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I Cor. 14: 5.

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higher degree to those who are to direct not only themselves but others.¹²

The *Gifts of the Holy Ghost* are inseparably connected with sanctifying grace and charity, which are infused into the soul through the instrumentality of the sacraments. The Holy Spirit with His gifts descends upon all who receive the sacraments worthily. In none of the sacraments is this *doctrine mere explicit* than in the sacrament of Orders, which confers the power and grace of the priesthood. In conferring the diaconate the bishop says: "Receive ye the *Holy Ghost for strength* and for resisting the devil and his temptations in the name of the Lord *." Later, in conferring the priesthood, he says: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain they are retained." In the consecration of a bishop the consecrating prelate says simply: "Receive the Holy Ghost." Only in one other sacrament, that of Confirmation, is there such emphatic reference to the Holy Spirit. We cannot therefore escape the conclusion that the test of Pentecost is peculiarly the feast of the priest, nor that devotion to the Holy Spirit should be particularly the devotion of priests. The priest has *special need for the assistance of God*. He has special titles also that are not found in the faithful in general. The destiny of the Church is his destiny. He must be a guide and an example to the flock entrusted to him. Over him at ordination were spoken the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost, and the Council of Trent tells us that these words of the bishop are not spoken in vain,¹³



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¹² n' O» MV. Art. i.
¹³ "Sew. XXm cat. 4.



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THE ACT OE THE KİSTTCAL BOB'?

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According to this brilliant theologian, the Mystical Body of Christ is something which can be understood in function of four real causes—material, formal, efficient, and final. The material cause is definitely the principle, not of unity but of multiplicity. The material cause of the Mystical Body is the Head and the members, those who go to make up the fulness of Christ. The other three causes are principles of unity, and the Mystical Body is one by reason of these. The formal cause is either exemplary or intrinsic. The Mystical Body is one by reason of exemplary causality because there is one, and only one Model to which its members must be conformed. That one ultimate exemplar is the Incarnate Word.

The internal formal cause is either substantial or accidental. The Church can have no properly substantial cause because it is something made up of individual persons. But the Holy Ghost, to whom the activities of love on the part of the Blessed Trinity are attributed, is the quasi-substantial cause of the Mystical Body. Obviously It does not enter into composition with the members to form a whole of which It would be a part. It fulfills the functions of a substantial cause by constituting the Mystical Body as a supernatural organism, binding the members together in their corporate unity.

The accidental and secondary formal cause of the Mystical Body is twofold. First there is the moral and judicial subjection to the glorious yoke of Christ the King within the Church. Then there is the perfecting bond of charity.

The efficient cause that binds and holds the Church together is principal and instrumental. The principal cause is the Blessed Trinity, and by appropriation the Holy Ghost. The instrumental cause is either conjoined or separate. The instrumental cause which makes the Church one is the humanity of Christ, hypostatically united to the Second Person of the Trinity. The separate and secondary instrumental cause is the Holy Spirit, who is the principle of unity.

of the Mystical Body in His humanity. The instrumental cause which makes the Church one is the humanity of Christ, hypostatically united to the Second Person of the Trinity. The separate and secondary instrumental cause is the Holy Spirit, who is the principle of unity.

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As Father S. monin. has pointed out very well,¹⁰ there is bound to be a certain incompleteness in any schema which attempts to classify a supernatural reality in function of natural standards. The work of Father Mura is exact, and in its own manner quite complete. Yet the very classification of which he made use precluded a very sharp insistence upon one principle of unity, an aspect of the Mystical Body. We are one with Christ not only for reasons which can be resumed under the heading of four causes, but because we are deputized and empowered in a special way to make the act and the proper operation of Christ our own. The Mystical Body is one with Christ because it is the organization whose chief and central business is the eternal sacrifice of the Redeemer. His act, that for which He came into the world, is *in a special way ours, in the sense that the members of Christ are constituted as a kingly priesthood by a sharing in the priesthood of Christ. The unity of the Mystical Body is essentially something dynamic. That which is the proper act of the Head is the proper act of the members who are conjoined with Him.*

There is one act which is fundamentally and primarily the proper operation of Jesus Christ. The act of Redemption itself is the motive of the Incarnation, in such a way that, in the reverse order of divine providence, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity would not have assumed human nature had He not sinned. The purpose of the Incarnation was accomplished in the passion and death of Christ in an act which was at once satisfactory, sacrificial, redemptive and thus efficaciously the cause of our salvation.⁵ From the very moment of His conception Christ had merited the satisfaction for us in every act He performed, and in every suffering He endured. But, in the merciful decrees of divine providence, it had been established that all these other merits of Christ should be ordered to, and have their effect from and through the passion itself.¹⁸

* W* "Ireph'c'je et Explicite dxm îe &"refoppa 't ' ' 'æe. S' î-æ>
Avdirm. Jamury. 1857.

The life of Christ in *this world* actually *centered about* the passion. Our *Lord* could and did look to His exaltation upon the cross as the crowning achievement of His life on earth. The sacrifice of Calvary was the act toward which every other work of His *life* was ordered, and to which He looked forward with eager anticipation. "I have a baptism wherewith I to be baptized: and how am I straightened until it be accomplished?"¹⁴ The sacrifice of Calvary is the *proper act and perfection of Christ* in such a way that the Apostle of the Gentiles could speak of his evangelizing work in the terms, "Ye preach Christ crucified." And, standing amidst the eternal glories of heaven, Saint John describes Him as "a Lamb, as it were

The Mystical Body of Christ is the organization of those to whom God has *accorded the signal favor of being united to Christ* in such a way that His act becomes their own. The operation of a thing constitutes its proper perfection, and, in the final analysis, a thing is one in so far as it operates as one. The proper act of the *Mystical Body* is not *different* from the proper act of Christ Himself. The act of the head is the act of the body. Our union with Christ is not merely an affair of *static* union. It is not *static* but *dynamic*. The Mystical Body as an organization has a central affair, an essential business-*which* constitutes the proper basic concern of all its members. Its operation is none other than the great sacrificial act of Christ.

God has given us a very definite teaching in a manner in which the passion of Christ and its effects are communicated into the unit of the Mystical Body. In the first place it is of faith that the justice of Christ is not merely imputed to us. That was the error, however, justly condemned in the Council of Trent. We are to be made just by the justice of Christ, but the justice of Christ does that justice become ours *merely by* a sort of *dynamic* conjunction, according to which the member of the Mystical Body is united to Christ by a *dynamic* union.

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the member of Christ is sacramentally a participant of

the life of Christ. ; Unless they be born again they

never be justified, since the grace by which

they are given to them in that rebirth through the Holy

Spirit. The men to whom the merit of His

death is imputed are those who receive the benefit of

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*This sacrament signifies at the same time the cause of our salvation, the passion of Christ. Thus it is rememorative of a past event. It signifies the form of our sanctification, habitual grace and the supernatural virtues. In this way it is demonstrative of a present effect produced within us by the passion of Christ. Finally the sacrament is the sign of the ultimate effect of our sanctification, eternal life. Thus it is prognosis of future glory. In this way the passion of Christ itself, the cause of our salvation, is communicated to us in a certain manner in the sacraments.*²²

The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ. We become members of the Church when we receive the sacrament of Baptism. The enduring quality which constitutes us as members of the Church is the character of Baptism. Baptism is a conformation to the passion of Christ, an effective sign whereby we make the passion of Christ our act. Through this sacrament we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His death. For we are buried together with Him in baptism into death, that, as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. you also reckon that you are dead to sin but alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”^{2'}

We can appreciate the sacramental economy only in the measure that we realize that the passion and death of Christ not only constituted an act of redemption, by which we were liberated from our sins, but was also the supreme act of religion-2. sacrifice, in which all who are to be saved in Christ must participate. The sacraments of the new law, which have their power from the passion of Christ, have also this double orientation. The theology of Saint Thomas gives adequate expression to this twofold function of the sacraments, freeing men from the Christian religion. « Sacramental grace (in general) takes especially toward two things; that is, in the past sins, in so far as these are finished acts but yet remain in those things which portend to the worship of God according

²² W, in. 60, art. J.

^{2'} Rom. 4 anif

s the religion of the Christian life. It is evident from what has been said above that Christ has freed us, from our sin, not only sufficiently and meritoriously, but also by way of satisfaction, especially through His passion. Likewise, as a result of His passion He initiated the rite of the Christian religion, consecrating Himself as an oblation and a victim to God.

The sacrament of Baptism, by which we are made members of Christ, has this twofold effect. It takes away venial sin and it gives the sacramental grace of regeneration. This sacramental grace is habitual grace itself, a necessary condition and an exigency for those actual graces that are necessary for the conduct of that life begun by Baptism. The habitual grace, however, is not merely to know the concept of habitual grace.

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lost in the sin of Adam. All true religion among men is summed up and expressed in sacrifice. The life of which habitual grace is the intrinsic source constitutes a religion. It is the special and unique glory of the grace of the Church. A the Mystical Body that its life is summed up and expressed in the effably perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Baptism introduces us into the life of the Mystical Body, it is not the ultimate manifestation and expression of that life. Because that life is a service of God, or a religion, God in His mercy has constituted that Sacrament of Baptism so as to make it confer upon the person who receives it a special character, empowering and designating him for this service, by communicating him to the priesthood of Christ Himself. The same sign which is a configurative sign of our partaking in the priesthood of Christ is the distinctive sign by which the member of Christ is differentiated from all men who have not been really united to Christ sacramentally.

In this light we see the teaching of Saint Thomas on the nature of the sacramental character as a key to the thesis in the dynamic of the Mystical Body. The "Doctor Communis" and the Thomistic school after him teach that the sacramental character is conferred by reduction to the second species of the Eucharist, and that it is a permanent power by which

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Church is the instrument. The Eucharistic sacrifice, the true centre of the Mass, in which the Catholic participates according to his rank in the Mystical Body is the proper activity of the Church as an instrument, and the proper operation of the Catholic as such. The worship of God, in the Mystical Body, is summed up and expressed in one definite act, the Eucharistic Office.

The principal cause and the instrument have one act, and produce one effect. The act of the principal cause is the act of the instrument. In the eucharistic sacrifice the Mystical Body acts as the instrument of the passion of Christ, and in this sacrificial operation it makes the passion of Christ the act of the Church. The sacrifice of the Mass is then, in a special and metaphysical sense, the act of the Mystical Body, the tremendous instrumental function in which the baptized person is empowered to participate. To define it by its proper and immediate function, the Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is that organization which exists to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. The Christian or baptized person is marked as distinct from other men in that he is empowered to participate in the essentially corporate activity of the eucharistic sacrifice.

The Church does not act as an amorphous unit in the performance of the eucharistic sacrifice. The Church is constituted as an ordered, hierarchical society. Since the act of a priest is proportioned to what it is, the priest's act in the Eucharist, the sacrifice of the Mass, is in its own nature the act of the Church, the sacrifice of the Mass, in its own nature. In this proper operation of the Mystical Body of Christ are some constituted as empowered to fulfil an office, with reference to their fellow members. These are designated with the character of Holy Order. The fullness of the priestly character are the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and the sacramental office of sacrifice. The other sacraments, in that corporate function of their order.

These who possess a relative participation in the Mass are recipients rather than agents in the sacramental act. The Church are the participants of the sacramental act, thus enabled to receive the other sacraments. This participation in the Holy Eucharist, "in which"

worship of God consists principally, in so far as it is the sacrifice of the Church." ~h

The worship or cultus of God is "a certain protestation of faith through exterior signs". And, because this protestation of faith is destined to be carried on until the end of time in the face of opposition coming from the inevitable enemies of the cross of Christ, there is a sacramental character officially empowering and designating the members of the Church for the spiritual conflict against the enemies of the faith.-' This is the character of Confirmation, which thus resolves itself into an official empowering designation for the conduct of the Eucharistic sacrifice against the attacks made against it, Vincent Contenson.-* in commenting upon this phase of the sacramental economy, shows the close analogy between the sacramental character and the military designation in natural affairs, *tfnib*: any citizen can actually fight the enemies of his country, only the soldier is officially designated and empowered for this work. So the confirmed Christian is the officially designated defender of the eucharistic sacrifice.

Finally, all the teaching on the Holy Eucharist itself brings out the fact that it is the immediate operation, the proper act and perfection of the Mystical Body. It is rightly called a sacrifice in so far as it is rememorative of the Lord's passion. That the Mass is "a true and proper sacrifice" is a dogma of Catholic faith."3 Furthermore, it is a sacrifice that belongs in a special way to the Mystical Body of Christ as an organization, even those Masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally must be considered common to the Church .v a !-4

and partly because they are celebrated by a *PUJ^C* < jvho the Church, not for himself alone but for ad ta e at belong to the *body* of Christ." XI Saint Thomas bongs -

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st *Ibid.*, BI, sju. 72, art. 1.

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■ *ibid.*, chapter ?, Dera. 944.

sufficient to have one minister who takes the rôle of the Catholic people." E" (. Church

The Holy Eucharist is the perfective sacrament of charity. in that it signifies and causes our union in J - Since At the same time it is the sacrifice of the people ° θ , < the proper operation of the Mystical Body is the sacrifice of Mass, a social rather than a merely indmdua .“Tty gaint members of the Church as a whole could oe ca - ^sej Peter " a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a P ,ζ. people.” And because sacrifice is the supreme act o summing up and expressing the acts ot, the he God and testifying in a unique way to tneu^^. special ...”d c.i-JmjJ rj\peik of them as constituted m ~ . < .u -uy deciare Th' v:rti:c'.n m. ■-■ :a •■ut cr darkness into His marvellous light :a acticu the une w'd·l'

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tian life. The acts of all the virtues enter into the background of prayer, and the eucharistic sacrifice, offered by the minister in the name and the person of Christ, for the members of His Mystical Body, demands the sincerity of prayer and devotion, among those for whom it is offered.

Thus the life of the Mystical Body, so brilliantly resumed in the work of Father Mura, finds its bond in its communion in the eucharistic sacrifice, the act of the Mystical Body.

Joseph C. Fenton

Washington, D. C.

