

Fr. Basilio Méramo

**A Theological Consideration of the New Mass
A Corrupted Mass Compromised by Heresy**

Santa Fe de Bogotá, March 1995

Easter Feast

3rd Printing, December 2000

Santa Fe de Bogotá

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Judgments and Appraisals Concerning the New Mass. Theological Appraisal of Those Assertions.....	3
Protestant Supper	8
Equivocality and the Mass	9
Essential rite – equivocal in itself	12
Equivocality and Intention	14
From Equivocality to Heresy.....	19
The Problem of Equivocality in Matters of Defined Faith = Heresy.....	23
Invalidity of the Rite	24
Intention and Validity.....	26
Altered and Adulterated Formula	27
The Restrainer and the <i>Mysterium Fidei</i>	37
Conclusion.....	39

Introduction

The present work is intended to condense the errors of the “*New Mass*” on the basis of what has been stated by the most authoritative declarations, considering them in the light of the doctrine and theology of the Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Church, the sole ark of salvation. Thus, the purpose of this study is to submit the assertions made against the New Mass to the light of theology, together with all their consequences and repercussions.

The theology of the Church is an instrument of doctrinal precision by which the “*New Mass*” must be examined, and from which the necessary conclusions must be drawn.

Our point of departure will be, fundamentally, the considerations of Archbishop Lefebvre and the Short Critical Study of the *Novus Ordo Missae*, which bears the signatures of Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci, but which in reality was prepared by a very small group under the direction of Archbishop Lefebvre, among whom Fr. Guérard des Lauriers served as principal drafter.

Taking as our starting point the affirmations of all those who detected the error and warned against the perversion of the “*New Mass*,” we shall simply apply the radiographic light of theology in order to draw out the consequences that follow from them by doctrinal logic.

It is a fact that almost all—if not all—who repudiated the “*New Mass*” admit that it is equivocal. As we shall see, this simple assertion, which is by no means gratuitous, carries theological consequences and implications that cannot and must not be disregarded. Hence no theological consideration is, or can be, indifferent with respect to the whole upon which it rests and into which it is woven. Everything has its weight and measure in this world, and all the more so in matters that touch upon faith and doctrine.

It is immediately evident that, when dealing with the Holy Mass—something so sacred and holy—it cannot be equivocal, evil, and the like, without this entailing profound effects of a theological order. A Mass cannot be equivocal, evil, and the like; if it is, then by a mystery of iniquity we must investigate the matter to its ultimate theological consequences.

Assertions such as: “*the New Mass is equivocal,*” “*it diminishes the faith,*” “*it does not express the Catholic faith,*” “*it departs from Catholic theology,*” and the like, have consequences that must be considered theologically. Otherwise, nothing remains but silence and surrender. Every assertion carries repercussions within the field and order in which it is made. Every doctrinal and theological assertion has its consequences; conclusions are but the explicit unfolding of the principles that contain them. In the realm of doctrine and faith there neither are nor can be gratuitous or airy affirmations or considerations; everything has, and must have, its proper weight and measure—its doctrinal value.

The doctrine and theology of the Church require that, if something is affirmed or denied, we draw out the consequences that necessarily follow from what has been affirmed or denied; that is to say, we must be doctrinally and theologically consistent with what we say, without recoiling from its logical consequences. Otherwise, silence is preferable, while awaiting a more fitting occasion to affirm or to deny.

Judgments and Appraisals Concerning the New Mass. Theological Appraisal of Those Assertions

First of all, according to the Short Critical Study, the New Mass “*departs in an astonishing manner, taken as a whole and in detail, from the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass as it was formulated in Session XXII of the Council of Trent, which, by definitively fixing the ‘canons of the rite,’ raised an insurmountable barrier against every heresy capable of undermining the integrity of the Mystery*” (Iction ed., Buenos Aires, 1980, p. 6).

This assessment alone puts its finger on the wound, laying bare the gravity of the situation, to the point of indicating a veritable rupture caused by the changes; thus Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci speak of the “*grave rupture*” entailed by these modifications, as well as of the diminution of the faith.

And likewise Archbishop Lefebvre denounced:

“This [liturgical] reform, having sprung from liberalism and modernism, is wholly poisoned; it proceeds from heresy and ends in heresy...”

(Archbishop Lefebvre, Declaration of November 21, 1974, *Itinéraires*, special issue, Dec. 1976, p. 9).

“We are convinced that precisely this new rite of the Mass expresses a new faith, a faith which is not the Catholic faith. This new Mass is a symbol, an image of a new faith, of a modernist faith...”

(Archbishop Lefebvre, June 29, 1976, *La Misa Nueva*, Iction ed., Buenos Aires, 1983, p. 49).

“The Holy Mass, for example, which is the summary of our faith, which is precisely our living catechism, has been denatured; it has become equivocal, ambiguous. Protestants can say it; Catholics can say it.”

(Archbishop Lefebvre, *Le coup de maître de Satan*, Saint-Gabriel ed., Martigny, Switzerland, 1977, p. 13).

This makes the new Mass, moreover, conducive to heresy, as Salleron himself acknowledges: *“The New Mass becomes the Supper. The ecumenical aim has been achieved; for that reason we say that the New Mass favors heresy. Who shall deny it?”* (*La Nueva Misa*, Iction ed., Buenos Aires, 1978, p. 208).

From this assertion, and from many others besides, there necessarily follow, in the doctrinal sphere, further affirmations that we cannot evade, and which shall constitute the subject of this work. Thus there arise, spontaneously, grave and unavoidable questions, which we set forth below, taken from the Short Critical Study:

How can one “*sweep away the whole theology of the Mass*” without falling into heresy?

How can a rite be valid if it *“implies none of the essential ‘dogmatic values’ of the Mass, which constitute its true definition”*?

How can Catholic doctrine be changed without there being heresy, when it is affirmed that: *“In truth, the change in formulation also reveals a change in doctrine”*?

How can a Mass be valid if it *“does not imply the Real Presence, nor the truth of the Sacrifice, nor the sacramentality of the consecrating priest, nor the intrinsic value of the Eucharistic Sacrifice”*?

How can a rite be valid if it denies the faith by its *“silence,”* its *“tacit negations,”* and its *“unceasing chain of negations concerning the Real Presence”*?

How can a Mass be valid when *“all these things taken together, by their repetition, manifest and confirm in an injurious manner the implicit denial of faith in the most august dogma of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist”*?

How can one, without denying the faith, *“debase the Roman Rite, bringing it closer to the level of certain rites of the Reformers”*?

How can one acknowledge that *“it is evident that the Novus Ordo no longer wishes to express the faith of Trent”* without thinking of the invalidity and heresy of the New Mass?

How can there be, in the liturgical innovations of the New Mass, *“a grave rupture”* without raising the question of schism?

How can one fail to think that the new Mass is schismatic when one admits that *“to depart from liturgical tradition... cannot but be a sign of schism”*?

How can faith be diminished without being denied?

How can there be *“most grave ambiguities, not to say manifest errors against the purity of the Catholic faith”* without falling into heresy?

How can it truly be Mass if *“such a Mass can also be said without any difficulty by a Protestant minister”*?

How can a Mass not be sacrilegious when, within it, *“the conditions established for the sacrifice as signs of a sacred reality are profaned”*?

How can a Mass be called Catholic and be valid, if, *“after the promulgation of the Novus Ordo, the true Catholic, whatever his condition or rank, finds himself under the tragic necessity of choosing between things opposed to one another”* (p. 93), in matters that plainly concern the faith and belong to sacred worship?

How can it fail to lead into apostasy if *“the new rite, on the contrary, will give the greatest satisfaction to all those groups which, already verging upon apostasy, are laying waste to the Church”* (p. 99)?

In the final analysis, how can a rite possessing all these characteristics be valid, if it departs from the doctrine of the Church in a matter so defined as the Mass? If it diminishes the faith, how does it not thereby deny it? For faith itself, objectively considered, cannot be diminished without being denied at some point. If it ruptures with Tradition, how can it fail to be schismatic, and so forth? How can one, without already falling either into schism, heresy, or apostasy, uphold a form of worship which *“departs in an astonishing manner, taken as a whole and in detail, from the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass”* (p. 7), a theology definitively and infallibly canonized by the Council of Trent, and which does not necessarily imply that which defines the Catholic Mass?

It is evident that a rite which expresses a new faith is not only non-Catholic, but at the same time contrary to the Catholic faith; and it is difficult to see how it could fail to be heretical. The very fact of expressing another faith necessarily entails being contrary to the Catholic faith and deserving the designation of heresy. There is no middle ground. In matters of faith (once defined)¹, yes must mean yes, and no must mean no; all else comes from the devil and is error and heresy.

Fr. Calmel, while recognizing without hesitation the authority of the Pope, nevertheless affirmed the following: *“Every Pope, in the exercise of his authority, can commit abuses of authority. I maintain that Pope Paul VI committed an abuse of authority of exceptional gravity when he constructed a new rite of the Mass upon a definition of the Mass that had ceased to be Catholic. ‘The Mass,’ he wrote in his Ordo Missae, ‘is the gathering of the People of God, presided over by a priest, for the celebration of the memorial of the Lord.’ This insidious definition deliberately omits that which makes the Catholic Mass Catholic, irreducible for ever to the Protestant supper”* (Fr. Calmel, *Itinéraires*, suppl. no. 151, March 1971, p. 3). The New Mass omits defining itself as a true and proper sacrifice and does not express the Catholic faith.

These questions, all pointing toward heresy, should not surprise us, for Salleron went so far as to say on this matter: *“Indeed, this Institutio generalis presented the New Mass in terms so equivocal and so close to heresy that one may ask whether at times they were not in fact effectively heretical”* (La Nueva Misa, Iction ed., Buenos Aires, 1978, p. 181).

“All these things taken together, by their repetition, manifest and confirm in an injurious manner the implicit denial of the faith...” (Short Critical Study..., p. 51).

Besides the description of the New Mass as equivocal, there are other qualifiers applied to it, which may be summed up as follows: evil, non-Catholic, favorable to heresy, hybrid, dangerous to the faith, bastard, poisoned, denatured, adulterated, Protestantized, ecumenical, desacralized, polyvalent, schismatic, sacrilegious.

¹ In reality, everything that is of faith is defined; otherwise it would be only a matter of faith, but not of faith formally speaking.

We cite the following passages in which such assertions are found:

“The desacralization is such that this Mass runs the danger of losing its supernatural character” (Archbishop Lefebvre, Cor Unum, no. 4, Nov. 1979, p. 4).

“We consider the Novus Ordo Missae dangerous to the faith” (Archbishop Lefebvre, Cor Unum, no. 5, March 1980, p. 2).

“A rite imbued with heretical influences” (Archbishop Lefebvre, Cor Unum, no. 7, Oct. 1980, p. 24).

“An Ordo Missae that is polyvalent, half Lutheran, half Catholic” (Fr. Raymond Dulac, Cor Unum, no. 10, Oct. 1989, p. 31).

“Thanks to the new polyvalent and equivocal Ordo, an ever-increasing number of invalid Masses are being celebrated, shamefully deceiving the faithful” (Fr. Calmel, Itinéraires, suppl. no. 151, March 1971, p. 56).

“The new liturgy is a rupture [schism] with the past and with the Tradition of the Church” (Cor Unum, no. 11, Feb. 1982, p. 18).

1 In reality, everything that is of faith is defined; otherwise it would be only a matter of faith, but not of faith formally speaking.

“The new definition of the Novus Ordo seems altogether Protestant” (Cor Unum, no. 12, p. 19).

“This new Mass is truly equivocal, ecumenical, imbued with the Protestant spirit” (Cor Unum, no. 12, June 1982, p. 22).

“The Holy Mass has been denatured; it has become equivocal, ambiguous” (Le Coup, p. 13).

“The new Mass has been Protestantized” (ibid., p. 23).

“The definition of the Mass, likewise the corrected version, in article VII of the Institutio, clearly shows this diminution and even the falsification of doctrine” (Archbishop Lefebvre, Cor Unum, no. 15, July 1983, p. 20).

“The Mass is being Protestantized little by little; it no longer retains its dogmatic character, which expresses the Catholic faith” (January 20, 1978).

“The concern for an exaggerated ecumenism has brought this reform so near to the Protestant reform that the result is a grave diminution of the faith, and even the loss of faith” (Le Coup, p. 45).

“The rite of the Mass is a bastard rite; the sacraments are bastard sacraments. We no longer know whether they are sacraments that give grace or whether they do not. We no longer know

whether this Mass gives the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ or whether it does not (Archbishop Lefebvre, *Itinéraires*, special issue, Dec. 1976, p. 190).

“The New Mass is a kind of hybrid Mass” (ibid., p. 195).²

“Therefore, by abandoning liturgical tradition—which for four centuries was the sign and guarantee of the unity of worship—in order to replace it with another, a new one, which cannot but be a sign of schism... and which is marked by most grave ambiguities, not to say manifest errors against the purity of the Catholic Faith, this seems to us, to express our most charitable judgment, the most monstrous of errors” (Short Critical Study..., p. 109).

“Moreover, the conditions established for the Sacrifice, as signs of a sacred reality, are profaned” (Short Critical Study..., p. 81).

“The work of desacralization is completed by the new and coarse rites of the Offertory” (ibid., p. 83).

“Then, as the idea of sacrifice is continually diminished, the Mass is slowly denatured...” (Archbishop Lefebvre, *La Nueva Misa*, Iction ed., Buenos Aires, 1983, p. 70).

“...the Catholic Mass cannot be equivocal,” says Salleron (*La Nueva Misa*, p. 211); therefore, if the Mass is equivocal, it is evident that it is not Catholic.

“The New Mass favors heresy” (cf. Salleron, *La Nueva Misa*, p. 211); but to favor heresy is sinful; therefore the New Mass is evil: *“it is not pleasing to God, for it no longer renders to Our Lord the fitting adoration. The Novus Ordo dishonors Our Lord”* (Cor Unum, no. 12, pp. 23–24). Moreover: *Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quocumque defectu* (Cor Unum, no. 11, p. 19), a principle which applies most aptly to the new Mass.

“This reform, having sprung from liberalism and modernism, is wholly poisoned” (Archbishop Lefebvre, *Itinéraires*, special issue, Dec. 1976, p. 9).

“The new liturgy is a rupture with the past and with the Tradition of the Church” (Cor Unum, no. 11, p. 18).

“The rite of the Mass is a bastard rite” (Archbishop Lefebvre, *Homélies - Été Chaud*, 1976, p. 29).

“The Christian people never asked for a liturgy changed or mutilated in order better to understand it; rather, they asked that the immutable liturgy be understood, but never that it be adulterated” (Short Critical Study..., p. 17).

“We may therefore conclude: the present transformation is identical to that of Luther” (Archbishop Lefebvre, *La Messa di Lutero*, p. 10).

² Let it be remembered, by way of illustration, that hybrid things are sterile in the natural order: for example, the mule bears no fruit; it is incapable of doing so.

Or as Canon Berto aptly says in his work *Théologie de la Messe*, p. 20, under the pseudonym Fr. René Marie: *“In the name of what authority will they impose upon Catholics who remain faithful to the faith of their Baptism a Mass compromised by heresy?”*

“In reality, this Ordo Missae does not exist. What does exist is a universal and permanent liturgical revolution...” (Fr. Calmel, *Itinéraires*, suppl. no. 151, p. 1.)

Moreover, the new Mass likewise lacks the character of a binding law, for: *“The constitution of Paul VI did not promulgate a true law, imposing a properly juridical obligation in the external forum.”* (Fr. Dulac, *Itinéraires*, suppl. no. 151, p. 16). *“Pope Paul VI did not wish to confer upon the new Ordo the force of a true law”* (Cor Unum, no. 10, p. 33).

We may add, moreover, that a law which harms, or runs contrary to, the common good is not, and cannot be, a true law, since law has the common good as its end. A law against the common good is an absurdity and a contradiction.

From these simple observations one sees clearly the enormous doctrinal consequences carried by certain affirmations—such as the term *“equivocal”* when applied to the new Mass—which might otherwise pass unnoticed if one does not give them sufficient attention.

If, moreover, we add other descriptions—such as that the new Mass is not Catholic, or is neo-Protestant, or does not express the Catholic faith, or is evil, or ecumenical, or polyvalent—the doctrinal implications that impose themselves would lead us not only to doubt the validity of the new Mass, but even to consider its invalidity. This is especially so if one takes into account the statements of Protestants themselves, who look favorably upon the New Mass because it is, quite simply, the expression of the Protestant Supper.

Protestant Supper

Let us now consider the principal declarations made by Protestants (heretics and schismatics) concerning the New Mass, declarations which would in themselves suffice to open our eyes and free us from the deception skillfully perpetrated by the enemies of Christ and of His Church, who strike at the very heart of divine worship and at the center of the Catholic Religion, the one true religion; for the Sacrifice of the Mass is the supreme act of the virtue of religion, whereas the other cults and false religions have Satan for their inspirer (Ps. 95): *Quoniam omnes dii gentium daemonia.*³

Max Thurian, vice-prior of Taizé, one of the six Protestant ministers who took part in the elaboration of the New Mass and who was later ordained priest without abjuring Protestantism by Cardinal Ursi, Archbishop of Naples, on May 3, 1988, said in *La Croix* of May 30, 1969, that the New Mass *“is an example of that fruitful concern for open unity and dynamic fidelity, for true catholicity. One of its fruits will perhaps be that non-Catholic communities will be able*

³ *“For all the gods of the Gentiles are devils.”*

to celebrate the Holy Supper with the same prayers as the Catholic Church. Theologically, that is possible" (La Nueva Misa, p. 189).

The Protestant Siegvall, professor of theology in the Protestant faculty of the University of Strasbourg, wrote in a letter to the Bishop of that city—extracts of which appeared in *Le Monde* on November 21, 1969—that *"there is nothing in the Mass, now renewed, that could truly trouble the evangelical Christian"* (ibid., p. 189).

Jean Guitton (journalist) reproduces in *La Croix* of December 10, 1969, an observation published in an important Protestant review: *"The new Eucharistic prayers have eliminated the false perspective of a sacrifice offered to God"* (ibid., p. 189).

In the monthly review *L'Église en Alsace* of January 1974, published by the diocesan information office, there appeared on December 8, 1973, a Protestant article from the superior consistory of the Augsburg Confession and Lorraine, belonging to the *"Evangelical Church"*:

"Given the present forms of Eucharistic celebration in the Catholic Church, and by reason of the theological convergences now existing, many obstacles which might once have prevented a Protestant from participating in its Eucharistic celebration appear to be disappearing. At the present time, it ought to be possible for a Protestant to recognize in the Catholic Eucharistic celebration the Supper instituted by the Lord. (...) We adhere to the use of the new Eucharistic prayers, in which we find ourselves once again, and which have the advantage of qualifying the theology of sacrifice that we were accustomed to attribute to Catholicism. These prayers invite us to rediscover an evangelical theology of sacrifice..." (ibid., p. 190).

The prior of Taizé, Schutz, declared: *"The Protestant liturgical revision must henceforth take into account the structure of the Roman Mass, since the new Eucharistic Prayers II and IV present a structure corresponding to the Lutheran Mass"* (Itinéraires, Dec. 1977).

All these declarations on the part of Protestants show clearly that the new Mass presupposes the principles of the Protestant supper, and that it neither expresses nor contains the doctrine, nor necessarily implies the dogmas, of the Catholic Mass.

Thus the Short Critical Study was able to say: *"it is evident that the Novus Ordo no longer wishes to express the faith of Trent"* (p. 91), and that *"the true Catholic, whatever his condition or rank, finds himself under the tragic necessity of choosing between things opposed to one another"* (pp. 91-93). *"In a word, this supper does not imply any of those essential 'dogmatic values' of the Mass which constitute its true definition"* (ibid., p. 25).

Equivocality and the Mass

The New Mass, precisely because it is equivocal, raises an immense doctrinal problem; for a Catholic Mass cannot be equivocal, just as neither can a sacrament be so. Whatever is truly Catholic can never be equivocal, objectively speaking. Louis Salleron, the author already cited, expresses it with lapidary force: *"the Catholic Mass cannot be equivocal"* (La Nueva Misa, Icton ed., Buenos Aires, 1978, p. 211). This assertion does not point to a merely grammatical ambiguity, but to a most grave doctrinal equivocality touching the dogma and sacramentality of the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

An equivocal Mass, intended as such by its authors, is a veritable doctrinal defection which not only fosters heresy, but also implies, at the very least, a tacit apostasy.

The New Mass is equivocal because it approaches the Protestant conception of the Mass and because it may be interpreted either according to Protestantism or according to Catholicism. Archbishop Lefebvre declares: *“Everything effectively prescribed by the innovations relates to this conception, which is closer to the Protestant conception than to the Catholic one”* (La Nueva Misa, Icton ed., Buenos Aires, 1989, p. 19). To such an extent is this true that Protestants themselves are able to say the New Mass, for: *“Protestants no longer see what would prevent them from celebrating the Novus Ordo”* (ibid., p. 19).

On this point, the Short Critical Study says the same with reference to the Second Canon: *“Of this Canon it has been written, among other things, that a priest who has no faith in Transubstantiation and in the sacrificial nature of the Mass can use it with peace of mind in order to celebrate his Mass; and that therefore such a Mass can also be said without any difficulty by a Protestant minister”* (p. 89).

The reason for such an affirmation can only be found in the following words describing the new rite: *“Here one is commanded to sweep away the whole theology of the Mass. In a few words, it draws near to that theology of the Protestants, which has already abolished and utterly destroyed the Sacrifice of the Mass”* (Short Critical Study..., p. 15).

A thing is grammatically equivocal when it bears a double sense, distinct and diverse—for example, a term signifying more than one thing—but the equivocality of the term disappears within the context surrounding it. If the whole context is equivocal, then it lends itself to a double interpretation, and this can have no place in matters of faith, nor in the sacramental order.

An equivocal Mass, or an equivocal Novus Ordo Missae, is a veritable iniquity against the doctrine and faith of the Church, whether the equivocality bears upon the whole or upon a part, whether it bears upon the ceremonial rite (liturgical words, ritual gestures, and the like) or upon the essential rite (the words of consecration). The New Mass permits one either to believe or to deny all the Eucharistic dogmas. Without clearly denying any dogma, it allows them all to be denied—or at the very least, so much may be said—and this is a matter of the utmost gravity. Everything depends upon the standpoint from which it is regarded, that is, upon the faith of the one attending it. If he be a Protestant, he will see the Protestant supper; if he be a Catholic, he will see the Catholic Mass. This rite was conceived and fashioned so as to serve both Catholic worship and Protestant worship at once; it is a synthesis of Catholic doctrine and Protestant doctrine. The equivocal character of the Mass, directly intended and constituting the very intention of its authors, thus has as its end the ecumenical project: it realizes the ecumenist ideal to perfection—serving both Catholic worship and Protestant worship at the same time—which is an abomination.

The Fathers of Campos (Brazil), faithful to the Tradition of the Church around Bishop de Castro Mayer, declare:

“The new Mass is equivocal; that is to say, when it is celebrated, whether in Latin or in Portuguese, its objective text allows one both to affirm and to deny Eucharistic dogmas. This method of adopting equivocal texts is used by heretics to spread their heresies” (A missa nova, um caso de consciência, São Paulo, 1982, p. 9).

And further on they add:

“A hereticizing liturgy tending toward desacralization has no foundation whatever in Tradition; on the contrary, it constitutes a formal and violent rupture with all the rules that hitherto governed Catholic worship” (ibid., p. 35).

If the equivocality of the new Mass falls upon the ceremonial part of the rite, the matter is grave indeed, for the ceremonial rite exists precisely in order to make explicit the truths and realities of faith contained in the essential part. An equivocal ceremonial rite is a rite that distorts the essence of the sacrifice (the double consecration), because it fails in its purpose, which is to express the faith of the *mysterium fidei*, to make explicit and manifest the reality and truth contained in the essential rite, which by reason of its conciseness and brevity cannot express everything all at once. It must also remove every possibility of erroneous interpretation—that is, it must exclude every meaning contrary to the Mystery and dispel every equivocality (double interpretation, double meaning) that detracts from the Mystery of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. An equivocal ceremonial rite is not truly a rite; it is an adulteration of the rite, for the ceremonial order must remove every equivocation and ambiguity of meaning or interpretation.

The ceremonial rite must express the Catholic sense and intention of the essential rite, lest the consecratory formula of the bread and wine be distorted by erroneous interpretations either of intention or of meaning. An equivocal ceremonial rite offends against the intention of the Church and against the meaning of the words that disclose the mystery. The rite, in its ceremonial aspect, must ward off every error against the faith. Hence the Short Critical Study says that *“every danger of error against the faith ought to have been removed from the rites”* (p. 101). The ceremonial rite must frame the true meaning of the consecratory formula, expressing and determining it in conformity with the sense of the Church’s dogma and with her intention, thereby expressing the faith of the Church.

An equivocal rite in the ceremonial part, directly related to the essential rite which it explicates as its context, contradicts the specific and determinate meaning which every sacrament must possess according to the intention of the Church.

An equivocal ceremonial rite permits, or at least makes possible, another notion of the sacrament, or another meaning altogether: that some other sacramental signification, or some other conception of the sacrament, be admitted. The text itself (the essential part) is thereby obscured by the equivocal context (the ceremonial part) which directly surrounds and envelops it.

An equivocal ceremonial rite clouds the sense and meaning of the sacramental formula (the essential rite); by this very fact it not only makes possible that the essential rite be interpreted otherwise, but positively and objectively induces the essential rite to be interpreted according to the Protestant conception.

A rite equivocal in what is essential is an alteration of sacramental signification that affects the validity of the sacrificial sacrament—or sacramental sacrifice—of the Mass, since it fails to fulfill the definition of every sacrament, which, as a sensible sign, produces the grace that it signifies *ex opere operato* (by the very fact of the rite being effected).

Essential rite – equivocal in itself

The ceremonial rite of the new Mass, instead of expressing the Catholic sense (that is, the meaning) of the essential rite, denatures it, failing in its purpose, which is to express the meaning and intention according to the mind of the Church. Nor does it make explicit the truths and realities contained in the essential rite, nor protect against every error or false interpretation against the faith, by excluding all equivocality.

An equivocal ceremonial rite is not in conformity with the signification of the essential rite and allows, at the very least, another meaning than that which the Church gives to the essential rite.

An equivocal rite in the ceremonial part is a liturgical absurdity and a deformation of the Church's intention.

If the equivocality of the New Mass falls upon the essential part itself (the consecration), it is evident that the validity of the Mass is thereby affected. A Mass equivocal in what is essential is, objectively considered, invalid. The words of consecration (the essential rite) cannot be equivocal; they must be determinate in order to produce the grace they signify: first, because like every sacrament they produce their effect *ex opere operato* (by the action of the rite performed) if it is equivocal, this dogma of faith is denied or called into question, for it does not unequivocally guarantee that it produces the grace it signifies, since its signification is equivocal, signifying—or being able to signify—something else. This is not merely heresy, but an outrage against Our Lord Jesus Christ, who instituted all seven sacraments validly and unequivocally, so that they might produce the grace they signify.

Secondly, a rite that is expressly equivocal cannot sacramentally effect what it signifies. Sacramental signification is altered by an equivocal rite, since, by reason of its ambiguity, it does not signify in a determinate manner that which it ought sacramentally to effect.

“If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify, or that they do not confer that grace itself ... let him be anathema” (D. 849).

“If anyone shall say that by means of the sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred ex opere operato ... let him be anathema” (D. 851).

The equivocal rite raises, sacramentally speaking, a problem of signification which calls into question the sacramental validity of the new Mass, since it signifies—or may signify—something other than the sacramental signification it possesses by divine institution and which pertains to the very intention of the Church.

The equivocal Mass, at the very least, necessarily tends to foster heresy. In this sense Salleron affirms: *“The New Mass is equivocal. By that very fact it favors heresy, since it accords as much with Protestant doctrine as with Catholic doctrine”* (La Nueva Misa, Icton ed., Buenos Aires, 1978, p. 197). And this fostering of heresy is the implicit yet necessary purpose of its authors, for, as Salleron says: *“The authors of the new Ordo Missae intended to make an equivocal rite”* (ibid., p. 188). And by that very fact they intended, at least implicitly, to favor heresy, if we follow the logic through.

“The New Mass is equivocal and favors heresy. That is equivalent to saying that it is a failure, because the Catholic Mass cannot be equivocal and cannot favor heresy” (ibid., p. 211).

The intention of those who made—indeed fabricated—the New Mass is not in harmony with the intention of the Church, for the Church can never, whether directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, favor heresy by means of an equivocal rite in order to satisfy the ecumenical aims of a pluricultural or polyvalent rite. *“The very authors of the Reform declared that their goal was ecumenical, that is, intended to remove, without touching doctrine, whatever displeases our ‘separated brethren’ (D.T.C., vol. III of the index, article ‘Ecumenism’ by Fr. Boyer, S.J., former secretary of the Secretariat for Unity) (article by Archbishop Bugnini, O.R., March 19, 1965). Hence, it is evident that ‘what displeases our ‘separated brethren’ is the doctrine of the Catholic Mass”* (Archbishop Lefebvre, Cor Unum, July 1983, no. 15, p. 20).

It scarcely needs to be said that the ecumenical objective is a contradiction in terms; it is an absurdity. For to remove what displeases Protestants—which is precisely dogma, the very thing they do not accept—without touching dogma, is an absurdity devoid of all coherence. For this reason, the ecumenist ideal is a well-disguised heresy, subtly insinuated.

The equivocal character of the new Mass reaches even to the essential rite itself, as is attested by the following words of the Short Critical Study: *“these ambiguities are introduced and repeated in the very formula of the Consecration and, in general, throughout the entire Novus Ordo”* (p. 33).

From what has been set forth above, it is evident that the New Mass is equivocal in the essential part of the rite, whereby its validity as a rite is affected. For the Mass, when said according to the new rite, to be valid, the subjective intention of the priest is required: namely, the intention to do what Holy Mother Church wills and commands. For what is lacking is the objective intention of the rite itself, that intention which guarantees the sacrifice and which leads the priest to have the intention of the Church, even if through forgetfulness or distraction he should fail to form an explicit intention to consecrate.

Hence, if a priest, without intending to consecrate, yet without positively excluding that intention, were to say Mass according to the traditional rite, he would consecrate by the very fact of following that rite, provided he placed no obstacle. But if he takes the new rite, likewise placing no obstacle and entertaining no contrary intention, he would not consecrate by the mere fact of simply following the new rite. This is what the Short Critical Study means when it affirms that the New Mass is not valid by the very force of the words themselves (ex ipsa vi verborum), but rather by the subjective intention of the minister. Thus the new Mass, as rite,

lacks consecratory efficacy such that one might say it is valid by the very force of the essential rite itself.

The lack of consecratory efficacy in the New Mass is due to its equivocality. The New Mass is equivocal in the essential part of the rite, and as a sacrament it does not, by reason of that equivocality, signify what it ought to produce. A rite equivocal in its essential part affects sacramental signification and therefore does not produce what it signifies; sacramental causality is destroyed when its signification as sacrament is destroyed.

Equivocality in the essential rite renders the Mass invalid, for the sacraments, in order to produce what they signify, require that what is signified be determinate, and not equivocal or indeterminate. A rite that is equivocal in what is essential to the consecratory formula renders the sacrament invalid, for there is no determination of meaning and consequently it cannot produce what it signifies.

The equivocality—at the very least—of the essential rite in the New Mass is also clearly expressed by the observation made in the Short Critical Study of the *Novus Ordo Missae* regarding the narrative, rather than assertive, manner of signifying: *“For the consecratory formulas are now uttered by the priest as part of a historical narrative, and are no longer pronounced as expressing a categorical and operative judgment”* (p. 61).

The New Mass, in its essential rite, objectively bears a purely narrative, historical tone.

The New Mass is by definition and by construction a mere narration; for this reason, in order to be valid, it requires the priest’s supplementary intention. Thus, according to the Short Critical Study, the new Mass is not valid by reason of the rite itself, by the very force of the words of consecration (*ex ipsa vi verborum*), but by the subjective intention of the minister—namely, a supplementary intention—to do what the Church does. The equivocality of the ceremonial rite is amply attested by all the criticisms levelled against the new Mass.

A rite that is equivocal in what is essential to it as a sacrament, a sacrament which must signify what it effects, is liturgically and sacramentally not only an absurdity, but also an invalid rite (considered objectively in itself), incapable of producing the reality which it ought sacramentally to signify *ex opere operato*.

Equivocality and Intention

A rite equivocal in what is essential (the consecratory formula) affects the intention of the Church by adulterating it. We shall limit ourselves simply to recalling the treatment and judgment of the Church with respect to the case of the invalidity of the Anglican rite of ordination on account of defect of intention, the rite of the Church having been corrupted. All this applies with exactness to the case of the New Mass, which adulterates the Catholic rite of the Holy Mass by introducing a new equivocal rite that alters the sacramental signification of the consecratory formula of the Holy Mass and thereby distorts the intention of the Church.

Let us see how and in what manner the intention of the Church is or may be adulterated—that is, corrupted—by changing the rite of the Church, and therefore the sacramental signification, which makes it possible for every sacrament, as a sacred and sensible sign, to produce *ex opere operato* the grace it signifies for the justification and sanctification of souls.

“For intention is not radically vitiated by the error of the minister. Nor is it required that the minister should wish to do what the Catholic Church does; it is enough that he have the intention of doing what the Church in general does, the true Church, or what Jesus Christ instituted: Si absolute velit facere quod Christus instituit sed ex errore non putet hoc esse id quod romana Ecclesia facit, ex altera tamen parte adhibeat materiam et formam, conficitur sacramentum (C. Pesch, Praelect. dogm., t. VI, 4th ed., p. 131). On the basis of these theological principles, the Anglicans claimed truly to have the intention of doing what the Church does” (D.T.C., Ordinations Anglicanes, t. XI, col. 1186).

The minister’s intention *“is the deliberate will to confer a sacrament, to perform what Jesus Christ instituted” (ibid., col. 1186).*

In order to resolve this problem of intention—that is, of having the intention of the Church—it was necessary to consider intention as concretely determined by the rite, and not merely intention considered in the abstract. For the question could not be settled otherwise, since that would have favored the Anglicans, because: *“It is the doctrine of the Church that heresy, even when contrary to the essence of the sacrament, does not necessarily exclude the intentio faciendi quod facit Ecclesia. (...) The reason for this is very simple. Intention is an act of the will. This act of the will, faciendi quod facit Ecclesia, can exist alone in the soul at the moment of administering the sacrament. This occurs when, at that moment, the minister acts while abstracting from his personal ideas, opposed to the doctrine of the Church” (D.T.C., Ord. Ang., t. XI, col. 1187).*

An example may be found in the case of Baptism, since: *“Baptism is valid even if the minister believes that this rite produces only outward effects: the general intention of doing what the Church does prevails over the minister’s private error” (D.T.C., Ord. Ang., t. XI, col. 1188).* The reason is clear: *“The merely concomitant error of the minister does not affect the general will to do what the Church does” (ibid., col. 1188).* Thus, *“the will of the minister will not be a cause of the nullity of the sacrament, save in the case where he were to say to himself: I wish to do what the Church does, but I do not wish either to confer grace or to imprint the character” (ibid., col. 1188).*

“For this reason, in the case of the Anglicans, if one considers intention alone, abstraction being made from the rites employed, one cannot affirm that it is insufficient, nor that it is the cause of the nullity of their ordinations. But this evil intention may be manifested and may serve as the basis of the judgment passed upon the validity of those orders, from outward circumstances; and among those circumstances none is more apt than the rite employed for determining what the true intention has been” (ibid., col. 1188).

Since the question becomes insoluble if we remain on the abstract plane of intention considered in itself, it is necessary to consider concrete intention as determined by the Anglican rite, which thus makes it possible to render a sure and exact judgment.

“For it is by outward circumstances that one may judge the true intention, as Leo XIII himself expressly noted: ‘The Church does not judge thought or intention insofar as they are something interior; but she must judge them insofar as they are manifested outwardly. When a man seriously and rightly employs the matter and form necessary for making and conferring a sacrament, he is thereby presumed to have the intention of doing what the Church does. Upon this principle rests the doctrine by which a sacrament is valid when conferred through the ministry of a heretic or of an unbaptized man, provided it is conferred according to the Catholic rite. On the contrary, if the rite has been changed with the manifest purpose of introducing another rite not approved by the Church, and of rejecting what the Church does, and what, by Christ’s institution, belongs to the nature of the sacrament, then it is evident not only that the necessary intention is lacking, but also that there exists an intention contrary to and opposed to the sacrament.’” Bull Apostolicae Curae (D.T.C., Ord. Ang., t. XI, cols. 1188–1189).

This is, neither more nor less, what has taken place with the Novus Ordo Missae; for the rite has been modified with the manifest purpose of introducing another rite, impossible for the Church to admit, while rejecting what the Church does—that is, rejecting the traditional rite of the immemorial Mass, codified in perpetuity by Saint Pius V; rejecting what, by the institution of Christ Himself, belongs to the nature of the sacrament of the Eucharist, namely, the notion of a real and true sacrifice, in order to define itself instead as the Protestant Supper or Synaxis.⁴

For all these reasons, not only does the requisite intention fail, but there is, as regards the rite itself, an intention contrary to and opposed to the sacrament—an intention expressed in the definition of the new Mass and affecting the entire construction of the rite, since it *“no longer wishes to express the faith of Trent”* (Short Critical Study..., p. 91).

This assertion should not astonish us if one considers that the omissions found in the Novus Ordo Missae divert the meaning and alter the true sacramental signification, just as occurred in the Anglican rite of orders, whose comparison with the new rite of the Mass is highly significant and decisive; for: *“Those omissions and those reforms, per occasionem factae, which the archbishops seem to regard as secondary and accessory, are of capital importance, because they are precisely what diverted the rites of priestly ordination and episcopal consecration from their true signification. Omissions that show us what was the true intention of those who gave birth to the Anglican hierarchy: an intention that deprived the rite employed of all efficacy, because that rite is no longer the one instituted by Jesus”* (ibid., col. 1189).

It remains clear and evident that the changes and omissions regarded as secondary modified the sacramental signification of the rite employed. The parallel with what has occurred in the rite of the New Mass could scarcely be closer; it is astonishing, yet such is the reality.

Highly significant and illuminating is the case related by the D.T.C. in the same article regarding a question that Saint Boniface put to Pope Zachary: *“Pope Zachary, replying to a question from Saint Boniface, resolved a case presenting great analogy with the one now before us. The Apostle of Germany had asked Rome whether Baptism ought to be repeated for those who*

⁴ *“The Lord’s Supper, or Mass, is the sacred synaxis or assembly of the people of God gathered together under the presidency of the priest to celebrate the memorial of the Lord”* (Short Critical Study..., p. 23).

had received it from a priest but little versed in the tongue of Cicero, who had used the form: Ego baptizo te in nomine Patria, Filia et Spiritu sancta. In Saint Boniface's judgment such a baptism was invalid. Pope Zachary replied: Sed, santissime frater, si ille qui baptizavit non errorem introducens aut haeresim, sed pro sola ignorantia romanae locutionis infringendo linguam, ut supra fati sumus, baptizans dixisset, non possumus consentire ut denuo baptizentur (Mansi, Concil., t. XII, p. 325). Here the form was susceptible of a double interpretation, one orthodox, the other heretical; the intention of the minister gave it its value. Acting through ignorance of the language, he conferred the sacrament; but if, by introducing an error into the form, his intention corrupts the rite, then it produces no effect whatsoever" (ibid., cols. 1189-1190).

"One may very well apply this doctrine," says the author of the article, "to the first Anglican ministers" (ibid., col. 1190), and we, for our part, may make the same application to the New Mass.

"The Anglicans maintained that, whatever may have been the design of the compilers, the changes they introduced could not have caused the essential elements of the valid rite of ordination to disappear. (...) The rite nevertheless remains at least ambiguous, and this ambiguity must be resolved according to the views of those who composed the rite and made use of it. Nor may it be objected against this reasoning that, according to Catholic theologians, a heretical minister validly administers a sacrament provided he has the general intention of doing what the Church does by means of that sacrament; for this principle is valid only in those cases in which the matter and the form employed are the same as those used by the Catholic Church, or at least do not admit of another meaning. But if another meaning is introduced into the form, with the purpose of making it susceptible of a heretical interpretation, then the heretical intention of the minister is, for the reason given above, fatal to the validity of the sacrament" (ibid., col. 1190).

"Thus, the rejection of the rite adopted by the Church and the adoption of a new rite for the purpose of introducing heresy are truly proof that the ministers lacked the intention of doing what the Church does. According to the opinion of Cardinal d'Annibale, there is not even need that essential changes be introduced into the formula: an accidental modification, made with the design of introducing a new rite or a heresy, is sufficient to testify to a defect of intention: Quod autem quidam docent sacramentum non valere si minister immutaverit aliquid accidentaliter, ut novum ritum vel errorem introducat, sic accipiendum est quia is non creditur habere intentionem faciendi quod facit Ecclesia, Summula III, n. 101, note 18. In the Anglican rite, the modifications are essential. Barlow and Parker adopted a new rite, different from the rite of the true Church; into this rite they introduced a doctrine concerning the priesthood and the episcopate contrary to orthodoxy. This is the external and evident proof that they did not have the intention of doing what the Church does, but rather an intention wholly opposed to it. This defect of intention suffices to suppress the transmission of sacerdotal power in the Anglican Church and to render null all subsequent ordinations" (D.T.C., Ord. Ang., t. XI, col. 1190).

The author of the article, referring to the Church's practice of conferring ordination upon Anglican ministers who, having converted and abjured their error, desired to become priests—not sub conditione, but by an absolute ordination—says in conclusion: *"this practice rests upon*

theological reasons that permit the formulation of a certain judgment: because of the defect of the rite, in which the forms of priestly ordination and episcopal consecration are not sufficiently determinate, but are, on the contrary, susceptible by reason of their omissions to a heretical interpretation; and because of the intention opposed to that of the Church on the part of the founders of the Anglican Church. Consequently, Leo XIII was bound to act as he did in proclaiming the nullity of Anglican ordinations” (D.T.C., Ord. Ang., t. XI, col. 1191).

Saint Thomas gives a case of an equivocal formula caused by the addition of words, a case that serves us well in examining the new formula: *“Forte autem si diceret, Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti et Beatae Virginis Mariae, non esset baptismus... si sic intelligatur in nomine Beatae Virginis baptizari sicut in nomine Trinitatis, quo baptismus consecratur: talis enim sensus esset contrarius verae fidei, et per consequens tolleretur veritatem sacramenti. Si vero sic intelligatur quod additur, et in nomine Beatae Virginis, non quasi nomen Beatae Virginis aliquid operetur in baptismo, sed ut eius intercessio prosit baptizato ad conservandum gratiam baptismalem, non tollitur perfectio sacramenti”* (S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 8).

From this example it is clear that, when words are added to the formula, it will be valid or invalid according to the conception of the one pronouncing them, that is, according to the sense in which the minister understands them.

Any addition to or subtraction from the formula, if it alters the due sense of the words, invalidates the sacrament. The due sense of the words is not according to what is said merely in the natural order, but according to what is believed—the sense held according to faith: *verbum operatur in sacramentis, non quia dicitur, id est, non secundum exteriorem sonum vocis sed quia creditur secundum sensum verborum qui fide tenetur* (S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 7, ad 1).

The meaning of the words, then, is according to faith—but according to the faith of the Church, not that of the minister; for even without faith, a non-Catholic can, for example, baptize validly if he wills to do what the Church does. Hence the faith of the minister is not required, provided that, as an instrument, he intends to do what the Church does.

The only safeguard for possessing the intention of the Church is to follow her rite. Thus, if a man intends to introduce another rite, with modifications—whether by diminution or addition—to the sacramental words, a rite not accepted by the Church, the sacrament is not effected: *si intendat per huiusmodi additionem vel diminutionem alium ritum inducere qui non sit ab Ecclesia receptus, non videtur perficere sacramentum quia non videtur quod intendat facere id quod facit Ecclesia* (S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 8).

Hence the gravity of the new Mass: the Tridentine rite was altered in order to create a new one which the Church cannot accept without falling into error and contradiction.

This was likewise the criterion applied to Anglican ordinations, and thus their invalidity was determined.

Every change in the formula, whether by subtraction or by addition of words, invalidates the sacrament if the meaning of the words is altered—that meaning being according to the faith of

the Church. If that meaning is not affected, the sacrament remains, as in the case of omitting enim, which is not essential to the form of the consecration, though one sins if this is done through negligence or contempt: Sicut in forma Eucharistiae, quae est, Hoc est enim corpus meum, ly enim sublatum non tollit debitum sensum verborum, et ideo non impedit perfectionem sacramenti: quamvis possit contingere quod ille qui praetermittit, peccet ex negligentia vel contemptu (S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 8).

How important the whole question of sacramental signification is, the Angelic Doctor expresses thus: Verba pertinent ad formam sacramenti ratione sensus significati (S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 8, ad 2). Such signification belongs to every sacrament, and in it sacramental operation consists: Nam hic operatur sacramentaliter, idest secundum vim significationis (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 2, ad 2). Without sacramental signification, there is no sacrament.

From Equivocality to Heresy

The equivocal character that marks the new Mass, and which was intended by its authors, at the very least fosters heresy by logical consequence. Hence Salleron affirmed, in a text cited earlier on page 13: *“The New Mass is equivocal. By that very fact it favors heresy, since it accords as much with Protestant doctrine as with Catholic doctrine”* (La Nueva Misa, p. 197). This statement alone, theologically considered, cannot avoid the term heretical as a description of the New Mass. The reason is very simple and evident at once: if the New Mass is equivocal because it claims to agree both with Catholic doctrine and with Protestant doctrine, then it is evident that, doctrinally and dogmatically, this is an absurdity, since Catholic dogma and doctrine cannot agree with Protestant doctrine except where heresy is involved. Doctrinal concord between Protestantism and Catholicism can never take place; if it does, it is because one has fallen into Protestant heresy, neither more nor less.

The equivocality of the New Mass lies in its supposed concord between Protestant doctrine and Catholic doctrine; therefore such concord can have no foundation but heresy.

The equivocality of the New Mass was willed in itself. Salleron expresses this plainly: *“The authors of the new Ordo Missae intended to make an equivocal rite”* (La Nueva..., p. 188). And in willing to fashion an equivocal rite for ecumenical ends, they capitulated in the matter of dogma because of the intimate link—the correlation—between *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the law of prayer and the law of faith). By reason of this close and intimate relation between faith and prayer, a relation ignored and effectively abrogated by ecumenism, an equivocal rite such as that of the New Mass, one that would accord both with Protestant doctrine and with Catholic doctrine, is not merely a theological impossibility, a doctrinal absurdity; it is also a heresy. For doctrinal concord with error in a matter of defined faith—such as the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—cannot but be an abominable heresy.

It is useful to recall what Marcial Solana says in his book *El Tradicionalismo Político Español y la Ciencia Hispana* (Tradicionalista ed., Madrid, 1951), with regard to the heresy of liberalism, relying chiefly upon Félix Sardá y Salvany, that distinguished anti-liberal priest: *“In the order of doctrines, liberalism is the universal and radical heresy, because it contains them*

all. (...) In the order of doctrines, liberalism is heresy. Heresy is every doctrine that denies, with formal and pertinacious denial, a dogma of the Christian faith. Doctrinal liberalism denies them all first in general, and then each one in particular. It denies them all in general when it affirms or presupposes the absolute independence of individual reason in the individual, and of social reason or public judgment in society. We say affirms or presupposes, because at times, in its secondary consequences, the liberal principle is not explicitly affirmed, but it is taken for granted and admitted” (pp. 192–193). And the Holy Bishop Ezequiel Moreno concludes by saying in his booklet *Either with Jesus Christ or against Jesus Christ; either Catholicism or Liberalism* that: *“Liberalism is condemned by our Holy Mother the Church in all its forms and degrees...”* (Carlos Valderrama, *Un Capítulo de las Relaciones entre el Estado y la Iglesia en Colombia*, Instituto Caro y Cuervo, Bogotá, 1986, p. 405). And further on the holy Bishop insists: *“The great liberal pestilence will infect us all, if we do not regard error and heresy with the aversion with which they must be regarded...”* (ibid., p. 455).

If this is said of liberalism, how much more may it be said of the New Mass, which Protestants themselves approve as their own.

The New Mass presupposes the principles of the Protestant supper, as Bishop de Castro Mayer said, and this cannot be so without heresy. It is theologically and doctrinally impossible to conceive of a Mass which *“departs in an astonishing manner, taken as a whole and in detail, from the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass, as it was formulated in Session XXII of the Council of Trent,”* as the Short Critical Study affirms, without its falling into heresy.

How could the New Mass fail to be heretical if it answers to a new conception of the Mass? For, as Archbishop Lefebvre himself warns: *“What is at issue, then, is not a liturgical reform such as that of Saint Pius X, but, beyond all doubt, a new conception of the Mass”* (La Misa Nueva, Iction ed., Buenos Aires, 1983, p. 19). A new conception of the Catholic Mass cannot exist without falling into heresy.

A Mass constructed upon a heretical definition cannot but be heretical. The definition upon which the New Mass was fashioned influences it in the same way that an architectural plan governs a building: if the plans are faulty, the building erected according to them will likewise be so. The same holds true of the heretical definition in article 7 of the *Institutio Generalis* and the New Mass.

Article 7 of the *Institutio Generalis*, upon which the New Mass was built, was itself described as heretical, as is shown by the words reported by a Cardinal to whom Archbishop Lefebvre alludes: *“A Cardinal, still living, told me that article 7 of the Instruction, in its first draft, was heretical”* (Itinéraires, May 1979, no. 233, p. 84). If Solana can say that liberalism is heretical because it affirms or presupposes something contrary to the faith of the Church, then how much more can and must we say the same with regard to the New Mass, when Archbishop Lefebvre affirms: *“It is evident that this new rite presupposes—if I may so speak—another conception of the Catholic religion, another religion”* (La Nueva Misa, Iction ed., Buenos Aires, p. 49).

Fr. Coache affirms the same in a small leaflet entitled *La Nouvelle Messe*, p. 2, when referring to the heretical propositions inherent in the conception of the Protestant Supper: *“These*

propositions, heretical in themselves, are explicitly expressed in nos. 1 and 7 of the Institutio Generalis, which contradicts or relegates to the background the essential notions of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.”

The correction of article 7 did not alter its substance; it merely camouflaged it by moderating its dangerousness. Moreover, the modification did not affect the New Mass, which had already been elaborated upon the basis of the first definition: *“The explanations, according to Archbishop Bugnini himself, changed nothing in the doctrine previously expressed. In any case, the new Mass was not modified, for it remains a Catholic-Protestant synthesis”* (Archbishop Lefebvre, *Itinéraires*, May 1979, no. 233, p. 84).

Fr. René-Marie, in the study already cited, says essentially the same thing: *“...we know how Paul VI had article 7 of the general introduction to the new missal corrected, where a Protestant definition of the Mass had been inserted. (...) Yet the new rites themselves and the imposed texts of the New Mass, though inspired by that first heterodox definition of the Mass, were left entirely unchanged”* (p. 11). The expression heterodox definition means nothing less than heretical definition; for among Catholics, heterodoxy is nonconformity with Catholic dogma, and this is heresy.

Although it is true that Archbishop Lefebvre denied that the New Mass was heretical, this position must be understood in light of the circumstances in which it was taken. In the first place, Archbishop Lefebvre stood at the center of every accusation and calumny coming from the hierarchy of the Church; this obliged him, by his natural pastoral prudence, to avoid every assertion that might further compromise and aggravate his position. He had to evade blows that could prove mortal in order to continue the battle in defense of Tradition and the Faith of the Church. His attacks had to be confined to the minimum necessary, especially at the beginning, so that they might gradually acquire weight and credibility, without advancing too far into questions that would more gravely endanger his reputation and his work in the service of the Church. He had to be exceedingly prudent and cautious: to strike as far as possible, yet without giving occasion for a counterattack that would destroy him. Too many fronts could not be opened, lest they weaken a long and wearing struggle against a Church occupied by the modernists. He had to avoid, as much as possible, affirmations that would unleash an infernal barrage of accusations and render his position untenable. It is understandable, then, that he did not deploy every argument, but proceeded according to how events unfolded especially at a time when the pernicious effects that the development of the new Mass would produce were not yet fully clear, whereas today they impose themselves by reason of the magnitude of the evil, which has become suffocating. And since we know that a tree is known by its fruits, those fruits were not yet ripe then; today, by contrast, the fruits of the New Mass have ripened, and its deadly poison against faith and dogma is palpable.

Thus are explained such statements as this: *“I have said to many cardinals in Rome: ‘Your New Mass is Luther’s Mass.’ And they replied to me: ‘Then it is heretical!’ To which I answered: ‘No, it is not heretical, but ambivalent, equivocal; because one man can say it with the Catholic faith in the Sacrifice wholly intact, while another can also say it without that intention, in which case the Mass is not valid”* (La Messa di Lutero, pp. 15–16).

Or again, elsewhere, when he says: *“We wish to preserve the Catholic faith by means of the Catholic Mass, not through an ecumenical Mass, which, although valid and not heretical, is nevertheless favens haeresim”* (Archbishop Lefebvre, *Itinéraire...*, May 1979, no. 233, p. 85).

The Archbishop thus practically associates invalidity and heresy; yet a Mass may be heretical without being necessarily invalid, or invalid without being necessarily heretical, or both together: first, by being said by a heretic, as in the case of the Orthodox; second, by denying a dogma without affecting the intention that would directly compromise the invalidity of the Mass as sacrament—for example, denying that the Mass is offered for the dead.⁵ This may also explain why Archbishop Lefebvre did not directly affirm the heresy of the New Mass; for if it could be valid for one reason or another, then according to his criterion he could not say it was heretical.

Perhaps the most decisive reason why Archbishop Lefebvre did not say that the New Mass was heretical was that, at the time, the reasons, though serious, were not yet absolutely evident, since they embraced the whole liturgical reform—Breviary, liturgical calendar, rite of the dead, and so forth—and not solely the reform of the Mass. Thus, when asking what attitude should be taken in 1977 toward the New Mass, he said: *“...our attitude will depend upon the definition we give to this reform. If we judge this reformed liturgy to be heretical and invalid, whether because of the modifications introduced into matter and form, or because of the intention of the reformer, inscribed in the new rite and contrary to the intention of the Catholic Church, then it is evident that we are forbidden to participate in these reformed rites, for we would be taking part in a sacrilegious action. This opinion rests upon serious reasons, though not reasons that are absolutely evident”* (Le Coup de Maître de Satan, Saint-Gabriel ed., Martigny, 1977, pp. 44-45). Yet Archbishop Lefebvre did acknowledge that the New Mass approaches and favors heresy: *“The concern for an exaggerated ecumenism has brought this reform so close to the Protestant reform that it results in a grave danger of diminution of the faith, and even of loss of faith, for those who habitually make use of these rites—and this even in the case of those who strive to preserve the appearances of tradition. This judgment concerns the official reformed texts: faventes haeresiam”* (ibid., p. 45).

We, however, are focusing solely upon the reform of the New Mass, without claiming to pass a global judgment upon the whole liturgical reform. Therefore, we analyze here the New Mass itself, taking particular account of the heretical definition of article 7 upon which the reform of the New Mass was based, together with the changes made to the formula and to its immediate context, changes that alter sacramental signification.

The new Mass is not specified by that which ought to constitute and define it; hence its equivocality, which not only favors heresy [as Archbishop Lefebvre himself acknowledges: *“What is astonishing is that an Ordo Missae of Protestant flavor, and consequently favens haeresim, could have been spread abroad by the Roman Curia”* (Itin., May 1979, no. 233, p. 146)] but is heretical.

A Mass such as the new one, which is not defined by that which ought essentially to constitute and define it, denies the definition or essence of the Mass as defined by the Council of Trent,

⁵ Faith is not required for a sacrament to be valid; it is enough that one intend to do what the Church does, even though one believes that no effect takes place (St. Thomas, III, 64, 9; III, 68, 3).

or at least presupposes another definition that is not Catholic; and in either case it falls into heresy. In matters of faith once defined, equivocality has no place. Equivocality regarding what has been defined supposes, or at the very least leaves room to suppose, something other than the definition itself, and this, in matters touching the faith, is heresy. For in defining something, one affirms what a thing is, and thereby denies and excludes all that it is not.

“The definition of the Mass, even in its corrected form, in article 7 of the Institutio, clearly shows this diminution and even falsification of doctrine” (Archbishop Lefebvre, *Cor Unum*, July 1983, no. 15, p. 20). Falsification of doctrine in a matter of defined faith is heresy. Fr. Coache speaks of heretical texts in the New Mass that would render the Mass invalid: *“Since this priest, guided by the heretical texts of the Preface of the Ordo (Institutio Generalis), runs the risk of not wishing to celebrate according to the Catholic Faith, or of excluding the idea of Sacrifice, of Oblation, or of the Real Presence... in that case, his ‘Mass’ is invalid... there is no Consecration of the Body of Jesus”* (Tract on the New Mass, p. 4).

It is fitting to bear in mind the following reflections, which motivate our attitude of frontal rejection of the New Mass, that Catholic-Protestant synthesis.

The Problem of Equivocality in Matters of Defined Faith = Heresy

An equivocal rite is the manifest proof of the smoke of Satan within the Church.

- Equivocality knowingly introduced into matters of faith already defined either is, or is equivalent to, heresy.
- Matters of faith once defined admit of no equivocality, nor of being otherwise.
- Every definition is the essential affirmation of what a thing is, and the negation or exclusion of all that it is not.
- Definition denies and excludes equivocality.
- Equivocality introduced into matters of faith (once defined) is to admit, whether theoretically or hypothetically, that such a thing might not be what it is, but might be—or could be—something else; and this is heretical.
- In a matter of defined faith such as the Holy Mass, equivocality can neither be admitted nor tolerated, for it makes possible error concerning what has been defined, and this is heresy.
- One cannot make error possible in matters of faith once defined, for that is to admit or acknowledge that they might not be, or might be otherwise than, what has been defined; and this is heresy.
- Equivocality in a matter of defined faith is to admit or make possible that such a thing may not be what it is, or may exist in a form other than that which has been defined.
- To admit, to say, or to acknowledge that the New Mass is equivocal is, by logical theological and dogmatic consequence, to admit that such a Mass is heretical, since it allows that it may not be what it is or ought to be.

And in a matter of defined faith one cannot admit that the Mass is not what it is, as Catholic doctrine teaches and as it was defined by the Council of Trent.

To admit equivocality in what has been defined by faith is to admit that it may not be so, that is, not conformable to the definition, and this is heretical.

If this assertion seems too categorical, let us at least retain this other statement from the Fathers of Campos, already cited above (p. 11): *“A formal rupture with customs founded upon apostolic tradition, especially in matters of worship, involves schism (...) Now, a hereticizing liturgy tending toward desacralization has no basis whatever in Tradition; on the contrary, it constitutes a formal and violent rupture with all the rules that until now governed Catholic worship”* (A misa nova..., p. 35).

Invalidity of the Rite

The alleged validity of the new Mass has nothing whatever to do with the rite of the new Mass considered in itself. If a New Mass happens to be valid, it is not by virtue of the new rite, nor by virtue of the consecratory words of the new Mass—which were modified—but by virtue of the supplementary intention of the minister, by the subjective efficacy of the minister’s intention, and not by that of the *Novus Ordo*. This is wholly in conformity with the Short Critical Study of Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci. Let us recall note 15 of the Short Critical Study, which reads as follows: *“The words of the Consecration, by the manner in which they are inserted into the context of the Novus Ordo, may be valid by reason of the subjective efficacy of the minister’s intention. But they may also be invalid, insofar as they are no longer such by the very force of the words themselves, or more exactly, by the objective virtue of that mode of signifying which they possessed until now in the Mass”* (p. 61).

The validity of a Mass said according to the *Novus Ordo Missae* lies above and beyond the new rite of the Mass (*praeter novum ordinem Missae*). This is what must be made theologically and doctrinally quite clear. Thus, if a priest attached to the new Mass were to say—even in good faith—*“But surely you are not going to tell me that my Masses are invalid,”* the theological answer is as follows: If you follow the signification of the new Mass, which determines a narrative intention, then he certainly does not consecrate, and all his Masses are invalid for that reason alone. If, on the other hand, he has the intention of doing what the Church does—the Church as she has always been—despite the new rite, then he would certainly consecrate if he uses the formula in Latin, for in that case he would be taking the new rite materially, but not formally. If he uses the formula in the vernacular, then, according to the opinion of Saint Thomas, to which I adhere, he certainly does not consecrate—not through defect of intention, but through defect of formula. According to other theologians, however, he would consecrate, since they do not regard *pro multis* as belonging to the essence of the formula. But let him know that, in such a case, his Mass would, at best, be doubtfully valid, especially since in matters of the sacraments one must always follow the safer course. Morally speaking, one may not confect or administer doubtfully valid sacraments, for in so doing one exposes souls to idolatry or sacrilege.

Although there are authors who deny that the New Mass is heretical—as, for example, Fr. Dulac, who says: *“But we have never said that the new Mass is heretical”* (Itinéraires, suppl. no. 151, p. 40)—nevertheless, the logic of the reasoning and the motives he goes on to set forth cannot avoid leading to that conclusion. For if we simply follow what we are here expounding, without any preconceived notion, it is difficult to see how one could deny or maintain that the New Mass is not heretical. Let us consider the matter. Fr. Dulac himself goes on to say: *“Unfortunately, we might say that it is worse than that [that is, worse than heretical]: the New Mass is equivocal; it is flexible according to various meanings. Flexible according to the will. The individual will thus becomes the rule and measure of things. Formal and explicit heresy acts like a dagger thrust. Equivocality acts like a slow poison. Heresy attacks one precise article of dogma. Equivocality, while leaving untouched the outward habit of faith, thus wounds all the dogmas. One becomes formally heretical only by willing it. Equivocality can destroy a man’s faith without his knowing it. Heresy affirms what dogma denies, or denies what dogma affirms. Equivocality destroys the faith at its root by abstaining from affirming or denying, making revealed certainty into a matter of free opinion”* (ibid., pp. 40–41).

If what we have just underlined is true, then it is difficult to see how one can say that equivocality is not heresy in matters that belong to faith. Let the following reflection suffice to show the absurdity of refusing, under any circumstances, to identify equivocality and heresy: if one affirms that equivocality acts like a slow poison, that it destroys faith radically—that is, at the root—and that it turns the certainty of revelation into a matter of free opinion, then how can one say there is no heresy? One cannot turn the certainty of revelation into a matter of free opinion without falling into heresy; this is evident. Therefore, the equivocality of the New Mass is a slow poison, yet one that kills as surely as a dagger thrust. The effect is the same: death. It matters little whether the process be swift or slow. The question is one of cause and effect: such a thing produces such another thing.

We would never say that, because the process of gestation is slow—nine months—the act did not produce its effect. If the equivocality of the Mass destroys the root of faith by abstaining from affirming or denying, and by turning the certainty of revelation into mere opinion, then how can there not be heresy? It is a commonplace that doubt in matters of faith once defined is heresy. How can one relativize into an opinion the certainty of what has been revealed without being heretical? Either one falls into absurdity and contradiction, or else one accepts that equivocality, objectively considered in matters of faith, is heretical. *“Yes means yes, and no means no,”* Our Lord said; all else comes from the Evil One—that is to say, in matters of faith, yes means yes and no means no; all else is heretical. All else is heretical—let us not evade the point. Faith admits neither doubt nor equivocality. He who does not see this clearly must ask God for the faith. A rite equivocal in what is essential to the Holy Mass, and expressly elaborated as such, cannot fail to be heretical. To admit equivocality in matters of faith is heresy. Bread must be called bread, and wine wine; yes means yes, no means no; all else comes from the Evil One (Mt. 5:37), especially when the faith is at stake.

The Church excludes every equivocality from her rites, above all in the essential part, when she teaches and declares infallibly against Anglican *“ordinations,”* referring to the form, that: *“...they in no wise definitely signify the Order of the priesthood, or its grace and power...”* And when, after many years, the Anglicans wished to correct this defect of signification, once they

had themselves recognized it, the Church pointed out that *“that very addition, even if it might have been able to give the form its legitimate signification, was introduced too late”* (D. 1964).

The equivocality of the New Mass causes the signification to fail—a signification which must be determinate, and therefore unequivocal—necessary to every sacrament by definition, since it must signify what it produces *ex opere operato*.

Intention and Validity

Archbishop Lefebvre’s reasons in favor of the validity of the New Mass are general to every sacrament, and therefore extrinsic to the rite of the New Mass considered in itself; they are reasons *praeter ritum*: *“When the essential conditions for validity exist—that is, matter, form, intention, and a validly ordained priest—it is difficult to see how one could affirm that all new Masses are invalid.”*

When, however, he refers to the rite considered in itself, he says: *“The intention of the celebrant will conform itself to the new conception of the Mass, which before long will be none other than the Protestant conception. At that point the Mass will no longer be valid”* (La Nueva Misa, Icton ed., Buenos Aires, 1983, p. 19). *“All these changes in the new rite are truly dangerous, because little by little—especially for young priests who no longer have any notion of Sacrifice, of the Real Presence, of Transubstantiation, and for whom all this means nothing—these young priests lose the intention of doing what the Church does and no longer say valid Masses: the Real Presence is no longer there. Certainly, priests of a certain age, when they celebrate according to the new rite, still retain the faith of former times. They have said Mass according to the old rite for so many years, while maintaining the same intention, that one may then believe their Mass to be valid. But insofar as those intentions disappear, to that same extent the Masses will no longer be valid”* (Archbishop Lefebvre, La Messa di Lutero, p. 17).

From what has been said, it is evident that the rite of the New Mass, objectively considered in itself, does not possess the intention of the Church; and for that reason, this rite cannot, if it is followed as such, lead the celebrant to have the intention of the Church.

It is clear that, according to Archbishop Lefebvre, the intention of the New Mass is not the intention of the Church; otherwise he would not say: *“It seems to me that these young and new priests say: ‘No, no, I want to celebrate the New Mass and not the former one’; therefore they are effecting a rupture in the Church... It seems to me that this intention runs the risk of becoming the intention of priests who constantly celebrate the New Mass. After one or two years of celebrating this New Mass, they finally have the impression that they are truly celebrating the New Mass—a New Mass and no longer the former one—and therefore they no longer possess that conception of celebrating the Mass of old”* (Archbishop Lefebvre, Spiritual Conference, March 21, 1977, Rev. Tradición Católica, no. 86).

This text makes it evident that the intention of the Church does not correspond to the intention of the New Mass. It is therefore clear that the New Mass does not possess the intention of the Church, and for that very reason it is a rite which, as such, does not have the intention of

consecrating; there is a defect of intention in the rite itself, in the rite as such. For the rite of the New Mass, its texts, *“end indeed by exercising an influence upon the intention of many priests, especially the younger ones, distancing them from the intention of doing what the Catholic Church does, whence arises the danger of invalidity”* (Le Coup, p. 45).

A Mass that is not Catholic, even if only by the very fact of being equivocal and thereby favoring heresy, how can it be a valid Mass? This is a question that arises almost spontaneously. For a rite, as such, which is not Catholic—whatever the circumstances may be—cannot be valid.

In matters of faith and of the sacraments, according to theology, a non-Catholic rite is a sacramentally invalid rite; only Catholic sacraments produce what they signify. The Catholic rite, as such, guarantees the validity of the sacrament. An equivocal rite does not guarantee, as such and in itself, the validity of the sacrament, since its meaning is double—equivocal, ambiguous—and therefore it cannot, of itself, effect what it signifies. Theologically, an equivocal rite requires for its validity a determination beyond the rite itself (*praeter ritum*), one that makes only one of its meanings prevail; and according to whether that meaning be the Catholic one or the other, there will be validity or invalidity as regards the rite itself. The sacraments produce what they signify *ex opere operato*; if the signification is altered by equivocality, the rite cannot produce what it signifies.

The equivocality of the essential rite affects the whole formula in such wise that validity is compromised, for the equivocal rite, by its ambiguity, distorts the exact meaning required for the sacrament to produce its effect—to produce the grace that it signifies *ex opere operato*.

The ceremonial rite, being equivocal in general, relativizes the meaning of the essential rite, which must be determinate and precise in order to be a sacrament. Moreover, it confirms error concerning the sense and sacramental signification of the essential rite. Since the ceremonial rite is equivocal, it not only makes possible the Protestant interpretation, but—and this is graver still—it also reinforces the equivocality of sacramental signification in the essential rite, so that it cannot produce the grace it signifies *ex opere operato*, because the signification is equivocal instead of being determinate according to the mind of the Church.

For this reason, the explanatory note (no. 15 of the Short Critical Study) states most rightly: *“The words of the Consecration, by the manner in which they are inserted into the context of the Novus Ordo, may be valid by reason of the subjective efficacy of the minister’s intention. But they may also be invalid, insofar as they are no longer such by the very force of the words themselves, or more exactly, by the objective virtue of that mode of signifying which they possessed until now in the Mass”* (p. 61). This confirms that the rite as such, by the force of its words, is not capable of consecrating; if there is consecration, it is by the subjective efficacy of the priest’s intention, and not by that of the new rite in itself. The equivocal rite goes so far as to modify the mode of signifying of the essential rite.

Altered and Adulterated Formula

The formula—the essential rite—of the new Mass has been modified; it is therefore necessary to understand wherein this change consists and whether it affects the validity of the consecratory formula.

The new formula, when compared with the old, contains considerable changes, which we shall now examine.

The old formula of the Tridentine rite is: *Hoc est enim Corpus meum* (consecration of the bread), and *Hic est enim Calix Sanguinis mei, novi et aeterni testamenti: mysterium fidei, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum* (consecration of the wine).

The new formula must be considered both in Latin—as it was composed—and in the vernacular, which in practice is how it is used almost everywhere, a fact that introduces an even more notable change.

The new formula for the consecration of the bread, according to the Apostolic Constitution *Missale Romanum*, reads: *Accipite et manducate ex hoc omnes: Hoc est enim Corpus meum, quod pro vobis tradetur*; and that of the chalice: *Accipite et bibite ex eo omnes: Hic est enim Calix Sanguinis mei novi et aeterni testamenti, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum. Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.*

In Spanish, as likewise in the other vernacular languages, official editions have introduced errors that further aggravate the changes in the formula, such as the substitution of “*for many*” by “*for all*” in the consecration of the wine. Thus, for the consecration of the bread, the new vernacular formula gives: “*Take and eat all of you from it, for this is My Body, which will be delivered up for you*”; and for the consecration of the wine: “*Take and drink all of you from it, for this is the chalice of My Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be shed for you and for all men for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of Me.*”

The changes immediately noticeable at first sight in the new consecratory formula, both in Latin and in the vernacular—Spanish in this case—are the following: the words *Accipite et manducate ex hoc omnes* and *quod pro vobis tradetur* (“*Take and eat all of you from it*” and “*which will be delivered up for you*”) have been introduced at the beginning and at the end of the consecration of the bread. And in the consecration of the wine, “*Take and drink all of you from it*” is added at the beginning, and “*do this in memory of me*” at the end. Moreover, *mysterium fidei* is suppressed, and *pro multis* in the Latin is wrongly translated as “*for all.*”

The change, materially considered, may appear slight at first glance; yet formally regarded, as it ought to be, it is most grave indeed.

Why this distinction between material consideration—which makes the change seem of little importance—and formal consideration, which reveals it as something exceedingly grave? For the simple reason that, materially observed, the new Latin formula contains—at least at first sight—the essential substance of the old formula, with the sole suppression of the *mysterium fidei*, of which we shall speak later. The new formula as universally used in any of the vernacular languages, however, presents the further aggravating factor of the most serious change from “*for many*” (*pro multis*) to “*for all*” (*pro omnibus*), a change which, if we follow Saint Thomas,

the Common Doctor of the Church, whose doctrinal authority is decisive, renders the new formula invalid. Of this, too, we shall speak later.

Thus we see that the new formula materially presents—at least in appearance—the content of the old formula. For this reason Archbishop Lefebvre himself said: *“I acknowledge that in the Proemium of the 1970 edition, the doctrine of the Council of Trent is materially expressed”* (Itinéraires, May 1979, no. 233, p. 147), when he was questioned about the new Mass and asked, in an attempt to catch him off guard: *“Do you acknowledge that the doctrine of the Council of Trent on the Eucharistic Sacrifice is expressly and absolutely reaffirmed in no. 2 of the Proemium of the Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani promulgated by Pope Paul VI?”* (ibid., p. 147). But Archbishop Lefebvre clarified in that same response: *“But the very fact that an addition had to be made clearly shows the incomplete character of the 1969 edition. Besides, the body of the rites of the Mass remained as in the 1969 edition”* (ibid., p. 147).

In the new formula, the words of consecration are materially contained—without entering here into further dispute—but the formula is not the same, not even materially, since words have been added that did not belong to the formula; nor is it formally the same, for the whole signification has been profoundly altered.

Such an alteration is a veritable adulteration of the sacramental formula, and it is not immune from an impious profanation of the Church’s rite, undertaken in order to please Protestant heretics and schismatics—euphemistically called our *“separated brethren”*—in the name of ecumenism.

Those words added to the new formula did not, according to the rite of the Church, belong to the consecration of the bread and of the wine. They were indeed present in the rite, but they did not form part of its essence, for they belonged rather to the ceremonial rite as the context surrounding and enveloping the essential rite, that is, the formula itself.

The Church has always taught that the words of consecration in the Latin rite, which constitute the form of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, are: *Hoc est enim Corpus meum* for the bread, and *Hic est enim Calix Sanguinis mei, novi et aeterni testamenti: mysterium fidei: qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum* (cf. D. 715) for the wine.

In the section *De defectibus formae* (*“On defects of form”*) in the missal, it is warned that if anything is omitted from or changed in the form of the consecration of the **Body and Blood**, so that the words do not retain the same signification, the sacrament is not effected. If, however, something is added or removed that does not alter the signification, the sacrament is effected, though the priest sins gravely. Therefore, once the signification is altered, the formula is altered, and the sacrament is invalid.

The problem posed by the new Mass is therefore the following: why is it now said that the formula of consecration includes *Accipite et manducate ex hoc omnes... quod pro vobis tradetur* for the consecration of the bread, and *Accipite et bibite ex eo omnes... hoc facite in meam commemorationem* for the consecration of the wine, while suppressing the *mysterium fidei*, said to be of divine institution, and, to make matters worse, translating *pro multis* (*“for many”*) into the vernacular as *“for all”*?

If the new formula is the true one, then the old was not; and if the old is the true one, then the new is not. What cannot be maintained is that both are true, since they are different, and one contains what the other does not. If the words *Accipite et manducate... quod pro vobis tradetur* and *Accipite et bibite... hoc facite in meam commemorationem* were not formerly consecratory words, why are they so today by being inserted into the formula? The answer is simple and does not admit of many solutions: either the Church was mistaken for so long until the coming of the new Mass with its formula—which is absurd, impious, and even heretical, as though the Church did not know exactly which words were the words of consecration—or else the Church did not know what the essence of the sacrament was, though she proposes it as a matter of faith.

The Roman Catechism of the Council of Trent proposes as a matter of faith what the form of the consecration of the bread is: *“And so the Evangelists Saint Matthew and Saint Luke, as likewise the Apostle, teach us that the form is this: This is My Body.”* And for the consecration of the wine: *“It must certainly be believed that it is contained in these words: For this is the Chalice of My Blood, of the New and Eternal Testament, the mystery of faith, which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins”* (Part II, ch. IV, nos. 19, 21).

Signification, by the addition of words, may be changed through words bearing a different meaning or introducing another mode of signifying. With the new formula, the affirmative tone is reduced to a merely narrative tone; sacramental signification is changed by the addition of words that did not belong to the formula, and thus the tone itself is changed, becoming now purely narrative.

The Roman Catechism makes it quite clear that the words of the new formula are not part of the form of the consecration of the bread or of the wine, as the rite of the New Mass would have it: *“And although the Evangelist placed beforehand these words, Take and eat, it is evident that by them the consecration of the matter is not signified, but only its use”* (Part II, ch. IV, no. 20).

There is thus an evident doctrinal opposition, in something so important and delicate as the formula of consecration, between the Mass of all time and the new Mass.

In the consecration of the bread, the new form adds, as we have seen, *Accipite et manducate... (“Take and eat...”)* and *quod pro vobis tradetur (“which shall be delivered up for you”)*; and in the consecration of the wine: *Hoc facite in meam commemorationem (“Do this in memory of Me”)*, while suppressing the *mysterium fidei (“the mystery of faith”)*. The words *Hoc facite in meam commemorationem (“Do this in memory of Me”)* do not belong to the formula of the consecration of the wine either, for as the Church has always taught, by these words Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted His Apostles as priests: *“If anyone shall say that by the words, Do this in memory of Me (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24), Christ did not institute His Apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His Body and Blood, let him be anathema”* (D. 949). Therefore, if these are the words by which they were ordained priests—and at the same time consecrated bishops as well, since they received together both the priesthood and its fullness—it is evident that they are not, nor can they be, the words of the consecration of the wine, nor can they belong to the formula.

How can these words be part of the consecration of the wine, if they are the very words by which Our Lord Jesus Christ made His Apostles priests? The same words cannot signify two distinct things—ordination and consecration—at one and the same time. If one says that the words *“Do this in memory of Me”* form part of the consecration of the wine, one falls under the anathema pronounced by the Council of Trent (D. 949); there is no escape from this. The new formula for the consecration of the wine contradicts what the Council of Trent teaches.

The suppressed *mysterium fidei* (*“mystery of faith”*) is of apostolic origin and goes back to Christ Himself, as may be seen from the Roman Catechism of Trent: *“...the words eternal and mystery of faith have been handed down to us by holy tradition, which is the interpreter and guardian of Catholic truth”* (Part II, ch. IV, p. 21). Referring to the words *mysterium fidei*, Pope Innocent III says: *“We believe, therefore, that the form of the words, as it is found in the Canon, was received by the Apostles from Christ, and by their successors from them”* (D. 415). Saint Thomas teaches the same: *Quod autem additur, aeterni, et iterum, mysterium fidei, ex traditione Domini habetur, quae ad Ecclesiam per Apostolos pervenit* (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 9).

Why, then, these additions and suppressions in the new formula? Such is the question that arises in our mind. To obtain a correct answer, one must keep sacramental doctrine in view. The form of every sacrament must signify the grace that it produces and produce the grace that it signifies; there is thus a twofold reality: that of signifying grace and that of producing it. Everything that contributes to this is necessary to the form of the sacrament. Hence Saint Thomas teaches that the form of consecration must signify the conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the Body of Christ and the conversion of the whole substance of the wine into the Blood of Christ: *Oportet autem formam sacramenti significare id quod in sacramento efficitur. Unde forma consecrationis panis debet significare ipsam conversionem panis in Corpus Christi* (S. Th. III, q. 72, a. 2).

By adding or suppressing words in the form, as was done in the new Mass, one is in fact modifying sacramental signification: by adding *“Take and eat...”* and *“which shall be delivered up...”* to the formula for the consecration of the bread, and *“Take and drink...”* to the formula for the consecration of the wine, while suppressing the *“mystery of faith”* and adding further, *“Do this in memory of Me.”*

All of this alters the meaning of the formula. For let us not forget that Protestants reject the dogma of the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, and therefore, if they were to accept an ecumenical rite, that rite could signify nothing of what they do not accept. An equivocal rite was therefore necessary—that is, a rite that would make possible the interpretation of the Protestant Supper without Catholics perceiving it, at least not immediately. Thus, to introduce within the formula itself the words that formerly surrounded it in the rite was the tactic employed to attain this objective. The formula would no longer signify necessarily and exclusively sacramental signification as understood by the Catholic Church; rather, the Protestant interpretation would become possible. Hence the need for a formula ambiguous in appearance, yet one which in reality—objectively considered—was no longer specifically Catholic. Hence the need for a new formula not specified as Catholic, one containing nothing that would oblige a Catholic interpretation, but which, by its very equivocality, would open the way to a Protestant

interpretation. Ecumenical motives required that a formula be achieved that was not specifically Catholic, but one that would harbor and shelter the Protestant conception of the Eucharistic Supper.

The best way to achieve this was to preserve materially the words of the old formula—save for the *mysterium fidei*—and to incorporate into the formula or essential rite the surrounding words of the ceremonial rite, thereby adulterating sacramental signification.

The suppression of the *mysterium fidei* facilitated still more the conception of the Protestant Supper, for these words, inserted into the old formula, whose origin goes back to the Apostles who had received them in that form from Christ, signified what the Roman Catechism of the Council of Trent states: *“The words that follow, mystery of faith, are not opposed to the truth of the sacrament; rather, they signify that what lies hidden and so far beyond the reach of sight must be believed with firm faith”* (Part II, ch. IV, no. 23). This, then, is precisely what Protestants do not admit, and for that reason the *mysterium fidei* had to be suppressed, since it decisively obstructed the Protestant conception. Let us not forget that Protestants do not accept the sacraments, for to them they are only a symbol and not a reality—that is, not the grace produced by the sacrament. As Royo Marín says: *“Protestants, in general, also deny that the sacraments confer grace, as a consequence of their doctrine of the justification of the sinner by faith alone, which applies to us the merits of Christ. The sacraments are mere signs that stir up faith—nothing more”* (Teol. Mor., t. II, p. 25), and *“the modernists repeat doctrines of a similar kind: “The sacraments have no other end than to evoke in the soul of man the ever-beneficent presence of the Creator”* (condemned proposition: D. 2041) (ibid., p. 25).

The matter is thus clear: within the Protestant conception, the sacraments are mere signs that excite faith; consequently, the *mysterium fidei* had to disappear, since it clearly expressed the signification of sacramental reality, and for Protestants it has no meaning. The Roman Catechism explains the reason for the words *“mystery of faith”* in the formula: *“For it is called a ‘mystery of faith’ because by faith we behold the Blood of Christ hidden beneath the species of wine”* (Part II, ch. IV, no. 23).

Mysterium fidei signifies the Passion of Christ, represented by His Blood shed, which is truly present in this sacrament, hidden beneath the appearances of wine, and which is believed by faith alone. This is the reason why it belongs to the formula, although it does not refer directly to the conversion itself. It was for this reason that they suppressed the *mysterium fidei* in the new formula of the New Mass. Thus Protestants could have a sure guarantee that there was no sacrament, since sacramental signification was being adulterated; and the suppression of the *mysterium fidei* signifies the suppression of the Mass.

By all these innovations, the new formula loses its specific character as a consecratory formula and becomes a mere narration of a past event. The narrative tone, indicating nothing more than a historical recital, is the very reason why these changes were introduced. The sacramental formula, which must signify the grace it produces and produce the grace it signifies, has been deftly and most subtly adulterated—about as apt to produce its effect as a revolver without bullets. The new formula has lost both the sacramental signification and the affirmative, imperative tone it possessed in order to effect the sacrament. Hence, if the celebrant conforms himself to the intention of the new rite, he does not consecrate. In order to consecrate, he must

conform himself to the rite of the Church, taking the new rite only materially, and thus consecrate *praeter ritum*—not by the power of the new rite, but by the intention of willing to do what the Church does yesterday, today, and forever, and not what the new ecumenical rite does.

In order to grasp the profound and subtle adulteration wrought by the *Novus Ordo*, it is necessary to recall the Catholic doctrine concerning the words of consecration, set forth unsurpassably by Saint Thomas.

In analyzing the formula of the consecration of the wine, Saint Thomas raises an objection both profound and most apt for shedding light upon the matter, fitting our purpose like a glove.

Saint Thomas poses the following objection: Why, if the formula for the bread, *Hoc est corpus meum*, is complete and effects the consecration, is not the formula for the consecration of the wine likewise complete with the words *Hic est calix sanguinis mei* alone, without the rest being necessary? To this Saint Thomas replies, with all doctrinal clarity and truth, that although for the consecration of the bread the formula *Hoc est corpus meum* perfectly effects that consecration without need of further words, nevertheless for the consecration of the wine the words *Hic est calix sanguinis mei* are not sufficient; the remaining words are required—*novi et aeterni testamenti, mysterium fidei, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum*—in order that the consecration of the wine may take place. And the reason is this: the Passion is manifested in the Blood consecrated separately from the Body; therefore, in the formula for the consecration of the wine, mention is made of the shedding of the Blood, which, separated from the Body, represents the Passion of Christ (cf. S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 1).

In the Passion of Christ, of which the Sacrifice of the Mass is the memorial, the other parts of the Body were not separated as the Blood was separated (cf. S. Th. III, q. 76, a. 2, ad 2).

According to Saint Thomas, the reason why the Holy Mass—the Sacrifice of the Cross renewed in an unbloody manner upon the altar—does not take place with only the words of the consecration of the wine, as is the case with those of the consecration of the bread, is this: *“the Blood consecrated separately represents the Passion of Christ expressly; therefore it is more fitting that mention of the effect of the Passion be made in its consecration than in the consecration of the Body, which was the subject that suffered”* (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 2).

Sanguis seorsum consecratus expresse passionem Christi repraesentat, ideo potius in consecratione sanguinis fit mentio de effectu passionis quam in consecratione corporis, quod est passionis subiectum (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 2).

With this brief yet richly instructive exposition of Saint Thomas, the shortsighted and incomplete view of those theologians falls to the ground—namely, those who consider only the words *Hic est calix sanguinis mei* to be essential to the formula of the consecration of the wine, discarding the words that follow. A grave theological error, unfortunately, because it fails to take into account that the Eucharist is not only a Sacrament but also a Sacrifice, and as such this too must be signified—which takes place through the shedding of the Blood representing the Passion of Christ.

Only a view deficient in sacramental and theological depth could have forgotten that the formula of the consecration of the Holy Mass requires a twofold sacramental signification, since according to the universal sacramental law every sacrament must signify that which grace produces: *“The sacraments of the New Law are sacred signs that produce sanctifying grace in the one who receives them. (A truth expressly defined as of faith)”* (Royo Marín, *Teología para Seglares*, BAC, Madrid, 1984, vol. II, p. 21). Yet the Holy Mass is not a mere sacrament; it has the distinctive character of being a sacrifice, by which the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross are renewed in an unbloody manner, such that it is a sacrifice produced—or rather reproduced—sacramentally until the end of time. We are therefore in the presence of a sacrificial sacrament, a sacramental act, a sacramental reality, a sacramental mystery. As Dom Vonier says, with both depth and clarity: *“it is a sacrament which is at the same time a sacrifice—or better still, it is the sacrifice which is a sacrament. The term ‘sacramental sacrifice’ is without any doubt the best term...”* (*La Clef de la Doctrine Eucharistique*, Les Éditions de l’Abeille, Lyon, 1943, p. 89).

The Holy Mass therefore requires, as a sacrifice accomplished sacramentally—that is, as a sacrifice sacramentally effected—a signification that is doubly necessary, both sacramental and sacrificial; in other words, the sacrament and the sacrifice must be signified, or rather the sacramental sacrifice itself, through the double consecration and through the Passion of Christ.

Thus sacramental theology requires that the consecratory formula signify the sacramental sacrifice—the sacrifice and the sacrament—both by the things themselves and by the words.

The double consecration signifies the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ by the reality of the thing itself—that is, by the Body and Blood of Christ—but it does not signify it by the words.

The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which constitute the Sacrifice of the Cross, being sacramentally effected, must also be signified by words; and this is done by the words expressing the shedding of the Blood, contained in the formula of the consecration of the wine.

For this reason Gonet rightly says: *In reliquis sacramentis non sufficit, ut effectus sacramentalis exprimat solis rebus, sed requiritur ut etiam exprimat verbis, id ipsum significantibus quod res repraesentant: ergo nec sat erit ad sacrificium novae legis exprimendum, sola expressio rerum, sed requiritur praeterea significatio verborum, cum non minus significatio sacrificii, quam Sacramenti, in nova lege ordinata sit ad instituendos Christi fideles* (*Clypeus Theol. Thom.*, ed. Vives, Paris, 1875, t. VI, Tract IV, Disp. VII, art. 2, §2, no. XXV, p. 412).

The theological principle is clear and simple: just as every sacrament must signify the grace it produces, so too the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass—which is sacrament and sacrifice, or rather a sacrifice sacramentally accomplished—requires that the sacramental sacrifice be signified as sacrifice, not only by the thing itself, namely the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, but also by the words, as sacramental theology requires.

The Sacrifice of the Cross must be signified by words in order that the sacramental reality may be produced. The double consecration, performed separately over the bread and the wine, is not sufficient in itself to signify the sacrifice sacramentally reproduced or renewed, since

sacramental signification necessarily requires words that manifest and signify what the sacrament effects: *Oportet autem formam sacramenti significare id quod in sacramento efficitur* (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 2). Words belong to the form of the sacrament by reason of the meaning they express: *Verba pertinent ad formam sacramenti ratione sensus significati* (S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 8, ad 2).

The sacramental reality of the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass must be signified and expressed by words that signify the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross: *Quia ita se habent formae sacramentales ad significandum effectum sacramenti* (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 2). And this is signified by the words that allude to the shedding of the Blood, since it is precisely the shedding of Christ's Blood that best represents His Passion and Death, that is, His Sacrifice.

The Blood consecrated separately from the Body represents, as a thing (*ut res*), the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, His Sacrifice; but it does not represent it by words, as every sacrament requires. For this reason the Church has always said that the formula of the consecration of the wine is: *Hic est calix sanguinis mei, novi et aeterni testamenti, mysterium fidei, qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum*. And Saint Thomas considers these words to belong to the substance—or essence—of the form, as pertaining to the integrity of the utterance, without which the formula would remain truncated, like a head severed from the body.

The Church, through her magisterium, sums up very well the principles of sacramental theology: *“In the rite for effecting and administering any sacrament, a distinction is rightly made between the ceremonial part and the essential part, which is usually called matter and form. And all know that the sacraments of the New Law, being sensible signs and producing invisible grace, must both signify the grace they produce and produce the grace they signify. This signification, although it must be present in the whole essential rite—that is, in matter and form—belongs nevertheless principally to the form, since matter is in itself the undetermined part, which is determined by the form”* (D. 1963).

The words of the double consecration must signify what they produce and produce what they signify. It is therefore evident that they cannot produce what they do not signify, contrary to the position of those theologians who, regrettably, maintain against the Church's bimillennial practice that only the words *Hic est enim calix sanguinis mei* belong to the essence of the form of the consecration of the wine, while the words that follow do not. For by doing so they leave unsigned what the sacrament produces; they leave the form of the consecration of the wine without signifying that which it produces—namely, the shedding of the Blood separated from the Body in the death of Christ. In other words, one would have the Body and Blood of Christ produced by the sacrament without the sacrament having signified them as sacrifice, and this runs contrary to the principle of sacramental theology expressly taught by the magisterium of the Church.

The fact of the double consecration, considered in itself, does not signify by words—but only by things—the Sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, His Passion and Death. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the form of the consecration express by words, and not by things alone, the Sacrifice of the Cross. This is fittingly expressed by the shedding of the Blood, which signifies in unsurpassable fashion the death of Christ. Without this signification by words, there

is no sacramental reality, no sacrament, no sacrifice sacramentally effected, as the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass must be.

At this point, the question of the term enim (“for” or “because”), which is not part of the form yet nevertheless stands within the formula, might lead someone to think that the added words “*Take and eat...*” could likewise have been added, just as the word enim was. But the cases are not the same, for the conjunction enim comes from Saint Peter himself, who, besides being Pope, possessed all the privileges proper to the Apostles, as Saint Thomas explains, and it serves to join what follows to what precedes: haec coniunctio enim apponitur in hac forma secundum consuetudinem Romanae Ecclesiae a beato Petro Apostolo derivatam. Et hoc propter continuationem ad verba praecedentia. Et ideo non est de forma: sicut nec praecedentia formam (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 2, ad 5). Moreover, it is but a single term, a single copulative word, not a cluster of words with a meaning of their own.

It is fitting that we keep in mind Saint Thomas’s explanation of the words in the formula of the wine, so that we may see their importance. The words Hic est enim sanguinis mei, which form the first part of the formula for the consecration of the wine, signify the conversion of the substance of the wine into the substance of the Blood of Christ; that is, they signify transubstantiation.

By the words that follow, the sacrifice is signified: the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ through the shedding of His Blood. The power of the Blood shed in the Passion, which is wrought in this sacrament, is thereby indicated. That power is ordered to three things. First and principally, to the acquisition of the eternal inheritance, according to the words (Heb. 10:19): “*We have confidence to enter into the sanctuary by the Blood of Christ.*” To designate this it is said: Novi et aeterni testamenti. Second, to the justice of grace, which is by faith, according to these words (Rom. 3:25–26): “*Whom God hath proposed as a propitiation through faith in His Blood, to the showing of His justice... that He Himself may be just, and the justifier of him who is of the faith of Jesus Christ.*” And with respect to this there is added mysterium fidei. Third, to the removal of the obstacle to the two foregoing effects, namely sins, according to that saying of the Apostle (Heb. 9:14): “*The Blood of Christ... shall cleanse our conscience from dead works,*” that is, from sins; and with respect to this there is added: qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur in remissionem peccatorum (cf. S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3).

It is therefore clear that the form of the consecration must signify both the sacrament and the sacrifice—or better still, the sacrifice sacramentally effected. And since it is the shedding of the Blood that best represents the Passion of Christ, it is in the formula of the consecration of the wine that the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, His Sacrifice, is fittingly and necessarily signified. Therefore all the words belong to the substance—the essence—of the form of the consecration of the wine, and they are of apostolic origin, as Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches, he who is the sole common Doctor of the Catholic Church, and by that very fact her most eminent representative as Doctor of the Church.

To consider only the opening words of the formula for the consecration of the wine, while disregarding those that follow, is to fail to take into account either the Church’s apostolic tradition or the doctrine of the Church as expounded and represented by Saint Thomas.

The Restrainer and the *Mysterium Fidei*

It is well known that the Antichrist, according to Saint Paul, will appear when the restraining obstacle has been taken out of the way: *“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and is lifted up above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he were God. Do you not remember that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now you know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity already worketh; only he who now holdeth, let him hold until he be taken out of the way. And then that wicked one shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall kill with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming”* (2 Thess. 2:5-8).

What is that famous obstacle which, according to Saint Paul, restrains the appearance of the Antichrist?

Saint Thomas gives the answer, citing Pope Saint Leo the Great: the obstacle is the Roman Empire, which did not cease, but was changed from temporal into spiritual, as Pope Leo says in his sermon on the Apostles. Hence, the defection must be understood not only as a falling away from the temporal Roman Empire, but also from the spiritual one—that is, from the Catholic faith of the Roman Church. This sign is fitting, because just as at Christ’s first coming the Roman Empire ruled over all, so conversely the sign of the Antichrist’s coming is defection from it: *Dicendum est, quod nondum cessavit, sed est commutatum de temporali in spirituale, ut dicit Leo Papa in sermone de Apostolis. Et ideo dicendum est, quod discessio a Romano imperio debet intelligi, non solum a temporali, sed a spirituali, scilicet a fide catholica Romanae ecclesiae. Est autem hoc conveniens signum, quod sicut Christus, quando venit, Romanum imperium omnibus dominabatur, ita e converso signum Antichristi est discessio ab eo* (Super Epistolas S. Pauli, II ad Thess. 2:5, ed. Marietti, 1953, no. 35, p. 198).

The obstacle, then, according to Pope Saint Leo the Great and Saint Thomas, is the Catholic faith. For just as the Roman Empire ruled over the whole civilized world at the first coming of Christ, so likewise the sign of the appearance of the Antichrist will be the disintegration of the spiritual Roman Empire—the faith of the Roman Catholic Church—that is, the disappearance, the eclipse, of the Catholic faith even in its loftiest and most sacred expression: the *Mysterium Fidei*, the Holy Mass.

The obstacle is the Catholic faith in general, and in a particular way its finest and most sublime expression: the *mysterium fidei*, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. As Pablo Caballero Sánchez, C.M., says: *“They would know that the obstacle which prevents the apotheotic coming of that Chief—at once agent and thing (neuter and masculine in Saint Paul’s texts)—is the sacrifice and oblation spoken of by Daniel...”* (La Profecía de las 70 semanas de Daniel y los destinos del pueblo judío, Ed. Luz, Madrid, 1946, p. 97). The obstacle, then, is the Catholic faith, and its most sublime and sacred expression: the *Mysterium Fidei*, the immemorial Holy Mass.

The suppression of the immemorial Mass, that marvelous synthesis of the Mystery of Faith: *Quia et ipse sanguis Christi occulto modo est in hoc sacramento; et ipsa passio Christi occulte*

fuit figurata in veteri testamento (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 5). (*“For the Blood of Christ itself is present in this sacrament in a hidden manner; and the Passion of Christ itself was likewise prefigured in a hidden manner in the Old Testament.”*)

The true Mass, mystery of faith, heart and center of Catholic worship, is the ineffable synthesis of the Catholic religion, the object of faith: Quod dicitur sacramentum fidei, quasi fidei obiectum: quia quod sanguis Christi secundum rei veritatem sit in hoc sacramento, sola fide tenetur. Ipsa etiam Christi passio per fidem iustificat (S. Th. III, q. 78, a. 3, ad 6). (*“It is called the sacrament of faith as being the object of faith, because that the Blood of Christ is truly in this sacrament is held by faith alone; and the Passion of Christ itself likewise justifies by faith.”*)

The Holy Mass is therefore the summary and synthesis of the Catholic faith and worship, as Saint Alphonsus Mary de Liguori says: *“The Mass is the Church’s best and most beautiful treasure... For in the Mass, the Incarnate Word sacrifices Himself to the Eternal Father”* (Oeuvres Complètes, t. XI, p. 5).

The Mass is therefore the obstacle that hinders or restrains the appearance of the Antichrist; and once that obstacle is removed, nothing will any longer delay his manifestation. Thus the prophecies of Daniel take on their fullest depth.

The prophet Daniel clearly foretells the abolition of the Holy Mass—the perpetual sacrifice: *“And he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation”* (Dan. 9:27). *“And they shall profane the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the continual sacrifice: and they shall place there the abomination unto desolation”* (Dan. 11:31).

Let no one say that Daniel’s prophecies refer only to the past, for the Gospel itself shows that they are eminently apocalyptic: *“When therefore you shall see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place: he that readeth let him understand... For there shall be then great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be. And unless those days had been shortened, no flesh should be saved: but for the sake of the elect those days shall be shortened”* (Matt. 24:15, 21).

Archbishop Straubinger comments on this passage as follows: *“An allusion to Daniel’s prophecy (see Dan. 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). In 1 Macc. 1:57 this prophecy is applied to the profanation of the temple in the time of the Maccabees. Jesus teaches that it shall be fulfilled again in the times He announces”* (note on Matt. 24:15).

Scio, referring to Matthew 24:16, says: *“Saint Jerome and other ancient authors have applied these words to the end of the world and to the consummation of the ages.”*

Commenting on Daniel 12:11, which announces that *“the perpetual sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination unto desolation shall be set up,”* Archbishop Straubinger says: *“By the perpetual sacrifice Saint Jerome, along with other Fathers, here understands the worship of the Eucharist and all the solemn worship of the Church, which in the times of Antichrist shall be hindered. Abomination unto desolation: this refers to Antichrist. See what we have said on this subject in the notes to verses 26 and 27 of chapter 9.”* There we read, among other things: *“For his part, Saint Jerome alludes to this text when commenting on Matthew 24:15 and*

admits that the abomination may refer to Antichrist, an opinion widespread among the Fathers” (note 26 on Dan. 9:26). “The words abomination of desolation (*Vulgate: abomination of desolation*) refer, according to the ancient interpreters, either to the idol of Jupiter set up by Antiochus Epiphanes (*cf. 1 Macc. 1:57*), or to the image of Caesar with which Pilate profaned the temple, or to some similar profanation. Jesus alludes to this passage in His great eschatological discourse (*Matt. 24:15*), teaching that it shall be fulfilled again in the times He announces. Hence not all the Fathers apply this prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem, but rather to the times of the end. The Doctor Maximus himself admits that it may concern Antichrist, a view maintained among others by Saint Hippolytus (in a Coptic fragment published in *Sefarad, 1946, p. 359*), Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, and Saint Athanasius” (note 27 on Dan. 9:27).

The correspondence, astonishing as it is, leaves no room for doubt—especially if we recall the abomination of desolation in the holy place, when in Assisi, in the church of Saint Peter, the statue of Buddha was placed upon the tabernacle. He who has eyes to see, let him see.

Scio also cites Saint Jerome: “By the perpetual sacrifice they understand, with Saint Jerome, the Eucharist and all solemn worship, which no one shall dare to offer publicly” (note 17 on Dan. 12:11), as sadly happens today with the immemorial Mass, which no one dares to celebrate publicly save a faithful remnant under two wise and holy bishops, Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and Bishop Antonio de Castro Mayer.

Conclusion

We must keep clearly in mind that the sacraments, being sensible signs instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ to signify and produce sanctifying grace in our souls, can never be equivocal or ambiguous. To admit that a sacrament is—or even may be—equivocal is to deny, or at least to cast doubt upon, the truth that the sacraments produce the grace they signify by the very fact of the rite being performed (*ex opere operato*). One would thereby deny or call into doubt a truth expressly defined as of faith, which is heresy; for: “If anyone shall say that by means of the sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred *ex opere operato*... let him be anathema” (D. 851).

A rite such as that of the New Mass, which is equivocal both as a whole and in detail, since “these ambiguities are introduced and repeated in the very formula of the consecration and, in general, throughout the entire *Novus Ordo*” (Short Critical Study, p. 33), cannot be Catholic. With the added aggravation that, if one admits an equivocal rite in its essence—that is, in the sacramental formula—one falls into heresy, since the sacraments produce *ex opere operato* the grace they signify, and to deny this or place it in doubt is heretical. To admit an equivocal rite in the sacramental formula is to admit that the sacrament may or may not produce the grace it signifies *ex opere operato*; and this stands condemned. Another matter is not having perceived this, and therefore not having pointed it out or denounced it clearly and effectively. But the truth remains: the light of truth cannot be permanently eclipsed or ignored.

“The Church,” as Royo Marín says—and we would add, no Pope either—*“has no power to institute new sacraments or substantially to alter any of those instituted by Jesus Christ”* (Teología para Seglares, BAC, vol. II, Madrid, 1984, p. 6).

Therefore let not Paul VI—however much Pope he may have been—come to change the Most Holy Rite of the Catholic Church into a new Protestantized Mass, in the making of which six Protestant ministers collaborated (Max Thurian, Smith, Konneth, Sephard, Jasper, and Georges), adulterating the formula of consecration in order to leave us an equivocal, ambiguous, polyvalent rite that does not embody the faith of Trent, nor the essential dogmas that constitute the Holy Catholic, Apostolic, Roman Mass. For, as the Short Critical Study says wisely and most rightly: *“The definition of the Mass is limited to the sole notion of a ‘supper’... But all this implies neither the Real Presence, nor the truth of the Sacrifice, nor the sacramentality of the consecrating priest, nor the intrinsic value of the Eucharistic Sacrifice.... In a word, this supper implies none of those essential ‘dogmatic values’ of the Mass which constitute its true definition”* (p. 25).

No Pope has power or authority to innovate either in doctrine or in sacramental rites, *“for the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter so that, by His revelation, they might make known a new doctrine, but so that, with His assistance, they might religiously guard and faithfully expound the revelation handed down by the Apostles, that is, the deposit of faith”* (D. 1836).

An equivocal rite in what is essential—that is, in the consecratory formula—is inadmissible from every point of view according to the doctrine and theology of the Church.

That the formula of consecration should not signify in a determinate—that is, unequivocal—manner what it produces is a matter of the utmost gravity; and to accept it is to accept what has been condemned, which is heresy.

The equivocality of the essential rite—the formula—of the new Mass is produced by the introduction of words that did not belong to the formula, whereby the signification and sacramental tone are altered.

The general or overall equivocality of the New Mass—both essential rite and ceremonial rite—causes the sacramental formula to be objectively determined according to the Protestant sense and not the Catholic sense. It is an equivocality introduced deliberately, not by circumstantial error or momentary inadvertence, but by ecumenical design. One might say that it is a determined—or willed—equivocality, and not a merely indeterminate or accidental one.

The adulteration of the new formula is such that the consecration does not take place by the very force of the words (*vi verborum*). There is no consecration by the power of the words of the new formula; that is to say, the New Mass is invalid according to the power of the words of the new formula. That there should be no consecration by the power of the consecratory words means that the formula has been denatured—emptied of its strength, enervated.

The new formula does not signify, and consequently does not produce, what as consecratory words it ought to signify and produce. The context and the text of the new formula vitiate the

sacramental signification and the consecratory efficacy of the words, reducing them to a mere historical narration. Whether Catholics—be they of the Church’s hierarchy or simple faithful—perceive or fail to perceive this sacrilegious adulteration born of perfidious and apostate ecumenism changes nothing whatever in the facts themselves.

To change the rite of the Church—to modify it—into an equivocal rite expressly intended as such for ecumenical ends is proof of a defect of intention. The case of the Anglican rite is clear evidence of this. There is a double defect: of form, by lack of signification, and of intention, by changing the rite of the Church.

The New Mass said in any of the vernacular languages—Spanish, French, English, German, Italian, and so forth—has the further aggravating defect that many (pro multis) is mistranslated as all (pro omnibus), whereby, if we follow Saint Thomas, the new formula for the consecration of the wine is invalid.

If God permits the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass to be persecuted and, in practice, abolished, as is happening almost everywhere today, let us not forget that it is because of the sins of men who turn away from God. For as the prophet Daniel says: *“And he was magnified even unto the prince of the host: and he took away from him the continual sacrifice, and cast down the place of his sanctuary. And strength was given him against the continual sacrifice because of sins: and truth shall be cast down on the ground, and he shall do and prosper”* (Dan. 8:11-12).

The masterstroke of Satan—nothing less—as Archbishop Lefebvre made plain. Only thus are the words of Our Lord explained, those words concerning the little faithful flock and the scarcity of faith at the hour of His Second Coming: *“Fear not, little flock”* (Luke 12:32), and *“But yet the Son of Man, when He cometh, shall He find, think you, faith on earth?”* (Luke 18:8). On this point Archbishop Straubinger comments: *“This striking announcement made by Christ calls for deep meditation, notwithstanding His promise of assistance to the Church until the consummation of the age. It is the great mystery which Saint Paul calls the mystery of iniquity and of apostasy (2 Thess. 2), and which the Lord Himself describes many times, above all in His great eschatological discourse (Matt., chap. 24)”* (note on Luke 18:8).

The abolition of the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by the very authorities of Rome, by the reigning Pope himself—from Paul VI to John Paul II—with the obsequious collaboration of the clergy, cardinals, bishops, and priests, is a true mystery of iniquity and apostasy in the sense of Saint Paul’s expression. It is intelligible only because Rome shall lose the faith and become the seat of Antichrist, according to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary at La Salette. This is the most terrible and tragic thing that the Mother of Heaven, in her love and mercy for her children, could have said.

The abolition of the *Mysterium Fidei*, of the Holy Sacrifice of the Catholic Mass, is a fact; and now it is only just and logical that the consequences necessarily following from it must be paid.

By its ecumenical spirit, the New Mass is an adulteration of the Catholic Mass, turning it into a veritable parody. This has been Satan’s masterstroke, accomplished with the complicity and cynicism of a corrupt and perfidious clergy and hierarchy.

Saint Alphonsus had already prophesied as much when he said: *“The Mass is the Church’s best and fairest treasure... It is for this reason that the devil has always sought to banish this holy sacrifice from the world by means of heretics, making them precursors of Antichrist, who will strive before all else to abolish—and will in fact abolish—the holy sacrifice of the altar, as a punishment for the sins of men, according to Daniel’s prophecy: ‘and strength was given him against the continual sacrifice because of sins’ (Dan. 8:12)”* (Oeuvres Complètes, t. II, p. 5).

Dom Guillou, in the epilogue of his book, cites a passage from Dom Guéranger: *“If the Sacrifice of the Mass were extinguished, we should not be long in relapsing into the depraved state in which the nations stained by paganism once lay immersed; and such shall be the work of Antichrist”* (Le Canon Romain, Fideliter ed., 1989, p. 149).

As Fr. René Marie says, the object of ecumenism is *“to remake the unity of Christians, a unity broken after the rise of the various Protestantisms... The task, therefore, was to clear away the obstacles to ecumenism”* (pp. 8–9).

Obviously, if Protestants do not wish to convert, then the obstacle can be none other than the faith itself and its most sublime expression, the Holy Mass, the center of all Catholic worship. Thus Fr. René warned when he said: *“But the greatest obstacle to ecumenism continued to be the Mass, since it is the affirmation of the whole Catholic faith, inflexibly transmitted from apostolic origins”* (p. 9).

And in an almost prophetic tone, Fr. René Marie affirms: *“The Mass thus appears as the greatest obstacle to ecumenism. Consequently, in order to carry out the ecumenical project, that obstacle had to be reduced”* (p. 10). Therefore it was necessary that *“a new Mass be introduced; that the new Mass should no longer be an obstacle to ecumenism, by calling upon theologians of diverse Christian confessions to devise a project for a Mass that would offend no belief”* (p. 11).

In conclusion, Fr. René Marie affirms that one *“can do no other than acknowledge—in the light of the facts—that the New Mass was entirely conceived and elaborated according to the ecumenical spirit, adaptable to the different beliefs of the various churches... This ecumenical Mass is no longer the clear and exclusive expression of the Catholic faith”* (p. 19).

An ecumenical Mass, by definition, runs contrary to the Faith, for it seeks unity among diverse creeds, and this is pure heresy. An equivocal rite, expressly intended to serve opposed forms of worship—to be interchangeable—runs contrary to the signification of the sacramental words, which is according to faith (cf. S. Th. III, q. 60, a. 7, ad 1).

Fr. Castellani makes an observation by bringing forward an extremely interesting citation from Domingo Soto, one that sheds much light: *“...we Catholics alone number nine hundred million. But one must not place too much trust in numbers, because we know that of those nine hundred million there will come a day when only a handful of men will remain, for when the Son of Man returns, do you think He will find faith upon the earth? For faith will remain, though among few and persecuted souls, in the last times. But faith in this sense signifies organized faith, that is the Church,”* says the theologian Domingo Soto, *“shall be taken out of the way”* (Catecismo para Adultos, Patria Grande ed., Buenos Aires, 1979, pp. 35–36).

We are convinced that the ecumenical New Mass is the fruit of a pact denounced by Archbishop Lefebvre: *“A pact of non-aggression has been concluded between the Church and Freemasonry. This has been covered over with the name of aggiornamento, of ‘openness to the world,’ of ‘ecumenism.’ Henceforth, the Church agrees no longer to be the one true religion, the sole way of salvation”* (La Iglesia Nueva, p. 124). And this, precisely, is yet another heresy.

If a dogma of faith is contradicted, the qualification of heresy cannot be avoided. Now Archbishop Lefebvre affirms the following: *“The fundamental dogmas of the Holy Mass no longer appear very clearly, and indeed they are even contradicted...”* (La Nueva Misa, p. 116). It is therefore difficult to see how one could deny that the New Mass deserves to be called heretical, since it even contradicts the fundamental dogmas of the Holy Mass. Moreover, the mere voluntary omission of things pertaining to the faith, as is rightly stated in the Short Critical Study (p. 27), is at least in practice equivalent to their denial; and this is nothing other than heresy.

To claim that the New Mass, while serving both Protestant worship and Catholic worship, nevertheless remains a Catholic Mass, a Catholic rite, is a grave error.

The New Mass is an abomination in the holy place; it is fornication and spiritual adultery; it is a rite that has been adulterated and corrupted. It is a rite that has ceased to be Catholic and is therefore sacramentally invalid.

The New Mass presupposes the principles of the Protestant Supper, principles that deny the dogmas of faith constituting the very reality of the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass.

The principles and conception of the Protestant Supper presupposed by the New Mass are these:

1. The denial of the reality of the Sacrifice of the Mass itself in general, and of the propitiatory sacrifice in particular, admitting at most only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.
Thus the notion of sacrifice is suppressed, though sacrifice requires three elements essential to its reality: the victim (offered and immolated), the minister (the priest) who performs the offering and immolation, and the immolation itself (the sacrificial act or action) by which the victim is sacrificed. These three elements are rejected by the conception of the Protestant Supper.
2. The Protestant conception of the Supper thus denies the victim who is offered and immolated; it denies the real, substantial, and personal presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ under the species—that is, the accidents—of bread and wine, whereas in the true Eucharist He is present truly, really, and substantially, and not merely, as Protestants say, in some purely spiritual *“real presence.”*
3. The Protestant conception denies the priesthood; it denies the sacerdotal character of the minister who performs the sacrifice.

The priest, alter Christus, accomplishes the sacrifice, thus preserving the identity of both the same victim and the same priest: Christ Himself.

4. The Protestant Supper denies the immolation itself whereby the sacrifice is accomplished; it denies the sacrificial, sacramental action performed by the priest upon the victim; it denies the consecration whereby the immolation of Our Lord is effected, He having been made present by the words—the formulas—uttered by the priest, through which Transubstantiation is wrought, that is, the change effected in the substance of the bread and the wine, so that they become the substance of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, together with His soul and divinity.

As a seal upon all that has been said concerning the New Mass, and in honor of Archbishop Lefebvre, that great Eucharistic champion, we wish to conclude with a citation from him, taken from his conference at Florence, Italy, on February 15, 1975, and published in a booklet entitled *La Messa di Lutero* (p. 7), which reads as follows:

“Two weeks ago I was in England, and I learned that an Anglican bishop has adopted the new Catholic rite for his entire diocese. He declared: ‘This new rite is perfectly in accord with our Protestant ideas.’ It is therefore clear that Protestants no longer have any difficulty in adopting the new rite. (...) Between the new rite and the old, there is thus a difference that is essential; it is not an accidental difference...”

If this is true, then it is evident that the New Mass is heretical and invalid; it is a pseudo-mass. Thus Da Silveira can affirm in the conclusion of his study on the New Mass:

“It is a question of the principle that a formal rupture with customs founded upon apostolic Tradition, especially in matters of worship, involves schism. Now, a liturgy tending toward ‘desacralization’ has no basis whatever in Tradition; on the contrary, it constitutes a formal and violent rupture with all the rules that have hitherto governed Catholic worship.”
(Theological and Moral Implications of the New *“Ordo Missae”*, mimeograph, São Paulo, Brazil, 1971, p. 221).

We make our own the affirmation that Archbishop Lefebvre maintained concerning the New Mass in his sermon of June 29, 1976:

“...we are convinced that precisely this new rite of the Mass expresses a new Faith, a Faith that is not ours, a Faith that is not the Catholic Faith. This new Mass is a symbol; it is an expression; it is an image of a new faith, of a modernist faith.”
(Itinéraires, special issue, Dec. 1976, p. 125).

The New Mass is evil because its celebration has been denatured by being desacralized, because its rite, as such, no longer corresponds to the nature of sacrifice.

Once the New Mass has been denatured with regard to sacrifice, it carries with it the denaturing of its constitutive elements: the victim offered and immolated, the minister or priest who performs the immolation, and the sacrificial action by which the immolation itself is

accomplished. These realities, which constitute the essence of the Mass, are in the New Mass profoundly affected.

The New Mass is celebrated according to a new rite, denatured and desacralized, which has lost its essence or nature as sacrifice.

Because the New Mass has been denatured, it presupposes the principles of the Protestant Supper; and for this reason one speaks of synaxis, agape, supper, but not of propitiatory sacrifice. For the same reason one speaks of a spiritual presence, no longer of a real and substantial presence, still less of transubstantiation, that term which expressed the change of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ. The victim is no longer real, but purely symbolic, by virtue of a merely spiritual presence.

The ministry is designated as that of a presider, the one who presides over the supper, and thus its eminently sacerdotal character is eclipsed, and consequently also its role as sacrificer of the victim and executor of the sacrifice. The sacrificial action, or immolation of the victim, no longer exists except as a remembrance or memorial, but not as a reality—as the unbloody renewal upon the altars of the Sacrifice of Calvary, which is what defines and characterizes the Mass of all time.

May Our Lady, Guardian of the Faith, shelter us beneath her mantle, as we remain confidently beneath her banner, for she it is who has crushed all heresies:

Gaude, Maria Virgo, cunctas haereses sola interemisti.

“Rejoice, O Virgin Mary, for thou alone hast destroyed all heresies.”