

Saviour's passion.* Or, the mass is an oblation of the body and blood of our Saviour, under the sensible forms of bread and wine, made only by a priest authorised by Christ, to God; whose dominion over us is thereby acknowledged, with our subjection and dependence on him. This is the public and solemn honour and glory of the most Sacred Trinity: here the power of God is owned, and his perfections displayed: † here the first-born of all creatures, in whom they are all included, is offered: here the angels rejoice, and repeat their *Gloria be to God on high*: ‡ here sinners obtain pardon; the living, grace; the dead, refreshment; the offerers, blessings and remission, and the universal Church has all good from this mystery; it being an *holocaust* of perfect love, *propitiatory* for sins past, *expiatory* of pains and punishments due to them, *impetratory* of new gifts and graces, *eucharistical* for blessings and benefits received, and in fine, ascends continually to God, in the odour of sweetness. "If then, (says Pope Urban VIII.) in human affairs, there be anything perfectly divine, for which the heavenly citizens (if envy could touch them) might envy our happiness, that surely is the most holy sacrifice of the mass, by the benefit whereof it comes to pass, that men, by a certain anticipation, do possess heaven on earth, whilst they have before their eyes, and in their hands, the very creator of heaven and earth, so much are mortals obliged to maintain this great privilege, with due worship and honour." And, in order hereto,

THE PRIEST

"Is taken," or set apart, or chosen "from amongst" the rest of "men," as the most perfect amongst them, and is "appointed" for men in those things that appertain to God, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for them, that he may compassionate the ignorant, and such as err, because himself also is compassed with infirmity; and there-

fore he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins." Heb. 5. 1. &c. This then is

HIS OFFICE,

To be a secondary mediator between God and man; pleading their cause, and offering their tribute, in public testimony, that God is their God, and they his creatures; offering in like manner for their sins, to appease his wrath, and obtain his grace; to comfort the afflicted, and be a Samaritan to all. But "who shall ascend unto the mount of the Lord? The innocent in hands, and clean in heart. Ps. 23. Let him therefore make

HIS PREPARATION FOR MASS.

1. By placing himself upon his knees in the presence of God. 2. By calling to mind, that he is now about to address and pray to his heavenly Majesty, for the salvation of himself and his universal people, and that by the solemn oblation of the dreadful sacrifice. 3. By cleansing his conscience from the filth of sin, and disposing his soul with all humility and meekness, with all devotion and purity, with all attention, affection, sincerity, and zeal, to perform this great work, saying:

"In union, O Lord, with that heavenly sacrifice, which thy eternal Son, our merciful Redeemer, offered at his last supper, and upon the cross, I humbly beg thou wilt accept this sacrifice of ours, which I am about to offer to thy everlasting honour. In testimony of thy sovereign universal dominion, and our dependence; in commemoration of the sacrifice of our redemption. May thy saints hereby participate of the merits of thy passion, to the increase of their glory; the souls in purgatory be relieved from their sufferings; and all sinners upon earth reclaimed, of what kind soever, and in particular such and such. Thou hast ordained it, O Lord, to be offered to thee, as a perpetual thanksgiving for all thy blessings bestowed upon us, as a satisfaction for all the offences of thy faithful people, both living and dead, and for the obtaining of

* Luke 22, 12. † Col. 1, 15. ‡ Luke 2, 14.