

angels and saints ; greater and greater grows the measure of her happiness, which will eventually culminate in the eternal joys of heaven.

By this continuous growth in sanctifying grace, a constantly purifying and strengthening influence is thus exerted upon the soul. Our conceptions of this increase of sanctifying grace and of its concomitant gifts in holy communion must differ from that which we have of the operations of the other sacraments, which, when received in the state of grace, also produce an augmentation of the same.

We have already stated that the special sacramental grace of the Holy Eucharist is the source, the author, the plenitude of all grace. St Thomas Aquinas says : " The Holy Eucharist is, in a manner, the completion of the spiritual life and the final goal of all the sacraments." In the Holy Eucharist the operations of the other sacraments are raised to the sublimest height and attain the very acme of perfection. When the sun of grace itself, the very origin of the light and life of the soul, approaches us so intimately, then indeed every virtuous plant that has taken root in the soul blossoms with renewed vigor, just as the verdant fields of nature and the flowers appear more beautiful and assume brighter colors when after a dreary season of rain there follows a day of golden sunshine.

This heavenly food of grace, however is not limited in its operations to the soul, but consecrates the body also for its supernatural life, its resurrection and eternal glorification. Holy communion is the pledge of our resurrection and eternal salvation. It prepares the way for the union of our glorified bodies with Christ in His eternal glory. Christ Himself has said ; " He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life and I will raise him up in the last day." If it has been said of Christ by the prophet : " The Holy One shall not see corruption," then it may be remarked of the body sanctified by holy communion ; " The sanctified cannot be permitted to remain in the state of corruption, in the curse of sin. "

If, moreover, it is an established fact that there will be various degrees of glory among the saints after the resurrection, then it may with reason be assumed that the number and worth of our holy communions will pre-