

CHAPTER 12: FRUITS OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS:

THE MERITS OF THE SACRIFICE OF CALVARY ARE APPLIED BY THE MASS:

“Like Calvary, the sacrifice of the Mass is essentially an ascending movement of glorification” (Feingold, 451). “All of the sacraments apply the merits won through the sacrifice of Calvary” (Feingold, 452). The Sacrifice of the Mass is unique in its application. In *Mediator Dei*, Pius XII says:

Wherefore, that the redemption and salvation of each person and of future generations unto the end of time may be effectively accomplished, and be acceptable to God, it is necessary that men should individually come into vital contact with the sacrifice of the cross, so that the merits, which flow from it, should be imparted to them (Feingold, 453).

The sacraments of the Church make the grace of calvary present to humanity.

FOUR ENDS OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS: The four ends of mass are “adoration by which God is glorified, thanksgiving, petition, and expiation of sin” (Feingold, 454).

Sacrifice of Praise: “*Ex opere operato*, the Mass gives infinitely greater glory to God than any other meritorious act that we can perform” (Feingold, 454).

Sacrifice of Thanksgiving: “The Mass is also the most perfect means of giving thanks to God for all of His benefits” (Feingold, 455). Only Jesus, the Divine Son could offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving that is fitting to the Father. Thanksgiving is particularly exemplified in the Preface.

Sacrifice of Impetration: “This means that the sacrifice of the Mass is the best way to present our petitions before God” (Feingold, 456). Liturgically this is exemplified in the Good Friday Petitions and the petitions of the Eucharistic prayer.

The Mass Is a Propitiatory Sacrifice Benefiting the Living and the Dead: “The Mass is the most perfect expiatory or propitiatory sacrifice that can be offered or even conceived, for it is the expiation of Jesus Christ” (Feingold, 456). “The Mass is efficacious in expiating the two consequences of sin, which are the guilt of sin and the temporal punishment due to sin” (Feingold, 456). The two sacraments for the forgiveness of sins—Baptism and Reconciliation—receive their merits from Calvary. “The propitiatory effect of the sacrifice of the Mass is principally to call down God’s mercy on sinners so that He may send them His grace of contrition and conversion and lead them to make use of the grace of the sacraments of Penance and Communion” (Feingold, 457). This is highlighted by the words of consecration for the Precious Blood: “for the forgiveness of sins.” The Divine Mercy Chaplet also speaks to this.

“The sacrifice of the Mass also remits some of the temporal punishment due to sin, which otherwise would have to be expiated in purgatory” (Feingold, 458). The mass is effective for releasing the poor souls in purgatory. Saint Cyril of Jerusalem believed in the propitiatory value of the sacrifice of the mass for the living and the dead. Saint Monica asked her sons to have mass offered on behalf of her soul.

PARTICULAR FRUITS OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS: “A Mass celebrated by a priest in grave sin is still the sacrifice of Calvary made present on our altars” (Feingold, 462). The sacraments are efficacious *ex opere operato*, that is, by the fact of them being rightly performed. The fruits of the mass include the general fruit of benefiting the whole Church, which includes the living and the dead. It also effects potential members of the Church. “Secondly, the Mass has a special fruit that corresponds to the special intentions for which the mass is offered by the priest” (Feingold, 464). “Finally, there is a personal fruit for the priest who celebrates with devotion and for all who are present with devotion” (Feingold, 464). “Even those who, for whatever reason, cannot receive Communion can gain this fruit from devout participation in the Mass” (Feingold, 464).

Why Does the Church Celebrate Many Masses If Every Mass Has Infinite Value?: Christ “instituted it not to duplicate or add to the value of Calvary, but to allow His Church to participate in the offering of His one sacrifice and in the application of its effects” (Feingold, 465-6). “We who are finite and temporal need to participate frequently in offering God the infinite Gift of His Son” (Feingold, 466). Feingold holds that although the mass is infinite in its ascending order, it is finite in its descending order insofar God showers down a finite, limited number of graces from the celebration of every mass. Since the interior oblation of the faithful is always imperfect, the mass is finite about the Church’s participation in it.

The Logic of Superabundance: With one drop of blood, Jesus could have saved the world. However, he demonstrates his great love for the Father and humanity with a superabundance of his love. The Lord offers a superabundant of masses that conforms to his logic of superabundance.

Martin Luther’s Rejection of the Fruits of the Mass: Luther does not believe in the sacrificial nature of the mass. He also does not believe that it can be offered for another person. For him, it only affects the person with faith who participates in it. Luther believed that the Catholic Church taught that Christ’s death on the cross only atones for original sin, and that the mass atones for personal sin. This is not consistent with Church teaching, as Feingold indicates. Calvary alone is the source of forgiveness for all sins. Each mass applies to the world graces won by the infinite merits of Calvary.

The Value of “Private” Masses: “Every Mass, even if the priest is celebrating alone, ‘is not robbed of its social effects.’ So-called ‘private’ Masses, in which there is no presence of the faithful, are still public acts of the Church and retain the infinite value of the sacrifice of Christ renewed on the altar” (Feingold, 471). Paul VI, in his encyclical on the Eucharist *Mysterium Fidei* (1965), and Benedict XVI in *Sacramentum Caritatis* affirm the value of private masses, even if the faithful cannot participate (Feingold, 472).

EUCCHARISTIC CONCELEBRATION: There are two types of concelebration: Sacramental and ceremonial. In the former, the concelebrants pronounce with the celebrant the words of consecration and in the latter they do not. In ceremonial concelebration, the bishop is the main

celebrant. Both forms of concelebration manifest the hierarchical unity of the priests under the one bishop. Sacramental concelebration originates in Rome, used especially for ordinations and Holy Thursday Masses.

Concelebration and the Fruits of the Mass: Feingold holds that concelebration does not detract from the graces of the masses, since in the concelebration of a mass each priest is not a partial cause, but “a total cause whose power extends to the entire effect of consecration and sacrifice” (Feingold, 476). Each priest is acting *in persona Christi*. Christ works through all priests equally so that they offer the same sacrifice. Furthermore, Feingold connects the multiplication of the fruits of the mass with the number of priests offering the mass. Pius XII says that “With regard to the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the actions of Christ, the High Priest, are as many as are the priests celebrating” (Feingold, 477 & 478, quoting Pius XII’s Address dated November 2, 1954). This is only true for priests concelebrating sacramentally. If they are just assisting, that is, concelebrating ceremonially, then they are not acting *in persona Christi*. Pius XII, after recalling the necessity that co-consecrating bishops pronounce the words and perform the action of the main consecrator of an episcopal ordination, so he says regarding sacramentally concelebrating priests:

The same thing likewise happens in concelebration in the true sense. It is not sufficient to have and to indicate the will to make one’s own the words and actions of the celebrant. The concelebrants must themselves say over the bread and the wine, “This is my Body,” “This is my Blood.” Otherwise, their concelebration is purely ceremonial.

Vatican II and Post-Conciliar Magisterial Texts on Concelebration: The Vatican II document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* §57 calls for an increase in the number of concelebrating masses to better manifest the unity of the priesthood and the hierarchical communion with the bishop. Priests can celebrate a mass together in concelebration or individual, however, they are not to celebrate individual masses in the Church at the same time as another mass.