

Non licet pluribus sacerdotibus concelebrare, praeterquam in Missa ordinationis presbyterorum et in Missa consecrationis Episcoporum secundum Pontificale Romanum.

It is not allowed for several priests to concelebrate, except in the Mass of Ordination of priests and in the Mass of Consecration of bishops according to the Roman Pontifical.¹

Why is this exception made for Masses of ordination and consecration?

Concelebration is not a practice that can be traced back (like the Offertory procession discussed in the last section) right through the centuries to the primitive Church. The Apostles did not concelebrate with our Lord at the Last Supper, and in the primitive Church so long as there was no fixed form of the canon, the assembled presbyters cannot have pronounced the canon together. St. Ignatius of Antioch, who died a martyr in A.D. 107, compares the bishop to Christ and the presbyters to the Apostles—having in mind probably the similarity between the bishop surrounded by his priests at Mass, and our Lord surrounded by His Apostles at the Last Supper.² This suggests that in the primitive Church the presbyters thought of themselves as doing at Mass what the Apostles did at the Last Supper, viz., witnessing the sacred mysteries. Again, when St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, visited Pope Anicetus in Rome about A.D. 190, Anicetus invited him to say the Mass in place of himself.³ And in the description of the Mass given by St. Justin about A.D. 150 there is nothing to suggest that concelebration was practised.⁴ For these and other similar reasons,⁵ it seems certain that concelebration was not customary in the early centuries.

At Rome the practice of concelebration appears to have arisen in the following way. The cardinal priests of the titular

¹ *CIC*, 803.

² *Epist. ad Trallianos*, 2, 1 and 3, 1 (Rouët, nn. 48-9).

³ Cf. Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.*, V, 24, 17 (Kirch, n. 100). Neither suggested that they should concelebrate.

⁴ *Apol.* I, 65 and 67 (Rouët, nn. 128-9).

⁵ For which see I. M. Hanssens, "De Concelebratione Eucharistica" in *Periodica de Re Morali et Liturgica*, Rome, 1927, XVI, pp. 143*-154* and 181*-210*.

churches normally celebrated Mass by themselves in their own churches, but on the greater feasts they were summoned to officiate along with the Pope, to add to the solemnity of the occasion. It is easily understandable that when celebrating with the Pope they retained their custom of reciting the canon, and that they did so with their normal intention.¹ In this way the Roman *practice* of concelebration arose;² the theory of it was not worked out till later.

The letter of Pseudo-Anacletus, already quoted in the last section, attempts to explain the function of priests who assist their bishop at Mass:

Ipsi autem [sc. episcopi], quando Domino sacrificant, non soli hoc agere debent, sed testes secum adhibeant, ut Domino perfecte in sacratis Deo sacrificare locis probentur.

Bishops, when they offer sacrifice to the Lord, should not do so alone, but should have witnesses with them, so that it can be proved that they offer sacrifice to God in sacred places.³

Apparently the author knew that the priests were present as *testes* ("witnesses") and took this to mean that they were there to obtain evidence! But his source probably meant nothing more than that they are to witness, or more simply to *see*, what the bishop does at the altar. The rest of the congregation does not see what the celebrant is doing.

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) explains the concelebration of the cardinal priests with the Popes in an important passage of his work *On the Sacred Mystery of the Altar*:

¹ Cf. Hanssens, *ibid.*, p. 217*.

² At Iona in the time of St. Columba there was a wholly different custom, clearly of independent origin: only bishops or individual priests of eminent sanctity were allowed to consecrate singly; normally, where two or more priests were together, they concelebrated. This is illustrated by an incident from the life of Columba by Adamnan, quoted by F. E. Wilson, *The Liturgy and Ritual of the Celtic Church*, Oxford, 1881, pp. 128-9: "On one occasion a stranger from the Province of Munster, who concealed through humility the fact that he was a bishop, was invited, on the next Sunday, by Columba to join with him in consecrating the body of Christ, that as two priests they might break the bread of the Lord together. Columba, on going to the altar, discovered his rank, and addressed him thus: 'Christ bless thee, brother; consecrate alone as a bishop; now we know that thou art of episcopal rank. Why hast thou endeavoured to disguise thyself so long, and to prevent our giving thee the honour due to thee?'"

³ Hinschius, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

Consueverunt autem presbyteri cardinales Romanum circumstare Pontificem et cum eo pariter celebrare, cumque consummatum est sacrificium, de manu eius communionem recipere, significantes Apostolos, qui cum Domino pariter discumbentes, sacram de manu eius Eucharistiam acceperunt, et in eo quod ipsi concelebrant, ostendunt Apostolos tunc a Domino ritum huius sacrificii didicisse.

It is customary for the cardinal priests to stand round the Roman Pontiff and to celebrate along with him, and when the sacrifice is consummated, to receive Communion from His hands—signifying the Apostles, who reclining with the Lord, received the Eucharist from His Hand; and in concelebrating with him, they show that the Apostles then learnt the ritual of this sacrifice from the Lord.¹

Since the Apostles did not share in the act of consecrating at the Last Supper, the resemblance would be closer if the Roman cardinal priests had concelebrated only ceremonially.²

It is probably no coincidence that concelebration appears in the rite of ordination to the priesthood very soon after the composition of Innocent's above-mentioned work.³ Roman Pontificals of the thirteenth century seem to indicate that newly-ordained priests are to concelebrate with the bishop, but only ceremonially:

Qua oblatione facta, presbyteri vadant ad altare ad standum a dextra et leva altaris cum missalibus suis et dicunt totum submissa voce, sicut si celebrarent.

After making the Offering, the priests should go to the altar, to stand at the right and left of the altar with their missals; and they say everything in a low voice, as if they were celebrating.⁴

The phrase *sicut si celebrarent* ("as if they were celebrating") implies clearly enough that they were not to intend to con-

¹ Innoc. III, *De Sacro Altaris Mysteriorum*, IV, 20 (PL 217, 873).

² For the distinction between ceremonial and sacramental concelebration, see *supra*, p. 93.

³ The first extant Pontifical that prescribes concelebration is one made at Apamea in Syria in 1214 for a Latin bishop: it indicates that a *bishop* immediately after his consecration is to concelebrate sacramentally with his consecrator; but it contains no suggestion of concelebration in the Mass of ordination to the priesthood. Nearly a century earlier, Hugh of St. Victor shows knowledge of episcopal concelebration in his work *On the Sacraments*. In the chapter "On Bishops" (PL 176, 430) he says:

Denique et ordinator et ordinatus in ipsa ordinatione uterque missam celebrare debet.

Finally, both consecrator and consecrated should celebrate Mass at the ordination.

Cf. Hanssens, p. 188*.

⁴ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 349.

secrete. It seems quite likely that the author of this rubric had in mind Pope Innocent's interpretation of the significance of concelebration, and thought it would be appropriate to make the new priests re-enact, as closely as possible, the occasion when "the Apostles learnt this rite from our Lord".

Pope Innocent III clearly understood the cardinals' concelebration to be sacramental, since he says in a later chapter of the same work that "the intention of all should be directed to the same moment of consecration¹." He does not speak of concelebration in ordination Masses—which is a fairly safe indication that he did not know of it. However, before the end of the thirteenth century, in some of the churches of Europe the concelebration of new priests with their bishops was sacramental, since St. Thomas mentions the practice in his *Tertia Pars*, written in 1273.² The change may have come about imperceptibly: if a scribe omitted the clause *sicut si celebrarent*, the users of the new Pontifical would be left to decide for themselves what intention the newly-ordained priests should have.

The rubric in the Pontifical of Durandus is a good deal less definite than that of the thirteenth-century Roman Pontificals just quoted. It runs:

Ordinati, si velint, habeant libros
coram se dicentes tacite canonem
et quecumque de missa dixerit
ordinator.

The new priests may, if they
wish, have books with them, saying
silently the canon and all parts of
the Mass that are said by the
ordaining prelate.³

It is, therefore, not at all correct to say that the custom of concelebration in the Mass of Ordination owed its propagation to the Pontifical of Durandus.⁴ The following passage from his

¹ Innoc. III, loc. cit., cap. 25 in med.

² IIIa, 82, 2: "Utrum plures sacerdotes possint unam et eandem hostiam consecrare."

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, pp. 370-1.

⁴ As De Puniel (I, p. 246) says. Hanssens (pp. 184*-5*) also assigns too much importance to the Pontifical of Durandus in this matter; he was misled by the Pontifical MS. Vat. lat. 1145, which is entitled *Pontificale Mimatense Gulielmi Durandi*, but is in fact the Pontifical of Guillaume Durand the younger (d. 1330), a nephew of the great liturgist. Cf. H. Ehrensberger, *Libri Liturgici Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae Manuscripti*, Fr. im Br., 1897, pp. 547-50; and L. Fischer, "Der Ordinarius Papae und der Pontificalis Ordinis Liber" in *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1930, 38, p. 8. According to Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 304, Vat. lat. 1145 contains a conflation of the Pontifical of Durandus with material from other sources.

Rationale indicates that he had no clear idea at all of the meaning of concelebration:

Consecrat autem oleum Episcopus cum omnibus sacerdotibus ei adstantibus, quia hoc sacramentum fuit a Christi discipulis institutum: vel tractum est ab antiqua consuetudine qua consueverat ecclesia primitiva simul cum pontifice verbis et manibus corpus Christi conficere, forte ad testimonium, prout hodie in missa de ordinibus cum ordinatore faciunt ordinati.

The bishop consecrates the oil with all his priests standing about him, because this sacrament was instituted by the disciples of Christ: or it is derived from the ancient custom whereby the primitive Church used to consecrate the Body of Christ with words and actions at the same moment as the bishop—perhaps as witnesses, just as the newly ordained do with the ordaining bishop nowadays in the Mass of Ordination.¹

The phrase *forte ad testimonium* (“perhaps as witnesses”) shows that Durandus was aware of Pseudo-Anacletus’s explanation² without being satisfied by it, and that he had nothing better to offer.

Here again Piccolomini’s Roman Pontifical of 1485 does not follow Durandus. Its rubric does not specify the intention that the priests are to form, nor does it use the word *concelebrare*, but it implies fairly clearly that the concelebration is to be sacramental:

Presbyteri vero ordinati retro pontificem vel hinc inde ubi magis commodum erit in terra genuflexi, habeant libros coram se super scabellis seu bancis ordinatis, dicentes tacite canonem et quaecumque de missa dixerit pontifex, qui tamen bene advertat quod secretas morose dicat et aliquantulum alto, ita ut ordinati sacerdotes possint secum omnia dicere quae dici debent eodem momento.

The newly-ordained priests kneel on the ground behind the bishop or on each side, whichever is more convenient. They should have books with them on stools or benches that have been set out for them, and they say silently the canon and whatsoever of the Mass is said by the bishop. He must take care to say the secret prayers slowly and in a slightly raised voice, so that the new priests can say everything that they ought to say at the same moment as himself.

In the revision of 1497 *tacite* (“silently”) is altered to *secrete* (“secretly”), and the word *concelebrant* appears in a rubric

¹ *Rationale* IV, 7, p. 8, 8, 23.

² *Supra*, p. 147.

concerning the communion of the newly-ordained (to be quoted later). In Roman Pontificals since that of Clement VIII the adverb (*secrete*) has been simply omitted.

THE SECRET PRAYER

After the Secret of the Mass for the day, the bishop and the new priests read the following special prayer, which has come down, without any change, from the Gelasian Sacramentary:

Tuis, quaesumus, Domine,
operare mysteriis, ut haec tibi
munera dignis mentibus offeramus.
Per Dominum nostrum Jesum
Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum
vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus
Sancti, Deus, per omnia saecula
saeculorum.

Work in us, we beseech Thee, O
Lord, through Thy mysteries, so
that we may offer these gifts to
Thee with worthy minds. Through
our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son,
who liveth and reigneth with Thee
in the unity of the Holy Ghost,
God, world without end.¹

Since "Thy mysteries" here evidently means the mysteries of the Mass, the new priests are here praying that through this Mass and their Communion God will give them grace to offer Mass worthily in the future. But, it may be said, have they not already received this grace by the imposition of hands? The answer is that they have, but there is always room for an increase. It was suggested in the introductory chapter that the character gives the priest a permanent claim to the graces he needs in order to perform his duties worthily. This claim does not dispense him from the ordinary rule that graces are given to those who ask for them. Hence the graces petitioned for in this Secret are graces of the priesthood: they will be given through the Mass and Communion, but also by reason of the sacerdotal character.

* * * * *

The Gelasian Sacramentary supplied a special *infra actionem* prayer for ordinations:

Hanc igitur oblationem quam
tibi offerimus pro famulis tuis,
quos ad presbyterii vel diaconatus

Therefore we beseech Thee, O
Lord, mercifully to accept this
offering which we make on behalf

¹ Ed. Wilson, p. 29.

gradus promovere dignatus es, quæsumus, Domine, placatus suscipias; et quod eis divino munere contulisti, in eis propitius tua dona custodi. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

of Thy servants, whom Thou hast deigned to promote to the order of priest or deacon; and do Thou preserve in them the gifts that Thou hast bountifully conferred upon them. Through Christ our Lord.¹

The original purpose of inserting a *Hanc igitur* prayer into the Canon of the Mass was to express the intention for which the Mass was being offered. (The Missal still has a special *Hanc igitur* for Easter and Pentecost.) It was a natural thing to specify the intention immediately before the moment of sacrifice. The Roman Pontifical still contains a special *Hanc igitur* prayer for the consecration of a bishop, but the one for ordinations to the diaconate and priesthood very soon passed out of use.² Durandus, though he gives the Collect, Secret and Post-communion for ordinands inherited from the Gelasian Sacramentary in the text of his Pontifical, does not give the *Hanc igitur*.

From the form of the first sentence it is plain that in the Gelasian rite of ordination the newly-ordained did not make an offering at the Offertory—otherwise the prayer would have run: *Hanc igitur oblationem famulorum tuorum illorum, quam tibi offerunt . . .* (“This sacrifice of Thy servants, which they offer to Thee . . .”). From the variations in the wording of such prayers it has been inferred that in the Gelasian liturgy it was a point of etiquette that on the great days in a person’s life—Baptism, Marriage, Ordination, etc.—he did not make the offering himself, but others did it for him.³ A suggestion was made above to explain why the rubrics later required the newly-ordained to make an offering themselves.⁴

* * * * *

In the Pontifical of Durandus, before the *Agnus Dei* the bishop gives a solemn blessing to the new priests:

¹ Wilson, *ibid.*

² On the reason why variations in the *Hanc igitur* were suppressed, see Jungmann, II, p. 225. Gregory the Great was chiefly responsible: he did not want trivial and unworthy intentions mentioned at this most solemn moment of the Mass.

³ Cf. Jungmann, II, p. 222.

⁴ Cf. *supra*, p. 145.

Omnipotens Deus sua vos benedicat clementia et sensum vobis sapientiae salutaris infundat. Amen.

Catholicae fidei documentis imbuat et in sanctis operibus perseverabiles reddat. Amen.

Gressus vestros ab errore convertat et viam vobis pacis et caritatis ostendat. Amen.

Quod ipse praestare dignetur, cuius regnum et imperium sine fine permanet in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Et benedictio Dei omnipotentis Patris ✠ et Filii ✠ et Spiritus ✠ sancti descendat super vos et maneat semper. Et Pax ✠ eius sit sem ✠ per vobis ✠ cum. R̄. Et cum spiritu tuo.

May almighty God in His clemency bless you and pour into you the spirit of salutary wisdom. Amen.

May He imbue you with documents of the faith and give you perseverance in good works. Amen.

May He turn your steps from error and show you the path of peace and charity. Amen.

Which may He deign to effect, whose reign and empire remain without end through all ages. Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, descend upon you and remain for ever. And may His peace be always with you. R̄. And with thy spirit.¹

The original purpose of giving a blessing of this type at this particular point in the Mass may have been to prepare the faithful for Holy Communion;² but later, in the Gallican Church, it became a substitute for those who did not communicate. The form of words used varied according to the occasion, but regularly consisted of three members, each answered by an Amen. The pattern for all such blessings was the priestly blessing given in the Book of Numbers: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord show His face to thee and have mercy on thee. The Lord turn His countenance to thee, and give thee peace."³

The reason why Durandus' triple blessing did not survive is that the Gallican custom of inserting an episcopal blessing at this point of the Mass, although it crossed the Alps into Italy, never established itself in Rome.⁴ Moreover, Piccolomini may have felt that the special blessing to be given by the bishop to the new priests at the end of the Mass rendered the earlier one superfluous.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 371. Cf. Morinus, II, p. 281.

² Jungmann, II, pp. 356-9. But this is not certain. In Hippolytus (ed. Hauler, I, p. 108) the blessing of oil and other things comes after the Amen of the Canon—as the blessing of oil on Maundy Thursday does still. And the *Velatio Nuptialis* in the Leonine Sacramentary (ed. Feltoe, p. 141) seems to have a blessing for that place, just as in our Nuptial Mass of today.

³ Num. vii. 23-7.

⁴ Cf. Jungmann, II, p. 357, n. 11: "In Rom selbst blieben sie unbekannt."

THE COMMUNION

Special rubrics for the Communion of the newly-ordained appear first in Roman Pontificals of the thirteenth century—the same Pontificals in which concelebration begins to make its appearance.

Post communionem vero pontificis, ante perfusionem, ordinati, facta confessione et osculata dextera pontificis, sacram communionem recipiant de manu pontificis, recipiendo osculum pacis ab eo, presbyteri scilicet et diaconi. Sanguinem autem recipiunt de manu diaconi qui cantavit evangelium. Et redeunt ad loca sua circa altare.

Si alius a Papa ordinationem faciat, communicabunt omnes sacerdotes primo, diaconi secundo et subdiaconi tertio, de corpore tantum et non de sanguine, prout plenius habes in Ordinario de officio missae.

After the bishop's Communion and before the ablu-tion, the new priests and deacons, after saying the *Confiteor* and kissing the bishop's right hand, receive Holy Communion from the bishop's hand, receiving the kiss of peace from him. But they receive the Blood from the hand of the deacon who chanted the Gospel. And they return to their places about the altar.

If someone other than the Pope performs the ordinations, all the priests will communicate first, then the deacons, then the subdeacons, but they will receive only the Body and not the Blood, as is explained more at length in the Ordinary of the Office of the Mass.¹

The most remarkable thing about this rubric is that the new priests receive Holy Communion under both kinds if they have been ordained by the Pope. The explanation of this privilege may be that in the period 468–867 as a rule the only priests who were ordained by the Pope were the cardinal priests of Rome,² and that in the latter part of this period the cardinal priests had the privilege of concelebrating with the Pope at the great feasts. It is logical that when a priest has concelebrated sacramentally, he should receive under both kinds. However, as the earlier rubric in these same Pontificals seems to indicate that the new priests concelebrate only ceremonially and makes no distinction about the intention to be had when the Pope is ordaining, it seems incorrect to conclude

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, II, p. 350; Martène, II, p. 85.

² Cf. A. Harnack, "Über die Ordinationes im Papstbuch" in *Sitzungsberichte der kgl. Preuss. Akad.*, Berlin, 1897, p. 768.

that Communion under both kinds was introduced precisely as a consequence of the concelebration. But it may well have been suggested by the same passage of Pope Innocent III as suggested the concelebration.¹ Since the Mass of Ordination is to be made as close a representation of the Last Supper as possible, the new priests should receive the chalice. But there was precedent for this in the Roman Church only in Papal Masses.

Other points worthy of notice in the same rubric are: that there is as yet no special rubric about the *Confiteor*; that the custom of kissing the bishop's hand makes its appearance here—no doubt as a mark of reverence and gratitude to the hand that gives so precious a gift;² and that immediately after receiving the Host, the ordained received the kiss of peace from the bishop. This kiss was a common practice in the early Church as an act of charity and union after receiving the sacrament of charity and union. The later disappearance of this kiss is probably due to Durandus, who wrote the following rubric:

Et si presbyter vel diaconus est qui communicat, pontifex data hostia immediate eum ad osculum pacis recipit.

Apud nos tamen solummodo presbyteri communicant nec ad osculum recipiuntur.

And if it is a priest or deacon who is receiving Communion, the bishop, after giving him the Host, immediately admits him to the kiss of peace.

But with us, only the priests receive Communion, and they are not admitted to the kiss.³

The omission of the kiss in Durandus's arrangement of the rite may simply be a consequence of his earlier rubric saying that the new priests are to keep their hands anointed and clasped together until the end of the Mass.

Since he was compiling his Pontifical not for Rome but for his own and similar diocesan churches, Durandus makes no mention of the privilege of Communion under both kinds in Papal Masses of ordination; and at Rome itself this privilege was not maintained in the printed Pontificals. Piccolomini's Pontifical of 1485 has the following rubric:

¹ Quoted *supra*, p. 148.

² Cf. Catalanus, I, p. 146.

³ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 348.

Postquam pontifex se communicaverit et totum sanguinem sumpserit, post primam oris ablutionem priusquam digitos lavet, accedant omnes ad sacros ordines promoti: primo presbyteri, deinde diaconi, tandem subdiaconi bini et bini: et quilibet priusquam communicet flexis genibus manum pontificis hostiam tenentis osculetur: et mox pontifex patena supposita porrigens sacram communionem singulis dicat: *Corpus Domini nostri Iesu Christi custodiat te et perducat in vitam aeternam. Amen.* Omnibus communicatis et purificatis, surgunt omnes et pontifex cum mitra lavat manus.

After the bishop has received Communion and taken all of the Blood, after the first ablution of his mouth and before he washes his fingers, all who have been promoted to Sacred Orders come forward—first the priests, then the deacons, and lastly the subdeacons, two by two; and each, before receiving Communion, kneeling kisses the bishop's hand that holds the Host; then the bishop, with the paten held beneath, gives Holy Communion to each, saying: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you and lead you to eternal life. Amen." When all have received Communion and purified themselves, all arise and the bishop, mitred, washes his hands.

The writer shows that he is deliberately excluding Communion under both kinds by inserting the word *totum* ("all of the Blood"), which still remains in the modern rubric as a vestige of the old Roman custom.

The meaning of the phrase *et purificatis* ("and have purified themselves") is made clear in the revision of 1497:

Unus ministrorum pontificis stat iuxta cornu epistolae altaris calicem habens, non illum quo pontifex celebravit, sed alium cum vino, et mappulam mundam in manibus; ad quem singuli communicati accedunt et se purificant; os extergunt et ad partem se locant.

One of the bishop's servers stands close to the epistle corner of the altar holding in his hands a chalice—not the one with which the bishop has celebrated, but another containing wine—and a clean cloth; each one after receiving Communion approaches him and purifies himself; they wipe their mouth and go away.

This rubric, which still remains in force, was probably devised in order to maintain the external appearance of the rite unchanged at Rome after it had been decided that the newly-ordained should no longer receive under both kinds. The liturgist who composed it may have wished to preserve the closest possible assimilation of the rite to the Last Supper.

He had a precedent for what he did in the history of the

reservation of the Host from Maundy Thursday to Good Friday. In the Gelasian Sacramentary a rubric for Maundy Thursday says:

Communicant et reservant de ipso sacrificio in crastinum unde communicent.

They receive Communion, and reserve part of the sacrifice till the following day, to receive it then.¹

This was done in order to allow the faithful to communicate on the anniversary of the Passion while respecting the ancient tradition that forbade the offering of Mass during the last two days of Holy Week. At that time it was still customary for the faithful to communicate under both kinds; hence they reserved both the Host and the Chalice—that this is implied in *reservant de ipso sacrificio* (“they reserve part of the sacrifice”) is proved by the rubric for Good Friday:

Istas orationes supra dictas expletas, ingrediuntur diaconi in sacrario. Procedunt cum corpore et sanguine Domini quod ante diem remansit, et ponunt super altare.

When the above-mentioned prayers are over, the deacons enter the sacristy. They come forth with the Body and Blood of the Lord, which remained over on the previous day, and place it on the altar.²

The tradition of reserving the Precious Blood as well as the Host survived in some churches into the twelfth century, and perhaps even into the thirteenth.³ But in the course of the eighth century a new practice was started; it appears in the *Ordines Romani*, and became general through the fusion of the *Ordines* with the Sacramentaries in the tenth century. The Precious Blood was no longer reserved—probably for practical reasons (viz., to avoid the danger of its being spilled)—and on Good Friday the chalice brought to the altar contained unconsecrated wine. The purpose of using this chalice seems to have been simply to preserve the exterior forms of the traditional ritual.⁴ Here then was a precedent for the use of unconsecrated wine in the rite of ordination.

¹ Ed. Wilson, p. 72. On this subject see M. Andrieu, *Immixtio et Consecratio*, Paris, 1924, p. 20f.

² Ed. Wilson, p. 77.

³ Andrieu, *Immixtio*, p. 25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

The Roman Pontifical of 1497 also introduced a rubric prescribing that newly-ordained priests who are concelebrating with the bishop should not recite the *Confiteor*:

Presbyteri ante communionem non dicunt confessionem neque datur eis absolutio, quia concelebrant pontifici: propterea si non sunt alii ordinati, confessio et absolutio praedictae omittuntur.

The priests do not say the *Confiteor* before Communion, nor is the absolution given them, because they concelebrate with the bishop; therefore if no others have been ordained, the *Confiteor* and absolution are omitted.

Since the new priests are concelebrating, and a priest does not recite the *Confiteor*, *Misereatur* and *Indulgentiam* before receiving Communion when he says Mass, these prayers are omitted by the concelebrants.

A further change in the manner of communicating was made as recently as 1872, when the Sacred Congregation of Rites decreed that the bishop should give Holy Communion to the new priests without saying the prayer *Corpus Domini Nostri*.¹

THE RESPONSORY *Iam Non Dicam*

After the second ablutions the bishop stands without his mitre at the epistle corner facing the altar and reads the following responsory:

Iam non dicam vos servos, sed amicos meos, quia omnia cognovistis quae operatus sum in medio vestri. Alleluia.* Accipite Spiritum Sanctum in vobis Paraclitum.* Ille est quem Pater mittet vobis. Alleluia. √. Vos amici mei estis, si feceritis quae ego praecipio vobis.* Accipite. √. Gloria Patri, etc.* Ille.

No longer will I call you servants, but my friends, because you have known all things I have wrought in the midst of you. Alleluia.* Receive the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, within you.* He it is whom the Father will send to you. Alleluia. √. Ye are my friends, if ye do the things that I command you.* Receive. √. Glory be.* He it is.

This responsory, made up very largely of phrases taken from our Lord's last discourse at the end of the Last Supper, was

¹ *Decreta Authentica S.C.R.*, n. 3274, 31 Aug. 1872. Dub. II: In praebenda Communionem Neo-Presbyteris debetne adhiberi formula *Corpus*, etc.; vel potius illa debet omitti? R. Negative ad primam partem; affirmative ad secundam.

introduced into the Roman tradition by Durandus,¹ presumably in order to stress still further the resemblance of the Mass of Ordination to the Last Supper.

Our Lord said to His newly-ordained Apostles: "I will not now call you servants: for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth. But I have called you friends: because all things whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you."² These words are a little puzzling, since the Gospels do not give the impression that our Lord had previously treated His Apostles as servants. Probably the comparison with servants extends no further than this: that just as a servant is not told the secret plans of his master but is required to obey without understanding, so the Apostles had not before the Last Supper been told the secret plans of our Redemption and in particular the mystery of the Eucharist; they had been required to obey our Lord's instructions without fully understanding what was afoot. But now that they have been initiated, they will henceforth co-operate in Christ's work not blindly like servants but with understanding as friends. The abridgement of our Lord's words in the bishop's responsory makes the reference to the Eucharistic Sacrifice a little more explicit by the use of *operatus sum*, which can mean either "I have done" or "I have offered sacrifice".

This responsory marks the end of the representation of the Last Supper.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 371.

² John xv. 15.

IX

FOURTH PART: COMMISSION TO ABSOLVE, ETC.

Before the Communion prayer is read, the Mass is interrupted a second time for the inclusion of a group of ceremonies, all of which are concerned with the new priests' place and function in the Mystical Body of Christ. These ceremonies have been in their present position and order since the time of Durandus, viz.:

1. The profession of faith.
2. The second imposition of hands.
3. The promise of obedience.
4. The kiss.
5. The bishop's charge to the new priests.
6. The final blessing of the new priests.

These will be discussed one by one, and an attempt will be made at the same time to answer the obvious question: how did the idea of interrupting the Mass for a second time ever arise?

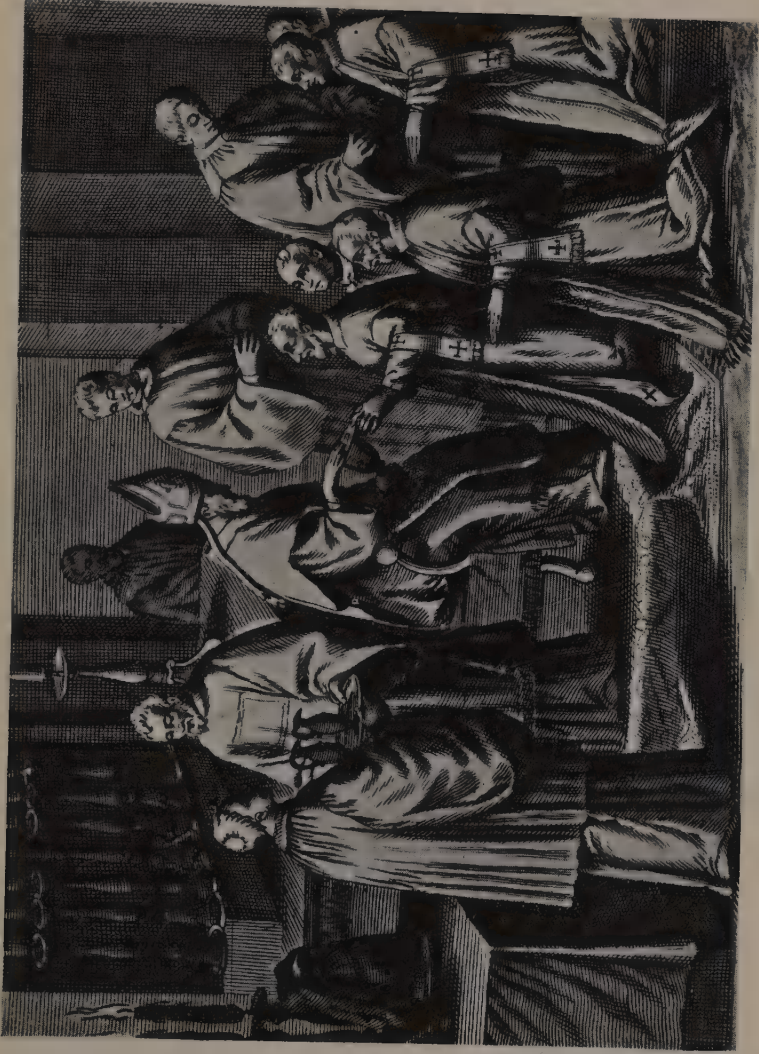
THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

The profession of faith is the oldest component of the group. It appears in a twelfth-century Besançon Pontifical:

Ponet archidiaconus pallium super humeros Domini archiepiscopi et incipiatur a novis presbyteris *Credo in Deum*, ut ibi in publico proferant quod praedicaturi sunt, scilicet fidem Trinitatis. Et sic finitur missa.

Then the archdeacon places the pallium on the shoulders of the lord archbishop, and the new priests begin "I believe in God", so that there in public they may profess the faith they are going to preach, namely faith in the Trinity. And so the Mass is finished.¹

¹ Quoted by Catalanus, I, p. 148. He says that the profession of faith was made before the Mass, and the ordinations were performed after it! The rubric itself (*novis presbyteris*) refutes this extraordinary notion.



The Tradition of Instruments: Roman Pontifical, 1664

The last words of this rubric do not mean that the profession of faith was made at the very end of the Mass, as can be seen from a very similar rubric from a Rheims Pontifical of the thirteenth or fourteenth century:

Tum dat singulis osculum pacis dicendo *Pax tibi*, et communicant omnes presbyteri. Presbyteri vero pro consecratione sua stantes ante altare fidem Sanctae Trinitatis quam praedicaturi sunt, incipiant ita: *Credo in Deum Patrem*, etc. Et sic finiatur Missa ordine suo.

Then he gives to each the kiss of peace, saying "Peace be to you", and all the priests communicate. But the priests, in order of their consecration, stand before the altar and profess the faith in the Holy Trinity which they are going to preach, beginning thus: "I believe in God the Father" etc. And so let the Mass be ended in due order.¹

Durandus introduced the rubric that has remained in force to the present day:

Incepto responsorio, Pontifex, accepta mitra, vertit se ad presbyteros ordinatos, qui ante altare coram ipso stantes profitentur fidem quam praedicaturi sunt, dicentes: *Credo in Deum*, etc.

When the responsory has been begun, the bishop receives his mitre and turns to the new priests who stand around him before the altar and make a profession of the faith they are going to preach, saying: "I believe in God", etc.²

In its present position and as interpreted by the rubric, the recitation of the Creed is not merely a public profession of orthodoxy, but a ceremony whereby the new priests signify that they have accepted the office of preaching the Gospel. It is, therefore, comparable in significance to the receiving of the chalice and the second imposition of hands.

THE UNFOLDING OF THE CHASUBLE

After the profession of faith in the modern rite comes the second imposition of hands, but as the unfolding of the chasuble was added to this group of ceremonies earlier than the second imposition, it will be more convenient to discuss the unfolding of the chasuble first.

¹ Morinus, II, p. 279.

² Cf. Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 372.

A Roman Pontifical of the thirteenth century has the following rubric for the first giving of the chasuble (before the anointing):

Hic vestiet eum casula plicata.

Here he will vest him with the folded chasuble.¹

And there is no later rubric in this Pontifical saying when they were unfolded; presumably, therefore, they remained folded throughout the rite.

It was suggested above that this Roman custom of folding the new priests' chasubles may have been introduced for the sake of uniformity, so that cardinal priests vested as bishops, but with folded chasubles, would not appear inferior to priests who were not cardinals. However, especially outside Rome, this custom would very easily be misunderstood: it would strongly suggest that at the time of receiving the folded chasuble the ordinands were not yet priests. Hence there would be urgent need of a new rubric saying that the chasuble is to be unfolded at some point before the end of the ceremony—or else the ordinands would appear to go away at the very end still incomplete priests! That furnishes a likely explanation of why it was felt necessary to introduce the ceremony of unfolding the chasubles before the end of the Mass.

The Rheims Pontifical quoted shortly above has a marginal addition which shows that the unfolding was originally added to the profession of faith without any second imposition of hands between:

Et post sumpcionem corporis et sanguinis Iesu Christi, antequam dicatur Postcommunio, tunc Episcopus trahat unicuique casulam deorsum per scapulas, osculans eum et dicens *Pax Domini sit semper tecum. Respondeat ordinatus Et cum spiritu tuo.* Et per manus se commendat orationibus eorum dicens *Ora pro me, frater.* Respondet ordinatus *Dominus Vobis retribuatur.*

After receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, before the Postcommunion is said, the bishop pulls down each one's chasuble past his shoulders, and kisses him saying: "May the peace of the Lord be always with you." The new priests reply: "And with thy spirit." And let the bishop, taking their hands in his [?], commend himself to their prayers, saying: "Pray for me, brother." The new priest replies "May the Lord reward you."²:

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, II, p. 345, 24, n. 2. MS. Paris Bibl. Nat., *Lat.* 1219. For the complete text of the ordinations in this Pontifical see Martène, II, pp. 84-5.

² Morinus, II, p. 279.

Here then is a simple form of the second group of ceremonies; it consists only of the profession of faith, the unfolding of the chasubles, the kiss and the bishop's request for prayers. The kiss and the request for prayers have been moved from the end of the first group into this position because they mark the end of the rite.

THE SECOND LAYING-ON OF HANDS

In the modern rite, immediately after the profession of faith, the bishop sits down on the faldstool before the middle of the altar and lays both hands on the head of each one kneeling before him, saying to him:

<p>Accipe Spiritum Sanctum; quorum remiseris peccata, remittuntur eis; et quorum retinueris retenta sunt.</p>	<p>Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.</p>
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The bishop does not wear his gloves for the second imposition of hands, whereas he does for the first. The explanation of this difference is a simple one. At the beginning of the eleventh century, when the *mappula* (handkerchief) became transformed into the purely decorative maniple, bishops began to wear gloves at Mass to keep their hands clean.¹ They wore them—and do so still—until the washing of hands before the Offertory.² Since the first imposition of hands comes before the Offertory, the bishop is still wearing his gloves. There is nothing more to it than that.

The form of words used at the second imposition of hands was originally introduced to accompany the *first* imposition. The original practice is mentioned in a rubric, quoted above, from a Toulouse Pontifical of about A.D. 1300;³ but it is much older than the Toulouse Pontifical. In the life of St. Lietbert of Cambrai, who was consecrated bishop in 1048 and must therefore have been ordained about 1025, we find the following description of his ordination:

¹ Cf. J. Braun, *Die Pontificalen Gewänder des Abendlandes*, pp. 85-9.

² *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, II, 8.

³ Morinus, II, p. 281, quoted *supra*, p. 92.

More canonico factis scrutiniis, ordinandorum personae praesentantur et nomina, inter quos et prae quibus dominus Lietbertus levita. Suis locis et competentis consecrantur ceteri, donec ventum est ad ordinem Presbyterii. Cumque ad manus impositionem pontificalis inter ordinandum diceretur novo presbytero *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum, quorum remiseras peccata, remittuntur eis*, infremuit habitumque mentis vultus significatione monstravit; liberalis eius facies, quibus vestitus erat, sancto rore perfudit.

When the canonical examinations had taken place, the persons and names of the ordinands were presented, among them and pre-eminent among them being the lord Lietbert, a deacon. The others were consecrated in their due order and to their own rank, until it came to the order of the priesthood. And when at the imposition of the bishop's hand while being ordained, the new priest heard "Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them", he sighed and showed the disposition of his mind by the expression on his countenance; and his noble face bedewed with tears the vestments he was wearing.¹

Since there is no evidence of the two impositions of hands either in this text or in early eleventh-century Pontificals, it seems certain, if the narrative can be trusted, that the bishop who ordained Lietbert said the words *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*, etc., during the first imposition of hands. It is a recognized law of liturgical evolution that every liturgical action tends to acquire an accompanying formula of words.² Although the words "Receive the Holy Ghost" are too indeterminate to suffice as the form of the sacrament, they are an appropriate formula to accompany the laying-on of hands by which the Holy Ghost is given; but the following words: "Whose sins you shall forgive", etc., which were probably added by sheer force of association, are not: the power of absolution is not the essence of the priesthood, and it is not fitting that it should receive such prominence.

It cannot have been Durandus who first transferred this formula to the second group of ceremonies and introduced the second imposition of hands, since Scotus in his *Commentary on*

¹ *Vita Domni Lietberti Episcopi Cameracensis*, in L. D'Achery, *Veterum aliquot Scriptorum Specilegium*, Paris, 1677, IX, p. 691. The closing words of this quotation seem to show that Lietbert was already vested as a priest. Perhaps Cambrai was still following the old Roman custom whereby the ordinand was vested by the archdeacon immediately before the imposition of hands by the bishop.

² Cf. De Vert, quoted *supra*, p. 92.

the *Sentences*, quoted above, was already familiar with this arrangement of the rite, and indeed regarded it as the normal thing.¹ For want of any authoritative statement on the subject, we can do no more than conjecture why such an arrangement was first made. The following explanation must, therefore, be regarded with caution.

When the second group of ceremonies was in the primitive condition exhibited to us in the Rheims Pontifical quoted above, the rite was not in a satisfactory state. The unfolding of the chasuble signified that the newly-ordained now had the priesthood complete—and yet nothing had happened to complete it! The second imposition of hands with its accompanying formula may, therefore, have been introduced to justify the unfolding. And again—another conjecture—the bishop responsible for this innovation may have been influenced by a passage in St. Thomas' *Commentary on the Sentences*, where the following difficulty is proposed:

Dominus dedit discipulis sacerdotalem potestatem quando dixit, *Accipite Spiritum Sanctum, quorum remisistis*, etc. Sed Spiritus datur per manus impositionem. Ergo in ipsa manus impositione imprimitur character ordinis.

The Lord gave His disciples priestly power when He said "Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive" etc. But the Spirit is given by the laying-on of hands. Therefore it is at the imposition of hands that the character of Orders is imprinted.

St. Thomas replies as follows:

Ad secundum dicendum quod Dominus discipulis dedit sacerdotalem potestatem quantum ad principalem actum ante passionem in cena, quando dixit *Accipite et manducate*; unde subiunxit, *Hoc facite in meam commemorationem*. Sed post resurrectionem dedit eis sacerdotalem potestatem quantum ad actum secundarium, qui est ligare et absolvere.

The Lord gave His disciples priestly power with a view to the principal act of the priesthood at the Supper before His passion, when He said "Take and eat"; that is why He added "Do this for a commemoration of me". But after His resurrection He gave them priestly power with a view to the secondary act, which is that of binding and loosing.²

This is the first appearance known to the present writer of the idea that the Apostles received the powers of the priesthood

¹ *Supra*, p. 45.

² *In IV Sent.*, d. 24, q. 2, a. 2, ad. 2.

in two stages, one before the passion of our Lord and the other after it. If then the folding of the chasuble signified that the priesthood was first given incomplete, what more natural than to find the completion in the giving of the power of absolution, and therefore to transfer the words *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum*, etc. to the end of the ceremony just before the unfolding of the chasuble?

A fourteenth-century Rouen Pontifical shows the second group of ceremonies at this stage of development. After the Communion prayer it has the following:

Et tunc successive imponit manus super capita singulorum inclinata, dicendo cuilibet quod sequitur: *Accipe Spiritum Sanctum; quorum remiseric*, etc. Postmodum extendens casulam complicatam cuiuslibet, induit quemque eorum manibus remanentibus iunctis, dicendo sic: *Stola innocentiae induat te Dominus. Et cum osculo dicit Pax Domini. Amen.*

Then he lays his hands on the head of each in turn bowed before him, saying to each: "Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive" etc. Afterwards, extending each one's folded chasuble, he clothes him in it, while the new priest's hands remain joined, and says as follows: "The Lord clothe you with the robe of innocence." And with a kiss he says: "The peace of the Lord!" Amen.¹

Durandus has a similar rubric, but instead of immediately closing the rite with the kiss, he inserts the other ceremonies listed above. The reason why it is prescribed in the above rubric and in Durandus that the hands must remain joined is simply that, according to these Pontificals, the hands still have the holy oil upon them. Piccolomini, in his edition of 1485, having decided that the oil should be washed off before the Offertory, omitted the clause; since then the new priests have been at liberty to open their hands, if they wish—though there is no necessity for doing so if they are wearing a Roman chasuble or a semi-Gothic one.

THE PROMISE OF OBEDIENCE

In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical quoted above,² the promise of obedience is part of a dialogue which precedes the

¹ Morinus, II, p. 281.

² *Supra*, p. 83.

conferring of the sacrament. It was pointed out that this dialogue is really a Roman *stipulatio*. At least since the time of Durandus, who has the promise in its present position, the promise has been combined with another ceremony that is not of Roman but of German origin: the new priest kneels before the bishop and places his joined hands between the hands of the bishop; when the promise has been made, the bishop leans forward and kisses him on the cheek.

It has been suggested that the clasping of hands derives from the Greek and Roman custom of "shaking" hands in making an agreement—to signify conjunction and agreement of mind and will.¹ But bishop and priest do not here clasp hands as equals. The hands are the instruments of service, and by putting his hands into the bishop's the priest is signifying his will to put his service at the disposal of the bishop. This particular form of hand-clasping is of feudal origin: it signifies the vassal's placing of his person and his strength at the service of his Lord.²

In the feudal ceremony of homage the vassal made an oath to a bilateral contract with his overlord.³ The priest at ordination does not make an oath to his bishop. The taking of such oaths was forbidden by the Second Council of Châlons-sur-Saone:

Dictum est interea de quibusdam fratribus, quod eos quos ordinaturi sunt jurare cogunt, quod digni sint, et contra canones non sint facturi, et obedientes sint episcopo qui eos ordinat et ecclesiae in qua ordinantur; quod iuramentum, quia periculosum est, omnes una inhibendum statuimus.

It has been reported of certain of the brethren that they compel those whom they are about to ordain, to take an oath that they are worthy, that they will not contravene the canons, and that they will be obedient to the bishop who ordains them and to the Church in which they are ordained. We have all unanimously decided that such an oath is to be prohibited as dangerous.⁴

¹ Catalanus, I, p. 149.

² Cf. Herwegen, p. 328: "The outstretched hands signify the service which the vassal offers to his lord."

³ Cf. D. Whitlock, *The Beginnings of English Society*, Harmondsworth (Penguin), 1952, p. 33.

⁴ Canon 13, quoted by Martène, II, p. 24.

No doubt the Council's chief objection was to the oath regarding the ordinand's own worthiness, but the oath of obedience is forbidden too.

The rubric in the Pontifical of Durandus prescribes the promise only for priests who are ordained by their own local ordinaries:

Et mox unusquisque ad episcopum sigillatim accedit, ponens manus suas iunctas inter manus episcopi dicentis cuilibet: *Promittis michi et successoribus meis obedientiam et reverentiam?* Et ille respondet: *Promitto.* Et hoc nisi alteri sit subiectus.

Soon they approach the bishop one by one, and place their joined hands between the hands of the bishop, who says to each: "Do you promise obedience and reverence to me and my successors?" He replies: "I promise"—this unless he is subject to another Ordinary.¹

It is implied that if the new priest is an exempt religious or a secular ordained outside his own diocese, the promise would be simply omitted. Piccolomini followed Durandus' rubric with merely verbal changes.

The second printed Pontifical (1497) introduced a promise for seculars ordained outside their own dioceses:

Promittis pontifici ordinario tuo pro tempore existenti reverentiam et obedientiam?

Do you promise reverence and obedience to the bishop who is your Ordinary for the time being?

Exempt religious still, apparently, made no promise. In some manuscript Pontificals of earlier date they had been told to make it with the qualification *salvo Ordine meo* ("without prejudice to my Order").² Not a very happy solution! The difficulty was eventually settled by the insertion into Clement VIII's Pontifical of another alternative formula:

Promittis Praelato ordinario tuo pro tempore existenti reverentiam et obedientiam?

Do you promise reverence and obedience to the prelate who is your Ordinary for the time being?

The "ordinary prelate" of an exempt religious is a major superior of his Order, e.g., a Jesuit Provincial.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 372.

² Martène, II, p. 25, from a Provence Pontifical of about 1350.

It might be objected that the promise of obedience is out of place after the *Iam non dicam vos servos* ("No longer will I call you servants")—as if the doing of homage put the new priest back into the position of a serf or servant. However, feudal barons did homage to their king, and in our own day we have seen the Duke of Edinburgh do homage to his royal wife. So there is no force in the objection.

The promise of obedience is a particularly moving ceremony when the new priest makes the promise to the bishop of his own diocese: he promises to work with the bishop until his death, and after that with his successors, for the good of his diocese and the salvation of the souls entrusted to the bishop's charge. A close bond of reverence, affection, gratitude and mutual confidence is tied between the new priest and the bishop who is in a special sense his "father in Christ".¹ When an exempt religious makes the promise, and the bishop receives it on behalf of "the prelate who is his ordinary for the time being", it is not quite the same; but even so it is a moment of deep emotion: the new priest knows that by becoming an "assistant of the episcopal order" he has put his life at the disposal of the Church's bishops, whether directly or through his religious superiors, and the bishop looking down at the young man kneeling before him, knows that the work of Christ will go on, when he himself is dead.

A few years ago, Pope Pius XII had occasion to refute certain erroneous opinions that have been held about the place of regular clergy in the Church and their relations to the bishops. Since the rubrics for the Promise of Obedience might give the impression that the regular clergy are less firmly integrated in the hierarchic structure of the Church than are the secular clergy, it will not be out of place to give here some excerpts from the Papal pronouncement:

It is a misconception of the very foundations which Christ laid down for His Church, to think that the secular form of the clerical state was established and ratified by our Divine Redeemer, whereas the regular form (though it is to be considered

¹ Cf. N. Gehr, *Die heiligen Sacramente der kath. Kirche*, Freiburg im Br., 1899, II, p. 392.

a good and legitimate one) is secondary and auxiliary, as being derived from the other. If we keep before our eyes the order of things established by Christ, neither of the two forms of the clerical state can claim the distinction of being of divine law, since divine law does not give one pre-eminence over the other, nor does it tend to the dissolution of either . . .

The exemption of religious Orders is not opposed to the principles of the constitution given to the Church from on high, nor is it at all contrary to the law that a priest must be under obedience to a bishop. For by the prescriptions of Canon Law exempt religious are subject to the power of the local bishop, so far as the performance of his episcopal office and the proper arrangement of the care of souls shall demand. And even apart from this, it has not perhaps been sufficiently observed in the discussions about exemption that have taken place in the past ten years, that by prescript of Canon Law exempt religious "are always and everywhere subject to the power of the Roman Pontiff, who is their highest Superior, and are moreover bound to obey him by virtue of their vow of obedience as well". But the Sovereign Pontiff has ordinary and immediate jurisdiction both over the Church as a whole, and over each diocese and each individual Christian. Therefore the primary God-given law, by which both clerics and lay-people must be subject to the rule of a bishop, has been abundantly satisfied by exempt religious no less than by others; and so, to conclude, in their service of Christ the regular and secular clergy both correspond in equal measure to His will and His law.¹

This important document shows, if any proof is needed, how fitting it is that regulars no less than seculars should, at their ordination, put their hands in the hands of the bishop and make their promise of obedience and reverence.

The clasping of hands and the promise are followed by a kiss, which is a rite of adoption, giving outward expression to the paternal relationship established or confirmed by the promise. There is a striking resemblance between this part of the rite and the ancient Welsh ritual for adoption of a child described in the *Tryads of Dvynwal Moelmud*, a collection of laws and customs which are said to go back to 400 B.C.!

¹ Address to the Convention of Religious, 8 Dec. 1950, *AAS*, 1951, XLIII, pp. 27-9. Cf. *CIC*, 499, §1.

The chief of the family ought to take the child's two hands between his two hands, and give him a kiss, for a kiss is a sign of affinity; and then to place the child's right hand in the hand of the oldest of the other men, who must kiss him also, even to the last man.¹

As the bishop leans forward to kiss the new priest on the cheek, he says to him:

Pax Domini sit semper tecum.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

To which the priest replies *Amen*. The mention of peace at this moment is most apt, since the ceremony of the promise will have awoken in the heart of each that "true, serene and apostolic charity" of which St. Bonaventure speaks.

From the most ancient times the completion of the ordination ceremony has been marked by this ceremonial embrace. It is mentioned by Hippolytus—explicitly in the consecration of bishops and by implication in the ordination of priests.² Since the liturgical use of the kiss has become steadily rarer and rarer since apostolic times, it is very probable that the kiss after ordination goes right back to the very earliest Christian ordinations. Among both Jews and heathens of apostolic times kissing was used much more frequently than it is at present as a mere sign of goodwill, concord and charity. In the Epistles of St. Paul the early Christians are four times exhorted to "salute one another with a holy kiss".³ It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the kiss was given after the conferring of the sacrament of Orders, as also after Baptism.⁴

In the *Ordines Romani*, where the whole rite of ordination took place in one group of ceremonies inserted in the Mass before the Offertory, the kiss was given at the end both by the

¹ W. Probert, *The Ancient Laws of Cambria*, London, 1823, p. 203. Cf. J. Michelet, *Origines du droit français*, Paris, 1837, p. 12; and J. Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, Leipzig, 1899, I, p. 12.

² Ed. Horner, p. 139 for bishops; and p. 143 for priests: "In the form which we said before he shall pray, saying: 'My God . . .'" Since this prayer is quite different from the one for bishops, "in the form" seems to mean "with the same ritual".

³ Rom. xvi. 16; 1 Cor. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 12; 1 Thess. v. 26. Cf. 1 Pet. v. 14.

⁴ Cf. H. Thurston, art. "Kiss" in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

bishop and by the other priests present. In Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the new priests kiss the ordaining prelate, other bishops and all priests and deacons present.¹ In the Pontifical of Durandus and thereafter in the Roman tradition, only the bishop gives the kiss.² Nowadays it is given by a touching of cheeks.³

When the second group of ceremonies took shape, the kiss was naturally moved from the end of the first group of ceremonies to the end of the second. Thus, for example, in the Rheims Pontifical quoted above, we find the unfolding of the chasuble followed by the kiss and the bishop's request for prayers.⁴ It is perhaps to be regretted that the bishop's request for the prayers of the new priests and their reply have been moved away from the embrace; but on the other hand, it is plain how much the rite has gained by the insertion of the Promise of Obedience between the unfolding of the chasuble and the kiss; the kiss itself has received added significance by becoming identified with the final act of the homage ceremony.

The portion of the rite just discussed is, therefore, a synthesis of the Roman *stipulatio*, the feudal custom of clasping hands, and the Jewish kiss.⁵

THE BISHOP'S CHARGE TO THE NEW PRIESTS

After receiving the embrace, the new priests return to their places. The bishop takes his seat, mitred, on the faldstool, and reads out the following charge:

Quia res quam tractaturi estis
satis periculosa est, filii dilectissimi,
moneo vos, ut diligenter totius
Missae ordinem, atque Hostiae
consecrationem ac fractionem, et
communione, ab aliis iam doctis

Dearly beloved sons, as the thing
that you are going to handle is
fairly dangerous, I warn you to
learn diligently from other priests
who are already experienced, the
ritual of the whole Mass, the conse-

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, I, p. 137; II, p. 349.

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 372.

³ Decretum S.C.R. 2682, 12 Nov. 1831, ad. 17: "Dextra vultus pars seu gena deosculanda est."

⁴ Morinus, II, p. 279, *supra*, p. 162.

⁵ Cf. M. Gerlaud, *L'Ordre*, Paris, 1930, p. 215: "Puisque le sacrement est un langage, on conçoit qu'il subisse des mutations."

sacerdotibus discatis, priusquam cration and breaking of the Host,
ad celebrandum Missam accedatis. and the Communion, before you
approach the celebration of Mass.

This curious instruction was introduced into the Roman Pontifical from that of Durandus. Before his day its use does not appear to have been at all widespread.

It was pointed out above that in the rite of ordination as arranged by Durandus the new priests do not concelebrate sacramentally.¹ Hence the bishop could well exhort the new priests, without qualification, to learn the ceremonies carefully "before approaching the celebration of Mass". But these words sound strange after the new priests have already concelebrated, especially if concelebration is meant to be an initiation and a lesson in how to say Mass. The charge was retained without alteration by Piccolomini, although in his arrangement of the rite there is sacramental concelebration, and so it has passed on to the present day. One Pontifical of about A.D. 1300, sensing no doubt the incongruity, alters *celebrandum accedatis* to *cantare praesumatis*, so that the sense would be: learn the ceremonies of High Mass before you attempt to *sing* Mass.² This is reasonable enough, since the rubrics for the celebrant at High Mass do differ considerably from those for Low Mass.

One problem that this charge presents is: why was it ever felt necessary to introduce this particular piece of advice into the rite at all? We may grant that in the thirteenth century candidates for the priesthood were not seminary-trained, as they are now, and the advice may have been necessary. But why give it during the rite of ordination? Possibly it was introduced originally at an earlier stage in the rite, before the Offertory, by a bishop who did not approve of sacramental concelebration and wished to dissuade the newly-ordained from exercising their priestly power, or from trying to learn the ritual *from him*, during the Mass of Ordination. This is of course nothing more than a conjecture, which further evidence from still unpublished Pontificals might refute; but it does

¹ *Supra*, p. 149.

² A Mainz Pontifical, quoted by Catalanus, I, p. 152. For its context see Martène, II, 80.

seem significant that the charge makes its appearance just about the time when sacramental concelebration was practised in some Churches and not in others.

A second problem is: why is the celebration of Mass said to be "fairly dangerous"? In the Celtic Church the central prayer of the Mass (*Qui pridie quam pateretur*) was sometimes called the *periculosa oratio* ("dangerous prayer"),¹ because a priest who tripped up or mispronounced any word of it, was liable to a fairly stiff canonical penance. In the *Penitential of Cummean* (about A.D. 650), for example, we find: "If anyone in error changes any of the words of the sacraments where the word 'danger' is noted, he shall keep three special fasts."² However, as there is no evidence that the exhortation *Quia res* originated in the Celtic Church, or that the canonical penalty just mentioned was still in force in the thirteenth century when the exhortation first appears, it is unlikely that an allusion is intended to the above-mentioned penance in particular. Durandus in his *Rationale* gives a whole list of canonical penances for various defects in the celebration of Mass, e.g., for spilling the chalice.³ So the meaning is quite general: since the Mass is a complicated rite, in which you may easily commit some fault and thereby incur a penance, be sure to take lessons from an experienced priest before your first Mass.

Nowadays this exhortation is entirely superfluous, since all

¹ Cf. G. F. Warner, *The Stowe Missal*, HBS, 1906, II, p. 40, Appendix: Treatise of the Mass, §8: "When the priest chants *Accipit Iesus panem*, the people kneel, and here no voice cometh lest it disturb the priest, for this is the right of it, that his mind separate not from God while he chants this lesson. Hence its *nomen* is *periculosa oratio*." Cf. Jungmann, II, p. 248, n. 16.

² The *Penitential of Cummean*, X, 9, in J. T. McNeill and H. M. Gamer, *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, Columbia University, New York, 1938, p. 112.

³ IV, 42, 18, p. 115. In the same chapter (§19) occurs an interesting use of the word *periculosa*. If a priest faints at the altar and is unable to continue, another priest must complete the sacrifice; "Sed si incertum est ubi ille dimisit, tunc quia periculosum esset verba sacramenti iterare vel praetermittere, posita oblata illa super propitiatorium minister denuo ponat vinum et aquam et reincipiat: *Hanc igitur oblationem* (confessione tamen praemissa) et hostia servata sumatur postmodum a ministro in fine missae." The "danger" here is the danger of using the sacramental words invalidly. If the exhortation *Quia res* was first introduced by a bishop who disapproved of sacramental concelebration, his objection may have been that there was danger lest some of the concelebrants through being behindhand (or all but one through being superfluous—see above, p. 145) would in fact use the sacramental words invalidly.

candidates for ordination have to pass an examination in the rites of the Holy Mass and administration of the sacraments before they can be ordained.

THE SPECIAL BLESSING FOR THE NEW PRIESTS

Next, the bishop rises, still with mitre and crozier, and blesses the priests kneeling before him with the following words:

Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Pa^{tr}is, et Fi^{li}i, et Spiritus ^Sancti, descendat super vos, ut sitis benedicti in ordine sacerdotali; et offeratis placabiles Hostias pro peccatis atque offensionibus populi omnipotenti Deo, cui est honor et gloria per omnia saecula saeculorum. R̄. Amen.

May the blessing of God almighty, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, descend upon you, so that you may be blessed in the Priestly Order. And may you offer propitiatory sacrifices for the sins and offences of the people to almighty God, to whom is honour and glory for ever and ever. R̄. Amen.

In the Gelasian Sacramentaries of the eighth century¹ and the Gregorian Sacramentaries of the ninth,² this blessing follows immediately after the vesting with the chasuble—because the chasuble is the chief part of the insignia of the priesthood and is the sign of membership of “the priestly order”. In the Romano-Germanic Pontifical, which introduces a special form of words for the giving of the chasuble, the blessing is removed to the end of the rite, immediately before the kiss, and there it remained in the Roman Pontificals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Durandus places it in the second group of ceremonies, in its present position.

Neither the latinity nor the thought-content of this formula is entirely unexceptionable. The bishop prays that the blessing of God may descend upon the new priests, first, that they may be blessed in the priestly order; the meaning presumably is “in order that they may be helped by abundant graces in their priestly life”. Secondly, that they may offer propitiatory sacrifices to God; this suggests that without God's special blessing their sacrifices will not be propitiatory; which is bad

¹ e.g. the Sacramentary of Gellone, in Martène, II, p. 44.

² e.g. the Rheims Sacramentary, in Morinus, II, p. 238.

theology.¹ To avoid this heterodox implication, it is necessary to take the clause *et offeratis* as syntactically independent of what precedes, i.e., as introducing a separate aspiration—hence the punctuation adopted in the above translation.²

¹ Cf. *Conc. Trid.*, Sess. XXII, cap. 1 (Denz., 939): “Et haec quidem illa munda oblatio est, quae nulla indignitate aut malitia offerentium inquinari potest.” Cf. J. Tixeront, *L’Ordre et les Ordinations*, Paris, 1925, pp. 178–9.

² Cf. the punctuation adopted in the Invitatory, *supra*, p. 97, and in the Collect, p. 98.



X

THE CLOSE OF THE CEREMONY

THE MASS IS RESUMED AGAIN

After the blessing of the new priests, the mitré is removed, the faldstool is taken away, and the bishop turns to the altar to continue the Mass. After the Communion and Post-communion of the Mass of the day, he inserts the following prayer, inherited from the Gelasian Sacramentary, for the newly-ordained:

Quos tuis, Domine, reficis sacramentis, continuis attolle benignus auxiliis; ut tuæ redemptionis effectum et †mysteriis† capiamus et moribus. Qui vivis et regnas cum Deo Patre in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus per omnia seacula saeculorum. Amen.

Deign, O Lord, to support with Thy constant help those whom Thou dost nourish with Thy sacraments, so that we may reap the fruit of Thy Redemption both in our mysteries and in our conduct. Who livest and reignest with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, for ever and ever. Amen.¹

The word *mysteriis* ("mysteries") is probably a corruption for *ministeriis* ("ministries"), which is the reading of four copies of Durandus' Pontifical.²

There follow the remaining commemorations (if there are any), *Dominus vobiscum*, *Ite Missa est*, and *Placeat*, as usual. Then the bishop, wearing this time the precious mitre, gives his blessing—the ordinary blessing of a Pontifical Mass—to the whole congregation. In the Pontificals of Durandus and Piccolomini the special blessing of the new priests is given *after* the

¹ Ed. Wilson, p. 30.

² Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 373. The words *mysteriis* and *moribus* are obviously meant to be parallel in sense as well as in sound. *Moribus* is a "dative of advantage", whereas *mysteriis*, if correct, would have to be an ablative of instrument ("that we may reap the fruit of Thy redemption both by the sacred mysteries and in our own conduct"). *Ministeriis* would be another dative of advantage.

Post-communions, *Ite Missa est* and Final Exhortation, and is the very last thing in the whole rite, immediately before the bishop and new priests withdraw. The blessing for the congregation and the Last Gospel were added in the Roman Pontifical of Clement VIII.

THE FINAL EXHORTATION

After the *Ite Missa est*, Durandus has the following rubric:

Quo facto, vertit se ad ordinatos cum mitra et baculo et hortatur eos communiter ad bene vivendum, quodque considerent qualem ordinem susceperunt; et quod orant pro eo et aliis quos voluerit, iniungens eis missas et alia quae viderit expedire, quod illi devote suscipiant et spondeant se facturos.

Whereupon, he turns to the newly-ordained, with mitre and crozier, and exhorts them all to lead a good life and to ponder the nature of the Order they have taken; also to pray for him and for others whom he wishes them to pray for, enjoining upon them Masses and other prayers which he shall deem to be expedient; this they devoutly undertake to do.¹

That shows how unsuitable is the name of "Penance" often given to the three Masses by people who do not know why they are enjoined!

Neither Durandus nor Piccolomini (who repeats Durandus' rubric) gives a set form of words for this final exhortation; the bishop is to speak as the Spirit moves him. The Pontifical of 1497 was the first to suggest a fixed formula. The first half of it, which corresponds to the first half of Durandus' rubric (as far as the semicolon), has passed on almost unchanged to the present day:

Fratres carissimi,² diligenter considerate ordinem per vos susceptum, ac onus humeris vestris impositum; studete sancte et religiose vivere, atque omnipotenti Deo placere, ut gratiam suam³ possitis acquirere; quam ipse vobis per suam misericordiam concedere dignetur.

Dearly beloved brethren, ponder carefully on the order you have taken, and the burden laid on your shoulders. Strive to lead a holy and religious life, and to please almighty God, that you may be able to win His grace; which may He of His mercy be pleased to grant you.

¹ Andrieu, *PRMA*, III, p. 372.

² Changed to *Filii dilectissimi* in the edition of Clement VIII.

³ Grammar requires *eius* here, of course.

The second half of the 1497 formula is as follows:

Ad presbyteratum vero¹ ordinati: post primam suam missam in tribus immediate tunc sequentibus diebus tres alias missas: videlicet, unam de Spiritu sancto, aliam de beata Maria semper virgine, tertiam pro fidelibus defunctis dicite, et omnipotentem Deum etiam pro me orate.

You who have been ordained to the priesthood should say three Masses on the three days immediately following your first Mass, namely one of the Holy Ghost, one of the Blessed Mary ever a Virgin, and the third for the faithful departed; and also pray to almighty God for me.

This does not exactly correspond to the second half of Durandus' rubric, since the new priests are not told for whom they are to offer the votive Masses of the Holy Ghost and of our Lady. In the fifteenth-century Lacy Pontifical (from Exeter) they are to be offered "for the good estate of the Church".²

The prescription that the new priests are to say the three Masses on the three days immediately following their first Mass is remarkable, as it implies that these votive Masses could supplant the Masses of great feasts. Perhaps to avoid inconveniences of that sort, the words "on the three days immediately following" were omitted in the edition of Clement VIII.

In the editions of 1497 and 1520 use of the formula of exhortation given above (*fratres carissimi, diligenter considerate*) is optional: the bishop can use it, *si placet* ("if he pleases"). In the edition of Clement VIII it is made obligatory.

Nowadays the new priests express their willingness to say the three Masses and pray for the bishop by saying *libenter* ("gladly"), though this is not prescribed in the Pontifical. In earlier days, when the bishop asked for prayers for himself alone, they sometimes replied *Deus Vobis retribuatur* ("May God reward you!"),³ whereby they not only expressed their willingness, but made a start of fulfilling what they were promising to do.

¹ The *vero* marks the transition from what the deacons are to say, to what the priests are to do. Hence it ought to be omitted when no deacons have been ordained.

² Ed. R. Barnes, p. 91: "Iniungantur cuilibet tres missae pro statu ecclesiae, de Trinitate, de Spiritu Sancto, et de Beata V. Maria." For the opinion of a modern canonist on this point, see F. Capello, *De Sacramentis*, Rome, 1935, II, iii, p. 190: "Nec opus est ut Missae applicentur ad mentem episcopi; idcirco potest percipi stipendium earumque applicatio fieri ad intentionem eleemosynas offerentium."

³ Cf. the rubric quoted above, p. 162.

The bishop then turns to the altar and reads the last Gospel,¹ after which he unvests, and withdraws with his assistants.

THE KISSING OF HANDS

It is customary for the new priests either to remain behind or to return after a few minutes, to give their blessing to their parents, brothers and sisters and others who have been present. Raising their eyes and hands to heaven in the gesture of oblation, to bring down the blessings of God,² they say:

<p>Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti, descendat super te et maneat semper.</p>	<p>May the blessing of Almighty God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, descend upon you and remain always.</p>
--	---

Then the priest lays his hands on the head of the person kneeling before him, and gives him or her his hands to be kissed.

This is the priest's first use of his sacerdotal power of blessing, and it is fitting that the first person whom he blesses should be his mother, if she is still living. For the mother it is a moment of almost unbearable emotion to take in her hands these newly-anointed hands of her son—the hands that she washed when he was a boy, and perhaps spanked, and probably bandaged on various occasions—and press them to her lips, knowing that they are now consecrated to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The kissing of hands is of course a mark of respect for the sacrament of Orders and for the solemn consecration that has been imparted to the priest so that his hands may consecrate and touch the Body of Christ.³ The profound reverence for the priesthood which the faithful display in this ceremony is a wonderful testimonial to the strength of their faith and a most impressive lesson to the new priest: the men who have gone

¹ The new priests read it with him—S.C.R., no. 2682, 12 Nov. 1831, ad. 12.

² On the close connexion between the power to offer sacrifice and the power to bless, see De Puriet, "Le pouvoir sacerdotal de bénir" in *Ephemerides Liturgicæ*, 1928, p. 425f. "It is because he has offered the holy victim, and thereby had access to the authentic source of blessings, that he can pour them out upon the world in the name of the High Priest, Jesus Christ" (p. 432).

³ Perhaps it is also a sign of acceptance; cf. *supra*, p. 170-1.

before him in the priesthood have deserved this reverence, and he must try to do the same.

It is difficult to discover the history of the kissing of hands, since it is not strictly a part of the rite of ordination and is not mentioned in the Pontifical. A Pontifical of Amiens has the interesting rubric:

Post unctionem osculetur episcopus os et manus singulorum.

After the anointing the bishop kisses the lips and hands of each.¹

Which suggests that the kissing of hands may perhaps be as old as the anointing. Some bishops kiss the hands of those whom they have ordained at the present day, and some have been known to kneel down for the new priests' blessing. But this latter gesture, however edifying, is not strictly correct, as there is an ancient rule in the Church, based on a verse in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that the higher order should not be blessed by the lower.²

¹ Pontifical MS. Amiens 196, quoted by V. de Beauvillé and H. Josse, *Le Pontifical d'Amiens*, Amiens, 1885, p. 112.

² Heb. vii. 7: "Without all contradiction, that which is less is blessed by the better."

INDEX

INDEX

A

AARONIC PRIESTHOOD, 17-18, 19n,
 38, 88-9, 110, 131
 Albert the Great, St., 41-2, 145n
 Alcuin, 137
 Alexander Severus, 76
 Alphonsus Liguori, St., 53n
 Amalarius, 13n, 38, 63, 95-6, 109,
 131, 135, 137
 Ambrose, St., 13
 Ambrosian Sacramentary, 132
 Ambrosiaster, 90
 Amiens Pontifical, 181
 Andrieu, M., *Immixtio*, 157n
 Ordines, xi, 109
 PRMA, *passim*
 Anointing, 126f
 Apostles, ordination by, 31
 ordination of, 15, 120
Apostolic Constitutions, 104
 Apamean Pontifical, 148n
 Archdeacon's petition, 73
 testimony, 74-5
 Aristotle, 41, 55, 91
 Armenians, Decree for, 8, 21n,
 47-55
 Arnold, F. X., 17n
 Augustine, St., 3f, 16n, 19, 76, 82,
 95n, 100n
 Avicenna, 89

B

BAISI, C., 10n
 Balgy, A., 49n
 Barbosa, A., 59n
 Bardy, G., 19n
 Barnes, R., 113n, 179n
 Bartholomew the Small, 49

Beauvais Pontifical, 137
 Bellarmine, St. Robert, 107n
 Benedict XII, 49
 Benedict XIII, 59
 Benedict XIV, 29, 53n
 Benedictionary of Archbp. Robert,
 133n
 Berger, A., 83n
 Bernard, P., 135n
 Besançon Pontifical, 160
 Billot, L., 3, 5n, 6n, 54n, 90n, 127n
 Binding of hands, 134, 139-41
 Bodleian Library, ix
 Bonaventure, St., 40, 171
 Boniface IX, 8n
 Botte, D. B., 79n
 Braga, Council of, 111, 112, 113,
 114, 115
 Braun, J., 63n, 66n, 109n, 116n,
 118n, 163n
 Brothers of Unity, 49

C

CAERIMONIALE EPISCOPORUM, 65, 67,
 68, 163n
 Caesarius of Arles, St., 143
 Candles, offering of, 142f
 Callewaert, C., 25n
 Callistus, I, St., 57n
 Capello, F., 179n
 Catalanus, J., xi, 96n, 116n, 155n,
 167n, 173n
 Celibacy, 20
 Châlons-sur-Saone, Council of, 167
 Chardon, C., xi, 76n, 77n, 138n
 Charlemagne, 25, 130
 Chasuble, 109, 117, 119, 161f
 Chrysostom, St. John, 111

Cicero, 105n, 124
 Cistercian privilege, 9
 Clark, A. C., 105n
 Clement VIII, 29, 63, 134, 151, 178,
 179
 Code of Canon Law, 9, 20, 59, 107,
 108n, 146
 Collect, 69
 Colour of vestments, 64-5
 Columba, St., 147n
 Concelebration, 30, 34, 93f, 108,
 145-51, 173
 Confirmation, 4, 9, 135
 Consummation, Prayer of, 19n, 121f
 Crehan, J., xv, 31n
 Cummean, Penitential of, 174
 Cyprian, 13n, 75
 Cyril of Jerusalem, xiii

D

DAMASUS, ST., 23n
 Decius, 12n
 De Guibert, J., 48n, 49n, 50n,
 53n
 De Langogne, P., 9
 De Loë, P., 41n
 De Puniet, P., xi, 25n, 33n, 85n, 93n,
 109n, 110n, 180n
 De Smedt, C., 12n
 De Vert, C., 91n, 92n, 164n
Dispensatio in angariis, 59
 Doble, G. H., 133n
 Donatus, 5
 Duchesne, L., xi, 57n, 97n, 101n,
 109n
 Duensing, H., 24n
 Dunstan Pontifical, 133
 Durandus Mimatensis, 15, 27, 34
 Pontifical, 27, 28n, 77n, 84, 87,
 96, 119, 132, 134, 140, 144, 149,
 153, 159, 161, 168, 172, 173,
 177, 179
 Rationale, 44-5, 68, 113, 117, 119,
 144, 145, 150, 174

E

EASTON, B. S., 23n
 Edinburgh, Duke of, 169
 Egbert Pontifical, 115n, 133
 Ehrhardt, A., 91
 Ehrensberger, H., 149n
 Eisenhofer, L., 25n, 118n
 Elias, D., 83n
 Ellard, G., ix, xi, 25n, 30, 38n, 115n,
 127f
 Embertide, 56-9, 64, 72
 Eugenius IV, 47, 50-1, 54
 Ennius, 78n
 Eusebius, 12n, 18n, 146n
 Exempt religious, 168-70
 Extreme Unction, 7, 14, 135

F

FALSE DECRETALS, 105-6, 131-2, 135
 Feltoe, C. L., 24n, 98n
 Fischer, L., 57n, 58n, 75n, 149n
 Florence, Council of, 8, 47-55
 Funk, F. X., xi, 24n, 79n, 94n, 104n,
 143

G

GALTIER, P., 53n
 Gavin, F., 90n
 Gelasius, St., 24, 25, 57-8
 Gelasian Sacramentary, 19n, 24, 25,
 77, 97, 100, 101, 105, 106, 120,
 121, 123, 130, 151, 175
 Gellone Sacramentary, 175n
 Gerlaud, M., 172n
 Geyer, B., 24n
 Gihl, N., 169n
 Gildas the Wise, 128, 133n
 Gratian, 40, 75
 Greenwell, E. W., 133n
 Gregorian Sacramentary, 24, 25, 32,
 38, 69n, 97, 100, 101, 105, 106,
 130, 136, 175
 Gregory the Great, St., 19, 24, 25,
 36, 64, 82, 152n

Gregory XIII, 59
 Gregory XIV, 59
 Gregory the Illuminator, St., 48
 Grimm, J., 171n

H

HADRIAN (POPE), 25, 130
 Hallier, F., xii, 64n, 70n, 91n
 Hannsens, I. M., xii, 13n, 93n, 145n,
 146n, 148n, 149n
 Harnack, A., 56n, 107n, 154n
 Hauler, E., 32n
 Herwegen, I., xii, 83n, 109n, 110n,
 136n, 167n
 Hindo, P., 97n
 Hippolytus, 19n, 23, 24n, 31, 32, 36,
 92n, 104, 153n, 171
 Hittorp, M., 26n, 57n
 Hofmann, G., 47n, 50n, 51n, 52n
 Honorius of Autun, 112n, 137
 Horner, G., 24n, 32n, 171n
 Hugh of St. Victor, 39-40, 113, 116,
 135, 148n
 Hugon, E., 54n

I

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, ST., 11n, 146
 Innocent I, St., 127
 Innocent III, 58, 75, 147-9, 155
 Innocent VIII, 9n, 29
 Interdict, 71-3
 Investiture, 108f
 Invitatory prayer, 97, 120-1
 Isidore, St., 41, 131n, 137

J

JEROME, ST., 13n
 John X (Pope), 127, 132
 John of Dara, 127
 John of Kerna, 49
 John of Montenegro, 51-2
 John of Salisbury, 112

Jungmann, J. A., xii, 68n, 152n,
 153n
 Justin, 146

K

KISS, 33, 155, 171-2
 Kissing of hands, 180-1
 Klauser, T., 23n

L

LACY PONTIFICAL, 133
 Lampen, W., 45n
 Lanalet Pontifical, 133, 179
 Ludolf, Pontifical of Bp., 132, 137n
 Laodicea, Council of, 76, 111
 Last Supper, 15, 89
 representation of, 142f, 145, 156
 Lennerz, H., xii, xv, 9n, 11n, 54n,
 79n, 95n, 136n
 Leo the Great, St., 24, 25, 36, 57,
 105n
 Leonine Sacramentary, 24, 32,
 97-8, 100, 101, 105, 106
Libelli, 24
 Lietbert of Cambrai, St., 164
 Litanies, 84-8
 Lohse, E., 90n
 Lombard, *see* Peter Lombard
 Lottin, O., 41n

M

MÂCON, COUNCIL OF, 143
 Magisretti, M., 132
 Mainz, Archbp. William of, 26
 Council of, 111, 143
 Pontifical, 64n, 73n, 92, 112n,
 118n, 143n, 154n, 162n, 167n
 Maniple, 63-4, 68-9, 163
 Martène, E., xii, 27n, 92n, 112n,
 118n, 143n, 154n, 162n, 167n
 Martin, V., 8n
 Martinucci, P., 64n
 Matrimony, 11

McNeill, J. T., 174n
 Michelet, J., 171n.
 Minister of ordination, 8f
Missale Francorum, 129
 Mitre, 66-8
 Morin, G., 57n
 Morinus, J., xii, 26n, 27n, 64n, 86n,
 87n, 92n, 98n, 101n, 110, 115n,
 116n, 123n, 137n, 161n, 162n,
 163n, 172n
 Moses, 12n, 16, 18, 22, 32, 64, 74
 89, 91, 96, 101, 105, 110, 127n
 Muratori, 25n
 Mystical Body of Christ, 15, 18, 21,
 30, 120, 125

N

NANTES, COUNCIL OF, 75
 Neoplatonism, 4n
 Nicea, Council of, 42n, 79n
 Nicolas I, St., 34, 127, 132
 Norris, H., 117n

O

ODO OF CLUNY, ST., 111
 Offering of candles, 142
Ordines Romani, 26, 32, 109, 118, 157,
 171

P

PAUL, ST., 8, 13, 15, 22, 31, 93, 96,
 171
 Pearce, E. H., 72n
 Penance, 18, 178
 Penitential of Cummean, 174
Periculosa oratio, 174
 Pesch, C., 9n
 Peter Lombard, 40, 113, 135
 Piault, B., 18n
 Piccolomini, 28, 34, 67, 139, 153,
 166, 173
 Pinianus, 76

Pius XI, xiii
 Pius XII, xv, 8, 10, 19, 36, 47, 91,
 107-8, 169
 Plato, 3
 Polycarp, St., 146
 Postcommunion, 175
 Prat, F., 31n
 Preface of Consecration, 100-7
 Probert, W., 171n
 Profession of faith, 160
 Promise of obedience, 166
 Prostration of ordinands, 85
 Ps.-Anacletus, 131, 147, 150
 Ps.-Denis, 4n, 91

R

RHABANUS MAURUS, 13n, 137
 Rheims Pontifical, 161, 162, 165,
 172, 175n
 Romano-Germanic Pontifical, 17n,
 26-7, 33, 50, 64, 71, 83, 101,
 110, 120, 132, 143, 166, 175
 Roques, R., 4n
 Rouen Pontifical, 166
 Rule, M., 124n

S

SACRAMENTUM ORDINIS, xv, 15, 36,
 47, 55, 91
 Salmeron, 90
 Schermann, T., 32n
 Schröder, A., 75
 Scotus, 14n, 15, 18, 36, 45-7, 120,
 164-5
 Secret prayer, 151
 Sens Pontifical, 98
Sententiae Divinitatis, 24n
Spiritus Sancti Munera, 8, 10
Statuta Ecclesiae Antiqua, 42n, 76, 79,
 80, 94, 136
 Steeger, T., 105n
 Stephen, St., 83, 85n
 Stephen de Baugé, 39n, 137
Stipulatio, 83, 167, 172

Stole, 64, 111f
 Swete, H. B., 124n

T

TAPPER, R., 54
 Tertullian, 124n
 Theodulf of Orleans, 130
 Theophilus, 76
 Thomas Aquinas, St., 6n, 7, 14, 18n,
 21n, 36, 42-4, 45n, 49, 50, 52,
 89, 98n, 116n, 145, 149, 165
 Thomas de Cobham, Bp. of Wor-
 cester, 72n
 Thomassinus, L., 75
 Thomas of Canterbury, St., 112
 Thurston, H., 171
 Till, W., 24n
 Tixeront, J., xii, 31n, 176n
 Toledo, Council of, 109, 111, 114,
 136
 Toulouse Pontifical, 92, 116n.
 Tradition of Instruments, xv, 15, 33
 Trent, Council of, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11, 24,
 47, 54, 90, 107n, 176n
Tryads of Dynwal Moelmud, 170

U

UNTERSTEINER, M., 89
 Urban VIII, 29, 63

V

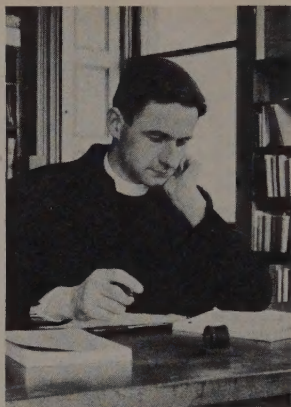
VALERIAN, 12n
 Van Rossum, G. M., xii, 18, 46, 48,
 137n
 Vermeersch, A., 71n
 Victorine Pontifical, 87, 116

W

WALFRIDUS STRABO, 137
 Warner, G. F., 174n
 Whitlock, D., 167n
 Wilson, F. E., 147n
 Wilson, H. A., 24n

Y

YORK PONTIFICAL, 133, 140
 Ysambertus, 9
 Yves of Chartres, 38-40, 113, 137



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