

comply, I say, sincerely, and earnestly, this precept of the Apostle ; so that every time you communicate you may be able to testify to yourself, that you are *proved*, and that without presuming to be justified on this account more than St. Paul did, your conscience may reproach you with no essential obstacle to this sacrament ; that is, that it may not be charged with mortal sin, for it is in this, principally, the Council of Trent makes that proof consist, which you must undergo before you approach the holy Communion.

V. Make as exact, as fervent, and as perfect a Confession before Communion, as you would make on the point of death, being well convinced, that to receive Jesus Christ requires no less purity of heart, than to appear before God and undergo the rigour of his judgment. This reflection alone will suffice to prevent you from ever making a sacrilegious communion, and ever hinder you from making lukewarm and imperfect Communion, which are often disposing causes for the former.

VI. Be also convinced, that the proving of one's self before Communion does not consist merely in confessing and detesting your sins, but you must quit the occasions, you must destroy the cause, and repair the scandal of sin. As long as the scandal or occasion of sin remains without the determination to abandon it, so long you do not satisfy the indispensable obligation imposed on

us by St. Paul in these words : *Let a man prove himself.*

VII. Remember, that as purity is the most natural disposition for this sacrament, that is, the most suitable to its dignity, and the most conformable to the inclinations of Jesus Christ—so that sin, which of all others is specially opposed to Communion, and would render you most unworthy of it, is the sin of impurity, because, by profaning your flesh, it dishonours the flesh of Jesus Christ himself. On this account hold it in abomination, and frequently meditate on those astonishing words which St. Ambrose addressed to Jesus Christ : “What goodness O Lord ! That, in order to save mankind, you had no horror of being incarnated in a Virgin's womb !” For if St. Ambrose did not hesitate to speak thus of the blessed virgin, all pure as she was, what would he have said of an unchaste person, who in the attachment and disorders of his crime, should approach Communion, which according to the Fathers, is nothing else than an extension and sequence of the Incarnation ?

VIII. Do not wait for the very day of Communion to prepare yourself, but take a reasonable time for this purpose, and think of it the sooner before hand, as a greater interval elapses between your Communion. Especially on the eve of so holy a day, or even two or three days previously, withdraw from every thing that can dissipate