

of this wonderful truth, which I see puzzles you very much, is contained in these three words, which theologians use to describe the action of the Blessed Sacrament:—It has an efficacy '*Ex opere operato.*' "

"Latin! But what does it mean?" answered Mrs. Mary.

"It means, '*On account of the deed which is done,*' " answered Father Carson, "and if you wish to understand what is, to my mind, the very basic reason for early and frequent Communion, you must listen to a thorough explanation of the meaning of those three words, '*ex opere operato.*' "

"Please go on," said Mrs. Mary, "I'll do my very best to understand."

"Every Sacrament," began Father Carson, "is really an act, and a prayer of Our Blessed Lord. True it is the priest or other minister who goes through the actions, and who speaks the words, but he does so in the name and in the person of Christ. And the Heavenly Father, seeing those actions, hearing those words which Christ has bidden His ministers to do and speak in His Name, is moved by the merits of His Divine Son, to pour down on the recipient that grace, actual and sanctifying, which Christ meant that they should receive when He instituted the Sacrament. Is that clear to your mind?"

"You mean," said Mrs. Mary, "that God gives us grace because the Sacrament is, in His eyes, not only an act of the priest, but even more an act of His Divine Son. I think I can follow that."

"Very good!" went on Father Carson. "This, then, is what is meant by '*opus operatum,*' the '*deed which is done*' in Christ's Person, and in His Name; and so long as those words and actions are duly performed by the authorized representative of Christ, The Sacrament is complete, ready to pour grace into the soul of the recipient, by reason of the very '*deed which has been done.*' Remember it is Christ who has done the deed. It is His merit which moves the Heavenly Father to pour down grace on the recipient. All that is absolutely required now, on the part of the receiver of the Sacrament is this—