

Tridentine Community News

May 3, 2009

De Defectibus – Part 2 of 4

We continue our presentation of the 1962 Roman Missal instruction, *De Defectibus* (On Defects Occurring in the Celebration of Mass), which displays the Church's concern for the Blessed Sacrament and the validity of the Eucharist that the faithful may receive.

IV. Defect of Wine (*con't.*)

17. If he finds out, before or after the Consecration, that the wine is completely vinegar or otherwise corrupt, he is to follow the same procedure as above, as if he were to find that no wine had been put into the chalice, or that only water had been put in.

18. If the celebrant remembers before the consecration of the chalice that there was no water added, he is to put some in at once and say the words of the Consecration. If he remembers this after the consecration of the chalice, he is not to add any water, because the water is not necessary to the Sacrament.

19. If a defect either of bread or of wine is discovered before the consecration of the Body, and the material needed cannot be obtained in any way, the priest should not continue any further. If after the consecration of the Body, or even of the wine, a defect in either species is discovered, and the material needed cannot be obtained in any way, then the priest should continue and complete the Mass if the defective material has already been consecrated, omitting the words and signs that pertain to the defective species. But if the material needed can be obtained with some little delay, he should wait, in order that the Sacrament may not remain incomplete.

V. Defects of the Form

20. Defects on the part of the form may arise if anything is missing from the complete wording required for the act of consecrating. Now the words of the Consecration, which are the form of this Sacrament, are:

HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM, and HIC EST ENIM CALIX SÁNGUINIS MEI, NOVI ET ÆTÉRNÍ TESTAMÉNTI: MYSTÉRIUM FIDÉI: QUI PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS EFFUNDÉTUR IN REMISSIÓNEM PECCATÓRUM.

If the priest were to shorten or change the form of the consecration of the Body and the Blood, so that in the change of wording the words did not mean the same thing, he would not be achieving a valid Sacrament. If, on the other hand, he were to add or take away anything which did not change the meaning, the Sacrament would be valid, but he would be committing a grave sin.

21. If the celebrant does not remember having said the usual words in the Consecration, he should not for that reason be worried. If, however, he is sure that he omitted something necessary to the Sacrament, that is, the form of the Consecration or a part of it, he is to repeat the formula and continue from there. If he thinks it is very likely that he omitted something essential, he is to repeat the formula conditionally, though the condition need not be expressed. But if what he omitted is not necessary to the

Sacrament, he is not to repeat anything; he should simply continue the Mass.

VI. Defects of the Minister

22. Defects on the part of the minister may arise with regard to the things required in him. These are: first of all the intention, then the disposition of soul, the bodily disposition, the disposition of vestments, the disposition in the rite itself with regard to the things that may occur in it.

VII. Defect of Intention

23. The intention of consecrating is required. Therefore there is no consecration in the following cases: when a priest does not intend to consecrate but only to make a pretense; when some hosts remain on the altar forgotten by the priest, or when some part of the wine or some host is hidden, since the priest intends to consecrate only what is on the corporal; when a priest has eleven hosts before him and intends to consecrate only ten, without determining which ten he means to consecrate. On the other hand, if he thinks there are ten, but intends to consecrate all that he has before him, then all will be consecrated. For that reason every priest should always have such an intention, namely the intention of consecrating all the hosts that have been placed on the corporal before him for consecration.

24. If the priest thinks that he is holding one Host but discovers after the Consecration that there were two Hosts stuck together, he is to consume both when the time comes. If after receiving the Body and Blood, or even after the ablution, he finds other consecrated Pieces, large or small, he is to consume them, because they belong to the same sacrifice.

25. If, however, a whole consecrated Host is left, he is to put it into the tabernacle with the others that are there; if this cannot be done, he is to consume it.

26. It may be that the intention is not actual at the time of the Consecration because the priest lets his mind wander, yet is still virtual, since he has come to the altar intending to do what the Church does. In this case the Sacrament is valid. A priest should be careful, however, to make his intention actual also.

VIII. Defects of the Disposition of Soul

27. If a priest celebrates Mass in a state of mortal sin or under some ecclesiastical penalty, he does celebrate a valid Sacrament, but he sins most grievously.

IX. Defects of the Disposition of Body

28. If a priest has not been fasting for at least one hour before Communion, he may not celebrate. The drinking of water, however, does not break the fast.

29. The sick, even though they are not bed-ridden, may take non-alcoholic liquids as well as true and proper medicine, whether liquid or solid, before the celebration of Mass, without any time limit.