

## SUPPLEMENT TO THE THIRD PART, QUESTION 34

### Of the Sacrament of Order As to Its Essence and Its Parts

(In Five Articles)

In the next place we must consider the sacrament of Order: (1) Order in general; (2) the difference of Orders; (3) those who confer Orders; (4) the impediments to receiving Orders; (5) things connected with Orders.

Concerning Order in general three points have to be considered: (1) Its essence, quiddity, and parts; (2) Its effect; (3) The recipients of Orders.

Under the first head there are five points of inquiry:

- (1) Whether there should be Order in the Church?
- (2) Whether it is fittingly defined?
- (3) Whether it is a sacrament?
- (4) Whether its form is expressed properly?
- (5) Whether this sacrament has any matter?

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#### Whether there should be Order in the Church?

Suppl. q. 34 a. 1

**Objection 1.** It would seem that there should not be Order in the Church. For Order requires subjection and preeminence. But subjection seemingly is incompatible with the liberty whereunto we are called by Christ. Therefore there should not be Order in the Church.

**Objection 2.** Further, he who has received an Order becomes another's superior. But in the Church everyone should deem himself lower than another (Phil. 2:3): "Let each esteem others better than themselves." Therefore Order should not be in the Church.

**Objection 3.** Further, we find order among the angels on account of their differing in natural and gratuitous gifts. But all men are one in nature, and it is not known who has the higher gifts of grace. Therefore Order should not be in the Church.

**On the contrary,** "Those things that are of God, are in order\*." Now the Church is of God, for He Himself built it with His blood. Therefore there ought to be Order in the Church.

Further, the state of the Church is between the state of nature and the state of glory. Now we find order in nature, in that some things are above others, and likewise in glory, as in the angels. Therefore there should be Order in the Church.

**I answer that,** God wished to produce His works in likeness to Himself, as far as possible, in order that they might be perfect, and that He might be known through them. Hence, that He might be portrayed in His works, not only according to what He is in Himself, but also according as He acts on others, He laid this natural law on all things, that last things should be reduced and perfected by middle things, and middle things by the first, as Dionysius

says (Eccl. Hier. v). Wherefore that this beauty might not be lacking to the Church, He established Order in her so that some should deliver the sacraments to others, being thus made like to God in their own way, as co-operating with God; even as in the natural body, some members act on others.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The subjection of slavery is incompatible with liberty; for slavery consists in lord-ing over others and employing them for one's own profit. Such subjection is not required in Order, whereby those who preside have to seek the salvation of their subjects and not their own profit.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Each one should esteem himself lower in merit, not in office; and orders are a kind of office.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Order among the angels does not arise from difference of nature, unless accidentally, in so far as difference of grace results in them from difference of nature. But in them it results directly from their difference in grace; because their orders regard their participation of divine things, and their communicating them in the state of glory, which is according to the measure of grace, as being the end and effect, so to speak, of grace. on the other hand, the Orders of the Church militant regard the participation in the sacraments and the communication thereof, which are the cause of grace and, in a way, precede grace; and consequently our Orders do not require sanctifying grace, but only the power to dispense the sacraments; for which reason order does not correspond to the difference of sanctifying grace, but to the difference of power.

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\* Vulg: 'Those (powers) that are, are ordained of God.'

**Objection 1.** It would seem that order is improperly defined by the Master (Sent. iv, D, 53), where it is said “Order is a seal of the Church, whereby spiritual power is conferred on the person ordained.” For a part should not be described as the genus of the whole. Now the character which is denoted by the seal in a subsequent definition is a part of order, since it is placed in contradistinction with that which is either reality only, or sacrament only, since it is both reality and sacrament. Therefore seal should not be mentioned as the genus of Order.

**Objection 2.** Further, just as a character is imprinted in the sacrament of order, so is it in the sacrament of Baptism. Now character was not mentioned in the definition of Baptism. Therefore neither should it be mentioned in the definition of Order.

**Objection 3.** Further, in Baptism there is also given a certain spiritual power to approach the sacraments; and again it is a seal, since it is a sacrament. Therefore this definition is applicable to Baptism; and consequently it is improperly applied to Order.

**Objection 4.** Further, Order is a kind of relation, and relation is realized in both its terms. Now the terms of the relation of order are the superior and the inferior. Therefore inferiors have order as well as superiors. Yet there is no power of preeminence in them, such as is mentioned here in the definition of Order, as appears from the subsequent explanation (Sent. iv, D, 53), where promotion to power is mentioned. Therefore Order is improperly defined there.

**I answer that,** The Master’s definition of Order applies to Order as a sacrament of the Church. Hence he mentions two things, namely the outward sign, a “kind of seal,” i.e. a kind of sign, and the inward effect, “whereby spiritual power,” etc.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Seal stands here, not for the

inward character, but for the outward action, which is the sign and cause of inward power; and this is also the sense of character in the other definition. If, however, it be taken for the inward character, the definition would not be unsuitable; because the division of a sacrament into those three things is not a division into integral parts, properly speaking; since what is reality only is not essential to the sacrament, and that which is the sacrament is transitory; while that which is sacrament and reality is said to remain. Wherefore it follows that inward character itself is essentially and principally the sacrament of Order.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Although in Baptism there is conferred a spiritual power to receive the other sacraments, for which reason it imprints a character, nevertheless this is not its principal effect, but the inward cleansing; wherefore Baptism would be given even though the former motive did not exist. On the other hand, order denotes power principally. Wherefore the character which is a spiritual power is included in the definition of Order, but not in that of Baptism.

**Reply to Objection 3.** In Baptism there is given a certain spiritual potentiality to receive, and consequently a somewhat passive potentiality. But power properly denotes active potentiality, together with some kind of preeminence. Hence this definition is not applicable to Baptism.

**Reply to Objection 4.** The word “order” is used in two ways. For sometimes it denotes the relation itself, and thus it is both in the inferior and in the superior, as the objection states; but it is not thus that we use the word here. On the other hand, it denotes the degree which results in the order taken in the first sense. And since the notion of order as relation is observed where we first meet with something higher than another, it follows that this degree of pre-eminence by spiritual power is called Order.

**Objection 1.** It would seem that Order is not a sacrament. For a sacrament, according to Hugh of St. Victor (De Sacram. i) “is a material element.” Now Order denotes nothing of the kind, but rather relation or power; since Order is a part of power according to Isidore. Therefore it is not a sacrament.

**Objection 2.** Further, the sacraments do not concern the Church triumphant. Yet Order is there, as in the angels. Therefore it is not a sacrament.

**Objection 3.** Further, just as spiritual authority, which is Order, is given by means of consecration, so is secular authority, since kings also are anointed, as stated above (q. 19, a. 3, ad 2). But the kingly power is not a sacra-

ment. Therefore neither is order of which we speak now.

**On the contrary,** It is mentioned by all among the seven sacraments of the Church.

Further, “the cause of a thing being such, is still more so.” Now Order is the cause of man being the dispenser of the other sacraments. Therefore Order has more reason for being a sacrament than the others.

**I answer that,** As stated above (q. 29, a. 1; IIIa, q. 60), a sacrament is nothing else than a sanctification conferred on man with some outward sign. Wherefore, since by receiving orders a consecration is conferred on man by visible signs, it is clear that Order is a sacrament.

**Reply to Objection 1.** Although Order does not by

its name express a material element, it is not conferred without some material element.

**Reply to Objection 2.** Power must needs be proportionate to the purpose for which it is intended. Now the communication of divine things, which is the purpose for which spiritual power is given, is not effected among the angels by means of sensible signs, as is the case among men. Hence the spiritual power that is Order is not bestowed on the angels by visible signs, as on men. Where-

fore Order is a sacrament among men, but not among angels.

**Reply to Objection 3.** Not every blessing or consecration given to men is a sacrament, for both monks and abbots are blessed, and yet such blessings are not sacraments, and in like manner neither is the anointing of a king; because by such blessings men are not ordained to the dispensing of the divine sacraments, as by the blessing of Order. Hence the comparison fails.

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### Whether the form of this sacrament is suitably expressed?

Suppl. q. 34 a. 4

**Objection 1.** It would seem that the form of this sacrament is unsuitably set forth in the text (Sent. iv, D, 24). Because the sacraments take their efficacy from their form. Now the efficacy of the sacraments is from the divine power, which works our salvation in them in a most hidden manner. Therefore the form of this sacrament should include a mention of the divine power by the invocation of the Trinity, as in the other sacraments.

**Objection 2.** Further, to command pertains to one who has authority. Now the dispenser of the sacrament exercises no authority, but only ministry. Therefore he should not use the imperative mood by saying: “Do” or “Receive” this or that, or some similar expression.

**Objection 3.** Further, mention should not be made in the sacramental form, except of such things as are essential to the sacrament. But the use of the power received is not essential to this sacrament, but is consequent upon it. Therefore it should not be mentioned in the form of this sacrament.

**Objection 4.** Further, all the sacraments direct us to an eternal reward. But the forms of the other sacraments make no mention of a reward. Therefore neither should any mention be made thereof in the form of this sacrament, as in the words: “Since thou wilt have a share, if faithfully,” etc.

**I answer that,** This sacrament consists chiefly in the power conferred. Now power is conferred by power, as like proceeds from like; and again power is made known by its use, since powers are manifested by their acts. Wherefore in the form of order the use of order is expressed by the act which is commanded; and the conferring of power is expressed by employing the imperative mood.

**Reply to Objection 1.** The other sacraments are not ordained chiefly to effects similar to the power whereby

the sacraments are dispensed, as this sacrament is. Hence in this sacrament there is a kind of universal communication. Wherefore in the other sacraments something is expressed on the part of the divine power to which the effect of the sacrament is likened, but not in this sacrament.

**Reply to Objection 2.** [There is a special reason why this sacrament, rather than the others, is conferred by employing the imperative mood. For]\* although the bishop who is the minister of this sacrament has no authority in respect of the conferring of this sacrament, nevertheless he has some power with regard to the power of Order, which power he confers, in so far as it is derived, from his.

**Reply to Objection 3.** The use of power is the effect of power in the genus of efficient cause, and from this point of view it has no reason to be mentioned in the definition of Order. But it is somewhat a cause in the genus of final cause, and from this point of view it can be placed in the definition of order.

**Reply to Objection 4.** There is here a difference between this and the other sacraments. Because by this sacrament an office or the power to do something is conferred; and so it is fitting that mention be made of the reward to be obtained if it be administered faithfully. But in the other sacraments no such office or power to act is conferred, and so no mention of reward is made in them. Accordingly the recipient is somewhat passive in relation to the other sacraments, because he receives them for the perfecting of his own state only, whereas in relation to this sacrament he holds himself somewhat actively, since he receives it for the sake of exercising hierarchical duties in the Church. Wherefore although the other sacraments, from the very fact that they give grace, direct the recipient to salvation, properly speaking they do not direct him to a reward, in the same way as this sacrament does.

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\* The sentence in brackets is not in the Leonine edition.

**Objection 1.** It would seem that this sacrament has no matter. Because in every sacrament that has a matter the power that works in the sacrament is in the matter. But in the material objects which are used here, such as keys, candlesticks, and so forth, there is not apparently any power of sanctification. Therefore it has no matter.

**Objection 2.** Further, in this sacrament the fulness of sevenfold grace is conferred, as stated in the text (Sent. iv, D, 24), just as in Confirmation. But the matter of Confirmation requires to be consecrated beforehand. Since then the things which appear to be material in this sacrament are not consecrated beforehand, it would seem that they are not the matter of the sacrament.

**Objection 3.** Further, in any sacrament that has matter there needs to be contact of matter with the recipient of the sacrament. Now, as some say, it is not essential to this sacrament that there be contact between the aforesaid material objects and the recipient of the sacrament, but only that they be presented to him. Therefore the aforesaid material objects are not the matter of this sacrament.

**On the contrary,** Every sacrament consists of things and words. Now in any sacrament the thing is the matter. Therefore the things employed in this sacrament are its matter.

Further, more is requisite to dispense the sacraments than to receive them. Yet Baptism, wherein the power is given to receive the sacraments, needs a matter. Therefore order also does, wherein the power is given to dispense them.

**I answer that,** The matter employed outwardly in the sacraments signifies that the power which works in the sacraments comes entirely from without. Wherefore,

since the effect proper to this sacrament, namely the character, is not received through any operation of the one who approaches the sacrament, as was the case in Penance, but comes wholly from without, it is fitting that it should have a matter, yet otherwise than the other sacraments that have matter; because that which is bestowed in the other sacraments comes from God alone, and not from the minister who dispenses the sacrament; whereas that which is conferred in this sacrament, namely the spiritual power, comes also from him who gives the sacrament, as imperfect from perfect power. Hence the efficacy of the other sacraments resides chiefly in the matter which both signifies and contains the divine power through the sanctification applied by the minister; whereas the efficacy of this sacrament resides chiefly with him who dispenses the sacrament. And the matter is employed to show the powers conferred in particular by one who has it completely, rather than to cause power; and this is clear from the fact that the matter is in keeping with the use of power. This suffices for the Reply to the First Objection.

**Reply to Objection 2.** It is necessary for the matter to be consecrated in the other sacraments, on account of the power it contains; but it is not so in the case in point.

**Reply to Objection 3.** If we admit this assertion, the reason for it is clear from what we have said; for since the power of order is received from the minister and not from the matter, the presenting of the matter is more essential to the sacrament than contact therewith. However, the words themselves of the form would seem to indicate that contact with the matter is essential to the sacrament, for it is said: "Receive" this or that.