Sacraments are Means of Communion with God.

BOOK V.
Ch. ii. 1.

receiveth grace is indeed the very end for which these heavenly mysteries were instituted, and besides sundry other properties observed in them, the matter whereof they consist is such as signifieth, figureth, and representeth their end. But still their efficacy resteth obscure to our understanding, except we search somewhat more distinctly what grace in particular that is whereunto they are referred, and what manner of operation they have towards it.

The use of Sacraments is but only in this life, yet so that here they concern a far better life than this, and are for that cause accompanied with “grace which worketh Salvation.” Sacraments are the powerful instruments of God to eternal life. For as our natural life consisteth in the union of the body with the soul; so our life supernatural in the union of the soul with God. And forasmuch as there is no union of God with man 1 without that mean between both which is both, it seemeth requisite that we first consider how God is in Christ, then how Christ is in us, and how the Sacraments do serve to make us partakers of Christ. In other things we may be more brief, but the weight of these requireth largeness.

II. “The Lord our God is but one God.” In which indivisible unity notwithstanding we adore the Father as being altogether of himself, we glorify that consubstantial Word which is the Son, we bless and magnify that co-essential Spirit eternally proceeding from both which is the Holy Ghost. Seeing therefore the Father is of none, the Son is of the Father and the Spirit is of both, they are by these their several properties really distinguishable each from other. For the substance of God with this property to be of none doth make the Person of the Father; the very own substance in number with this property to be of the Father maketh the Person of the Son, the same substance having added unto it the property of proceeding from the other two maketh the Person of the Holy Ghost. So that in every Person there is implied both the substance of God which is one, and also that property which causeth the same person really and truly to differ from the other two. Every person hath his own subsistence which no others besides hath 2, although there be others besides that are of the same substance. As no man but Peter can be the person which Peter is yet Paul hath the selfsame nature which Peter hath. Again, angels have every of them the nature of pure and invisible spirits, but every angel is not that angel which appeared in a dream to Joseph.

[2.] Now when God became man, lest we should err in applying this to the Person of the Father, or of the Spirit, St. Peter’s confession unto Christ was, “Thou art the Son of the living God,” and St. John’s exposition thereof was plain, that it is the Word 3 which was made Flesh. “4 The Father 4 and the Holy Ghost (saith Damascen) have no communion “with the incarnation of the Word otherwise than only by “approbation and assent.”

Notwithstanding, forasmuch as the Word and Deity are one subject, we must beware we exclude not the nature of God from incarnation, and so make the Son of God incarnate not to be very God. For undoubtedly 5 even the nature of God itself in the only person of the Son is incarnate, and hath taken to itself flesh. Wherefore incarnation may neither be granted to any person but only one, nor yet denied to that nature which is common unto all three.

[3.] Concerning the cause of which incomprehensible mystery, forasmuch as it seemeth a thing unconsidered that the world should honour any other as the Saviour but him whom it honoureth as the Creator of the world, and in the wisdom of God it hath not been thought convenient to admit any way of

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1 Tertull. [Novatian.] de Trinit. [c. 18, ad calc. Tertull. ed. Pamela. p. 1246.] 2 Oportebat Deum carmen “tibi, ut in semetipsio concordiam “confibular et terrerum pariter “atque celestium, dum utrusque “partis in se connectes pignora, “et Deum pariter homini et homi- “nem Deo copularet.” 3 Isai. ix. 6; Jer. xxiii. 6; Rom. ix. 5; John xvi. 15. v. 21; Col. ii. 9; 1 John v. 20.

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BOOK V.
Ch. ii. 3.

...
The progress of Heresy concerning our Lord's Incarnation.

II. It is not in man's ability either to express perfectly or conceive the manner how this was brought to pass. But the strength of our faith is tried by those things wherein our wits and capacities are not strong. Howbeit because this divine mystery is more true than plain, divers having framed the same to their own conceits and fancies are found in their expositions thereof more plain than true. Inasmuch that by the space of five hundred years after Christ, the Church was almost

1. 2 Cor. v. 19.  2. Heb. ii. 10. [See also Coloss. i. 15-18.]  3. Heb. iv. 15.
Christ’s compound Person the Subject of all his Attributes. 225

instant; his making and taking to himself our flesh, was but one act, so that in Christ there is no personal subsistence but one, and that from everlasting. By taking only the nature of man he still continueth one person, and changeth but the manner of his subsisting, which was before in the mere glory of the Son of God, and is now in the habit of our flesh.

Forasmuch therefore as Christ hath no personal subsistence but one whereby we acknowledge him to have been eternally the Son of God, we must of necessity apply to the person of the Son of God even that which is spoken of Christ according to his human nature. For example, according to the flesh he was born of the Virgin Mary, baptized of John in the river Jordan, by Pilate adjudged to die, and executed by the Jews. We cannot say properly that the Virgin bore, or John did baptize, or Pilate condemn, or the Jews crucify the Nature of man, because these all are personal attributes; his Person is the subject which receiveth them, his Nature which maketh his person capable or apt to receive. If we should say that the person of a man in our Saviour Christ was the subject of these things, this were plainly to entrap ourselves in the very snare of the Nestorians' heresy, between whom and the Church of God there was no difference, saving only that Nestorius imagined in Christ as well a personal human subsistence as a divine, the Church acknowledging a substance both divine and human, but no other personal subsistence than divine, because the Son of God took not to himself a man's person, but the nature only of a man.

Christ is a Person both divine and human, howbeit not therefore two persons in one, neither both these in one sense, but a person divine, because he is personally the Son of God, human, because he hath really the nature of the children of men. In Christ therefore God and man “There is (saith “Paschasius 1) a twofold substance, not a twofold person, because one person extinguisheth another, whereas one nature cannot in another become extinct.” For the personal being which the Son of God already had, suffered not the sub-

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1 Paschasius, (786–865.) lib. de Spir. Sanct. [lib. ii. c. 4. “In Deo et homine, gemina quidem substantia, sed non gemina persona est, quia persona personam consumere potest, substantia vero substantiam consumere non potest.” In Biblioth. Patr. Colon. viii. 331.]
stance to be personal which he took, although together with
the nature which he had the nature also which he took continueth. Whereupon it followeth against Nestorius, that no
person was born of the Virgin but the Son of God, no person
but the Son of God baptized, the Son of God condemned, the
Son of God and no other person crucified; which one only
point of Christian belief, the infinite worth of the Son of God,
is the very ground of all things believed concerning life
and salvation by that which Christ either did or suffered as man
in our behalf.

[4.] But forasmuch as St. Cyril, the chiefest of those two
hundred bishops assembled in the council of Ephesus, where
the heresy of Nestorius was condemned, had in his writings
against the Arians avouched that the Word or Wisdom of God
hath but one nature which is eternal, and whereunto he
assumed flesh (for the Arians were of opinion that besides
God's own eternal wisdom, there is a wisdom which God
created before all things, to the end he might thereby create
all things else, and that this created wisdom was the Word
which took flesh;) again, forasmuch as the same Cyril had
given instance in the body and the soul of man no farther than
only to enforce by example against Nestorius, that a visible
and an invisible, a mortal and an immortal substance may
united make one person: the words of Cyril were in process
of time so taken as though it had been his drift to teach, that
even as in us the body and the soul, so in Christ God and man
make but one nature. Of which error, six hundred and thirty
fathers in the council of Chalcedon condemned Eutyches. For
as Nestorius teaching rightly that God and man are distinct
natures, did thereupon misinfer that in Christ those
natures can by no conjunction make one person; so Eutyches,
of sound belief as touching their true personal copulation,
became unsound by denying the difference which still continueth
between the one and the other Nature. We must therefore
keep warily a middle course, shunning both that distraction
of Persons wherein Nestorius went awry, and also this later
confusion of Natures which deceived Eutyches.

These natures from the moment of their first combination
have been and are for ever inseparable. For even when his
soul forsook the tabernacle of his body, his Deity forsook nei-
ther body nor soul. If it had, then could we not truly hold
either that the person of Christ was buried, or that: the person
of Christ did raise up itself from the dead. For the body
separated from the Word can in no true sense be termed
the person of Christ; nor is it true to say that the Son of God in
raising up that body did raise up himself, if the body were
not both with him and of him even during the time it lay in
the sepulchre. The like is also to be said of the soul, other-
wise we are plainly and inevitably Nestorians. The very
person of Christ therefore for ever one and the selfsame was only
touching bodily substance concluded within the grave, his
soul only from thence severed, but by personal union his
Deity still unseparably joined with both.

LIII. The sequel of which conjunction of natures in the
person of Christ is no abominalion of natural properties ap-
pertaining to either substance, no transition or transmigration
thereof out of one substance into another, finally no such
mutual infusion as really causeth the same natural operations
or properties to be made common unto both substances; but
whatsoever is natural to Deity the same remaineth in Christ
uncommunicated unto his manhood, and whatsoever natural
to manhood his Deity thereof is incapable. The true prop-
erties and operations of his Deity are to know that which is not
possible for created natures to comprehend; to be simply the
highest cause of all things, the wellspring of immortality and
life; to have neither end nor beginning of days; to be every
where present, and enclosed no where; to be subject to no
alteration nor passion; to produce of itself those effects which
cannot proceed but from infinite majesty and power. The true
properties and operations of his manhood are such as Irenaeus
reckoneth up: "If Christ," saith he, "had not taken flesh

3 Αγιωτατος προσέχει της σωφρονίς εἶναι τὴν θείαν φύσιν ὑμολογεῖ, κατὰ τὸ
σταυροῦ καὶ τὸ τάφον. Θεοδ. Διαλ. "Ασαθής. [Dial. iii. t. iv. p. 227.]
4 Ει μὴν ελήφησιν παρὰ τῆς Μα-
ρίας, οὐκ εἶχαμεν ἀπὸ τῆς εἰλημμένης
προσέκτω τρόφησιν, δι' ἣν τὸ ἁπάντα
λαμβάνεται σῶμα· οὐδ' ἂν εἰς
τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας, ἠμῖν τὸν Μα-
ρίαν καὶ Ἰησοῦν ἐκεῖνον, οὗτοι δὲ
ἀμαρτούσαι τήν θανάσιν προῆρθον,
οὐδ' ἄν ἦσαν καθήκτες τῶν ἱερατῶν
εἰς τοῦ λαότου, οὐδ' ἂν ἦσαν ἀρχι-

5 An. Dom. 431. 6 Vid. e.g. Alexand. Alexandrin.
Rule of Interpretation regarding this Mystery.

BOOK V.
Ch. iii. 3.

the better-advised sentences of other men.

"A He which in his own self was appointed," saith Hilary, "a Mediator to save his Church, and for performance of that mystery of mediation between God and man, is become God and man, doth now being but one consist of both these natures united, neither hath he through the union of both incurred the damage or loss of either, lest by being born a man we should think he hath given over to be God, or that because he continueth God, therefore he cannot be man also, whereas the true belief which maketh a man happy proclameth jointly God and man, confesseth the Word and flesh together." Cyril more plainly:

"His two natures have knit themselves the one to the other, and are in that nearness as incapable of confusion as of distraction. Their coherence hath not taken away the difference between them. Flesh is not become God, but doth still continue flesh, although it be now the flesh of God." Yea, "of each substance," saith Leo, "the properties are all preserved and kept safe."

[3.] These two natures are as causes and original grounds of all things which Christ hath done. Wherefore some things he doth as God, because his Deity alone is the wellsprings from which they flow; some things as man, because they issue from his mere human nature; some things jointly as both God and man, because both natures concur as principles thereunto. For albeit the properties of each nature do cleave only to that nature whereof they are properties, and therefore Christ cannot naturally be as God the same which he naturally is as man; yet both natures may very well concur unto one effect, and Christ in that respect be truly said to work prædicare, Verum et carnem concili.

2 Mediator
4 Salva proprieptate ursusque nature suscepta est a majestate "naturae suscepta est a majestate humilitatis, a virtute infirmitas, ab aternitate mortalitas." Leo Ep. ad Flav. [c. 3.]

"..." from the very earth, he would not have coveted those earthly nourishments, wherewith bodies which be taken from thence are fed. This was the nature which felt hunger after long fasting, was desirous of rest after travail, testified compassion and love by tears, groaned in heaviness, and with extremity of grief even melted away itself into bloody sweat. To Christ we ascribe both working of wonders and suffering of pains, we use concerning him speeches as well of humility as of divine glory, but the one we apply unto that nature which he took of the Virgin Mary, the other to that which was in the beginning.

[2.] We may not therefore imagine that the properties of the weaker nature have vanished with the presence of the more glorious, and have been therein swallowed up as in a gulf. We dare not in this point give ear to them who over boldly affirm 1 that "the nature which Christ took weak and feeble from us by being mingled with Deity became the same which Deity is, that the assumption of our substance unto his was like the blending of a drop of vinegar with the huge ocean, wherein although it continue still, yet not with those properties which severed it hath, because sithe the instant of their conjunction, all distinction and difference of the one from the other is extinct, and whatsoever we can now conceive of the Son of God, is nothing else but mere Deity," which words are so plain and direct for Eutyches, that I stand in doubt they are not his own name they carry. Sure I am they are far from truth, and must of necessity give place to..."