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### SIXTH SESSION

celebrated on the thirteenth day of January, 1547

#### DECREE CONCERNING JUSTIFICATION

##### Introduction

Since there is being disseminated at this time, not without the loss of many souls and grievous detriment to the unity of the Church, a certain erroneous doctrine concerning justification, the holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent, lawfully assembled in the Holy Ghost, the most reverend John Maria, Bishop of Praeneste de Monte, and Marcellus, priest of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem, cardinals of the holy Roman Church and legates Apostolic *a latere*, presiding in the name of our most holy Father and Lord in Christ, Paul III, by the providence of God, Pope, intends, for the praise and glory of Almighty God, for the tranquillity of the Church and the salvation of souls, to expound to all the faithful of Christ the true and salutary doctrine of justification, which the *Sum of justice*,<sup>1</sup> Jesus Christ, *the author and finisher of our faith*<sup>2</sup> taught, which the Apostles transmitted and which the Catholic Church under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost has always retained; strictly forbidding that anyone henceforth presume to believe, preach or teach otherwise than is defined and declared in the present decree.

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE IMPOTENCY OF NATURE AND OF THE LAW TO JUSTIFY MAN

The holy council declares first, that for a correct and clear understanding of the doctrine of justification, it is necessary that each one recognize and confess that since all men had lost innocence in the

<sup>1</sup> Mal. 4:2.  
<sup>2</sup> Heb. 12:2.

and cooperating with that grace; so that, while God touches the heart of man through the illumination of the Holy Ghost, man himself neither does absolutely nothing while receiving that inspiration, since he can also reject it, nor yet is he able by his own free will and without the grace of God to move himself to justice in His sight. Hence, when it is said in the sacred writings: *Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you*,<sup>19</sup> we are reminded of our liberty; and when we reply: *Convert us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be converted*,<sup>20</sup> we confess that we need the grace of God.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE MANNER OF PREPARATION

Now, they [the adults] are disposed to that justice when, aroused and aided by divine grace, receiving *faith by hearing*,<sup>21</sup> they are moved freely toward God, believing to be true what has been divinely revealed and promised, especially that the sinner is justified by God *by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*,<sup>22</sup> and when, understanding themselves to be sinners, they, by turning themselves from the fear of divine justice, by which they are salutarily aroused, to consider the mercy of God, are raised to hope, trusting that God will be propitious to them for Christ's sake; and they begin to love Him as the fountain of all justice, and on that account are moved against sin by a certain hatred and detestation, that is, by that repentance that must be performed before baptism;<sup>23</sup> finally, when they resolve to receive baptism, to begin a new life and to keep the commandments of God. Of this disposition it is written: *He that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and is a rewarder to them that seek him*,<sup>24</sup> and, *Be of good faith, son, thy sins are forgiven thee*,<sup>25</sup> and, *The fear of the Lord driveth out sin*,<sup>26</sup> and, *Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*,<sup>27</sup> and,

<sup>19</sup> Zach. 1:3.

<sup>20</sup> Lam. 5:21.

<sup>21</sup> Rom. 10:17.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:24.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Heb. 11:6.

<sup>25</sup> Matt. 9:2; Mark 2:5.

<sup>26</sup> Eccclus. 1:27.

<sup>27</sup> Acts 2:38; cc. 13, 97, D. IV de cons.

*Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*; <sup>28</sup> finally, *Prepare your hearts unto the Lord*.<sup>29</sup>

## CHAPTER VII

### IN WHAT THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE SINNER CONSISTS, AND WHAT ARE ITS CAUSES

This disposition or preparation is followed by justification itself, which is not only a remission of sins but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man through the voluntary reception of the grace and gifts whereby an unjust man becomes just and from being an enemy becomes a friend, that he may be *an heir according to hope of life everlasting*.<sup>30</sup> The causes of this justification are: the final cause is the glory of God and of Christ and life everlasting; the efficient cause is the merciful God who *washes and sanctifies*<sup>31</sup> gratuitously, signing and anointing *with the holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance*,<sup>32</sup> the meritorious cause is His most beloved only begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, *when we were enemies*,<sup>33</sup> for the *exceeding charity wherewith he loved us*,<sup>34</sup> merited for us justification by His most holy passion on the wood of the cross and made satisfaction for us to God the Father; the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith,<sup>35</sup> without which no man was ever justified; finally, the single formal cause is the justice of God, not that by which He Himself is just, but that by which He makes us just, that, namely, with which we being endowed by Him, are *renewed in the spirit of our mind*,<sup>36</sup> and not only are we reputed but we are truly called and are just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to everyone as He wills,<sup>37</sup> and according to each one's disposition and cooperation. For

<sup>28</sup> Matt. 28:19 f.

<sup>29</sup> See I Kings 7:3.

<sup>30</sup> Tit. 3:7.

<sup>31</sup> See I Cor. 6:11.

<sup>32</sup> Eph. 1:13 f.

<sup>33</sup> Rom. 5:10.

<sup>34</sup> Eph. 2:4.

<sup>35</sup> C. 76, D. IV de cons.

<sup>36</sup> Eph. 4:23.

<sup>37</sup> See I Cor. 12:11.

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## CHAPTER X

## THE INCREASE OF THE JUSTIFICATION RECEIVED

Having, therefore, been thus justified and made the friends and domestics of God,<sup>49</sup> advancing from virtue to virtue,<sup>50</sup> they are renewed, as the Apostle says, day by day,<sup>51</sup> that is, mortifying the members<sup>52</sup> of their flesh, and presenting them as instruments of justice unto sanctification,<sup>53</sup> they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith cooperating with good works, increase in that justice received through the grace of Christ and are further justified, as it is written: *He that is just, let him be justified still;*<sup>54</sup> and, *Be not afraid to be justified even to death;*<sup>55</sup> and again, *Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only?*<sup>56</sup> This increase of justice holy Church asks for when she prays: "Give unto us, O Lord, an increase of faith, hope and charity."<sup>57</sup>

## CHAPTER XI

## THE OBSERVANCE OF THE COMMANDMENTS AND THE NECESSITY AND POSSIBILITY THEREOF

But no one, however much justified, should consider himself exempt from the observance of the commandments; no one should use that rash statement, once forbidden by the Fathers under anathema, that the observance of the commandments of God is impossible for one that is justified. For God does not command impossibilities, but by commanding admonishes thee to do what thou canst and to pray for what thou canst not, and aids thee that thou mayest be able.<sup>58</sup> *His commandments are not heavy,*<sup>59</sup> and *his yoke is sweet and burden*

<sup>49</sup> Eph. 2:19.<sup>50</sup> Ps. 83:8.<sup>51</sup> See II Cor. 4:16.<sup>52</sup> Col. 3:5.<sup>53</sup> Rom. 6:13, 19.<sup>54</sup> Apoc. 22:11.<sup>55</sup> Eccclus. 18:22.<sup>56</sup> James 2:24.<sup>57</sup> Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost.<sup>58</sup> St. Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, c.43 (50), PL, XLIV, 271.<sup>59</sup> See I John 5:3.

light.<sup>60</sup> For they who are the sons of God love Christ, but they who love Him, keep His commandments, as He Himself testifies;<sup>61</sup> which, indeed, with the divine help they can do. For though during this mortal life, men, however holy and just, fall at times into at least light and daily sins, which are also called venial, they do not on that account cease to be just, for that petition of the just, *forgive us our trespasses,*<sup>62</sup> is both humble and true; for which reason the just ought to feel themselves the more obliged to walk in the way of justice, for *being now freed from sin and made servants of God,*<sup>63</sup> they are able, *living soberly, justly and godly,*<sup>64</sup> to proceed onward through Jesus Christ, by whom they have access unto this grace.<sup>65</sup> For God does not forsake those who have been once justified by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them. Wherefore, no one ought to flatter himself with faith alone, thinking that by faith alone he is made an heir and will obtain the inheritance, even though *he suffer not with Christ, that he may be also glorified with him.*<sup>66</sup> For even Christ Himself, as the Apostle says, *whereas he was the Son of God, he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and being consummated, he became to all who obey him the cause of eternal salvation.*<sup>67</sup> For which reason the same Apostle admonishes those justified, saying: *Know you not that they who run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain. I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty; I so fight, not as one beating the air, but I chastise my body and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway.*<sup>68</sup> So also the prince of the Apostles, Peter: *Labor the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election. For doing these things, you shall not sin at any time.*<sup>69</sup> From which it is clear that they are opposed to the orthodox teaching of religion who maintain that the just man sins, venially at least, in every good work; or, what is more intolerable, that he merits eternal punishment; and they also who assert that the just sin in all works, if, in order to arouse

<sup>60</sup> Matt. 11:30.<sup>61</sup> John 14:23.<sup>62</sup> Matt. 6:12.<sup>63</sup> Rom. 6:18, 22.<sup>64</sup> Tit. 2:12.<sup>65</sup> Rom. 5:1 f.<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 8:17.<sup>67</sup> Heb. 5:8 f.<sup>68</sup> See I Cor. 9:24, 26 f.<sup>69</sup> See II Pet. 1:10.<sup>70</sup> Cf. *infra*, can. 25.

have not feared to violate the temple of God.<sup>87</sup> Of which repentance it is written: *Be mindful whence thou art fallen; do penance, and do the first works;*<sup>88</sup> and again, *The sorrow that is according to God worketh penance, steadfast unto salvation;*<sup>89</sup> and again, *Do penance, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance.*<sup>90</sup>

## CHAPTER XV

BY EVERY MORTAL SIN GRACE IS LOST, BUT NOT FAITH

Against the subtle wits of some also, who by *pleasing speeches and good words seduce the hearts of the innocent*,<sup>91</sup> it must be maintained that the grace of justification once received is lost not only by infidelity, whereby also faith itself is lost, but also by every other mortal sin, though in this case faith is not lost; thus defending the teaching of the divine law which excludes from the kingdom of God not only unbelievers, but also the faithful [who are] *fornicators, adulterers, effeminate, liars with mankind, thieves, covetous, drunkards, railers, extortioners*,<sup>92</sup> and all others who commit deadly sins, from which with the help of divine grace they can refrain, and on account of which they are cut off from the grace of Christ.

## CHAPTER XVI

THE FRUITS OF JUSTIFICATION, THAT IS, THE MERIT OF GOOD WORKS, AND THE NATURE OF THAT MERIT

Therefore, to men justified in this manner, whether they have preserved uninterruptedly the grace received or recovered it when lost, are to be pointed out the words of the Apostle: *Abound in every good work, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*<sup>93</sup> *For God is not unjust, that he should forget your work, and the love which you have shown in his name;*<sup>94</sup> and, *Do not lose your confidence, which*

<sup>87</sup> See I Cor. 3:17.

<sup>88</sup> Apoc. 2:5.

<sup>89</sup> See II Cor. 7:10.

<sup>90</sup> Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Luke 3:8.

<sup>91</sup> Rom. 16:18.

<sup>92</sup> See I Cor. 6:9 f.; I Tim. 1:9 f.

<sup>93</sup> See I Cor. 15:58.

<sup>94</sup> Heb. 6:10.

*hath a great reward.*<sup>95</sup> Hence, to those who work well *unto the end*<sup>96</sup> and trust in God, eternal life is to be offered, both as a grace mercifully promised to the sons of God through Christ Jesus, and as a reward promised by God himself, to be faithfully given to their good works and merits.<sup>97</sup> For this is the crown of justice which after his fight and course the Apostle declared was laid up for him, to be rendered to him by the just judge, and not only to him, but also to all that love his coming.<sup>98</sup> For since Christ Jesus Himself, as the head into the members and the vine into the branches,<sup>99</sup> continually infuses strength into those justified, which strength always precedes, accompanies and follows their good works, and without which they could not in any manner be pleasing and meritorious before God, we must believe that nothing further is wanting to those justified to prevent them from being considered to have, by those very works which have been done in God, fully satisfied the divine law according to the state of this life and to have truly merited eternal life, to be obtained in its [due] time, provided they depart [this life] in grace,<sup>100</sup> since Christ our Savior says: *If anyone shall drink of the water that I will give him, he shall not thirst forever; but it shall become in him a fountain of water springing up unto life everlasting.*<sup>101</sup> Thus, neither is our own justice established as our own from ourselves,<sup>102</sup> nor is the justice of God ignored or repudiated, for that justice which is called ours, because we are justified by its inherence in us, that same is [the justice] of God, because it is infused into us by God through the merit of Christ. Nor must this be omitted, that although in the sacred writings so much is attributed to good works, that even *he that shall give a drink of cold water to one of his least ones*, Christ promises, *shall not lose his reward;*<sup>103</sup> and the Apostle testifies that, *That which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory;*<sup>104</sup> nevertheless, far be it that a Christian should either trust or glory in himself and not in the Lord,<sup>105</sup> whose bounty toward

<sup>95</sup> Heb. 10:35.

<sup>96</sup> Matt. 10:22.

<sup>97</sup> Rom. 6:22.

<sup>98</sup> See II Tim. 4:8.

<sup>99</sup> John 15:1 f.

<sup>100</sup> Apoc. 14:13.

<sup>101</sup> John 4:13 f.

<sup>102</sup> Rom. 10:3; II Cor. 3:5.

<sup>103</sup> Matt. 10:42; Mark 9:40.

<sup>104</sup> See II Cor. 4:17.

<sup>105</sup> See I Cor. 1:31; II Cor. 10:17.

Can. 13. If anyone says that in order to obtain the remission of sins it is necessary for every man to believe with certainty and without any hesitation arising from his own weakness and indisposition that his sins are forgiven him, let him be anathema.

Can. 14. If anyone says that man is absolved from his sins and justified because he firmly believes that he is absolved and justified,<sup>118</sup> or that no one is truly justified except him who believes himself justified, and that by this faith alone absolution and justification are effected, let him be anathema.

Can. 15. If anyone says that a man who is born again and justified is bound *ex fide* to believe that he is certainly in the number of the predestined,<sup>119</sup> let him be anathema.

Can. 16. If anyone says that he will for certain, with an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great gift of perseverance even to the end, unless he shall have learned this by a special revelation,<sup>120</sup> let him be anathema.

Can. 17. If anyone says that the grace of justification is shared by those only who are predestined to life, but that all others who are called are called indeed but receive not grace, as if they are by divine power predestined to evil, let him be anathema.

Can. 18. If anyone says that the commandments of God are, even for one that is justified and constituted in grace,<sup>121</sup> impossible to observe, let him be anathema.

Can. 19. If anyone says that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel, that other things are indifferent, neither commanded nor forbidden, but free; or that the ten commandments in no way pertain to Christians, let him be anathema.

Can. 20. If anyone says that a man who is justified and however perfect is not bound to observe the commandments of God and the Church, but only to believe,<sup>122</sup> as if the Gospel were a bare and absolute promise of eternal life without the condition of observing the commandments, let him be anathema.

Can. 21. If anyone says that Christ Jesus was given by God to men as a redeemer in whom to trust, and not also as a legislator whom to obey, let him be anathema.

<sup>118</sup> *Supra*, chap. 9.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 12.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 13.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 11.

<sup>122</sup> *Cf.* chap. cit.

Can. 22. If anyone says that the one justified either can without the special help of God persevere in the justice received,<sup>123</sup> or that without that help he cannot, let him be anathema.

Can. 23. If anyone says that a man once justified can sin no more nor lose grace,<sup>124</sup> and that therefore he that falls and sins was never truly justified; or on the contrary, that he can during his whole life avoid all sins, even those that are venial, except by a special privilege from God, as the Church holds in regard to the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema.

Can. 24. If anyone says that the justice received is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works,<sup>125</sup> but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, let him be anathema.

Can. 25. If anyone says that in every good work the just man sins at least venially,<sup>126</sup> or, what is more intolerable, mortally, and hence merit eternal punishment, and that he is not damned for this reason only, because God does not impute these works unto damnation, let him be anathema.

Can. 26. If anyone says that the just ought not for the good work done in God<sup>127</sup> to expect and hope for an eternal reward from God through His mercy and the merit of Jesus Christ, if by doing well and by keeping the divine commandments they persevere to the end,<sup>128</sup> let him be anathema.

Can. 27. If anyone says that there is no mortal sin except that of unbelief,<sup>129</sup> or that grace once received is not lost through any other sin however grievous and enormous except by that of unbelief, let him be anathema.

Can. 28. If anyone says that with the loss of grace through sin faith is also lost with it, or that the faith which remains is not a true faith, though it is not a living one, or that he who has faith without charity is not a Christian, let him be anathema.

Can. 29. If anyone says that he who has fallen after baptism cannot by the grace of God rise again,<sup>130</sup> or that he can indeed recover again the

<sup>123</sup> *Supra*, chap. 13.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 14.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 10.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 11 at the end.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 16.

<sup>128</sup> *Matt.* 24:13.

<sup>129</sup> *Supra*, chap. 15.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 14.

diocese for a continuous period of six months<sup>141</sup> without lawful impediment or just and reasonable causes,<sup>142</sup> be absent from a patriarchal, primate, metropolitan or cathedral church, under whatever title, cause, name or right committed to him, he shall incur *ipso jure* the forfeiture of a fourth part of one year's revenues, to be applied by the ecclesiastical superior to the church treasury and to the poor of the locality. If he continues to absent himself for another six months, he shall *eo ipso* forfeit another fourth part of the revenues, to be applied in like manner.<sup>143</sup> If the contumacy proceed yet farther, that he may be subject to a severer penalty of the sacred canons, the metropolitan shall be bound to denounce the absent suffragan bishops, and the oldest resident suffragan bishop shall be bound under penalty, to be incurred *ipso facto*, of being forbidden entrance to the church,<sup>144</sup> to denounce the absent metropolitan to the Roman pontiff by letter or messenger within three months, that he, by the authority of his supreme see, may take action against the non-resident prelates, as the degree of contumacy of each may demand, and provide the churches with more useful pastors, as he shall know in the Lord to be salutary and expedient.

## CHAPTER II

NO ONE HOLDING A BENEFICE THAT REQUIRES PERSONAL RESIDENCE  
MAY ABSENT HIMSELF EXCEPT FOR A JUST CAUSE TO BE  
APPROVED BY THE BISHOP, WHO SHALL THEN APPOINT  
A VICAR FOR THE CURA ANIMARUM, WITHDRAWING  
A PORTION OF THE REVENUES

Those inferior to bishops, who by title or *in commendam* hold any ecclesiastical benefices that by law or custom require personal residence, shall by appropriate measures be compelled by their ordinaries to reside therein, according as it seems expedient to them for the good government of the churches and the increase of divine worship, taking into account the character of places and persons, and to no one shall privileges or perpetual indulgences in favor of non-residence or the reception of revenues during absence be of avail;<sup>145</sup> temporary permissions

<sup>141</sup> C. 11, X, De cler. non resid., III, 4.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Sess. XXIII, chap. 1 de ref.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Sess. and chap. cit.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, p. 153, no. 60.  
<sup>145</sup> C. 15, VI<sup>o</sup>. De rescrip., I, 3.

and dispensations, however, granted solely on true and reasonable grounds and to be legally proved before the ordinary, shall remain in force; in which cases, nevertheless, it is the duty of the bishops, as delegated in this matter by the Apostolic See, to see to it that the *cura animarum* is in no way neglected by the appointment of competent vicars and the assignment of a suitable portion of the revenues;<sup>146</sup> no privilege or exemption whatever shall be of avail to anyone in this matter.

## CHAPTER III

TRANSGRESSIONS OF SECULAR CLERICS AND OF REGULARS WHO  
LIVE OUTSIDE THEIR MONASTERIES, SHALL BE CORRECTED  
BY THE ORDINARY OF THE LOCALITY

The prelates of the churches shall apply themselves prudently and diligently to correct the excesses of their subjects, and no secular cleric under pretext of a personal privilege, or a regular living outside his monastery under pretext of a privilege of his order, shall, if he transgresses, be considered exempt from being visited, punished and corrected in accordance with the canonical enactments by the ordinary of the locality as delegated in this matter by the Apostolic See.<sup>147</sup>

## CHAPTER IV

BISHOPS AND OTHER MAJOR PRELATES SHALL VISIT ALL CHURCHES  
AS OFTEN AS THIS IS NECESSARY; EVERYTHING THAT MIGHT  
HINDER THE EXECUTION OF THIS DECREE IS ABROGATED

Chapters of cathedral and of other major churches and the members thereof shall not by any exemptions, customs, judicial verdicts, oaths, agreements, which bind only the originators thereof and not also their successors, shield themselves so that they cannot even with Apostolic authority be visited, corrected and amended in accordance with the canonical statutes as often as shall be necessary by their own bishops and other major prelates, by themselves alone or with those whom they shall deem fit to accompany them.<sup>148</sup>

<sup>146</sup> C. 34, VI<sup>o</sup>. De elect., I, 6.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Sess. XIV, chap. 4 de ref.

<sup>148</sup> Cf. Sess. XXIV, chap. 3 de ref. and Sess. XXV, chap. 6 de ref.

Christ who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, the holy council teaches that this is truly propitiatory and has this effect, that if we, contrite and penitent, with sincere heart and upright faith, with fear and reverence, draw nigh to God, *we obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.*<sup>10</sup> For, appeased by this sacrifice, the Lord grants the grace and gift of penitence and pardons even the gravest crimes and sins. For the victim is one and the same, the same now offering by the ministry of priests who then offered Himself on the cross, the manner alone of offering being different. The fruits of that bloody sacrifice, it is well understood, are received most abundantly through this unbloody one, so far is the latter from derogating in any way from the former. Wherefore, according to the tradition of the Apostles,<sup>11</sup> it is rightly offered not only for the sins, punishments, satisfactions and other necessities of the faithful who are living, but also for those departed in Christ but not yet fully purified.

### CHAPTER III

#### MASSES IN HONOR OF THE SAINTS

And though the Church has been accustomed to celebrate at times certain masses in honor and memory of the saints, she does not teach that sacrifice is offered to them but to God alone who crowned them;<sup>12</sup> whence, the priest does not say: "To thee, Peter or Paul, I offer sacrifice,"<sup>13</sup> but, giving thanks to God for their victories, he implores their favor that they may vouchsafe to intercede for us in heaven whose memory we celebrate on earth.

### CHAPTER IV

#### THE CANON OF THE MASS

And since it is becoming that holy things be administered in a holy manner, and of all things this sacrifice is the most holy, the Catholic Church, to the end that it might be worthily and reverently offered and

<sup>10</sup> Heb. 4:16.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *infra*, can. 3, and Sess. XXV, de cr. on Purgatory.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, can. 5, and Sess. XXV, Invocation of the Saints.

<sup>13</sup> St. Aug., *De civitate Dei*, VIII, c. 27.

received, instituted many centuries ago the holy canon,<sup>14</sup> which is so free from error that it contains nothing that does not in the highest degree savor of a certain holiness and piety and raise up to God the minds of those who offer. For it consists partly of the very words of the Lord, partly of the traditions of the Apostles, and also of pious regulations of holy pontiffs.

### CHAPTER V

#### THE CEREMONIES AND RITES OF THE MASS

And since the nature of man is such that he cannot without external means be raised easily to meditation on divine things, holy mother Church has instituted certain rites, namely, that some things in the mass be pronounced in a low tone and others in a louder tone. She has likewise, in accordance with apostolic discipline and tradition, made use of ceremonies,<sup>15</sup> such as mystical blessings, lights, incense, vestments, and many other things of this kind, whereby both the majesty of so great a sacrifice might be emphasized and the minds of the faithful excited by those visible signs of religion and piety to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in this sacrifice.

### CHAPTER VI

#### THE MASS IN WHICH THE PRIEST ALONE COMMUNICATES

The holy council wishes indeed that at each mass the faithful who are present should communicate, not only in spiritual desire but also by the sacramental partaking of the Eucharist, that thereby they may derive from this most holy sacrifice a more abundant fruit; if, however, that is not always done, it does not on that account condemn as private and illicit those masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally, but rather approves and commends them, since these masses also ought to be considered as truly common, partly because at them the people communicate spiritually and partly also because they are celebrated by a public minister of the Church, not for himself only but for all the faithful who belong to the body of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> C. 6, X, De celebr. miss., III, 41.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *infra*, can. 7.

Can. 6. If anyone says that the canon of the mass contains errors and is therefore to be abrogated,<sup>25</sup> let him be anathema.

Can. 7. If anyone says that the ceremonies, vestments, and outward signs which the Catholic Church uses in the celebration of masses, are incentives to impiety rather than stimulants to piety,<sup>26</sup> let him be anathema.

Can. 8. If anyone says that masses in which the priest alone communicates sacramentally are illicit and are therefore to be abrogated,<sup>27</sup> let him be anathema.

Can. 9. If anyone says that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of consecration are pronounced in a low tone, is to be condemned; or that the mass ought to be celebrated in the vernacular tongue only;<sup>28</sup> or that water ought not to be mixed with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice because it is contrary to the institution of Christ,<sup>29</sup> let him be anathema.

#### DECREE CONCERNING THE THINGS TO BE OBSERVED AND AVOIDED IN THE CELEBRATION OF MASS

What great care is to be taken that the holy sacrifice of the mass be celebrated with all religious devotion and reverence, each one may easily conceive who considers that in the sacred writings he is called accursed who does the work of God negligently.<sup>30</sup> And since we must confess that no other work can be performed by the faithful that is so holy and divine as this awe-inspiring mystery, wherein that life-giving victim by which we are reconciled to the Father is daily immolated on the altar by priests, it is also sufficiently clear that all effort and attention must be directed to the end that it be performed with the greatest possible interior cleanness and purity of heart and exterior evidence of devotion and piety.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, since either through the depravity of the times or through the indifference and corruption of men many things seem already to have crept in that are foreign to the dignity of so great a sacrifice, in order that the honor and worship due

<sup>25</sup> *Supra*, chap. 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 5.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 6.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 8.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 7.

<sup>30</sup> Jer. 48:10.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Sess. XIII, chap. 7.

to it may for the glory of God and the edification of the faithful be restored, the holy council decrees that the local ordinaries shall be zealously concerned and be bound to prohibit and abolish all those things which either *covetousness*, which is a *serviſg of idols*,<sup>32</sup> or reverence, which can scarcely be separated from ungodliness, or superstition, a false imitation of true piety, have introduced.

And that many things may be summed up in a few, they shall in the first place, as regards avarice, absolutely forbid conditions of compensations of whatever kind, bargains, and whatever is given for the celebration of new masses; also those importunate and unbecoming demands, rather than requests, for alms and other things of this kind which border on simoniacal taint or certainly savor of filthy lucre.

In the second place, that irreverence may be avoided, each in his own diocese shall forbid that any wandering or unknown priest be permitted to celebrate mass. Furthermore, they shall permit no one who is publicly and notoriously wicked either to minister at the altar or to be present at the sacred services; nor suffer the holy sacrifice to be celebrated by any seculars and regulars whatsoever in private houses or entirely outside the church and the oratories dedicated solely to divine worship and to be designated and visited by the same ordinaries;<sup>33</sup> or unless those present have first shown by their outward disposition and appearance that they are there not in body only but also in mind and devout affection of heart. They shall also banish from the churches all such music which, whether by the organ or in the singing, contains things that are lascivious or impure; likewise all worldly conduct, vain and profane conversations, wandering around, noise and clamor, so that the house of God may be seen to be and may be truly called a house of prayer.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, that no room may be given to superstition, they shall by ordinance and prescribed penalties provide that priests do not celebrate at other than proper hours; or make use of rites or ceremonies and prayers in the celebration of masses other than those that have been approved by the Church and have been received through frequent and praiseworthy usage. They shall completely banish from the Church the practice of any fixed number of masses and candles, which has its origin in superstitious worship rather than in true religion; and they

<sup>32</sup> Eph. 5:5.

<sup>33</sup> Cc. 12, 34, D. I de cons.

<sup>34</sup> Is. 56:7; Matt. 21:13.



ON THE INVOCATION, VENERATION, AND RELICS OF SAINTS, AND ON SACRED IMAGES

The holy council commands all bishops and others who hold the office of teaching and have charge of the *cura animarum*, that in accordance with the usage of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, received from the primitive times of the Christian religion, and with the unanimous teaching of the holy Fathers and the decrees of sacred councils, they above all instruct the faithful diligently in matters relating to intercession and invocation of the saints, the veneration of relics, and the legitimate use of images, teaching them that the saints who reign together with Christ offer up their prayers to God for men, that it is good and beneficial suppliantly to invoke them and to have recourse to their prayers, assistance and support in order to obtain favors from God through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who alone is our redeemer and savior;<sup>5</sup> and that they think impiously who deny that the saints who enjoy eternal happiness in heaven are to be invoked, or who assert that they do not pray for men, or that our invocation of them to pray for each of us individually is idolatry, or that it is opposed to the word of God and inconsistent with the honor of the *one mediator of God and men, Jesus Christ*,<sup>6</sup> or that it is foolish to pray vocally or mentally to those who reign in heaven. Also, that the holy bodies of the holy martyrs and of others living with Christ, which were the living members of Christ and the temple of the Holy Ghost,<sup>7</sup> to be awakened by Him to eternal life and to be glorified, are to be venerated by the faithful,<sup>8</sup> through which many benefits are bestowed by God on men, so that those who maintain that veneration and honor are not due to the relics of the saints, or that these and other memorials are honored by the faithful without profit, and that the places dedicated to the memory of the saints for the purpose of obtaining their aid are visited in vain, are to be utterly condemned, as the Church has already long since condemned and now again condemns them. Moreover, that the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other saints are to be placed and retained especially in the churches, and that due honor and veneration is to be given them; not, however,

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Sess. XXII, chap. 3.

<sup>6</sup> See I Tim. 2:5.

<sup>7</sup> See I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Cor. 6:16.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. II Council of Nicaea (787), can. 7.

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

which is the ninth and last under the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IV, begun on the third and closed on the fourth day of December, 1563

DECREE CONCERNING PURGATORY

Since the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has, following the sacred writings and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, taught in sacred councils and very recently in this ecumenical council that there is a purgatory,<sup>1</sup> and that the souls there detained are aided by the suffrages of the faithful and chiefly by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar, the holy council commands the bishops that they strive diligently to the end that the sound doctrine of purgatory, transmitted by the Fathers and sacred councils,<sup>2</sup> be believed and maintained by the faithful of Christ, and be everywhere taught and preached. The more difficult and subtle questions, however, and those that do not make for edification and from which there is for the most part no increase in piety, are to be excluded from popular instructions to uneducated people.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, things that are uncertain or that have the appearance of falsehood they shall not permit to be made known publicly and discussed. But those things that tend to a certain kind of curiosity or superstition, or that savor of filthy lucre, they shall prohibit as scandals and stumblingblocks to the faithful. The bishops shall see to it that the suffrages of the living, that is, the sacrifice of the mass,<sup>4</sup> prayers, alms and other works of piety which they have been accustomed to perform for the faithful departed, be piously and devoutly discharged in accordance with the laws of the Church, and that whatever is due on their behalf from testamentary bequests or other ways, be discharged by the priests and ministers of the Church and others who are bound to render this service not in a perfunctory manner, but diligently and accurately.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sess. VI, can. 30 and Sess. XXII, chap. 2 and can. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. cc. 4, 5, D. XXV; Eugene IV in the Council of Florence (Denzinger, *Enchiridion*, no. 603).

<sup>3</sup> See I Tim. 1:4; II Tim. 2:23; Tit. 3:9.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *infra*, chap. 4 de ref.

CHAPTER XXI

IN ALL THINGS THE AUTHORITY OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE SHALL REMAIN INTACT

Lastly, the holy council declares that each and all of the things which under whatever clauses and words have been established in this holy council in the matter of reform of morals and ecclesiastical discipline, under the supreme pontiffs Paul III and Julius III, of happy memory, as well as under the most blessed Pius IV, have been so decreed that in these matters the authority of the Apostolic See is and is understood to be intact.<sup>85</sup>

DECREE CONCERNING THE CONTINUATION OF THE SESSION ON THE FOLLOWING DAY

Since all the things that were to be considered in the present session cannot by reason of the lateness of the hour be conveniently dispatched, the things that remain are deferred till tomorrow by continuing this same session, as was resolved by the Fathers in a general congregation.

CONTINUATION OF THE SESSION ON THE FOURTH DAY OF DECEMBER

DECREE CONCERNING INDULGENCES

Since the power of granting indulgences was conferred by Christ on the Church,<sup>86</sup> and she has even in the earliest times made use of that power divinely given to her, the holy council teaches and commands that the use of indulgences, most salutary to the Christian people and approved by the authority of the holy councils, is to be retained in the Church, and it condemns with anathema those who assert that they are useless or deny that there is in the Church the power of granting them. In granting them, however, it desires that in accordance with the ancient and approved custom in the Church moderation be observed, lest by too great facility ecclesiastical discipline be weakened. But desiring that the abuses which have become connected with them, and by reason of which this excellent name of in-

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Sess. VII de ref. at the beginning.

<sup>86</sup> Matt. 16:19; John 20:23.

indulgences is blasphemed by the heretics, be amended and corrected, it ordains in a general way by the present decree that all evil traffic in them, which has been a most prolific source of abuses among the Christian people, be absolutely abolished.<sup>87</sup> Other abuses, however, of this kind which have sprung from superstition, ignorance, irreverence, or from whatever other source, since by reason of the manifold corruptions in places and provinces where they are committed, they cannot conveniently be prohibited individually, it commands all bishops diligently to make note of, each in his own church, and report them in the next provincial synod,<sup>88</sup> so that after having been examined by the other bishops also they may forthwith be referred to the supreme Roman pontiff, by whose authority and prudence that may be ordained which is expedient for the universal Church; that thus the gift of holy indulgences may be dispensed to all the faithful piously, holily, and without corruption.

CONCERNING THE CHOICE OF FOODS; FASTS AND FESTIVAL DAYS

The holy council exhorts furthermore, and by the most holy Ad-vent of our Lord and Savior conjures all pastors, that like good soldiers they sedulously commend to all the faithful all those things which the holy Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all churches, has decreed; also those things which have been established in this council and in the other ecumenical councils, and to make every effort that they comply with all these things, particularly those which tend to mortify the flesh, as the choice of foods and fasts, also those that serve to increase piety, as the devout and religious celebration of festival days; often admonishing the people to obey those placed over them, since those who hear them will hear God as a rewarder, while those who despise them will feel God as an avenger.<sup>89</sup>

CONCERNING THE INDEX OF BOOKS AND THE CATECHISM, BREVIARY AND MISSAL

The holy council in the second session,<sup>90</sup> celebrated under our most holy Lord, Pius IV, commissioned some Fathers to consider what

<sup>88</sup> C.2. in Clem. De poenit. et remis., V. 9.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Sess. XXI, chap. 9 de ref.

<sup>90</sup> Luke 10:16; Heb. 13:17; c.9, D.XCIII.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Sess. XVIII at the beginning.