

## Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas, Part Three

### Question 60. What is a sacrament?

#### Article 4. Whether a sacrament is always something sensible?

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**Objection 1.** It seems that a sacrament is not always something sensible. Because, according to the Philosopher (Prior. Anal. ii), every effect is a sign of its cause. But just as there are some sensible effects, so are there some intelligible effects; thus science is the effect of a demonstration. Therefore not every sign is sensible. Now all that is required for a sacrament is something that is a sign of some sacred thing, inasmuch as thereby man is sanctified, as stated above (2). Therefore something sensible is not required for a sacrament.

**Objection 2.** Further, sacraments belong to the kingdom of God and the Divine worship. But sensible things do not seem to belong to the Divine worship: for we are told (John 4:24) that "God is a spirit; and they that adore Him, must adore Him in spirit and in truth"; and (Romans 14:17) that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink." Therefore sensible things are not required for the sacraments.

**Objection 3.** Further. Augustine says (De Lib. Arb. ii) that "sensible things are goods of least account, since without them man can live aright." But the sacraments are necessary for man's salvation, as we shall show farther on (61, 1): so that man cannot live aright without them. Therefore sensible things are not required for the sacraments.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (Tract. lxxx super Joan.): "The word is added to the element and this becomes a sacrament"; and he is speaking there of water which is a sensible element. Therefore sensible things are required for the sacraments.

**I answer that,** Divine wisdom provides for each thing according to its mode; hence it is written (Wisdom 8:1) that "she . . . ordereth all things sweetly": wherefore also we are told (Matthew 25:15) that she "gave to everyone according to his proper ability." Now it is part of man's nature to acquire knowledge of the intelligible from the sensible. But a sign is that by means of which one attains to the knowledge of something else.

Consequently, since the sacred things which are signified by the sacraments, are the spiritual and intelligible goods by means of which man is sanctified, it follows that the sacramental signs consist in sensible things: just as in the Divine Scriptures spiritual things are set before us under the guise of things sensible. And hence it is that sensible things are required for the sacraments; as Dionysius also proves in his book on the heavenly hierarchy (Coel. Hier. i).

**Reply to Objection 1.** The name and definition of a thing is taken principally from that which belongs to a thing primarily and essentially: and not from that which belongs to it through something else. Now a sensible effect being the primary and direct object of man's knowledge (since all our knowledge springs from the senses) by its very nature leads to the knowledge of something else: whereas intelligible effects are not such as to be able to lead us to the knowledge of something else, except in so far as they are manifested by some other thing, i.e. by certain sensibles. It is for this reason that the name sign is given primarily and principally to things which are offered to the senses; hence Augustine says (De Doctr. Christ. ii) that a sign "is that which conveys something else to the mind, besides the species which it impresses on the senses." But intelligible

effects do not partake of the nature of a sign except in so far as they are pointed out by certain signs. And in this way, too, certain things which are not sensible are termed sacraments as it were, in so far as they are signified by certain sensible things, of which we shall treat further on (63, 1, ad 2; 3, ad 2; 73, 6; 74, 1, ad 3).

**Reply to Objection 2.** Sensible things considered in their own nature do not belong to the worship or kingdom of God: but considered only as signs of spiritual things in which the kingdom of God consists.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Augustine speaks there of sensible things, considered in their nature; but not as employed to signify spiritual things, which are the highest goods.

## **Question 61. The necessity of the sacraments**

### **Article 1. Whether sacraments are necessary for man's salvation?**

**Objection 1.** It seems that sacraments are not necessary for man's salvation. For the Apostle says (1 Timothy 4:8): "Bodily exercise is profitable to little." But the use of sacraments pertains to bodily exercise; because sacraments are perfected in the signification of sensible things and words, as stated above (60, 6). Therefore sacraments are not necessary for the salvation of man.

**Objection 2.** Further, the Apostle was told (2 Corinthians 12:9): "My grace is sufficient for thee." But it would not suffice if sacraments were necessary for salvation. Therefore sacraments are not necessary for man's salvation.

**Objection 3.** Further, given a sufficient cause, nothing more seems to be required for the effect. But Christ's Passion is the sufficient cause of our salvation; for the Apostle says (Romans 5:10): "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son: much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life." Therefore sacraments are not necessary for man's salvation.

**On the contrary,** Augustine says (Contra Faust. xix): "It is impossible to keep men together in one religious denomination, whether true or false, except they be united by means of visible signs or sacraments." But it is necessary for salvation that men be united together in the name of the one true religion. Therefore sacraments are necessary for man's salvation.

**I answer that,** Sacraments are necessary unto man's salvation for three reasons. The first is taken from the condition of human nature which is such that it has to be led by things corporeal and sensible to things spiritual and intelligible. Now it belongs to Divine providence to provide for each one according as its condition requires. Divine wisdom, therefore, fittingly provides man with means of salvation, in the shape of corporeal and sensible signs that are called sacraments.

The second reason is taken from the state of man who in sinning subjected himself by his affections to corporeal things. Now the healing remedy should be given to a man so as to reach the part affected by disease. Consequently it was fitting that God should provide man with a spiritual medicine by means of certain corporeal signs; for if man were offered spiritual things without a veil, his mind being taken up with the material world would be unable to apply itself to them.

The third reason is taken from the fact that man is prone to direct his activity chiefly towards material things. Lest, therefore, it should be too hard for man to be drawn away

entirely from bodily actions, bodily exercise was offered to him in the sacraments, by which he might be trained to avoid superstitious practices, consisting in the worship of demons, and all manner of harmful action, consisting in sinful deeds.

It follows, therefore, that through the institution of the sacraments man, consistently with his nature, is instructed through sensible things; he is humbled, through confessing that he is subject to corporeal things, seeing that he receives assistance through them: and he is even preserved from bodily hurt, by the healthy exercise of the sacraments.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Bodily exercise, as such, is not very profitable: but exercise taken in the use of the sacraments is not merely bodily, but to a certain extent spiritual, viz. in its signification and in its causality.

**Reply to Objection 2.** God's grace is a sufficient cause of man's salvation. But God gives grace to man in a way which is suitable to him. Hence it is that man needs the sacraments that he may obtain grace.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Christ's Passion is a sufficient cause of man's salvation. But it does not follow that the sacraments are not also necessary for that purpose: because they obtain their effect through the power of Christ's Passion; and Christ's Passion is, so to say, applied to man through the sacraments according to the Apostle (Romans 6:3): "All we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in His death."

## **Question 62. The sacraments' principal effect, which is grace**

### **Article 5. Whether the sacraments of the New Law derive their power from Christ's Passion?**

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**Objection 1.** It seems that the sacraments of the New Law do not derive their power from Christ's Passion. For the power of the sacraments is in the causing of grace which is the principle of spiritual life in the soul. But as Augustine says (Tract. xix in Joan.): "The Word, as He was in the beginning with God, quickens souls; as He was made flesh, quickens bodies." Since, therefore, Christ's Passion pertains to the Word as made flesh, it seems that it cannot cause the power of the sacraments.

**Objection 2.** Further, the power of the sacraments seems to depend on faith. for as Augustine says (Tract. lxxx in Joan.), the Divine Word perfects the sacrament "not because it is spoken, but because it is believed." But our faith regards not only Christ's Passion, but also the other mysteries of His humanity, and in a yet higher measure, His Godhead. Therefore it seems that the power of the sacraments is not due specially to Christ's Passion.

**Objection 3.** Further, the sacraments are ordained unto man's justification, according to 1 Cor. 6:11: "You are washed . . . you are justified." Now justification is ascribed to the Resurrection, according to Rm. 4:25: "(Who) rose again for our justification." Therefore it seems that the sacraments derive their power from Christ's Resurrection rather than from His Passion.

**On the contrary,** on Rm. 5:14: "After the similitude of the transgression of Adam," etc., the gloss says: "From the side of Christ asleep on the Cross flowed the sacraments which brought salvation to the Church." Consequently, it seems that the sacraments derive their power from Christ's Passion.

**I answer that,** As stated above (1) a sacrament in causing grace works after the manner of an instrument. Now an instrument is twofold. the one, separate, as a stick, for instance; the other, united, as a hand. Moreover, the separate instrument is moved by means of the united instrument, as a stick by the hand. Now the principal efficient cause of grace is God Himself, in comparison with Whom Christ's humanity is as a united instrument, whereas the sacrament is as a separate instrument. Consequently, the saving power must needs be derived by the sacraments from Christ's Godhead through His humanity. Now sacramental grace seems to be ordained principally to two things: namely, to take away the defects consequent on past sins, in so far as they are transitory in act, but endure in guilt; and, further, to perfect the soul in things pertaining to Divine Worship in regard to the Christian Religion. But it is manifest from what has been stated above (48, 1,2,6; 49, 1,3) that Christ delivered us from our sins principally through His Passion, not only by way of efficiency and merit, but also by way of satisfaction. Likewise by His Passion He inaugurated the Rites of the Christian Religion by offering "Himself--an oblation and a sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:2). Wherefore it is manifest that the sacraments of the Church derive their power specially from Christ's Passion, the virtue of which is in a manner united to us by our receiving the sacraments. It was in sign of this that from the side of Christ hanging on the Cross there flowed water and blood, the former of which belongs to Baptism, the latter to the Eucharist, which are the principal sacraments.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The Word, forasmuch as He was in the beginning with God, quickens souls as principal agent; but His flesh, and the mysteries accomplished therein, are as instrumental causes in the process of giving life to the soul: while in giving life to the body they act not only as instrumental causes, but also to a certain extent as exemplars, as we stated above (56, 1, ad 3).

**Reply to Objection 2.** Christ dwells in us "by faith" (Ephesians 3:17). Consequently, by faith Christ's power is united to us. Now the power of blotting out sin belongs in a special way to His Passion. And therefore men are delivered from sin especially by faith in His Passion, according to Rm. 3:25: "Whom God hath proposed to be a propitiation through faith in His Blood." Therefore the power of the sacraments which is ordained unto the remission of sins is derived principally from faith in Christ's Passion.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Justification is ascribed to the Resurrection by reason of the term "whither," which is newness of life through grace. But it is ascribed to the Passion by reason of the term "whence," i.e. in regard to the forgiveness of sin.

## **Question 65. The number of the sacraments**

### **Article 1. Whether there should be seven sacraments?**

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**Objection 1.** It seems that there ought not to be seven sacraments. For the sacraments derive their efficacy from the Divine power, and the power of Christ's Passion. But the Divine power is one, and Christ's Passion is one; since "by one oblation He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14). Therefore there should be but one sacrament.

**Objection 2.** Further, a sacrament is intended as a remedy for the defect caused by sin. Now this is twofold, punishment and guilt. Therefore two sacraments would be enough.

**Objection 3.** Further, sacraments belong to the actions of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, as Dionysius explains (Eccl. Hier. v). But, as he says, there are three actions of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, namely, "to cleanse, to enlighten, to perfect." Therefore there should be no more than three sacraments.

**Objection 4.** Further, Augustine says (Contra Faust. xix) that the "sacraments" of the New Law are "less numerous" than those of the Old Law. But in the Old Law there was no sacrament corresponding to Confirmation and Extreme Unction. Therefore these should not be counted among the sacraments of the New Law.

**Objection 5.** Further, lust is not more grievous than other sins, as we have made clear in I-II, 74, 5; II-II, 154, 3]. But there is no sacrament instituted as a remedy for other sins. Therefore neither should matrimony be instituted as a remedy for lust.

**Objection 6.** On the other hand, It seems that there should be more than seven sacraments. For sacraments are a kind of sacred sign. But in the Church there are many sanctifications by sensible signs, such as Holy Water the Consecration of Altars, and such like. Therefore there are more than seven sacraments.

**Objection 7.** Further, Hugh of St. Victor (De Sacram. i) says that the sacraments of the Old Law were oblations, tithes and sacrifices. But the Sacrifice of the Church is one sacrament, called the Eucharist. Therefore oblations also and tithes should be called sacraments.

**Objection 8.** Further, there are three kinds of sin, original, mortal and venial. Now Baptism is intended as a remedy against original sin, and Penance against mortal sin. Therefore besides the seven sacraments, there should be another against venial sin.

**I answer that,** As stated above (62, 5; 63, 1), the sacraments of the Church were instituted for a twofold purpose: namely, in order to perfect man in things pertaining to the worship of God according to the religion of Christian life, and to be a remedy against the defects caused by sin. And in either way it is becoming that there should be seven sacraments.

For spiritual life has a certain conformity with the life of the body: just as other corporeal things have a certain likeness to things spiritual. Now a man attains perfection in the corporeal life in two ways: first, in regard to his own person; secondly, in regard to the whole community of the society in which he lives, for man is by nature a social animal. With regard to himself man is perfected in the life of the body, in two ways; first, directly [per se, i.e. by acquiring some vital perfection; secondly, indirectly [per accidens, i.e. by the removal of hindrances to life, such as ailments, or the like. Now the life of the body is perfected "directly," in three ways. First, by generation whereby a man begins to be and to live: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Baptism, which is a spiritual regeneration, according to Titus 3:5: "By the laver of regeneration," etc. Secondly, by growth whereby a man is brought to perfect size and strength: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Confirmation, in which the Holy Ghost is given to strengthen us. Wherefore the disciples who were already baptized were bidden thus: "Stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). Thirdly, by nourishment, whereby life and strength are preserved to man; and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is the Eucharist. Wherefore it is said (John 6:54): "Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you."

And this would be enough for man if he had an impassible life, both corporally and spiritually; but since man is liable at times to both corporal and spiritual infirmity, i.e. sin,

hence man needs a cure from his infirmity; which cure is twofold. one is the healing, that restores health: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Penance, according to Ps. 40:5: "Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee." The other is the restoration of former vigor by means of suitable diet and exercise: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is Extreme Unction, which removes the remainder of sin, and prepares man for final glory. Wherefore it is written (James 5:15): "And if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him."

In regard to the whole community, man is perfected in two ways. First, by receiving power to rule the community and to exercise public acts: and corresponding to this in the spiritual life there is the sacrament of order, according to the saying of Heb. 7:27, that priests offer sacrifices not for themselves only, but also for the people. Secondly in regard to natural propagation. This is accomplished by Matrimony both in the corporal and in the spiritual life: since it is not only a sacrament but also a function of nature.

We may likewise gather the number of the sacraments from their being instituted as a remedy against the defect caused by sin. For Baptism is intended as a remedy against the absence of spiritual life; Confirmation, against the infirmity of soul found in those of recent birth; the Eucharist, against the soul's proneness to sin; Penance, against actual sin committed after baptism; Extreme Unction, against the remainders of sins--of those sins, namely, which are not sufficiently removed by Penance, whether through negligence or through ignorance; order, against divisions in the community; Matrimony, as a remedy against concupiscence in the individual, and against the decrease in numbers that results from death.

Some, again, gather the number of sacraments from a certain adaptation to the virtues and to the defects and penal effects resulting from sin. They say that Baptism corresponds to Faith, and is ordained as a remedy against original sin; Extreme Unction, to Hope, being ordained against venial sin; the Eucharist, to Charity, being ordained against the penal effect which is malice. order, to Prudence, being ordained against ignorance; Penance to Justice, being ordained against mortal sin; Matrimony, to Temperance, being ordained against concupiscence; Confirmation, to Fortitude, being ordained against infirmity.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The same principal agent uses various instruments unto various effects, in accordance with the thing to be done. In the same way the Divine power and the Passion of Christ work in us through the various sacraments as through various instruments.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Guilt and punishment are diversified both according to species, inasmuch as there are various species of guilt and punishment, and according to men's various states and habitudes. And in this respect it was necessary to have a number of sacraments, as explained above.

**Reply to Objection 3.** In hierarchical actions we must consider the agents, the recipients and the actions. The agents are the ministers of the Church; and to these the sacrament of order belongs. The recipients are those who approach the sacraments: and these are brought into being by Matrimony. The actions are "cleansing," "enlightening," and "perfecting." Mere cleansing, however, cannot be a sacrament of the New Law, which confers grace: yet it belongs to certain sacramentals, i.e. catechism and exorcism. But cleansing coupled with enlightening, according to Dionysius, belongs to Baptism; and, for him who falls back into sin, they belong secondarily to Penance and Extreme Unction.

And perfecting, as regards power, which is, as it were, a formal perfection, belongs to Confirmation: while, as regards the attainment of the end, it belongs to the Eucharist.

**Reply to Objection 4.** In the sacrament of Confirmation we receive the fulness of the Holy Ghost in order to be strengthened; while in Extreme Unction man is prepared for the immediate attainment of glory; and neither of these two purposes was becoming to the Old Testament. Consequently, nothing in the old Law could correspond to these sacraments. Nevertheless, the sacraments of the old Law were more numerous, on account of the various kinds of sacrifices and ceremonies.

**Reply to Objection 5.** There was need for a special sacrament to be applied as a remedy against venereal concupiscence: first because by this concupiscence, not only the person but also the nature is defiled: secondly, by reason of its vehemence whereby it clouds the reason.

**Reply to Objection 6.** Holy Water and other consecrated things are not called sacraments, because they do not produce the sacramental effect, which is the receiving of grace. They are, however, a kind of disposition to the sacraments: either by removing obstacles. thus holy water is ordained against the snares of the demons, and against venial sins: or by making things suitable for the conferring of a sacrament; thus the altar and vessels are consecrated through reverence for the Eucharist.

**Reply to Objection 7.** Oblations and tithes, both the Law of nature and in the Law of Moses, ere ordained not only for the sustenance of the ministers and the poor, but also figuratively; and consequently they were sacraments. But now they remain no longer as figures, and therefore they are not sacraments.

**Reply to Objection 8.** The infusion of grace is not necessary for the blotting out of venial sin. Wherefore, since grace is infused in each of the sacraments of the New Law, none of them was instituted directly against venial sin. This is taken away by certain sacramentals, for instance, Holy Water and such like. Some, however, hold that Extreme Unction is ordained against venial sin. But of this we shall speak in its proper place (XP, 30, 1).

### **Article 3. Whether the Eucharist is the greatest of the sacraments?**

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**Objection 1.** It seems that the Eucharist is not the principal of the sacraments. For the common good is of more account than the good of the individual (1 Ethic. ii). But Matrimony is ordained to the common good of the human race by means of generation: whereas the sacrament of the Eucharist is ordained to the private good of the recipient. Therefore it is not the greatest of the sacraments.

**Objection 2.** Further, those sacraments, seemingly, are greater, which are conferred by a greater minister. But the sacraments of Confirmation and order are conferred by a bishop only, who is a greater minister than a mere minister such as a priest, by whom the sacraments of the Eucharist is conferred. Therefore those sacraments are greater.

**Objection 3.** Further, those sacraments are greater that have the greater power. But some of the sacraments imprint a character, viz. Baptism, Confirmation and order; whereas the Eucharist does not. Therefore those sacraments are greater.

**Objection 4.** Further, that seems to be greater, on which others depend without its depending on them. But the Eucharist depends on Baptism: since no one can receive the Eucharist except he has been baptized. Therefore Baptism is greater than the Eucharist.

**On the contrary**, Dionysius says (Eccl. Hier. iii) that "No one receives hierarchical perfection save by the most God-like Eucharist." Therefore this sacrament is greater than all the others and perfects them.

**I answer that**, Absolutely speaking, the sacrament of the Eucharist is the greatest of all the sacraments: and this may be shown in three ways. First of all because it contains Christ Himself substantially: whereas the other sacraments contain a certain instrumental power which is a share of Christ's power, as we have shown above (62, 4, ad 3, 5] ). Now that which is essentially such is always of more account than that which is such by participation.

Secondly, this is made clear by considering the relation of the sacraments to one another. For all the other sacraments seem to be ordained to this one as to their end. For it is manifest that the sacrament of order is ordained to the consecration of the Eucharist: and the sacrament of Baptism to the reception of the Eucharist: while a man is perfected by Confirmation, so as not to fear to abstain from this sacrament. By Penance and Extreme Unction man is prepared to receive the Body of Christ worthily. And Matrimony at least in its signification, touches this sacrament; in so far as it signifies the union of Christ with the Church, of which union the Eucharist is a figure: hence the Apostle says (Ephesians 5:32): "This is a great sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the Church."

Thirdly, this is made clear by considering the rites of the sacraments. For nearly all the sacraments terminate in the Eucharist, as Dionysius says (Eccl. Hier. iii): thus those who have been ordained receive Holy Communion, as also do those who have been baptized, if they be adults.

The remaining sacraments may be compared to one another in several ways. For on the ground of necessity, Baptism is the greatest of the sacraments; while from the point of view of perfection, order comes first; while Confirmation holds a middle place. The sacraments of Penance and Extreme Unction are on a degree inferior to those mentioned above; because, as stated above (2), they are ordained to the Christian life, not directly, but accidentally, as it were, that is to say, as remedies against supervening defects. And among these, Extreme Unction is compared to Penance, as Confirmation to Baptism; in such a way, that Penance is more necessary, whereas Extreme Unction is more perfect.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Matrimony is ordained to the common good as regards the body. But the common spiritual good of the whole Church is contained substantially in the sacrament itself of the Eucharist.

**Reply to Objection 2.** By order and Confirmation the faithful of Christ are deputed to certain special duties; and this can be done by the prince alone. Consequently the conferring of these sacraments belongs exclusively to a bishop, who is, as it were, a prince in the Church. But a man is not deputed to any duty by the sacrament of the Eucharist, rather is this sacrament the end of all duties, as stated above.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The sacramental character, as stated above (63, 3), is a kind of participation in Christ's priesthood. Wherefore the sacrament that unites man to Christ Himself, is greater than a sacrament that imprints Christ's character.

**Reply to Objection 4.** This argument proceeds on the ground of necessity. For thus Baptism, being of the greatest necessity, is the greatest of the sacraments, just as order and Confirmation have a certain excellence considered in their administration; and Matrimony by reason of its signification. For there is no reason why a thing should not be greater from a certain point of view which is not greater absolutely speaking.

#### **Article 4. Whether all the sacraments are necessary for salvation?**

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**Objection 1.** It seems that all the sacraments are necessary for salvation. For what is not necessary seems to be superfluous. But no sacrament is superfluous, because "God does nothing without a purpose" (De Coelo et Mundo i). Therefore all the sacraments are necessary for salvation.

**Objection 2.** Further, just as it is said of Baptism (John 3:5): "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter in to the kingdom of God," so of the Eucharist is it said (John 6:54): "Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink of His blood, you shall not have life in you." Therefore, just as Baptism is a necessary sacrament, so is the Eucharist.

**Objection 3.** Further, a man can be saved without the sacrament of Baptism, provided that some unavoidable obstacle, and not his contempt for religion, debar him from the sacrament, as we shall state further on (68, 2). But contempt of religion in any sacrament is a hindrance to salvation. Therefore, in like manner, all the sacraments are necessary for salvation.

**On the contrary,** Children are saved by Baptism alone without the other sacraments.

**I answer that,** Necessity of end, of which we speak now, is twofold. First, a thing may be necessary so that without it the end cannot be attained; thus food is necessary for human life. And this is simple necessity of end. Secondly, a thing is said to be necessary, if, without it, the end cannot be attained so becomingly: thus a horse is necessary for a journey. But this is not simple necessity of end.

In the first way, three sacraments are necessary for salvation. Two of them are necessary to the individual; Baptism, simply and absolutely; Penance, in the case of mortal sin committed after Baptism; while the sacrament of order is necessary to the Church, since "where there is no governor the people shall fall" (Proverbs 11:14).

But in the second way the other sacraments are necessary. For in a sense Confirmation perfects Baptism; Extreme Unction perfects Penance; while Matrimony, by multiplying them, preserves the numbers in the Church.

**Reply to Objection 1.** For a thing not to be superfluous it is enough if it be necessary either in the first or the second way. It is thus that the sacraments are necessary, as stated above.

**Reply to Objection 2.** These words of our Lord are to be understood of spiritual, and not of merely sacramental, eating, as Augustine explains (Tract. xxvi super Joan.).

**Reply to Objection 3.** Although contempt of any of the sacraments is a hindrance to salvation, yet it does not amount to contempt of the sacrament, if anyone does not trouble to receive a sacrament that is not necessary for salvation. Else those who do not receive orders, and those who do not contract Matrimony, would be guilty of contempt of those sacraments.

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