

ANGELICAN ORDERS.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO

would have been to repeat the ordination conditionally, and still more important is it to note that the judgment of the Pontiff applies universally to all Anglican ordinations, because although it refers to a particular case it is not based upon any reason special to that case, but upon the defect of form, which defect equally affects all these ordinations, so much so that in similar cases subsequently coming up for decision the same doctrine of Clement XI was quoted as the normal principle.

Hence it must be clear to every one that the controversy lately revived had been already definitely settled by the Apostolic See, and that it is to the insufficient knowledge of these documents that we must, perhaps, attribute the fact that any Catholic writer should have considered it still an open question. But, as we stated at the beginning, there is nothing we so deeply and ardently desire as to be of help to men of good will by showing them the greatest consideration and clarity, therefore we ordered that the Anglican Ordinal, which is the essential point of the whole matter, should be at once most carefully examined.

7. THE ANGELICAN ORDINAL.

In the examination of any rite for the affecting and administering of a sacrament, distinction is rightly made between the part which is ceremonial and that which is essential, usually called the matter and form. All know that the sacraments of the New Law, as sensible and efficient signs of invisible grace, ought both to signify the grace which they effect and effect the grace which they signify. Although the signification ought to be found in the whole essential rite, that is to say, in the matter and form, it still pertains chiefly to the form, since the matter is the part which is not determined by itself but which is determined by the form, and this appears still more clearly in the Sacrament of Orders, the matter of which, in so far as we have to consider it in this case, is the imposition of hands, which indeed by itself signifies nothing definite, and is equally used for several orders, and for confirmation, but the words which until recently were commonly held by Anglicans to constitute the proper form of priestly ordination—namely, "Receive the Holy Ghost," certainly do not in the least definitely express the sacred order of priesthood or its grace and power which is chiefly the power "of consecrating and offering the true Body and Blood of the Lord" (Council of Trent Sess. XXIII. *De Sac. Ord.*, Can 1) in that sacrifice which is no "nude commemoration of the sacrifice offered on the cross." (Ibid. Sess. XXII. *De Sacrific. Missae*, Can 3). This form had, indeed, after wards added to it the words, "for the office and work of a priest," &c., but this rather shows that the Anglicans themselves perceived that the first form was defective and inadequate. But even if this addition could give to the form its due signification, it was introduced too late, as a century has already elapsed since the adoption of the Edwardian Ordinal, for as the hierarchy had become extinct there remained no power of ordaining. In vain has help been recently sought for the plea of the validity of orders from the other prayers of the same ordinal. For, to put aside other reasons which show this to be insufficient for the purpose in the Anglican rite, let this argument alone for all—from them has been deliberately removed whatever set forth the dignity and office of the priesthood in the Catholic rite. That form consequently ought not to be considered apt or sufficient for the sacrament which omits what it ought essentially to signify. The same holds good for episcopal consecration. For the formula, "Receive the Holy Ghost," not only were the words, "for the office and work of a Bishop," etc., added at a later period, but even these, as we shall presently state, must be understood in a sense different to that which they bear in the Catholic rite. Nor is anything gained by quoting "Almighty God," since it in like manner has been stripped of the words which denote the *summa sacerdotium*. It is not here relevant to examine whether the episcopate be a complete distinct from it, or whether when bestowed it is by *potestatem* on one who is not a priest, it has or has not its effect. But the episcopate undoubtedly by the institution of Christ most truly belongs to the sacrament of orders, and constitutes the *sacerdotium* in the highest degree—namely, that which by the teaching of the Holy Fathers and our Liturgical customs is called the "summa sacerdotium *sacri ministerii summa*." So it comes to pass that as the Sacrament of Orders and the true *sacerdotium* of Christ were utterly eliminated from the Anglican rite, and hence the *sacerdotium* in its no wise conferred truly and validly in the episcopal consecration of the same rite, for like reason, therefore, the episcopate can in no way be truly and validly conferred by it, and this the more so because among the first duties of the episcopate is that of ordaining ministers for the Holy Eucharist and Sacrifice.

THE SIN AND SIN OF THOSE WHO COME TO THE ANGELICAN ORDINAL.

For the full and accurate understanding of the Anglican Ordinal, besides what we have noted as to some of its parts, there is nothing more pertinent than to consider carefully the circumstances under which it was composed and publicly authorized. It would be tedious to enter into details, nor is it necessary to do so, as the history of that time is sufficiently eloquent as to the animus of the authors of the Ordinal against the Catholic Church, as to the abettors whom they associated with themselves from the heterodox seats and as to the end they had in view. Being fully cognizant of the necessary connection between faith and worship, between the law of believing and the law of praying, under a pretext of returning to the primitive form they corrupted the liturgical order in many ways to suit the errors of the reformers. For this reason in the whole Ordinal not only is there no clear mention of the Sacrament of Consecration of the sacerdotium and of the power of consecrating and offering sacrifices, but as we have just stated every trace of those things which have been in such prayers of the Catholic rite as they had not entirely rejected, was deliberately removed and struck out. In this way the native character or spirit as it is called, of the Ordinal clearly manifests itself. Hence it vitiated in its origin it was wholly insufficient to confer order. It was impossible that in the course of time it would become sufficient, since no change had taken place. In vain those who from the time of Charles I. have attempted to hold some kind of sacrifice or of priesthood have made some additions to the Ordinal. In vain also has been the contention of that small section of the Anglican body formed in recent times that the said Ordinal can be understood and interpreted in a sound and orthodox sense. Such efforts we affirm have been and are made in vain, and for this reason that any words in the Anglican Ordinal as it now is which lend themselves to ambiguity cannot be taken in the same sense as they possess in the Catholic rite. For once a new rite has been instituted in which, as we have seen, the Sacrament of Orders is adulterated or denied and from which all ideas of consecration and sacrifice have been rejected, the formula, "Receive the Holy Ghost," no longer holds good, because the spirit is infused into the soul with the grace of the Sacrament, and the words, "For the office and work of a priest or Bishop," and the like no longer hold good, but remain as words without the reality which Christ instituted. Several of the more shrewd Anglican interpreters of the Ordinal have perceived the force of this argument, and they openly urge it against those who take the Ordinal in a new sense, and vainly attach to the orders conferred thereby a value and efficiency they do not possess. By this same argument is refused the contention of those who think that the prayer "Almighty God give us all good things," which is found at the beginning of the ritual action might suffice as a legitimate form of orders, even in the hypothesis that it might be held to be sufficient in a Catholic rite approved by the Church.

9. CATHOLIC DOCTRINE OF INTENTION.

With this inherent defect of form is joined the defect of intention, which is usually essential to the Sacraments. The Church does not judge about the mind and intention in so far as it is something by its nature internal, but in so far as it is manifested externally she is bound to judge concerning it. When anyone has rightly and seriously made use of the due form and the matter requisite for effecting or conferring the Sacrament he is considered by the very fact to do what the Church does. On this principle rests the doctrine that a Sacrament is truly conferred by the ministry of one who is a heretic or unbaptized provided the Catholic rite be employed. On the other hand, if the rite be changed with the manifest intention of introducing another rite not approved by the Church and of rejecting what the Church does, and what by the institution of Christ belongs to the nature of the Sacrament, then, it is clear, that not only is the necessary intention wanting to the Sacrament, but that the intention is adverse to and destructive of the Sacrament.

10. DECISION OF THE HOLY OFFICE AND THE FINAL DECREE.

All these matters have been long and carefully considered by ourselves and by our venerable brethren, the Judges of the Supreme Council of whom it has pleased Us to call a special meeting upon the "Feast of the 16th day of July last upon the solemnity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. They with one accord agreed that the question laid before them had been adjudicated upon with full knowledge of the Apostolic See, and that this renewed discussion and examination of the issues had only served to bring out more clearly the wisdom and accuracy with which that decision had been made. Nevertheless we deemed it well to postpone a decision in order to afford time both to consider whether it would be fitting or expedient that we should make a fresh authoritative declaration upon the matter, and to humbly pray for a fuller measure of Divine guidance. Then, considering that this matter of practice, although already decided, had been by certain

persons for whatever reasons recalled into discussion, and that thence it might follow that a pernicious error would be fostered in the minds of many who might suppose that they possessed the Sacrament and effects of orders whose those are nowise to be found, it has seemed good to Us to the Lord to pronounce Our judgment.

Wherefore, strictly adhering in this matter to the decrees of the Pontiffs Our predecessors, and confirming them most fully and as it were renewing them by Our authority, of Our own motion and certain knowledge, We pronounce and declare that ordinations carried out according to the Anglican rites have been and are absolutely null and utterly void. It remains for Us to say that even as we have entered upon the elevation of this grave question in the name and in the love of the Great Shepherd, in the same we appeal to those who desire and seek with a sincere heart the possession of a hierarchy and of Orders. Perhaps until now, aiming at the greater perfection of Canon law, and searching more devoutly the Divine Scriptures, and redoubting the fervour of their prayers, they have nevertheless hesitated in doubt and anxiety to follow the voice of Christ which has so long interiorly admonished them. Now they see clearly whether He in His goodness invited them, and wills them to come. In returning to his One only fold they will obtain the blessings which they seek and the consequent helps to salvation of which He has made the Church the dispenser and promoter of His redemption among the nations. Then indeed, "they shall draw waters in joy from the fountains of the Saviour." His wondrous sacraments, whereby His faithful souls have their sins truly remitted and restored to the friendship of God, are nourished and strengthened by the Heavenly Bread, and abound with the most powerful aids for their eternal salvation. May the God of peace, the God of all consolation, in His infinite tenderness enrich and fill with all these blessings those who truly yearn for them. We wish to direct Our exhortation and Our desires in a special way to those who are ministers of religion in their respective communities. They are men who from their very office take precedence in learning and authority, and who have at heart the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

Let them be the first in joyfully submitting to the Divine call, and obey it and "unashamedly follow the example to others. Assuredly with an exceeding great joy their mother the Church will welcome them, and cherish with all her love and care those whom the strength of their generous souls has amidst many trials and difficulties led back to her bosom. Nor could words express the recognition which this devoted courage will win for them from the assemblies of the brethren throughout the Catholic world, or what hope or confidence it will merit for them before Christ as their Judge, or what reward it will obtain from Him in the Heavenly Kingdom. And We ourselves in every lawful way shall continue to promote their reconciliation with the Church in which individuals and masses as we ardently desire may find so much for their initiation. In the meantime by the tender mercy of the Lord Our God, We ask and beseech all to strive faithfully to follow in the open path of Divine grace and truth.

We decree that these letters and all things contained therein shall not be liable at any time to be impugned or objected to by reason of fault or any other defect whatsoever of subreption or obreption, or of Our intention, but are and shall be always valid and in force, and shall be inviolably observed both judicially and otherwise by all of whatsoever degree and pre-eminence, declaring null and void anything which in these matters may happen to be contrary to what we have said, whether wittingly or unwittingly, by any person whatsoever, by whatsoever authority or pretext, all things to the contrary notwithstanding.

We will that these letters be given two copies of these letters once printed provided that they be signed by a notary and sealed by a person constituted in ecclesiastical dignity, the same credence that would be given to the expression of Our will by the showing of these presents.

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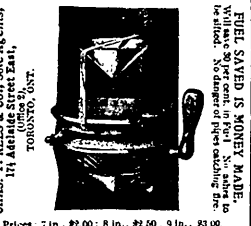
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