

QUESTION 60

What a Sacrament Is

Now that we have considered those things that pertain to the mystery of the Incarnate Word (questions 27-59), we have to consider the sacraments of the Church, which have their efficacy from the Incarnate Word Himself. First we will consider the sacraments in general (questions 60-65) and then each of the specific sacraments (questions 66-90).

On the first topic there are five things that have to be considered: first, what a sacrament is (question 60); second, the necessity for the sacraments (question 61); third, the effects of the sacraments (questions 62-63); fourth, the causes of the sacraments (question 64); and, fifth, the number of the sacraments (question 65).

On the first of these topics there are eight questions: (1) Is a sacrament in the genus of signs? (2) Is every sign of a sacred reality a sacrament? (3) Is a sacrament the sign of only one reality or of more than one? (4) Is a sacrament a sign which is a reality that can be sensed? (5) Is a determinate such reality required for a sacrament? (6) Is a signification that is by means of words required for a sacrament? (7) Are determinate words required? (8) Can anything be either added to these words or subtracted from them?

Article 1

Is a sacrament in the genus of signs?

It seems that a sacrament is not in the genus of signs (*sacramentum non sit in genere signi*):

Objection 1: ‘Sacrament’ (*sacramentum*) comes from ‘making sacred’ (*sacrando*), in the same way that ‘medicine’ (*medicamentum*) comes from ‘making healthy’ (*medicando*). But this seems to have more to do with the character of a *cause* than with the character of a *sign*. Therefore, a sacrament is in the genus of causes rather than in the genus of signs.

Objection 2: ‘Sacrament’ seems to signify something hidden (*occultum aliquid*)—this according to Tobit 12:7 (“It is good to hide the secret of the king (*sacramentum regis*)”), and according to Ephesians 3:19 (“... as to what is the dispensation of the mystery (*dispensatio sacramenti*) which has been hidden from eternity in God”). But what is hidden seems to be contrary to the character of a sign, since, as Augustine puts it in *De Doctrina Christiana* 2, “A sign is that which, besides the form that it impresses on the senses, makes something else come into our cognition.” Therefore, it seems that a sacrament is not in the genus of signs.

Objection 3: An oath (*iuramentum*) is sometimes called a sacrament (*sacramentum*); for instance, in *Decretals*, Caus. 22, q. 5, canon 14 it says, “Children who have not attained the use of reason must not be forced to swear an oath (*non cogantur iurare*), and one who has taken an oath at some time must not be a witness afterwards and must not take a sacrament (*non accedit sacramentum*),” that is, an oath (*iuramentum*). But an oath does not involve the character of a sign. Therefore, it seems that a sacrament is not in the genus of signs.

But contrary to this: In *De Civitate Dei* 10 Augustine says, “The visible sacrifice is a sacrament, i.e., a sacred sign, of an invisible sacrifice.”

I respond: Each thing that has an ordering toward some one thing, even in diverse ways, can be denominated by that thing. For instance, from the health that exists in an animal, it is not only the animal, i.e., the subject of health, which is denominated as healthy, but a medicine is likewise called healthy insofar as it effects health, whereas a diet is called healthy insofar as it preserves health, and urine is called healthy insofar as it is a sign of health (*inquantum est significativa [sanitatis]*).

So, then, something can be called a sacrament either (a) because it contains some hidden holiness

(*aliquam sanctitatem occultam*) within itself—and on this score a sacrament is the same thing as a sacred secret—or (b) because it has some sort of ordering toward this holiness, either as a *cause* of it, or as a *sign* of it, or in accord with some other such relation.

Now in the present context we are talking of sacraments specifically insofar as they involve the relation *being a sign of*. And on this score a sacrament is placed in the genus of signs.

Reply to objection 1: Since medicine (*medicina*) is related to health as an efficient cause of it, it follows that all the things denominated by ‘medicine’ (*medicamentum*) are said in relation to a first agent, and because of this, ‘medicine’ implies a certain sort of causality.

By contrast, holiness, by which a sacrament is denominated, is signified not in the manner of an efficient cause, but rather in the manner of a formal or final cause. And that is why ‘sacrament’ need not always imply [efficient] causality.

Reply to objection 2: This argument goes through insofar as a sacrament is the same as a sacred secret. However, what is said to be sacred and a sacrament is not only a secret that belongs to God, but also a secret that belongs to a king. For according to the ancients, what was called sacred and sacrosanct was anything at all that was not allowed to be violated, e.g., the walls of the city, and persons set in high offices. And so those secrets, whether divine or human, which were not allowed to be violated by making them known generally to anyone at all, are called sacred and sacraments.

Reply to objection 3: An oath likewise has a certain relation to sacred realities, viz., insofar as it is a sort of attestation sworn by appeal to something sacred (*quaedam contestatio facta per aliquod sacrum*). And it is on this score that it is said to be a sacrament, though not with the same meaning with which we are talking about sacraments at present—yet not by taking the name ‘sacrament’ equivocally, but instead by taking it analogically, viz., insofar as [an oath] has a different relation to the same one thing, i.e., to the sacred reality.

Article 2

Is every sign of a sacred reality a sacrament?

It seems that not every sign of a sacred reality is a sacrament:

Objection 1: All creatures that can be sensed are signs of sacred realities—this according to Romans 1:20 (“God’s invisible traits are seen clearly, for they are understood through the things that have been made”). And yet not all the things that are able to be sensed can be called sacraments. Therefore, not every sign of a sacred reality is a sacrament.

Objection 2: Everything that was done in the Old Law prefigured Christ, who is the Holy of Holies—this according to 1 Corinthians 10:11 (“All these things happened to them as a prefigurement”) and according to Colossians 2:17 (“These are shadows of things to come, but the substance is of Christ”). Yet as was established in the Second Part (*ST* 2-2, q. 101, a. 4), not all the deeds of the fathers of the Old Testament, or even all the ceremonies of the Law, are sacraments, but [only] certain of them specifically. Therefore, it seems that not every sign of a sacred reality is a sacrament.

Objection 3: Likewise, in the New Testament there are many things which are done as a sign of a sacred reality and yet which are not called sacraments, e.g., the sprinkling of holy water, the consecration of an altar, and similar things. Therefore, not every sign of a sacred reality is a sacrament.

But contrary to this: A definition is interchangeable (*convertitur*) with what is defined. But some define a sacrament as a sign of a sacred reality, and this is likewise clear from the passage cited above from Augustine. Therefore, it seems that every sign of a sacred reality is a sacrament.

I respond: Signs are given to men, and it is up to them to arrive at what is unknown through what is known. And so what is called a sacrament, properly speaking, is a sign of some sacred reality pertaining to men, so that in the sense in which we are speaking of sacraments in the present context, what is properly called a sacrament is a sign of a sacred reality *insofar as it makes men holy*.

Reply to objection 1: Creatures that can be sensed signify something sacred, viz., the divine wisdom and goodness, insofar as those creatures are sacred in themselves, but not insofar as we are made holy through them. And so creatures that are able to be sensed cannot be called sacraments in the sense in which we are now talking about sacraments.

Reply to objection 2: Certain things belonging to the Old Testament signified the holiness of the Christ insofar as He is holy in Himself. However, some of them signified His holiness insofar as we are sanctified through it; for instance, the immolation of the paschal lamb signified Christ's immolation, by which we have been made holy. And things such as these are properly called the sacraments of the Old Law.

Reply to objection 3: Things are denominated by their final end and fulfillment (*a fine et complemento*). Now it is not the disposition, but the completion or perfection, that constitutes the final end. And so those things which signify a *disposition* toward holiness are not called sacraments, and these are what the objection is talking about. Instead, it is only those things that signify the *perfection* or *completion* of human holiness that are called sacraments.

Article 3

Is a sacrament a sign of just one reality?

It seems that a sacrament is a sign of just one reality (*sacramentum non sit signum nisi unius rei*):

Objection 1: That by which many things are signified is an ambiguous sign and, as a result, an occasion for deception; this is clear in the case of equivocal names. But every deceit (*fallacia*) should be removed from the Christian religion—this according to Colossians 2:8 (“See to it that no one seduces you by philosophy and vain deceit”). Therefore, it seems that a sacrament is not a sign of more than one reality (*non sit signum plurium rerum*).

Objection 2: As has been explained (a. 2), a sacrament signifies a sacred reality insofar as it is a cause of human sanctification. But there is just one cause of human sanctification, viz., the blood of Christ—this according to Hebrews 13:12 (“Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people, suffered outside the gates”). Therefore, it seems that a sacrament does not signify more than one reality.

Objection 3: As has been explained (a. 2, ad 3), a sacrament properly signifies the final end of sanctification (*ipsum finem sanctificationis*). But the final end of sanctification is eternal life—this according to Romans 6:22 (“You have your fruit in sanctification, but as your end, eternal life”). Therefore, it seems that the sacraments signify only one reality, viz., eternal life.

But contrary to this: As Augustine explains in *Librum Sententiarum Prosperi*, there are two realities signified in the sacrament of the altar, viz., the genuine [human] body of Christ and the mystical body of Christ.

I respond: As has been explained (a. 2), what is properly called a sacrament is that which is ordered toward signifying our sanctification. Three things can be thought of in this, viz., the *cause* itself of our sanctification, which is Christ's passion; the *form* of our sanctification, which consists in grace and the virtues; and the *final end* of our sanctification, which is eternal life. And all of these realities are signified by the sacraments.

Hence, a sacrament is a sign that (a) makes present to our minds that which preceded it (*est signum rememorativum eius quod praecessit*), viz., Christ's passion, (b) makes manifest what is effected in us through Christ's passion (*demonstrativum eius quod in nobis efficitur per Christi passionem*), viz., grace; and (c) foreshadows, i.e., announces ahead of time, the glory to come (*prognosticum, idest praenuntiativum, futurae gloriae*).

Reply to objection 1: A sign is ambiguous, presenting an occasion for deception, when it signifies many realities without their being ordered to one another (*multa quorum unum non ordinatur ad aliud*). However, when it signifies many realities in such a way that they are made one by a given ordering, then it is a sure sign (*signum certum*) and not an ambiguous one—in the way that 'man' signifies the soul and the body insofar as a human nature is constituted from them. And it is in this way that 'sacrament' signifies the three realities noted above insofar as they are made one by the ordering in question.

Reply to objection 2: By the very fact that a sacrament signifies a sanctifying reality, it has to signify an effect, which is understood within the sanctifying cause itself insofar as it is a sanctifying cause.

Reply to objection 3: It is sufficient for the notion of a sacrament that it should signify the perfection which is the *form*, and it is not necessary for it to signify only the perfection which is the *final end*.

Article 4

Is a sacrament always a reality that can be sensed?

It seems that a sacrament is not always a reality that can be sensed (*sacramentum non semper sit aliqua res sensibilis*):

Objection 1: According to the Philosopher in *Prior Analytics* 1, every effect is a sign of its cause. But just as there are some effects that can be sensed, so, too, there are also some intelligible effects, in the way that scientific knowledge is an effect of a demonstration. Therefore, not every sign can be sensed. But as was explained above (a. 2), it is sufficient for the notion of a sacrament that it be a sign of some sacred reality insofar as a man is sanctified by it. Therefore, it is not required for a sacrament that it be a sign that can be sensed.

Objection 2: Sacraments belong to the kingdom of God and to the worship of God. But realities that can be sensed do not seem to belong to the worship of God; for John 4:24 says, "God is spirit, and all* who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth," and Romans 14:17 says, "The kingdom of God does not consist of food and drink." Therefore, realities that can be sensed are not required for the sacraments.

Objection 3: In *De Libero Arbitrio* Augustine says, "Things that can be sensed are the least goods, and a man can live in an upright way without them." But as will become clear below (q. 61, a. 1), the sacraments are necessary for human salvation, and so a man cannot live in an upright way without them. Therefore, things that can be sensed are not required for the sacraments.

But contrary to this: In *Super Ioannem* Augustine says, "A word is added to the element, and it becomes a sacrament." And he is talking here about an element that can be sensed, viz., water. Therefore, things that can be sensed are required for the sacraments.

I respond: Divine wisdom provides for each entity according to its own mode, and because of this Wisdom 8:1 says, "[Wisdom] orders all things delightfully." Hence, Matthew 25:15 says, "He gave ... to each according to his own abilities." But it is natural for a man to arrive at the cognition of intelligible

realities through realities that can be sensed. Now a sign is that by means of which an individual comes to the cognition of something else. Hence, since the sacred realities that are signified by the sacraments are spiritual and intelligible goods by which a man is sanctified, it follows that a sacrament's signification is accomplished by means of certain realities that can be sensed—just as, in the divine Scriptures, spiritual realities are described to us by reference to the similarities they bear to realities that can be sensed. And, as Dionysius likewise proves in *De Caelesti Hierarchia*, chap. 1, that is why realities that can be sensed are required for the sacraments.

Reply to objection 1: Each thing is denominated and defined mainly in accord with what belongs to it primarily and in its own right (*primo and per se*), and not by what belongs to it through something else (*per aliud*). Now an effect that can be sensed has it in its own right what it takes to lead to the cognition of something else, in the sense of making it known to a man primarily and in its own right, since all of our cognition takes its beginnings from the senses. On the other hand, intelligible effects do not have the wherewithal to lead to the cognition of something else except insofar as they have been made manifest through another (*per aliud*), viz., through what can be sensed. And that is why it is things offered to the senses that are called signs primarily and principally. As Augustine puts it in *De Doctrina Christiana* 2, “A sign is that which, besides the form that it impresses on the senses, makes something else come into our cognition.” By contrast, intelligible effects do not have the character of a sign except insofar as they have been made manifest through [other] signs. And in this same way some things that cannot be sensed are in a certain way called sacraments, insofar as they are signified by things that can be sensed. This will be discussed below (q. 63, aa. 1 and 3; q. 73, a. 6; and q. 84, a. 1).

Reply to objection 2: Things that can be sensed belong to the worship or kingdom of God not insofar as they are considered in their own nature, but only insofar as they are signs of the spiritual realities in which the kingdom of God consists.

Reply to objection 3: Augustine is here speaking about realities that can be sensed insofar as they are considered in their own nature and not insofar as they are taken to signify spiritual realities, which are the greatest goods.

Article 5

Are determinate entities required for the sacraments?

It seems that determinate entities are not required for the sacraments (*non requirantur determinatae res ad sacramenta*):

Objection 1: As has been explained (a. 4), entities that can be sensed are required in the sacraments in order to be signs (*ad significandum*). But there is nothing to prevent the same thing from being signified by diverse entities that can be sensed, in the way that in Sacred Scripture God is metaphorically signified sometimes by a rock, sometimes by a lion, sometimes by the sun, or by something else of that sort. Therefore, it seems that diverse entities can fit in with the same sacrament. Therefore, it is not the case that determinate entities are required in the sacraments.

Objection 2: The health of the soul is greater than the health of the body. But among bodily medicines, which are ordered toward the health of the body, one entity can be substituted for another in the latter's absence. Therefore, *a fortiori*, in the sacraments, which are spiritual medicines ordered toward the health of the soul, one entity can be substituted for another when the latter is absent.

Objection 3: It is not fitting for the salvation of men to be limited by divine law, and especially by the law of Christ, who came to save everyone. But in the state of the law of nature no determinate entities

were required in the sacraments, but instead entities were taken up in fulfillment of a vow; this is clear from Genesis 28:20, where Jacob vowed that he would offer tithes and peace offerings to God. Therefore, it seems that man ought not to have been restricted—especially in the New Law—to using determinate entities in the sacraments.

But contrary to this: John 3:5 says, “Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

I respond: There are two things that can be thought of in the exercise of the sacraments (*in usu sacramentorum*), viz., (a) the worship of God and (b) the sanctification of men. The first of these pertains to man in relation to God, whereas the second, conversely, pertains to God in relation to man.

Now it is up to an individual to make a determination only with respect to what lies within his own power and not with respect to what lies within the power of another. Therefore, since the sanctification of men lies within the power of the God who sanctifies, it is not up to man to make a determination by his own judgment with respect to which entities he is to be sanctified by; instead, this should be determined by divine institution. And that is why, in the case of sacraments of the New Law by which men are sanctified—this according to 1 Corinthians 6:11 (“You have been washed, you have been sanctified”)—it is necessary to make use of the entities that have been determined by divine institution.

Reply to objection 1: If the same thing can be signified by diverse signs, then in the end it is up to the individual who is doing the signifying to determine which of the signs is to be used to signify. Now it is God who is signifying spiritual things to us through sensory signs in the sacraments and through verbal similes (*per verba similitudinaria*) in the Scriptures. And so, just as it has been determined by the judgment of the Holy Spirit which similes are to be used to signify spiritual realities in given passages of Scripture, so, too, it ought to be determined by divine institution which entities are to be used to signify [spiritual realities] in this or that sacrament.

Reply to objection 2: Things that can be sensed have powers which they are naturally endowed with and which contribute to bodily health. And so if two of the them have the same power, it makes no difference which one an individual makes use of.

By contrast, things that can be sensed are ordered toward sanctification not by any naturally endowed power, but only by divine institution. And so it had to be divinely determined just which things that can be sensed are to be used in the case of the sacraments.

Reply to objection 3: As Augustine explains in *Contra Faustum* 19, different sacraments fit in with different times, just as different times—viz., present, past, and future—are likewise signified by diverse verbs. And just as in the state of natural law men, with no law having yet been given from the outside, were moved by their inner instinct alone to worship God, so, too, it was determined for them by their inner instinct which things that can be sensed were to be used for the worship of God.

However, later on it was necessary for a law to be given from the outside as well, both (a) because the law of nature had been obscured by the sins of men, and (b) in order to have a more explicit signification of the grace of Christ through which the human race is sanctified. And so it likewise had to be determined which entities men would use in the case of the sacraments. Nor was the way of salvation thereby restricted; for the entities that it is necessary to use in the sacraments are either commonly possessed or can be had with little effort.

Article 6

Are words required in the signification of the sacraments?

It seems that words are not required in the signification of the sacraments (*in significatione sacramentorum non requirantur verba*):

Objection 1: In *Contra Faustum* 19 Augustine asks, “What are all the corporeal sacraments other than something like visible words?” And so it seems that, in the case of the sacraments, adding words to the entities that can be sensed is adding words to words. But this is superfluous. Therefore, it is not the case that, in addition to the entities that can be sensed, words are required in the sacraments.

Objection 2: A sacrament is some one thing. But it does not seem possible for things that belong to diverse genera to be made into something one. Therefore, since (a) words and (b) entities that can be sensed belong to diverse genera—given that entities that can be sensed come from nature, whereas words come from reason—it seems that, in addition to the entities that can be sensed, words are not required in the sacraments.

Objection 3: The sacraments of the New Law are successors to the sacraments of the Old Law, since, as Augustine points out in *Contra Faustum* 26, “When the latter were removed, the former were instituted.” But there was no verbal formula required (*non requirebatur aliqua forma verborum*) in the sacraments of the Old Law. Therefore, there is no verbal formula required for the sacraments of the New Law, either.

But contrary to this: In Ephesians 5:25-26 the Apostle says, “Christ loved the Church and delivered Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, cleansing her in a bath of water by means of the word of life.” And in *Super Ioannem* Augustine says, “A word is added to the element, and it becomes a sacrament.”

I respond: As has been explained (aa. 2-3), the sacraments are applied as signs to the sanctification of men. Therefore, there are three ways in which they can be thought of, and in each of these three ways it is fitting that in the sacraments words should be adjoined to the things that can be sensed.

First, the sacraments can be thought of on the part of the *sanctifying cause*, who is the Word Incarnate and to whom the sacraments are in some sense conformed by the fact that a verbal formula is applied to the thing that can be sensed, in the way that in the mystery of the Incarnation the Word of God is united to flesh that can be sensed.

Second, the sacraments can be thought of on the part of the *man who is sanctified*. For he is composed of a soul and a body, and to him is proportioned the sacramental medicine, which touches his body through the visible reality and which is believed in by the soul through the verbal formula. Hence, in commenting on John 15:3 (“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you”), Augustine says, “Where does this great power of water come from, that it should touch the body and cleanse the heart, except by the word doing it, not because it is spoken, but because it is believed?”

Third, a sacrament can be thought of on the part of the *sacramental signification itself*. For in *De Doctrina Christiana* 2 Augustine says, “Among men, words have obtained preeminence in signifying,” since words can be formed in different ways to signify different concepts of the mind, and because of this we can express more distinctly what we conceive with our mind. And so for the completion of sacramental signification it was necessary for the signification of the things that can be sensed to be made determinate through a verbal formula (*per aliqua verba*). For instance, water can signify both (a) washing because of its moistness and (b) refreshment because of its coolness, but when it is said, “I baptize you ...,” it is made clear that we use water in baptism to signify spiritual cleansing.

Reply to objection 1: The visible entities that belong to the sacraments are called words because of a certain similarity, viz., insofar as they participate in some sort of power of signifying—which, as has been said, belongs principally to words themselves. And the reason why the duplication of words is not superfluous when words are added to the visible entities in the sacraments is that, as has been explained, the one of them is made determinate by the other.

Reply to objection 2: Even though words and the other things that can be sensed are in diverse genera as regards what belongs to the nature of the entity, they nonetheless agree in the notion of signifying, which is more complete (*perfectius*) in words than in the other entities. And so from the words and entities in the sacraments something unified comes to be as from form and matter, viz., insofar as the signification of the entities is, as has been said, perfected by the words. But the acts themselves of the entities that can be sensed, e.g., washing, anointing and other such acts, are also included under the entities, since in these acts the character of signifying is the same as in the entities themselves.

Reply to objection 3: As Augustine explains in *Contra Faustum*, the sacraments of a present reality should be different from the sacraments of a future reality. But the sacraments of the Old Law were a foreshadowing of the Christ who was to come. And this is why they did not signify Christ as expressly as do the sacraments of the New Law, which flow from Christ Himself and, as has been explained, bear a certain similarity to Him within themselves.

Still, in the Old Law they did use certain words in matters pertaining to the worship of God—both the priests, who were the ministers of those sacraments—this according to Numbers 6:23-24 (“Thus shall you bless the children of Israel, and you shall say to them, ‘The Lord bless you ...’”)—and those who made use of those sacraments—this according to Deuteronomy 26:3 (“I declare this day before the Lord your God, etc.”).

Article 7

Are determinate words required in the sacraments?

It seems not to be the case that determinate words are required in the sacraments (*non requirantur determinata verba in sacramenti*):

Objection 1: As the Philosopher says [in *De Interpretatione* 1], “Words are not the same for everyone.” But salvation, which is what is sought in the sacraments, is the same for everyone. Therefore, it is not the case that determinate words are required in the sacraments.

Objection 2: As was explained above (a. 6), words are required in the sacraments insofar as it is words that are principally significative. But it is possible for the same thing to be signified by different words. Therefore, it is not the case that determinate words are required in the sacraments.

Objection 3: The corruption of an entity changes the species of the entity. But some individuals pronounce words in a corrupted way, and yet the effect of the sacraments is believed not to be impeded because of this; otherwise, illiterate individuals and stutterers who confer the sacraments would often induce a defect in the sacraments. Therefore, it seems that determinate words are not required in the sacraments.

But contrary to this: Our Lord pronounced determinate words in the consecration of the sacrament of the Eucharist, saying in Matthew 26:26, “This is my body” (*hoc est corpus meum*). Similarly, He also commanded the disciples to baptize with a determinate verbal formula (*ut baptizarent sub determinata forma verborum*), saying in Matthew 28:19, “Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

I respond: As has been explained (a. 6, ad 2), in a sacrament the words behave in the manner of the *form*, whereas the entities that can be sensed behave in the manner of the *matter*. Now in all things composed of matter and form, the principle of determination lies on the part of the form, which is in some sense the end and terminus of the matter. And so a determinate form is required for the *esse* of the entity in a more central way than is a determinate matter, since a determinate matter is sought in order that it might be made proportionate to a determinate form. Therefore, since determinate entities that can be sensed are required in the sacraments, and since they behave like the matter in the sacraments, a determinate verbal formula is all the more required.

Reply to objection 1: As Augustine explains in *Super Ioannem*, the word works in the sacraments “not because it is spoken,” i.e., not because of the outward sound of the spoken word, “but because it is believed” in accord with the meaning of the words, which is held by faith. And this meaning is the same for everyone, even though the spoken words are not the same with respect to their sound. And so in whatever language this meaning is expressed by means of words, the sacrament is brought to completion.

Reply to objection 2: Even though in every language it is possible for the same thing to be signified by diverse sounds, it is nonetheless the case that there are some sounds that men of that language use more principally and more commonly to signify the thing in question. And it is those sounds that ought to be adopted in the signification of a sacrament.

In the same way, among the entities that can be sensed, the one that is adopted for the signification of a sacrament is the one whose use is more common for the act through which the sacrament’s effect is signified—in the way that men more commonly use water for washing their bodies, and through this a spiritual washing is signified. And that is why water is taken as the matter in baptism.

Reply to objection 3: If an individual who mispronounces the sacramental words (*qui corrupte profert verba sacramentalia*) does so on purpose, then he does not seem to be intending to do what the Church is doing, and so the sacrament does not seem to be brought to completion. On the other hand, if he does this by mistake or because of a slip of the tongue, then if the corruption is so great that it altogether removes the meaning of what is said, the sacrament does not seem to be brought to completion. And this happens mainly when the corruption has to do with the beginnings of the words—for instance, if in place of “in the name of the Father” (*in nomine Patris*) he were to say “in the name of the Mother” (*in nomine matris*). However, if the meaning of the locution is not totally removed by a corruption of this sort, then the sacrament is still brought to completion. And this happens mainly when the corruption has to do with the word-endings—for instance, if an individual says “*Patras et Filias*” [instead of “*Patris et Fili*”]. For even though words of this sort, when mispronounced, signify nothing by virtue of their imposition, they are nonetheless taken to signify by way of an accommodation of the usage. And so even though the sound that is heard is changed, the meaning still remains the same.

Now what has been said about the difference between corruptions of the beginnings and endings of words has its explanation in the fact that, among us [Latins], variations in the beginnings of words change the significations of the words, whereas variations in the endings of words do not for the most part change their signification. However, among the Greeks, there is also a variation of signification with respect to the beginnings of words when verbs are conjugated.

Still, what seems to require attention is mainly the *degree* of corruption in the utterance. For, with respect to both the beginnings and the endings [of the words], this degree of corruption can either be so small that it does not remove the meaning of the words or so great that it does indeed remove their meaning. And one of these possibilities happens more easily on the part of the beginnings [of the words], whereas the other happens more easily on the part of the endings [of the words].

Article 8

Is it permissible to add anything to the words in which the form of the sacraments consists?

It seems that it not permissible to add anything to the words in which the form of the sacraments consists (*nihil liceat addere verbis in quibus consistit forma sacramentorum*):

Objection 1: Sacramental words of the sort in question have no less necessity than the words of Sacred Scripture. But it is not permissible to add anything to, or to subtract anything from, the words of Sacred Scripture; for Deuteronomy 4:2 says, “You shall not add to the word that I speak to you, neither shall you take away from it,” and Apocalypse 22:18-19 says, “I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone shall add to them, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his portion from the book of life.” Therefore, it seems that it is not permissible to add or subtract anything in the forms of the sacraments.

Objection 2: As has been explained (a. 6 ad 2 and a. 7), in the case of the sacraments the words behave in the manner of the form. But as *Metaphysics* 8 explains, in the case of forms any addition or subtraction changes the species, just as with numbers. Therefore, it seems that if anything is added to or subtracted from the form of a sacrament, it will not be the same sacrament.

Objection 3: Just as the form of a sacrament requires a determinate number of words, so it likewise requires a determinate ordering of the words, as well as the continuity of the utterance. Therefore, if an addition or subtraction does not remove the authenticity of the sacrament (*non aufert sacramenti veritatem*), then it seems that, by parity of reasoning, neither does transposing the words or uttering them with interruptions.

But contrary to this: In the case of the forms of the sacraments, some add things which are not posited by others. For instance, the Latins baptize under this form: “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” whereas the Greeks baptize under this form: “The servant of Christ, N., is baptized in the name of the Father, etc.” And yet the sacrament is conferred in both cases. Therefore, it is permissible to add or subtract in the case of the forms of the sacraments.

I respond: Concerning all these variations that can occur in the forms of the sacraments, there seem to be two things that have to be considered:

The first is on the part of *the individual who is uttering the words* and whose intention is, as will be explained below (q. 64, a. 8), required for the sacrament. And so if he intends by an addition or subtraction of the sort in question to introduce a different rite that has not been accepted by the Church, then the sacrament does not seem to have been completed, since it does not seem that he intends to do what the Church does.

The second thing to consider is on the part of the *signification of the words*. For as was explained above (a. 7, ad 1), since the words act in the sacraments according to the meaning that they convey, it is necessary to consider whether the obligatory sense of the words (*debitus sensus verborum*) is destroyed by a variation of the sort in question; for if it is, then it is clear that the authenticity of the sacrament is destroyed (*tollitur veritas sacramenti*).

Now it is clear that if something is *subtracted* from among those things that belongs to the substance of the sacramental form, then the obligatory meaning of the words is destroyed, and so the sacrament is not brought to completion. Hence, in *De Spiritu Sancto* Didymus says, “If anyone tries to baptize in such a way that he leaves out one of the names noted above”—viz, ‘the Father’, ‘the Son’, and ‘the Holy Spirit’—“then he will baptize without bringing [the sacrament] to completion.” On the other hand, if something is left out which does not belong to the substance of the form, then a subtraction of

this sort does not destroy the obligatory meaning of the words and, as a result, does not subvert the completion of the sacrament. For instance, in the formula for the Eucharist, “For this is my body” (*Hoc est enim corpus meum*), leaving out the ‘for’ (*enim*) does not destroy the obligatory meaning of the words, and so it does not prevent the completion of the sacrament—even though it can happen that the individual who leaves out the word commits a sin out of either negligence or contempt.

As for *addition*, it likewise happens that something is added which corrupts the obligatory meaning—as, for instance, if someone says, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, who is greater, and of the Son, who is lesser,” in the way that the Arians used to baptize. And so an addition of this sort subverts the authenticity of the sacrament. On the other hand, if the addition in question does not remove the obligatory meaning, then the authenticity of the sacrament is not destroyed. And it does not matter whether such an addition is made at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end. For instance, if someone says, “I baptize you in the name of God the Father almighty, and of His only-begotten Son, and of the Holy Spirit the Paraclete,” then there will be a genuine baptism. And, similarly, if someone says, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and may the Blessed Virgin come to your assistance,” then there will be an authentic baptism.

However, if some one were perhaps to say, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” there would be no baptism, since 1 Corinthians 1:13 says, “Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?” However, this is true [only] if being baptized in the name of the Blessed Virgin is being understood in the same way as being baptized in the Trinity’s name, by which the baptism is consecrated. For such an understanding would be contrary to the truth of the Faith and, as a result, would destroy the authenticity of the sacrament. By contrast, if what is added, viz., “and in the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary,” is not being understood in the sense that the name of the Blessed Virgin effects anything in the baptism, but is instead being understood as asking that her intercession might help the baptized individual to preserve the grace of baptism, then the completion of the sacrament is not undermined.

Reply to objection 1: It is not permitted to add to the words of Sacred Scripture as regards their *meaning* (*quantum ad sensum*), but as regards their *explanation* (*quantum ad expositionem*), many words have been added to them by the doctors.

That aside, it is not permitted to add to the words of Sacred Scripture in such a way as to claim that those additions are an integral part of Sacred Scripture (*esse de integritate Sacrae Scripturae*), since this would constitute the sin of deceitfulness. And the same thing would hold if an individual were to claim that something necessarily belongs to the form [of a sacrament] when it does not belong to that form.

Reply to objection 2: Words belong to the form of a sacrament by reason of the meaning that is signified. And so whenever there is an addition or subtraction of sounds which does not add or subtract anything from the obligatory meaning, the species of the sacrament is not destroyed.

Reply to objection 3: If there is an interruption in the utterance of the words that is so long that the intention of the speaker is broken off (*quod intercipiatur intentio pronuntiantis*), then the meaning of the sacrament—and, as a result, its authenticity—is destroyed. However, it is not destroyed when the speaker’s interruption is short and does not remove either his intention or his understanding.

And the same thing should also be said about a change in the order of the words (*de transpositione verborum*). For if such a transposition destroys the meaning of the locution, then the sacrament is not brought to completion—as is clear in the case of a negation that is misplaced either before or after a given word. On the other hand, if there is a transposition of words that does not change the meaning of the locution, then the authenticity of the sacrament is not destroyed—this according to what the Philosopher says [in *De Interpretatione* 10] (“Transposed nouns and verbs signify the same thing”).