

CHAPTER XI

The Understanding Most Holy Mary Received Regarding the Seven Sacraments which Christ our Lord was to Institute and the Five Precepts of the Church.

119. In order to complete the beauty and the riches of the holy Church it was proper for her Founder, Christ our Redeemer, to institute the seven Sacraments which were to serve as the common treasury of all his merits; and the Author of them would Himself remain in one of them in an admirable mode of assistance, yet real and true, in order that He may feed the faithful children of his household and console them by his presence, and as a pledge of that which they hope to enjoy eternally and face to face. For the plenitude of knowledge and grace in most holy Mary it was also necessary that all these mysteries and treasures be copied into her dilated and ardent Heart, so in the manner possible the entire law of grace would remain deposited and stamped in it in the manner in which it was in her most holy Son. In his absence She was to be the Teacher of the Church, and She was to instruct the primitive Christians to venerate and enjoy these Sacraments with all the perfection possible.

120. By a new enlightenment each of these mysteries in particular were accordingly made manifest to the great Lady in the interior of her most holy Son. In regard to the first of these Sacraments She saw that the ancient law of circumcision was to be honorably laid aside and replaced by the admirable and sweet Sacrament of *Baptism*. She was informed the matter of this Sacrament was to be pure natural water, and its form was to contain the names of the three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, thus implicitly including faith in the most holy Trinity. She understood how Christ its Author was to impart to this Sacrament the power of taking away all sins and of perfectly sanctifying its recipient. She saw the admirable effects it would cause in all who would receive it, regenerating and engendering them anew as adopted children and heirs of the reign of their Father, infusing into them the virtues of faith, hope and charity, with many other virtues, and impressing upon their souls the character of children of the holy Church. She also knew everything else which touches upon this most holy Sacrament and its effects. Thereupon She sought her divine Son with burning desire to be allowed to receive it in proper time, which He promised Her and afterwards administered to Her as I shall describe later on (319).

121. The great Lady received a similar understanding regarding the Sacrament of *Confirmation*, which is the second since it was to be administered in the holy Church after Baptism, which engenders the children of the Church by grace, while Confirmation was to make them robust and courageous in confessing the faith received in Baptism, augmenting the first graces and adding thereto the graces suited to each one's state. She understood the matter, form, minister and effects of this Sacrament, the character it impresses upon the soul, and how by the chrism of oil and balm, which constitutes the matter of this Sacrament, is represented the light of the good works and the odor of Christ (II Cor. 2:15) poured upon the faithful confessing Him; and the same is indicated in its own way by the words of the form. Corresponding with these enlightenments our great Queen elicited heroic acts of praise, gratitude, and fervent petition, desiring all men to draw from these fountains of the Lord (Is. 12:3) and enjoy these incomparable treasures, while acknowledging and confessing Him as the true God and Redeemer. She wept bitterly over the lamentable perdition of so many who within sight of the Gospel nevertheless continue to lack such efficacious medicines for their sins as the Sacraments.

122. In regard to the third Sacrament, that of *Penance*, the heavenly Lady saw the usefulness and necessity of this means of restoring souls to the grace and friendship of God, supposing human frailty by which they lose it so often. She understood what requirements and ministers it would have, and the ease with which the children of the Church can make use of it with such admirable effects. For that which She knew regarding this benefit, as the true Mother of Mercy and of the faithful her children, She rendered special gratitude to the Almighty with incredible joy in seeing such an easy medicine for the repeated spiritual ailments as are the common faults of men. She prostrated Herself upon the ground and in the name of the holy Church She reverently acknowledged the sacred tribunal of Confession, where the Lord with ineffable kindness relieves and solves all doubts of souls in regard to their justification or condemnation, leaving it to the judgment of the priests whether they should grant or deny absolution (Mt. 18:18).

123. Especially deep was the intelligence of the most prudent Lady in regard to the sovereign sacramental mystery of the most *Holy Eucharist*. Her penetration of its secrets surpassed that of the most exalted Seraphim, for to Her was manifested the supernatural manner of the presence of the humanity and divinity of her Son under the appearances of bread and wine; the power of the words of consecration, by which the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the substance of his body and blood, while the appearances remained; how He could be present at the same time in so many diverse parts; how the sacrosanct mystery of the Mass was to be instituted in order to consecrate and offer Him in sacrifice to the eternal Father to the end of time; how He would be revered and adored in the holy Sacrament in so many temples of the Catholic Church throughout the world; what effects of grace He would produce in those who were to receive Him more or less well prepared; and what punishments would come to those who receive Him unworthily. She was informed also of the faith of the believers and the errors of the heretics in regard to this mystery, and especially of the immense love of her Son in thus resolving to give Himself as food and nourishment of eternal life to each one of the mortals.

124. By these and other enlightenments concerning the most Holy Eucharist her most chaste bosom experienced new conflagrations of love beyond the conception of the human intellect. Although She had invented new canticles of praise and worship at the enlightenments which She had received concerning each article of faith and each mystery, yet in considering this great Sacrament her Heart expanded more than ever before, and prostrate on the ground She spent Herself in new demonstrations of love, worship, praise, gratitude and humility, and sentiments of deepest sorrow for those who were to abuse it to their own damnation. She burned with the desire of seeing this Sacrament instituted, and if She had not been sustained by the power of the Almighty the force of her affection would have taken away her natural life, even though being within sight of her most holy Son was calculated to moderate the excess of her longings and sustain Her until the time for its institution. But from this hour She desired to prepare Herself for its reception, asking for Communion with his sacramental body when the hour of its consecration would arrive. The heavenly Queen said: "My most exalted Lord and true life of my soul, shall this vile worm, insignificant among men, perchance be found worthy to receive Thee in her heart? Shall I be so fortunate as to receive Thee once more within my body and soul? Shall my heart be thy dwelling and tabernacle, where Thou shalt take thy rest and I possess Thee, rejoicing in thy close embraces and Thou, my Beloved, in those of thy servant?"

125. The divine Master answered: “My Mother and Dove, many times shalt Thou receive Me sacramentally, and after my death and Ascension into heaven Thou shalt rejoice in this consolation, for thy most sincere and loving Heart shall be the continual habitation* and resting place which I shall choose to inhabit for my pleasure and satisfaction.” At this promise of the Lord the great Queen humbled Herself anew, and prostrate in the dust She gave Him thanks, exciting the admiration of heaven itself. From that hour She began to dispose all her thoughts and actions with the object of preparing Herself for the time when She would be allowed to receive her most holy Son in the Blessed Sacrament, and during all these years She never forgot or interrupted these acts of her will. Her memory, as I have already said, was more tenacious and constant than that of an angel (*Con.* 497, 535), and her intelligence was greater than that of all the angels; hence, as She always bore in mind this and other mysteries, her actions corresponded to her great knowledge. Also from that time on She continually and fervently besought the Lord to give light to mortals in order to know and venerate this most exalted Sacrament and receive it worthily. Whenever we receive this holy Sacrament with the proper dispositions (and the Lord himself always desires this) we owe it, next to the influence of the Redeemer, to the tears and prayers of this heavenly Mother, who merited this grace for us. If any one of us audaciously receives Him in the state of sin, let him know that besides the sacrilegious insult offered to his Lord and God, he also offends his most holy Mother, since he despises and abuses her love, her pious desires, her prayers, tears and sighs. Let us exert ourselves to avoid such horrible crimes.

126. In regard to the fifth Sacrament, that of *Extreme Unction*, most holy Mary understood the object for which it was instituted, its matter, form and minister. She saw its matter must be the blessed oil of olives, serving as a symbol of mercy, its form would be the words of supplication spoken while the senses, with which we have sinned, are anointed, and that none other than a priest could be its minister. She knew the purposes and effects of this Sacrament, which would be the help provided for the faithful who are sick and in danger of death, strengthening them against the temptations and assaults of the enemy, so frequent and terrible in that last hour. Thus he who receives this Sacrament worthily recovers the strength of soul which had been lost by sins previously committed, and by this also (if appropriate) given alleviation for the health of the body. At the same time the sick are moved to sentiments of devotion and desire of seeing God, while venial sins are forgiven together with some of the effects of mortal sin. It stamps upon the body the seal of heaven (though not an indelible one), so the demon dares not approach where by grace and the Sacraments the Lord has taken up his habitation. By the power of this Sacrament Lucifer loses the authority and right acquired over man through original and actual sin, so the body of the just, which is to rise and with the soul is to enjoy its God, may be properly marked for its union with its soul. All this the most faithful Mother and Lady knew, and for it She rendered gratitude in the name of the faithful.

127. Concerning the sixth Sacrament, *Holy Orders*, She understood how the providence of her most holy Son, the most prudent Architect of grace and of the Church, ordained in it ministers suitable for the Sacraments He was to institute, so through them the Mystical Body of the faithful would be sanctified, and for the consecration of the body and blood of the Lord himself, giving them this dignity above that of all men and the angels themselves. For all this He ordained this new Sacrament of Orders and Consecration. This caused in Her such an extreme reverence for the dignity of priests that She began from that moment to revere and honor them with profound humility. She asked the Almighty to make them worthy ministers and very suitable for their

* cf. *Coronation* 119 [Ed.]

office, and to inspire the faithful with a high veneration for the priesthood. She wept over the faults as well of the priests as of the people in regard to their duties toward each other; however, since I have already spoken of the great respect due to priests (*Con.* 465; *Inc.* 532, 602; etc.) I will not now expatiate upon this subject. Most holy Mary also knew all the rest which touches upon the matter and form of this Sacrament, its effects, and the orders it was to have.

128. Our heavenly Lady was likewise informed of the great purposes the Redeemer of the world had in instituting the seventh and last Sacrament, that of *Matrimony*, namely to sanctify and bless the propagation of the faithful in the evangelical law, and to typify the mystery of the spiritual marriage and close union of Christ with the Holy Church (Eph. 5:32), with greater efficacy than it had before. She understood how this Sacrament was to be perpetuated, what its matter and form were, what great benefits resulted from it for the faithful children of the Church, and all the other mysteries concerning its effects, necessity and power. For all this She composed hymns of praise and thanksgiving in the name of the Catholics who were to receive this benefit. Then was shown to Her the sacred ceremonies and rites with which the Church was to govern in future times the divine worship and the order of good customs. She knew also all the laws to be established for this, in particular the five Precepts of the Church, namely to hear Mass on feast days, to go to Confession and partake of the most sacred body of Christ sacramentally at stated times, to fast on the appointed days, and to give tithes and first fruits of our earthly goods to the Lord.

129. In all these Precepts of the Church most holy Mary perceived the most exalted mysteries of justification, the reason for their establishment, the effects which they caused in the faithful, and the necessity there was for them in the new and holy Church, so her children, keeping the first of these commandments, would have days designated in order to seek God and in them could assist at the sacred and mysterious sacrifice of the Mass, which was to be offered for the living and the dead, renew the profession of faith and the memory of the divine Passion and Death by which we were redeemed, and as far as possible cooperate in the offering of this great sacrifice and partake of the blessings and fruits received by the Holy Church in the sacrosanct mystery of the Mass. She knew also how necessary it is make obligatory sacramental Confession and Holy Communion so we do not spurn for a long time the return to the grace and friendship of God. And besides the danger and damage incurred by those who forget or neglect the use of these two Sacraments, men commit another injury to their Author by frustrating his desires and love in establishing such Sacraments for our remedy. Since such neglect cannot exist without great contempt, implied or expressed, it becomes a very serious insult to God in those who commit it.

130. She had the same understanding of the last two precepts of fasting and paying tithes, and how necessary they were for the children of the holy Church in order to secure victory over their enemies who can prevent their salvation, as happens to so many unhappy and negligent Catholics because they do not mortify and conquer their passions. These passions are ordinarily fomented by the concupiscence of the flesh, which is mortified by fasting, in which the Master of life gave us a singular example* even though He did not have to vanquish the *fomes peccati* as we do. The paying of tithes most holy Mary recognized as specially ordained by the Lord so the faithful could acknowledge Him as the supreme Creator and Lord of all, paying tribute to Him of their temporal goods and thanking Him for the gifts of his providence in the preservation of life. He also desired these offerings to be appropriated for the sustenance and comfort of his priests, since

* cf. Mt. 4:2 [Ed.]

seeing their sustenance is secured by the sweat of the people they were to be grateful to the Lord for so abundantly supplying their needs, and at the same time remain mindful of their obligation to seek the spiritual welfare of souls and devote their whole life to the worship of God and the advance of his holy Church.

131. I have tried to limit myself in the succinct declaration of these most hidden and magnificent mysteries which happened to our heavenly Empress and were operated in her inflamed and dilated Heart by the instruction of the Most High concerning the law of grace and the new Church of the Gospel. The fear of being too verbose, and much more that of committing an error, has prevented me from manifesting all that has interiorly been made known to me and all that I have understood in this matter. The light of our holy faith, assisted by Christian piety and prudence, will teach Catholics the greatest veneration for these high mysteries, and it will lead them to contemplate with lively faith the wonderful harmony of the Sacraments, laws, doctrines and mysteries contained in the Catholic Church, and how She has governed Herself admirably from her beginning and will govern Herself firmly and steadfastly to the end of the world. All of this together was treasured up in an admirable manner in the interior of our Queen and Lady, and by it (according to our understanding) Christ the Redeemer of the world rehearsed it in Her in order to construct his holy Church. He deposited all of this in advance in his most pure Mother so She would be the first to enjoy these treasures in superabundance and rejoice in them, work by them, love them, believe and hope in them, and render gratitude for them for all the rest of mortals. She was also to weep over their sins so they might not impede the torrent of such mercies for the human race. Most holy Mary was to be the public record in whom would be written all that God was to work for the Redemption of man,* and She was to bind Him to complete it. Taking Her for his Coadjutrix He was to write in her Heart the everlasting memorial of all the wonders He intended to work among us.

INSTRUCTION WHICH THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN GAVE ME.

132. My daughter, many times have I reminded thee how injurious to the Almighty and how dangerous to mortals is the forgetfulness and neglect of the mysterious and wonderful works of his divine clemency toward men. My maternal solicitude urges me to renew in thee the memory and the sorrow for this lamentable tendency. Where is the judgment and good sense of men, that they forget their eternal welfare and the glory of their Creator and Repairer? The gates of grace and of glory are open, and yet they not only do not enter, but they flee from light and life,† shutting them out from their hearts full of darkness and death. O more than inhuman cruelty of the sinner toward himself! Overtaken by the most dangerous and deathly sickness, he does not desire to accept the remedy so graciously offered to him! Who would not willingly be snatched from death and restored to life? What sick person would not be grateful to the physician for curing him of his sickness? If men know how to be thankful for the restoration of health, which is so soon to be again taken from them by death and only serves them to endure new labors and dangers,△ why are they so foolish and hard of heart as not to be thankful for or even recognize the blessings of the Lord, He who gives them eternal life and happiness, who rescues them from pains inconceivably great and without end?

* cf. Eccus. 24:32; Apoc. 20:12

† cf. Jn. 3:19-20 [Ed.]

△ cf. Ps. 89:10 [Ed.]

133. O my dearest daughter, how can I receive as children and be a Mother to those who thus despise my dearest Son and Lord and all his clemency? The angels and saints of heaven understand his kindness, and they are astounded at the gross and dangerous ingratitude of mortals, and they see how the rectitude of divine judgments shall become manifest before the whole world. Much have I given thee to know of these secrets in this History, and now I have made known to thee still more so thou mayest imitate me so much the more closely and weep with me over this unhappy state of mortals by which God has been and is so greatly offended. Do thou weep over their sins, and at the same time try to make up for them. I desire thee to let no day pass without having rendered most humble gratitude to his greatness, since He instituted the holy Sacraments and suffers the bad use of them in the wicked faithful. Do thou receive them with profound reverence, faith, and firm hope. Especially must thou be filled with highest esteem for the sacrament of Penance, and try to excite in thyself the dispositions and fulfill the requirements which the holy Church and its teachers point out as necessary for its worthy reception. Approach it with a humble and thankful heart day after day, and whenever thou art conscious of any fault do not postpone the remedy provided by this Sacrament. Wash and cleanse thy soul, for it is the most abominable carelessness to know oneself stained with sin and to remain in such disgrace for a long time, yea even for one instant.

134. Particularly do I desire thee to understand the wrath of the Almighty against those who dare to receive the Sacraments unworthily, especially the august Sacrament of the Altar. O soul! How dreadful is this sin in the eyes of the Lord and his saints! Yea, not only the receiving of Him unworthily, but the irreverence committed in his real presence on the altar! How can they be called children of the Church, who claiming to believe and respect this mystery not only neglect to visit Him in the many places where He is sacramentally present, but also dare to indulge in such disrespect towards Him as even the heathens are not guilty of against their false idols? This is a matter which could not be deplored sufficiently in many discourses. I tell thee, my daughter, that the men of the present age have so outraged the justice of the Lord that I cannot even manifest to them what in my kindness I desire as a remedy of this evil. But let them know at present that his sentence shall be dreadful and without mercy, rendered against those wicked and faithless servants who are condemned by the words of their own mouth (Lk. 19:22). This thou canst announce to all who will hear thee, and counsel them to come at least once a day to the churches in which their God is sacramentally present in order to adore and worship Him, and let them assist at the sacrifice of the Mass, for men do not know how much they lose by their negligence in this regard.