

## Summa of a Scotus Summa.

The following translations from Jerome of Montefortino's selection and arrangement of Scotus' writings are meant to make more readily and readably accessible the philosophical theology of the Subtle and Marian Doctor. The selections follow the pattern of St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*. However, only the responses in the body of each article are translated here. Adding the objections and replies that are in Montefortino's original (again following the Thomistic pattern) would not only greatly extend the size of the translation but would also make the whole less accessible to interested readers. It would again put Scotus' positions back into the larger dialectical context whereas the desideratum here is to present those positions as simply and as straightforwardly as possible. One does, admittedly, in this way lose the completeness as well as some of the rigor and flavor of Scotus' own writing, but if one really wants Scotus as Scotus pure, one should not bother with Montefortino in the first place but go directly to the recently completed critical texts of Scotus' own writings. The present 'Summa of a Summa' (title borrowed, with appreciation, from Peter Kreeft) has a different purpose and a different utility.

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## Part Three

### QUESTION SIXTY: WHAT A SACRAMENT IS

#### *Article 1: Whether a Sacrament is a Kind of Sign*

I answer that a sacrament must be said to be in the class of signs. [ib. n.4] For whatever God is able to do he can also do through a sign imposed by him to signify it; but a sign, as Augustine says (*De Doctr. Christ.* 2.1), “is that which conveys something else to the mind, besides the species which it impresses on the senses.” God could therefore impose and institute some sensible sign to signify an invisible effect created by him for the salvation of the human wayfarer. And just as we are accustomed to impose signs to signify our effects, as a promise to signify a future effect and an assertion to signify a past or present one, so much more so can God too institute a sign, whether commemorative of what was an effect of the past, or predictive with respect to the future, or finally demonstrative to signify present effects. Further, it is possible for God to determine himself so to cooperate with some sign he has instituted that it should at once cause the effect signified, unless some indisposition on the part of the one to whom the sign is applied gets in the way. Moreover, the sign, with which, when instituting, he disposed himself to cooperate as a regular matter, is to be called a true and certain sign, in contradistinction to an uncertain or equivocal sign where the thing signified or its opposite can equally follow. Properly, however, it is to be called an efficacious sign because, once it is applied, the effect, as far as the sign itself is concerned, follows without fail. There is no repugnance in such a sign embracing within itself many sensibles, even of different senses. For just as, in order to signify the divine perfection, which is the Essence the most simple, we can institute the prayer “God is infinitely perfect” which is composed of many audible syllables, so we can institute things such that several objects of hearing and seeing should together signify what we have conceived, as that several definite words along with a handshake or a kiss should signify an act of good will or friendship. Since, therefore, a sacrament is something made up, by divine institution, of things and words, along with the promise of assisting and cooperating with it—unless there is some indisposition on the part of those employing it—and of causing an invisible effect, namely grace for the salvation of the human wayfarer, a sacrament is assuredly in the class of signs; and it will signify the grace by which, as by a salutary and celestial medicine, the wounds of the human wayfarer may be healed. A sacrament is, therefore, “a sensible sign efficaciously signifying, by divine institution, the grace of God or his gratuitous effect, and ordered to the salvation of the human wayfarer.”

#### *Article 1 Again*

I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.* n.5] A sacrament does not only belong in some way or other to the class of signs, but it is itself a sign formally and essentially; although it does, by the by, connote several things obliquely, on account of the arrangement whereby all logical objects formally and essentially mean a respect of reason, or a second intention, but not an abstract one, rather one that keeps in view the first intention. One must note, however,

that just as we cannot prove that a spoken sound signifies this or that thing but must suppose this to be so because the common use of the same sound shows that that is how it has been instituted, so we cannot prove the meaning of the name *sacrament* but have to suppose and take what is commonly understood by that name. And because theologians commonly understand by *sacrament* a certain efficacious sign instituted by Christ the Lord signifying grace given by God to those who use the sacraments for their salvation, we cannot prove that meaning of the name, but we may well make clear whether that could be its proper definition.

Since, then, [Oxon. *ib.* n.2ff.] a definition is “a formula signifying a true being” (1Topics 4), it follows that nothing can be truly defined unless it is a positive being, one per se – in case it be composite – , and not singular; for singularity does not belong to the ‘what it is to be’ of a thing. Whatever, therefore, does not have true real being cannot be defined in a true definition. So, for that reason, since a sacrament is not anything but a certain sign significant by divine institution and is not per se one, it cannot have a true definition. But since whatever can be conceived and signified can be the idea for the name, because, that is, it declares distinctly and explicitly what the name imports implicitly and confusedly, any such declarative idea can be called a definition, taking the name of definition in an extended sense. In this sense, [Oxon. *ib.* n.5] it is not incongruous for sacrament to have a proper definition, unless the idea of the name be in itself false or impossible or altogether not one. But when it is said that a sacrament is *a sensible sign efficaciously signifying, by divine institution, the grace of God or a gratuitous effect of God ordered to the salvation of the human wayfarer*, the idea is not itself false, because the parts are not mutually contradictory; nor is it impossible, because nothing is impossible except that whose idea is in itself false. Nor does its not being per se one cause a problem; [Oxon. *ib.* n.6] for if one accident is in several subjects, that accident can nevertheless be as properly definable as if it were in one subject; because those several subjects do not belong per se to its idea but are related by way of supplement; but in the aforesaid definition that which is spoken of as *sensible* is as it were an addition to the respect of the sign; therefore, even though in the *sensible* there be no unity, because a one is not fused together from the things and the words, yet because it exists by respect to the sign, which is what the sacrament directly states, it will be properly definable in its way. For that [Oxon. *ib.* n.7] which is the being of the sign, and also those things which per se determine the idea of the sign, of which sort are *by divine institution* and *efficaciously*, is the formal part in the aforesaid idea. But *sensible* and *gratuitous effect of God* are supplementary, the first as the subject and foundation and the second as correlative; and that is why they do not prevent the relation from being per se definable, just as *conventional efficacious sign* means for the intellect something per se one, as does the idea of *relation of paternity*, which would be equally as definable if it were in many foundations as if it be in one only. Further, *sign by institution* is not a relation which follows by nature the foundation of the thing; for although a sign be of itself fit to signify the effect indicated, yet the actual indicating does not belong to it except by the act of the one imposing it; *sign*, therefore, says the respect precisely of reason. Since, therefore, it says one concept that is per se in the mind, it can well be defined, in the way that all logical intentions are defined, to the extent that those definitions suffice for science properly speaking, otherwise logic would not be a science. And in definitions of this sort are found genus, difference, and property. So, with respect

to the topic at hand, *sign* is the genus in the aforesaid notification of the name; *by institution* and *efficacious* are the difference; for a sacrament differs from natural and inefficacious signs; but *sensible* is the foundation of the relation; while *grace* or *gratuitous effect of God* are put there as correlative. And this idea is common to all the sacraments, because all of them signify habitual and inherent grace, or the gratuitous effect of God, as with the sacrament of the Eucharist. This idea of the name, therefore, is the definition; for the idea [Oxon. *ib.* n.9] that a name signifies is its definition, according to the Philosopher (Meta. 4 text. 28). And the reason for that is because the name is imposed to signify the essence of the thing; therefore the idea that expresses distinctly and in its parts what is said by the name distinctly expresses the concept of the thing's essence.

### *Article 2: Whether every Sign of a Holy Thing is a Sacrament*

I answer that not every sign of a sacred thing is a sacrament; for a sacrament is not just any sign but a sign efficaciously signifying the grace given by God, in view of the merits of Christ, to the one who makes use of the sign. Not that the grace that is in any way given to men is not bestowed by God because of Christ, for all who accept grace participate in Christ's fullness; but because the efficacy for signifying grace that the sacraments have they have from the merits of Christ, [Oxon. *ib.* d.1 q.6 n.10ff.], so that God should infallibly cause grace without fail when those signs are put in operation, even if there is no awareness of it, as in children, and provided no barrier is put in the way, as in adults. But for every other grace which God bestows on men there is required a good interior motive whereby they are moved mediately or immediately towards God, although, to be sure, they do not, in this way, merit the initial grace, but rather an increase in grace. Now the signs of sacred things in the Old Law were not at all sacraments (circumcision excepted), unless the word be taken improperly and in a broad sense, because they did not confer grace in the way in which the sacraments are said to confer it, that is, as the saying goes, by the work worked (*ex opere operato*); rather they only conferred grace by way of the merit or work of the worker (*ex opere operantis*), insofar as, from charity and obedience, people kept the precepts of God about ceremonies and purgations and oblations and so merited thereby increase of grace, just as, by transgressing those commands, they became guilty of sin.

### *Article 3: Whether a Sacrament is a Sign of One thing Only*

I answer that [Oxon. *ib.* 3 d.19] sacraments confer grace as a matter of rule on those to whom they are applied unless one's own indisposition stands in the way; but that grace was not to be conferred on men after the fall unless a cause that merited it, namely Christ handing himself over to death, had reconciled God to us and had justly inclined him to confer gifts of grace on those for whom Christ offered himself. Sacraments therefore are signs commemorative of that meritorious cause or of the presentation of the passion of Christ, insofar as by that and through that they have their efficacy. [Oxon. 4 d.2 q.1 a.2ff.] For they cannot be signs demonstrative of the grace conferred without importing the efficacy and certainty of the infusion of it, and consequently they also involve and signify in an ordered way the passion of Christ from which they took their efficacy and

certainty. And because, lastly, the state in which those sacraments were instituted is the most perfect of all preceding states, and its law the most perfect, to which, of course, no other is to succeed, according to the remark in *Matt 26*, “of the New and Eternal Testament”. For on that testament follows the most perfect and best state, to which the human wayfarer is ordained, namely the state of eternal beatitude. Of that glory of eternal happiness too the sacraments can be also predictive signs, and [Oxon. *ib.* n.9] they are not only demonstrative of the grace conferred through them—insofar, that is, as a predictive sign is taken not only for something signified by priority of duration, in which sense the sacraments signify heavenly glory, but also for a sign of priority of nature, in which sense they precede grace as a cause is said to precede its effect.

*Article 4: Whether a Sacrament is always Something Sensible*

I answer that it was fitting for God to have instituted sacraments in sensible things. [Oxon. *ib.* n.2] I say ‘fitting’ because the necessity of sacraments cannot be proved either a priori or a posteriori, as from their end. For the will of God, which is the cause of this institution, does everything outside itself freely and contingently, and there were not lacking any number of other means of freeing the human race besides the passion of Christ and the institution of sacraments; and God was absolutely able to cause grace and confer it on men independently of every visible sign. But that it was done in an especially fitting way can be made clear: for it was most agreeable that an invisible effect, such as grace is, that was to be caused by God directing man to eternal salvation, be signified by some sensible sign; for thereby it happens that the wayfarer, who is seeking knowledge of intelligibles from sensibles, comes more certainly to know that invisible effect. Nor was it proper that such a sign be a theoretical one, whereby, that is, the intellect might have a concept about a signified invisible effect, in the way that the term ‘man’ signifies human nature; for it was necessary that there exist a quasi practical sign, whereby, of course, it would be signified that an invisible effect is in existence or is coming about. Again, neither was it necessary that the practical sign be doubtful or equivocal or uncertain; because although through it a man might be led to the knowledge that that invisible effect was given, yet, because the sign was uncertain and doubtful, he would be rather remiss in wanting it to be applied to him; for he would be in two minds whether the thing signified had been given to him. It was therefore fitting for that invisible effect to be signified through a practical sign that was certain and efficacious, so that thereby a man might both know what was signified and ardently seek in the sign the invisible effect. Further, a sign that is certain can be such either by the certitude of demonstration or as certain for the most part (1 *Post An.* c.43). The practical sign of which we are now speaking ought not to have necessary certitude, so that universally and in any way and however applied it should be infallibly followed by the effect which it signifies; for since that sign must be applied by a man, it would follow that there was in the power of man some sign upon the application of which, however done, God would infallibly cause grace. But this would take from the one who took it up the due preparation, for even the greatest indisposition would be sufficient unto itself for taking up or applying the sign to receive the grace. Accordingly it was fitting for the invisible effect to be signified by a practical sensible sign that was certain with certainty for the most part, that is, always – unless the indisposition of the one taking it up gets in the way; and that would be by the sign

naturally preceding the coming to be of the thing signified so that, in this way, the taking up of the sign would be as it were a disposition for the thing signified, and so that in no other way would the sign be efficacious unless it had all those conditions. A sacrament, lastly, ought to be by divine institution because nothing sensible naturally has the efficacy of causing an invisible effect. And thus it was most agreeable that a sacrament be instituted in sensible signs, on account of its causing in the wayfarer knowledge and desire with respect to the invisible effect, namely the divine grace, which is fit for every private person. Besides, [Oxon. *ib.* n.3] there is another fittingness on the part of the whole community taken from Augustine quoted above. For it is fitting for all wayfarers of one way to communicate in some exterior signs, by which they may also be distinguished from others of an alternative way; for it is by such signs that a man knows who is of his own way and who of a foreign one. That this is especially agreeable is established by the fact that those who recognize themselves to be of the same way mutually help each other to the following of it, and that those who recognize themselves to be of a dissimilar path mutually avoid each other as being mutually impediment to each other. It is expedient that such a sign, which unites those of the same way and distinguishes them from others, be a practical one with respect to some invisible effect that pertains to the following of the way.

*Article 5: Whether Determinate Things are required for a Sacrament*

I answer that, the sacraments must be said to signify grace precisely in the determinate things in which they were instituted, and so determinate things are necessarily required; for no one can provide certainty with any practical sign save he in whose power it is to be able to cause what is signified by that sign; but God alone can determine Himself to causing an effect proper to Himself, namely the grace signified by the sacraments; therefore God alone could institute the sacraments; therefore if they are applied in things other than those which God prescribed when He instituted them, they will not be certain and efficacious signs of grace. And although anyone under God could institute the practical sign by which is signified that God is invisibly acting and causing grace, yet the creature instituting it could not, by a sign, provide certainty of signifying it, because such a thing is not in his power; so it is one thing that a sign signifies practically what is signified, and another that the sign be certain; for anyone might use a practical sign of kindness of heart to deceive the unwary by a wicked trick; but a sacrament is a certain and efficacious sign; therefore as often as it is not applied according to the mind of the legislator who instituted it, it is neither a certain sign nor is it a sacrament.

*Article 6: Whether Words are required for the Signification of the Sacraments*

I answer that, It must be said that in the signification of sacraments words are required. For [Oxon. *ib.* d.3 q.2 n.3] although a sacrament formally denotes the respect of reason of a sign to the thing signified, and in such a way that whatever precedes such respect should be as it were its foundation, nevertheless [Report. *ib.* n.2ff.] of the several things necessarily prerequisite for a sacrament's signifying grace, words seem to be the more principal; for, as Augustine says (*De Doctr. Christ.* ch.1) "Words possess among men the principal part in signifying." Therefore words seem to have the nature of form as regards

the things that are necessary for a sacrament, both because they are determinative of the things, namely because they presuppose those very things, and because they are more spiritual than things, just as what is audible is more spiritual than what is visible. So, comparing the things to the words, things have the nature of matter and words the nature of form; therefore if things are required in the signification of sacraments much more are words required as well, because they are more significative than the things are, and because a thing of any sort is more a whole in the way it is ordered by form than by matter, albeit it is necessarily ordered by both.

*Article 7: Whether Determinate Words are required in the Sacraments*

I answer that, Determinate words are required for the truth of the sacraments, namely those in which they were instituted by the Savior – assuming, that is (from the previous article), that words have the nature of form with respect to the things which are used, by divine institution, for the sacraments. For it is proper for matter to be first according to origin and to be determined, just as it is proper for form to follow and to determine; and so whenever words follow on things and determine them and are, in addition, more principal and actual in signifying, it is an established fact that the words have the nature of form with respect to the things, although both are meanwhile constituting and integrating a single foundation with respect to the relation of sign to the grace signified. Since therefore words have the nature of form, unless those words be used which the institutor wished to be used, the sacrament will not stand with its true form and consequently will not truly signify what he wished, when instituting it, to be signified through the form that he instituted; therefore it will not be a sacrament.

*Article 8: Whether it is Lawful to add Anything to the Words in which the Sacramental Form exists*

I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.* n.7] According to the Philosopher (Physics 5, text. 7, 9, 18), change is of four kinds, namely in substance, in quantity, in quality, and in where. And so variation in the form of the sacraments can be taken in as many ways; all of them, therefore, must be talked about in order [*sc. in this and the following two additional articles*]. As regards change in substance, the form of the sacraments can be understood to vary in several ways. One way is if other words are inserted from another language but ones that signify the same as the Latin words, and in this case the variation does not prevent the sacrament from being true and truly carried out (as said in the preceding article). Or another word or words are used having a different signification, and this can happen in two ways, namely: when what is signified is altogether disparate, and in that case it is clear that the sacrament cannot be carried out; or when the thing signified is altogether coincident, having the same substrate in reality, because it distinctly expresses the Three Persons as signified under other ideas, as *of the Begetter, of the Begotten, and of the Spirated*, or, lastly, insofar as those Persons are signified implicitly, whether in a collective whole as it were, as in the name *The Holy Trinity*, or as in something that introduces the persons through the correspondence of effect to cause, as would be the case if Baptism were conferred in the name of *Christ*, for this name signifies the Son according to his human nature, who is the anointed one, and makes to be understood both



the Father, as the one by whom he is anointed, and the Holy Spirit, as the one in whom he is anointed.

With respect, therefore, [Oxon. *ib.* n.9] to the names signifying the Divine Persons under the idea of their properties, namely *of the Begetter and of the Begotten and of the Spirated*, and not under the idea of their being subsistents or hypostases, namely *of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*, it must be said that the form is not preserved by those names as regards its substance, and hence the sacrament of Baptism is not at all conferred nor does it subsist under those names. *Demonstration:* the Savior wished the Persons to be called by the name of their persons and not of their properties; therefore someone using the names of the properties in place of the persons does not carry out the sacrament. But that the Savior rationally acted thus is established from the fact that, just as to the Jews a name was given signifying the Divine Essence under its proper idea, which they themselves called the name of God, namely the *Tetragrammaton*, so Christ gave to the Church names signifying the Persons under their proper ideas. But even if He had not made or not given such names, it is nevertheless provable that the name of the person has, in any invocation, an effectiveness which the name of the property of the person does not have. It is just as if someone were to ask for some gift from someone in the name of or for the love of John – he would attain his request more quickly and surely than if, in place of the proper name, a name was put that signified a property of the supposit, by asking for the love of the son of Zebedee.

But as far as concerns the name of the Trinity, it is clear from the last chapter of *Matthew* that Christ enjoined that the Divine Persons be distinctly expressed; but in the name of the Trinity they are introduced only implicitly; therefore someone conferring Baptism in the name of the Trinity does not effect anything.

### *Article 8 Again*

I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.* n.11] Variation according to quantity can happen in the form of the sacraments by the addition or subtraction of something that has regard to the form. An addition of something can be made at the beginning or at the end or in the middle.

FIRST STATEMENT: if in the form of the sacraments something is added that is repugnant to the principal words of the sacrament itself or that diminishes those principal words, the sacrament has not been carried out, because the form ordained by Christ has not been preserved. So, if the form is spoken with the addition, *In the name of the Father who is greater and of the Son who is less...*, or with the diminution, *If I am omnipotent, I baptize you...*, or if it is proffered under a disjunction, *I baptize you or I kill you in the name of the Father...*, the sacrament has not been carried out, because neither does the condition exist nor does the disjunction state either part determinatively.

SECOND STATEMENT: if something is added before or after that is repugnant to the form, the sacrament is not carried out; but it is carried out if the addition is not repugnant. *Example:* were someone to baptize saying: *In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and of the Blessed Virgin*, he would not validly baptize, because, by the strict scope of the phrase *In the name of...*, equal reference is made to the Divine Persons and to the Blessed Virgin; and the same must be said if the addition were to be made at the beginning of the sentence, as by saying, *In the name of the Blessed Virgin and of the Father etc.*, although the speaker may be intending to invoke the

Blessed Virgin in one way and the Divine Persons in a second. But if the baptizer, before or after pronouncing the form of the words, were to invoke the Blessed Virgin so that she might obtain the gift of perseverance for the baptized, then, since the meaning of the necessary form is not distorted, the addition does not prevent the conferring of the sacrament.

THIRD STATEMENT: If an insertion in the middle breaks the due unity of the form, the form does not remain nor is there a sacrament; but there is if it does not break it. But when is the form broken by an insertion? I answer: judgment must be made by reference to other human acts; for when it is not judged by ordinary usage that the interposition of words not affecting the issue prevents the act of speaking from being one and continuous, then it should not be held in the case at hand either; so that, if someone were to say, when beginning to pronounce the form of Baptism, *Be quiet*, or *Move back*, his act of speaking should not for that reason be held to have been interrupted, and thus he could complete and finish it notwithstanding the interruption. But if the baptizer, after beginning the form, wanted to interpose other prayers, his act of speaking should not be held to be one, just as it would not be so held in other similar cases.

FOURTH STATEMENT: If some word is subtracted that is not especially important, as the [Latin] pronoun *ego*, the sacrament is carried out; but this is by no means true if the subtraction is made with respect to some principal word, for each of those words is per se necessary to the form; so, just as the sacrament would not be carried out without the form, so neither without some one of the principal words; for one must not suppose that God has determined man to words in the sacraments beyond the point at which the words are sufficient for expressing the conception; but a hearer can well understand someone who expresses his conception with abbreviations. Nevertheless, one must avoid as much as one can the abbreviated expression of sacramental words out of reverence for the sacraments. But I would not dare to say that he sins mortally who makes an abbreviation, provided he do not do it from contempt but rather from some infirmity or human inattention which might not take precautions against everything as much as it can.

### *Article 8 a Third Time*

I answer that, now we must look at variation in quality and where. Variation [Oxon. *ib.* n.12] in quality concerns the termination of words, which belongs to appropriateness of speech. In accordance, therefore, with the doctrine handed down in the chapter alleged above, *They referred*, if it happens that the form is pronounced inappropriately by the minister because of his ignorance of the Latin language, and it not be his intention to introduce some error but rather to do what the Church intends to do, the variation in quality can stand with the validity of the sacrament; this, further, is to be understood of the case when the variation and inappropriate speech happen at the end of the word. In what way this happens can be well appreciated by those listening to the uneducated, who speak inappropriately and yet grasp well what they wish to say, even as to the individual words.

Lastly, about variation in where [Oxon. *ib.* n.13], I say that some transposition can altogether vary the speech, as if one were to say: *I of the Father baptize you in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*; but some other transposition permits the transposed

words to keep more or less the same force in the form itself, as if one were to say: *In the name of the Son and of the Father and of the Holy Spirit I baptize you*. The first transposition takes away the conception of the speech instituted by Christ; therefore the sacrament is not at all conferred under that form. But in the second transposition the sacrament is genuine; for although it would be appropriate, when pronouncing the Persons, to keep to the order according to origin, by which the Father is prior to the Son and each to the Holy Spirit who originates from them, and although it be necessary for the minister to keep to that order, in that he acts inordinately acting otherwise, yet on the part of the sacrament this does not seem altogether necessary, because the Persons, in whatever order they are named (provided only the concept of the speech instituted by Christ be preserved) are one efficient principle in Baptism, and it is thus that they are named.

## QUESTION SIXTY-ONE: THE NECESSITY OF THE SACRAMENTS

### *Article 1: Whether Sacraments are Necessary for Man's Salvation*

I answer that, The sacraments are not so needed by men for procuring eternal salvation that without them men could not attain it, because there were not lacking innumerable other means occurrent to divine wisdom beyond the institution of the said sacraments, whereby man might be brought back whence he had strayed, just as anyone is saved now through the sacraments who is achieving salvation. But, all the same, [Oxon. *ib.* n.2ff.] saving medicine for man, wounded by sin and fallen, is most agreeably presented through the mediation of sacraments instituted, most savingly, in sensible things. And this indeed for three reasons: humility, learning, and exercise. Because of humility, I say, so that while man himself subjects himself, from divine command, to sensible things, he is, on account of this humility and obedience, more pleasing to God, and earns with Him more merit, by whose precept he seeks salvation in things inferior to himself -- not from them, indeed, but from God through them. Because of learning too it was fitting for salvation to be instituted in sensible things, insofar as through sensible signs, which are discerned without, the mind might be instructed to acknowledge invisible virtue, which is within. Finally because of exercise it was agreeable that salvation be so instituted; for since man could not be idle, a useful and saving exercise in sacraments is proposed to him, whereby he might shun a vain and noxious occupation; for he who takes leisure in good exercise is not easily caught by the tempter.

### *Article 2: Whether before Sin Sacraments were Necessary to Man*

I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.*] in the state of innocence the sacraments were not necessary for man as they were after the human race fell, through Adams' prevarication, from innocence. For although man in the state of innocence could recognize intelligible things from sensible things, nevertheless no sensible thing was necessary, I mean as contributing to salvation by removing some impediment to it, such that it could thereby properly be called medicinal. For since at that time the inferior parts and the inferior powers of the body were perfectly subject to reason, such that they would not rebel against reason, and in this way reason and the superior parts were perfectly subject to eternal rules, there

could be no impediment to salvation from sensible things; and so neither was it necessary to institute from those very sensible things anything that could be a medicine against an evil which did not exist. From which it follows that much less in the state of the fatherland does man need sacraments; for man does not then need sensible things to recognize the intelligible things belonging to his salvation; nor in that state does he need to be stimulated to seek for things belonging to a salvation which he has now perfectly attained.

*Article 3: Whether there should have been Sacraments after Sin before Christ*

I answer that, For every time after the fall before Christ sacraments were necessary. For [Oxon. *ib.* n.7] in every state where there is disease a medicine is necessary; but after the fall of the first parent the disease of malice and the wounds of sin waxed strong in human nature; therefore it was necessary for them to be cured through the medicine of sacraments. And because it was fitting, especially after the fall, for man to be guided to invisible things through sensible signs, it was becoming for God to have, for that time, instituted sacraments. - Further, [Oxon. 4 d.1 q.7 n.2] at no time has God left his worshipers without a necessary remedy for salvation; but after the fall the removal of original sin was necessary for salvation; therefore at every time and for every state provision was made by God for an efficacious remedy whereby original sin might be removed; for although that sin could be removed in adults through a good interior movement, in children, however, in whom such a movement was impossible, it could not be removed by their own movement; therefore it had to be removed through some act of others concerning them or referred to them; but no one could be certain that an act of another referred to a child was sufficient for removing the original stain unless this had been instituted by God; and since no one could be certain of reaching salvation through a thing unless he knew for certain that God would accept that thing for that end, therefore most agreeably was there, during the time of every law before the advent of Christ, some sacrament, at least against original sin, instituted by God.

*Article 4: Whether there was need for any Sacraments after Christ came*

I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.* n.7ff.] after the advent of Christ there ought to have been some sacraments, by which as by sensible signs men might be led to invisible things, and in which the medicine of heavenly grace might be prepared for them to cure the wounds of sin. For sins were taken away not in their effect but in their cause by Christ's passion, and that most efficaciously and abundantly. For through Christ grace and truth came to be, and these have been so readied in the sacraments that to those who worthily receive the sacraments grace itself might infallibly be given and sins remitted. But the reason for this solution is as follows: because [Oxon. 3 d.25 q.1 n.9] everyone in every state after the fall was held to faith in a mediator, so much so that no one might be saved unless he believe in him, from whom all grace descends on those who are saved. He himself therefore is the principle of reparation in fallen nature. Just as, therefore, before his advent it was proper for God to have instituted, for every state and law, some sacrament to be the efficacious sign of grace, [Oxon. 4 d.1 q.7 n.3], so also after his advent it was necessary for similar efficacious signs to be instituted, by whose application men might both reach

unto salvation and make protestation of their faith in the mediator. And just as the Ancient Fathers used to make, with those signs, protestation that they believed in a mediator to come, so the faithful in the Gospel law make, through the use of the sacraments, protestation that they believe in the mediator who has already come. And just as it was of no advantage for salvation to the Ancient Fathers to believe in a mediator by a merely internal act of faith, but there was need for them also to make profession by an outward act, whether for removal of original sin in children or for the use of sacraments, so in the Gospel law and after Christ's passion it was necessary, both for the removal of original sin and for curing the wounds of sin, that those believing unto salvation make use, either in effect or at least in desire, of those sensible signs instituted by Christ. After the advent of Christ, therefore, there ought to have been some sacraments instituted, just as that also had to have been done before his advent after the fall, as was said in the preceding article.

## QUESTION SIXTY-TWO: THE SACRAMENTS' PRINCIPAL EFFECT WHICH IS GRACE

### *Article 1: Whether the Sacraments of the New Law are the Cause of Grace*

I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.* q.5 n.4] no proper action and causality is to be attributed to the sacraments with respect to grace, nor with respect to a supernatural advance disposition to grace.

*And a first proof is this:* the sacraments, as some think, have a physical causality with respect to grace because they have it with respect to the advance disposition for grace; but, as was said in Ia q.45 a.1, a creature cannot act, even instrumentally, to complete the creation of something, which fact should be much more true of a bodily and material substance such as the sacraments are; but an advance disposition for grace, whether it be a character or a supernatural ornament of the soul, is the term of some creating; therefore since a creature cannot act to bring this about, neither might it be attained through its action by the sacraments. *Proof of the minor:* for the advance disposition is a simply supernatural form, and that any such form is something that cannot be educed from the natural potency of the receiving subject is just as true as that the subject too is in obediential potency to a form of that sort; therefore it is precisely through creation that the form is attainable, inasmuch as it is something simply supernatural, that is to say, something to which there is in the subject no natural inclination but only, as they suppose, an obediential potency.

*The next proof is:* [Oxon. *ib.* n.4] an advance disposition for grace, which the sacraments are posited as physically causing, is induced, or can be induced, in an instant; but the sacraments cannot have physical action in an instant; therefore an advance disposition is not physically caused by them. *Proof of the major:* first, because the necessitating disposition, when there is no impediment in the one receiving, comes about at the same time as the form; but grace comes about in an instant; therefore the disposition for it does too, when there is no impediment; second, because there is no succession in a form, except in the case of parts of a movable thing or in the case of parts of the form itself; but here the subject is indivisible, nor is any succession required in the disposition because, just as it is possible to induce a minimal grace, so for this grace a minimal disposition is sufficient, which would necessarily be induced in an instant. *Proof*

*of the minor:* for a sacrament, since it essentially includes words spoken in succession, is a successive thing; therefore it cannot exist or act with a real, natural action except in time; therefore neither can it act with a supernatural action except in time, because, as they suppose, it does not belong to an instrument to have a supernatural action except when it has a natural and proper action and, consequently, since the disposition to grace would not be produced in an instant, the sacraments will not be physically productive of grace.

*There is here the following sort of response:* [Oxon. *ib.* n.5] one syllable of the whole sacramental prayer has being in an instant; therefore the sacraments themselves attain the disposition, which comes about in an instant. *On the contrary*, even a syllable is, with the local motion of the air, successively formed; therefore it is itself too pronounced in time. Further, is that syllable the first or the last or in the middle of the prayer? Whichever one you say, since it is the one that physically attains the disposition and the others do not, it follows that the disposition would follow on it by itself even were it formed in separation, because it is itself the precise cause, and the rest do not cause the disposition: but this is plainly false, because the sacrament is not completed unless all the words in which the form of the sacraments consists are pronounced.

*They reply* that the last syllable is the completing instrument and achieves the above mentioned action, not through its own virtue, but by virtue of all the preceding syllables, just as the last drop of water wears away the stone in virtue all of the preceding drops. *On the contrary*, it is for this reason that the last drop of water wears away the stone in virtue of the preceding ones, because the preceding ones have left an advance disposition for that end: but here the preceding syllables leave no disposition before the last syllable.

Finally, in the sacrament of the Eucharist such real causality does not seem to be possible; therefore it should not be posited in the case of the others. *Declaration of the assumption:* for either the causality would be posited in respect of the Eucharist already consecrated, or in respect of the sacramental consecrating. But not in the first way, because the species of bread is not the instrumental cause with respect to the real existence of the body of Christ, nor with respect to another disposition for that effect. Nor in the second way, for the words pronounced do not attain the transubstantiation which is the principal end of this consecrating. But since the transubstantiation does not come about except by the infinite virtue of God, just as is also true of creation, if the sacraments do not physically attain the end of creation, neither will they be able to attain an advance disposition to transubstantiation; for that disposition would either be in the body of Christ, and then it would not be a disposition to that body; or it would be in the bread, and then, since it would be itself necessitating for transubstantiation, it would exist in the same instant with the transubstantiation, and consequently the bread, as being the subject of the disposition, would exist at the same time as the transubstantiation which is the necessary accompaniment of the disposition; and this is contradictory.

### *Article One Again*

I answer that, [Oxon. 4 q.1, q.5 n.13] the sacraments do not cause grace nor an advance disposition to it by a true and real causality, but they are merely moral causes of grace insofar as on those who rightly use and receive them God confers the grace which they

infallibly signify, not because they attain to it by their own intrinsic virtue, but only infallibly through the assistance of God causing that effect; not infallibly nor necessarily by an absolute necessity, but by a necessity respecting God's ordained power, I mean with respect to the present dispositions freely posited by divine providence, by which he informs his Church and promises that he will give to those who rightly receive the sacraments the grace which they signify. Therefore the sacraments themselves, or the reception of them, is the immediate disposition for grace, which although it be in the soul while that reception concerns and is performed about the body, nevertheless that reception itself of the sacraments is truly a disposition to grace; for although this disposition is not in the same subject in which the form is, nevertheless that both are in the same supposit is enough, especially since a disposition of this sort is not such from the nature of the thing but in its order to an agent that is voluntarily causing the form or its term.

– *The proposition is further declared thus:* [Oxon. *ib.* n.12) the necessity of those things which relate to the end is not to be sought and received from anywhere else than from the end itself; therefore since the end of the sacraments is grace or some invisible effect ordered to salvation, and since the end itself can be sufficiently obtained without that which the sacraments are posited really to do either for the end itself or for an advance disposition to it, it follows that this sort of real action is not to be attributed to the sacraments themselves, because no plurality is to be posited without necessity. How then will the sacraments not be accidental causes, if they themselves cause, by a true and real action, neither grace nor a disposition to grace? – I answer that, [Oxon. *ib.* n.12] the view laid down, that they themselves do not have that real action (which in fact cannot be nor should be attributed to them), can still very well cohere with the fact that the sacraments are per se causes and not accidental ones. *Which I prove:* every necessitating disposition to a form, but one which is not the nature of the receptive subject, can be called in a certain way an active cause, or an instrumental cause, with respect to the form; but the sacrament itself, or the receiving of the sacrament, is such a disposition and not an immediate cause of another medium between itself and grace; therefore it can be called in some way an active cause or an instrumental cause with respect to grace. *Proof of the minor:* because, in the opinion of those who attribute a real active power to the sacraments, it is for this reason that they say the sacraments cause grace, not because they attain to it, but because they act for a preparatory disposition for the grace which is immediately, without the concurrence of that preparatory disposition, created by God; therefore the sacraments will also be per se active causes, or instrumental causes, of grace, through the fact that they are posited as precisely not physical dispositions but moral ones, necessitating the infusion of grace, not from an intrinsic virtue of themselves, but by compact of divine assistance.

*An example:* It is absolutely conceded that merit is an instrumental cause with respect to reward, so much so that the reward is acquired through the merit, and nevertheless the merit does not actively cause the reward in itself nor does it cause any intermediate disposition for it; but, since the merit itself is a disposition preparatory for, and not by way of being receptive of, grace, it is said to be a per se active cause of the reward. So the sacraments too will rightly be said to cause grace per se, although they may not physically attain to it or to an intermediate disposition for grace, because of the fact that they are moral dispositions, not holding their existence from the side of the

receptive subject, which are necessitating for infusion of grace from the compact of divine assistance. Otherwise [Oxon. 3 d.9; 4 d.1 qq.6, 7; d.2 q.1] it does not seem plausible to attribute to the sacraments a greater and more efficacious causality with respect to grace than the passion itself of Christ had in itself; for the sacraments receive their efficacy from that passion, as will be clear below in article 5. But the passion of Christ has precisely a moral and not physical influence on grace; for it retains as presented the same sort of mode of causing grace as it had when it was to be presented, and in this latter state it plainly did not effect the justification of men except meritoriously and morally.

Besides, [Oxon. 4 d.1 q.5 n.14] an instrument in artificial things does not formally have an active force: for a saw only has in itself quantity, figure, and local motion, which are not active forms; for otherwise the mathematician, when he is considering the how much of figures, would not abstract from motion. Nor does it seem that hardness is to be posited as an active quality, because if God were to conserve in being some soft mass in the same quantity and figure, it would, by moving itself locally, as equally divide some body as now a hard instrument divides it; therefore hardness is not formally the principle of acting. Therefore [Oxon. *ib.* n.15] just as an agent effectively induces heat, and just as the heat itself does not effectively but formally expel the cold, so an agent in motion by use of an instrument is formally expelled, through that instrument, from the same *where* that another body is, because of their impossibility. For the cutting of wood through a saw is only a certain expulsion of parts from the *where* to which the saw is moved by the artisan. Artificial instruments therefore are not formally active but only receptive of a certain prior effect that is ordered to an ultimate effect. Since therefore this is how things stand with an instrument, rightly is a sacrament called an instrument, although it does not have active virtue properly with respect to its term, since it is a certain prior effect ordered to the grace which it signifies, and which it even causes *per se*, and not accidentally, in the way already explained.

*Article 2: Whether Sacramental Grace confers anything in Addition to the Grace of the Virtues and the Gifts*

I answer that, [Oxon. 4 d.2 q.1 n.3] sacramental grace is diverse from habitual grace and thence from the other virtues and gifts, if the gifts are posited as diverse from the virtues; and consequently sacramental grace adds something to them all. For sacramental grace, which is conferred by God on those who rightly receive the sacraments, is given for an end special to the sacraments; therefore it differs from habitual grace in the nature of its effect; for through baptism is conferred grace by way of spiritual regeneration; through confirmation is bestowed the grace of strength and constancy in professing the faith professed in baptism; through the eucharist the grace of preservation from mortal sins is given and of perseverance in good works; but extreme unction wipes away the remains of sins, and stirs up in the the sick confidence in divine mercy; the grace, however, conferred in orders is so that the sacraments of the Church might be appropriately administered; and in matrimony, finally, is conferred the grace whereby the duties of matrimony are supported and offspring are duly educated and the concupiscence of the flesh is overcome. All these things conferred by God through the medium of the sacraments are actual helps by which those who receive the sacraments can carry out and



attain the proper ends of the same; therefore sacramental grace superadds to habitual grace, and to the other habits which perfect the wayfarer, that which is required, and which the sacraments demand, in those who receive them, and thus in the nature of what they effect.

*Article 3: Whether the Sacraments contain Grace*

I answer that, [Report. 4 d.1 q.3 n.2] the sacraments of the New Law do not contain grace as an effect is contained in a univocal cause, or in an equivocal one. And indeed, that the sacraments are not univocal causes of grace is manifest; because grace cannot be formally in the sacraments since they are sensible and material. Nor can it be in the sacraments as in an equivocal cause, because an equivocal cause is simply more perfect than that which it causes; but in sensible things there cannot be anything more noble or eminent than grace; therefore grace cannot be in the sacraments as in its real univocal or equivocal cause. However, since the sacraments are per se causes of grace and of the proximate disposition for grace, which grace God confers, in the way in which he himself has ordained and which was expounded in article 1, on those who receive them, and since the sacraments have an influence on grace as instrumental causes, then, just as an instrument in artificial things receives a prior effect ordered to the ultimate effect, so the sacraments themselves seem to contain grace in the way effects are said to be contained in their moral cause, and in the way effects are contained in their advance dispositions which necessitate the physical cause voluntarily determined to produce them.

*Article 4: Whether there is any Power in the Sacraments for the Causing of Grace*

I answer that, no virtue causative of grace is to be posited in the sacraments. *I prove this in a first way:* for [Oxon. *ib.* n.8] that supernatural virtue which is posited in the sacraments is either there indivisibly, that is to say, as whole in the whole and as whole in each part of the whole, or it is there as whole in the whole and as part in any of the parts. But it cannot be there in the first way, because that way is attributed, among all the forms that perfect matter, to the intellective soul alone; nor can it be posited there in the second way, because then it would have accidental extension in the subject, which is against the idea of spiritual virtue.

*A second proof:* The forms of the sacraments are commonly put together from several words; therefore, that same virtue would be altogether in any syllable whatever, or there would be one virtue in one syllable and another virtue in another. Suppose the first is said: then it must be confessed that the same accident migrates from subject to subject and remains after it has left a subject; for when the first syllable is going away, the virtue with which it was informed would survive and would inform the following syllable and so on up to the last. Suppose the second is held: then one sacrament put together from one act of speaking as its form would not have any virtue that was single, which is unacceptable; because just as a sacrament is constituted through the virtue which it has of causing its effect, because it is a practical sign, so it ought to have one simple nature of causing, just as its effect is simple. *And if* it be said that the virtue is one by the aggregation of the many virtues corresponding to the individual parts, *on the contrary*, [Oxon. *ib.* n.5] that virtue is not active which can never have its effect: but a virtue which

would be in each and all parts of a form never has its effect nor can have it, for it would cease to be before the last particle of the speaking was completed; but until the last particle of the form is completed the effect signified would not be obtained; therefore in vain is virtue posited in the preceding particles, since neither could it have, when it is being produced, any real influence on the effect, nor could it leave behind any real disposition by whose ultimate virtue it might have causal power.

*Finally*, [Oxon. *ib.* n.7, and the last question] several things are not to be posited unless natural reason, or the truth of faith, demands it: but no natural reason proves that that virtue is to be posited in the sacraments; nor does the truth of faith require that that sort of supernatural virtue exist in water or in words; because without it a sacrament can be declared to be an efficacious sign of grace, and the effect can be obtained without its being attained by any physical form intrinsic to the sacraments. And since it is not possible to assign when that supernatural virtue would be produced in the sensible things belonging to the sacrament -- because it cannot be assigned before they are in use, nor can it be assigned in their very being applied, since no instrument is formally fitted for use on account of the fact that someone is actually using it but it is such before it is used -- it follows that the aforementioned supernatural virtue is not to be attributed to the sacraments.

#### *Article Four again*

I answer that, it must be said that no absolute virtue is to be posited in the sacraments, indeed this does not even have the possibility of being proved. For [Report. 4 d.1 q.4 n.11] a sacrament is a certain sensible sign ordained and instituted by God, efficaciously representing what it signifies, so that whoever properly receives that sign becomes a friend of God through the grace given him in receiving it, to such an extent that, insofar as it depends on the part of God assisting, the grace which it signifies should, unless his own indisposition on the part of the one receiving it gets in the way, infallibly be given. -- But if [Report. *ib.*; Oxon. 4 d.1 q.5 n.16], on account of the authorities of the saints and of the Church saying that the sacraments include virtue, you should contend that this virtue must altogether be posited and laid down as fact, it can be said that virtue is in one way the ultimate of power (De *Caelo* bk.1 comm.116). But the ultimate of power in the case of a practical sign is that it should signify efficaciously, that is, in advance and with certitude. For no greater power can belong to a sign insofar as it is something practical; so this virtue I concede exists in the sacraments; but I say that it is not an absolute form but is only the relation of conformity of the sign to the thing signified, whether that conformity is posited as belonging to the essence of the sacrament or whether it is posited as not so belonging but is only an accident accompanying it for the most part; that idea is nevertheless the ultimate of power in the case of a practical sign, and so it is the virtue of the sacraments.

#### *Article 5: Whether the Sacraments derive this Power from Christ's Passion*

I answer that, the sacraments have their virtue and efficacy from the passion of Christ. Because for a sacrament to have efficacy is for it to have the effect signified accompanying it as a regular matter; therefore it has its effect from that which makes it to

be the case that its effect regularly accompanies it. And since that can happen and come about in two ways (namely either as from a principal cause that principally causes the accompanying of the effect, or as from a meritorious cause which, that is to say, merits there to be such an accompanying), the sacraments of the New Law have their efficacy from God alone as from the principal cause, but they have from Christ as suffering or from the passion of Christ their efficacy as from a meritorious cause.

– *Proof of the first:* because God alone instituted the sacraments: but the efficacy of a sacrament cannot be from any cause inferior to that which instituted it; therefore the sacraments get their principal efficacy from God alone as institutor. – *Again*, only God determines himself to causing an effect that is proper to himself; for if he were to be determined to acting by another, he would be, with respect to the determiner, the second and not the first cause; but the effects signified through the sacraments are proper to God; therefore God alone can determine himself to causing the effect of the sacraments that regularly accompany the sacraments; and consequently it is from the divine will alone that the sacraments determinately have their efficacy as from their principal cause. – But that the sacraments have their efficacy from the passion of Christ as from their meritorious cause is thus declared: for obedience is more pleasing and more accepted on his behalf for whom it is offered, and for attaining the end for which the offering is made, the more it is offered by someone who is more loved and pleasing. But Christ was to the Trinity the most pleasing and the most accepted by far, as being he to whom God gave grace and not according to the measure of the other saints; therefore by offering himself in death for the satisfaction of human prevarication, and to the end that the elect might attain the glory for which they were preordained, he merited, in view of such a most accepted obedience, that God should pour out the grace by which sins are forgiven, by which we become friends of God, and by which we obtain eternal life. Therefore it was Christ, or his obedience presented to God in his passion, that was the most adequate meritorious cause meriting glory and grace for the elect; and so much so that nothing of spiritual charisms and gifts should descend upon the sons of Adam except in view of the merits of Christ who merited them all for everybody. And to no one would God ever have given any grace after the prevarication of the first man, and no more would he have received anyone into his grace and friendship, unless he had first accepted the obedience of Christ by whom we are reconciled to God. For that obedience was more accepted and dear to him than the prevarication of Adam was hateful and displeasing (as was said in questions 48 and 49 and frequently elsewhere).

#### *Article 6: Whether the Sacraments of the Old Law caused Grace*

I answer that, it must be said that the sacraments of the Old Law caused grace just as the sacraments of the New Law cause it, that is from the work worked (*ex opere operato*), although not as efficaciously. For this purpose one must understand [Oxon. 4 d.1 q.6 n.10] that a sacrament is in one way distinguished or divided, after the manner that an equivocal term is divided into its several significations, into sacrament properly so called and sacrament improperly so called; and the first of these is what we defined in q.60 a.1. But improperly a sacrament is whatever has been instituted for divine worship but does not have efficacy against original sickness; such, in the law of nature, were genuflections and other such things, and, in the Law of Moses, diverse ceremonies, which can all be

called sacraments, that is sacred signs, because instituted for divine worship. But a sacrament properly so called can be distinguished or divided as above into its inferiors in three ways: first insofar as the inferiors signify one or other sacrament, as the Eucharist, Penance, Baptism, which is the division of a genus into its species: secondly, by reason of their subject matter, as Baptism and Circumcision; for although both of these were instituted against original sin, nevertheless they were instituted in different sensible things, and so they are distinguished by their subject matter: third and last, they can be distinguished in their order to what they signify, as either that they signify one thing more expressly than another or that they confer greater grace, like the sacrament of Baptism with respect to Circumcision.

*Declaration of the conclusion:* [Oxon. *ib.*] because God at no time left the human race without a necessary remedy for salvation, least of all those to whom he himself gave the law so that through the observance of it they might attain to salvation (for without a remedy by means of which they could be saved such a law would have been given in vain), therefore it must be judged that in the time of the Mosaic law God had prepared a medicine against the sickness of original guilt: but no one could reach salvation without the removal of original sin; therefore a sacrament instituted against original sin ought to cause grace whereby that sin might be destroyed. For there ought to be a certain and efficacious sign, that is, such that, through its application, they were certain from divine compact that grace had been conferred and original sin destroyed: but the sacraments of the New Law, which are said to cause grace, [Oxon. 4 d.1 q.7 n.2] do not have in them more than to be certain and efficacious signs of grace, which through their application is conferred on those who rightly receive them; therefore the sacraments of the Old Law too equally caused grace, although less efficaciously, because the passion of Christ had not yet been presented (as was said in the preceding article).