

...ive he enjoys, "of being alone priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisadech," who therefore alone, as primary priest, must to the consummation of the world offer this sacrifice. "It was becoming we should have a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, made higher than the heavens, who hath not necessity every day as the priests of the old law to offer vicims, first for his sins, then for the people" (Ep. Heb., c. 7); this refers no less to the Eucharist than to the sacrifice of the cross, with which it is the same in substance, and, therefore, in offering the Eucharist, Christ is the principal (primary) priest; so all the Holy Fathers understand it, as they acknowledge him to be both priest and victim.

2d. Priests alone who are validly ordained, can offer this sacrifice to them. J. Christ spoke the following words: "This do in commemoration of me;" to them he gave power and issued a command to consecrate the Eucharist. Now these words were solely addressed to the Apostles and to their successors in the priesthood, to wit, Bishops and Presbyters; they alone then have the power of offering the sacrifice of the Eucharist. This we likewise learn from tradition; St. Justin (*in prim. Apol. pro Christ*), writes: "To him who presides over the brethren, is offered bread and a cup of wine mixed with water, which, he receiving, performs the Eucharist." Tertulian writes: "The Eucharist is not to be received but from the hands of those who preside, much less is it to be consecrated by any" (but by them). They who presided were Bishops and Presbyters. St. Jerome proves the Luciferans not to belong to the true Church, from the fact of their not having priests to consecrate the Eucharist, "neque Episcopos, neque Presbyteros, habent epistol." This sacrament, no person can offer unless a priest (sacerdos), duly ordained, we are taught by the Council IV. of Later, A.D. 1215. To confirm this doctrine, the Council of Trent (*sess. 22, de sacrif. miss.*) has hurled the thunderbolts of heaven against all gainsayers fulminating the following scathing anathema: "If any person will say, Christ when he spoke these words, '*hoc facite in meam commemorationem*,' (sec. 22), did not ordain his Apostles priests, or did not intend they and other priests would offer his body and blood, let him be anathema." The faithful may be said in a threefold sense to offer.

1st. In a general way, inasmuch as they are members of the Church in the name of which the priest offers.

2nd. In a special manner, so far as they co-operate with the celebrating minister, e. g., by asking for, by procuring the sacrifice to be applied to themselves, by donating "the celebrant" an honorary, by ministering unto him.

3rd. Because by internal affection, they unite themselves "to the action of the priest," and seek to be partakers of its fruit; hence, the priest before beginning the canon in which is comprised "the action of the sacrifice," turning to the people, says in a loud voice, "*Orate fratres*," &c., *i. e.*, "pray brethren, that my sacrifice and yours be made acceptable to God, the Father Almighty;" and, "within the action," he says: "This oblation of our service, and of thy whole family, we beseech Thee, Lord, that propitious you receive;" and whereas, sacrifice from its nature, is the public and solemn worship of the people. In the name of the people it is to be offered to God. "What is performed in a special manner by the ministry of the priest, the same is done in a general way by the wish of the people," writes Pope Innocent III.

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