

“For many” versus “For all”:

Is the *Novus Ordo* consecration valid?

By John Salza, J.D.

In his ongoing effort to restore the Church to her infallible, ecclesiastical traditions, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI at the end of 2006 ordered the world’s episcopal conferences to remedy erroneous vernacular translations of the *Novus Ordo* Mass. Chief among the plethora of errors was the ICEL’s deplorable translation of the Latin *pro multis* (literally, “for many”) as “for all” (which, incidentally, is *pro omnibus*) in the consecration formula for the wine. Finally, the U.S. bishops have voted to approve a revised translation of the *Novus Ordo* Mass which correctly translates *pro multis* as “for many.” In other words, the revised English translation will finally use the words that Jesus used when He instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: “for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many (Greek, *polus*) for the forgiveness of sins” (Mt 26:28); “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many” (Greek, *polus*) (Mk 14:24).

Based on the plain words of her Savior, the Church has used “for many” in consecrating the wine throughout her entire history. It has been used in all the liturgies from the East to the West, including the Alexandrine liturgy, the canons of Hippolytus, De Sacramentis of Pseudo-Ambrose, the Gallican and Mozarabic rites, and all the rest. At no point in her history did the Church ever use “for all” in the consecration formula until the liturgical revolution of the 1960s. While the ICEL is guilty of many translation errors in the *Novus Ordo*, the “for all” error is the most egregious, and appears to have been promoted by powers within the Vatican itself (perhaps a prominent member of the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship). This is because the “for all” error has not been limited to English translations, but is also used in other vernacular translations, particularly throughout Europe. For example, in Italy the usage is “per tutti” (for all), and not “per molti” (for many).

Some apologists for the vernacular translation argue that “for many” and “for all” are interchangeable in the Scriptures. This is true in certain cases. For example, in Matthew 20:28, Jesus says that He came “to give his life as a ransom for many” (Greek, *polus*). In 1Tim 2:6, St. Paul says that Jesus “gave himself as a ransom for all” (Greek, *pas*). The problem with this argument is that Jesus did not use “for all” (*pas*) when He instituted the Eucharist. He used “for many” (*polus*). While it is true that, scripturally speaking, “for all” may mean the same thing as “for many” in certain cases, it does not mean that “for all” means “for many” in every case, and particularly in the case at hand, where Jesus at the Last Supper was referring to the efficacy of His sacrifice (which would benefit “many”), and not the sufficiency of His sacrifice (which would be given to “all”).

Sufficiency versus Efficacy

How do we know Jesus was speaking of the efficacy of His sacrifice and not its sufficiency? Because this is what the Church officially teaches in the venerated Catechism of the Council of Trent, which was compiled at the direction of that same council and approved by Pope St. Pius V. St. Thomas Aquinas, who greatly influenced the theology of the Tridentine Fathers,

also held that Christ's words were exclusive (regarding the actual application of the sacrifice) and not inclusive (regarding the potential application of the sacrifice). The Catechism of the Council of Trent says:

"The additional words for you and for many, are taken, some from Matthew, some from Luke, but were joined together by the Catholic Church under the guidance of the Spirit of God. They serve to declare the fruit and advantage of His Passion. For if we look to its value, we must confess that the Redeemer shed His blood for the salvation of all; but if we look to the fruit which mankind have received from it, we shall easily find that it pertains not unto all, but to many of the human race. When therefore ('our Lord) said: For you, He meant either those who were present, or those chosen from among the Jewish people, such as were, with the exception of Judas, the disciples with whom He was speaking. When He added, "And for many," He wished to be understood to mean the remainder of the elect from among the Jews or Gentiles. With reason, therefore, were the words for all not used, as in this place the fruits of the Passion are alone spoken of, and to the elect only did His Passion bring the fruit of salvation. And this is the purport of the Apostle when he says: Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many; and also of the words of our Lord in John: I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, because they are thine."

The Church draws her interpretation of the efficacy of Christ's sacrifice and not its sufficiency from the Last Supper accounts and the apostolic Tradition. For example, in St. Matthew's Gospel, St. Matthew connects the words "for many" with those who are going to receive the "forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28). This connection points to the efficacious application of the sacrifice to the Elect, and not the potential application to all men. This is why the immemorial Latin translation also uses "unto the remission of sins" (*in remissionem peccatorum*). While, grammatically speaking, the Latin *in* followed by an accusative case (*remissionem*) can refer to either the purpose or result (here, of the bloodshed), the Church has always interpreted these words to signify the efficacy of Christ's shed blood (result), not its sufficiency (purpose). Because not all people will receive the "forgiveness of sin," Jesus said that His blood was being poured out "for many," not "for all."

To anticipate the objection, we again acknowledge that Jesus shed His blood "for all," and that "all" have a chance to receive the "forgiveness of sin." That is Catholic dogma, and is not the issue. Thus, we do not say that "for all" is formally heretical, because Jesus did shed His blood for all men insofar as He wills to give them sufficient grace to be saved. This is how St. Paul can say that "Christ gave himself as a ransom for all" (1Tim 2:6). The issue, rather, is whether Jesus in instituting the Eucharist said "for many" or "for all," and whether He was referring to the availability of His atoning work to "all" or the application of His atoning work to "many." Using St. Thomas' terminology, it is the difference between the grace which gives man the potency to act (sufficient grace) and the grace which applies man's will to act (efficacious grace). Jesus' exact words of consecration must be used by the priest, for the priest acts *in persona Christi* in confecting the sacrament.

While apologists for the vernacular translation may argue that the Catechism of Trent's teaching on efficacy versus sufficiency is not a dogmatic definition from the Church, no one can reasonably deny that it faithfully sets forth the Church's interpretation of the previous 1,600 years. The Catechism also comes from a sainted pope upon whom the entire Church has relied for the last four and one-half centuries, and one of the most venerated catechisms the Church has ever issued. There is also no subsequent authority contrary to the Catechism's teaching. In short, the Scriptures and our understanding of them on this issue (as well as the Church's perennial Latin translation) demonstrate, quite strongly, that Christ was speaking of the fruits of His Passion at the Last Supper and thus "for many," not "for all," must only be used (as has always been the case, until the revolution).

The Validity Question

This manipulation of Christ's words raises the grave issue of whether the *Novus Ordo* consecration in the vernacular (using "for all") invalidates the Mass (remember, the Latin translation of the *Novus Ordo* – the only official translation of the Church - uses "*pro multis*" and thus does not raise the issue of validity). The question becomes whether the words that follow "this is the chalice of my blood" are necessary to consecrate the wine, or whether the short form (the words "this is the chalice of my blood" alone) is sufficient. If "for many" is not necessary to consecrate the wine, then there is no question of validity on those grounds. If "for many" is required, then there is a question of validity, because the mistranslation changes the meaning of the words.

The evidence indicates that the transubstantiation of the wine into Jesus' blood is brought about by the words "this is my blood" (that is, the short form suffices). While many saints and doctors of the Church have had their opinions on the matter, the Church's official position on this question comes from Pope St. Pius V through the Catechism of Trent. When the Catechism of Trent is examined and all the related evidence is weighed, one concludes that the Catechism teaches the sufficiency of the short form.

The Catechism of Trent

The Catechism states that, for the consecration of the bread, "the form consists of these words: This is my body." It then goes on to say, "The form is that which signifies what is accomplished in this Sacrament; but as the preceding words signify and declare what takes place in the Eucharist, that is, the conversion of the bread into the true body of our Lord; it therefore follows that these very words constitute the form." At first, it seems the Catechism teaches that the form includes all the words that signify what is accomplished in the sacrament. This would lend support to the position that the long form for the consecration of the wine is necessary, because the words that follow "blood" "signify what is accomplished in the Sacrament," namely, the "forgiveness of sin."

However, when we read further, the "what is accomplished in the Sacrament" appears to refer only to the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of the Lord. This seems to be the more likely meaning because, after saying, "but as the preceding words signify and declare what takes place in the Eucharist," the Catechism says "...that is, the conversion of the bread into the true body of our Lord." Hence, the Catechism appears to

teach that the words which describe transubstantiation are the necessary words, and this would seem to rule out the necessity of the long form for the consecration of the wine.

When describing the form for the consecration of the wine, however, the Catechism says that the "form" is: "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, to the remission of sins." Just as the Catechism refers to "this is my body" as the "form" for the consecration of the bread, it refers to "this is the chalice...remission of sins" as the "form" for the consecration of the wine. After explaining the meaning of the words after "blood," it refers collectively to these words as "this form." It makes no distinction between "this is the chalice of my blood" and the words that follow. This analysis initially suggests that the long form is required.

Yet, after the Catechism refers to "this form" for the consecration of the wine, it says, "if he here also attend to what has been already said about the form used in the consecration of the bread. The form to be used (in the consecration) of this element, evidently consists of those words which signify that the substance of the wine is changed into the blood of our Lord." In other words, "what has been already said about" the consecration of the wine is that the necessary form "is that which signifies what is accomplished in the Sacrament...that is, the conversion of the bread into the true body of our Lord."

It seems that the Catechism is drawing a parallel between the two consecrations and saying that only the words which signify transubstantiation constitute the essential words. If so, we can conclude that the long form is not necessary to confect the sacrament because the extra words do not signify the actual change of the wine into Christ's blood; they only provide additional information about the miracle that has already occurred. The Catechism goes on to say, "Since, therefore, the words already cited clearly declare this, it is plain that no other words constitute the form."

While this appears to settle the matter, the Catechism refers to all the words ("this is the chalice...remission of sins") as "the form." It does not explicitly distinguish between essential words and non-essential words in "the form." This "form" does in fact "signify what is accomplished in this Sacrament" (Christ's blood is offered as a propitiatory sacrifice for the remission of sins). In fact, if "shed" is omitted, it is not clear that the consecration is a sacrificial offering at all. Moreover, in the very next sentence of the Catechism, after referring to the "words" that "constitute the form," it says: "They moreover express certain admirable fruits of the blood shed in the Passion of our Lord, fruits which pertain in a most special manner to this Sacrament." The "They" in this sentence refers to the "words" that "constitute the form" in the preceding sentence. The "words" that express the "admirable fruits of the blood" are the words in the long form: "...which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins."

Thus, on the one hand, the Catechism teaches that those words which signify transubstantiation constitute the essential form. On the other hand, the Catechism seems to teach that (for the consecration of the wine) this essential form is the long form because it includes those words which "express the admirable fruits of the blood." In other words, the form for the Consecration of the wine would include "what is accomplished in the

Sacrament." The Catechism goes on to refer to the long form as "these very words of consecration," which also superficially appears to favor the necessity of the long form.

Nevertheless, the Catechism has already made a distinction between the essential and non-essential words in the form. It does this when it draws a parallel between the consecrations of the bread and wine and says, "The form to be used (in the consecration) of this element, evidently consists of those words which signify that the substance of the wine is changed into the blood of our Lord." Thus, the Catechism teaches that "this is the chalice of my blood" are the essential words, and "of the new and eternal testament...unto the remission of sins" are the non-essential words – both of which make up "the form." The formula for consecrating the bread ("For this is my body") also contains non-essential and essential words. The word "For" is non-essential and the words "this is my body" are essential.

De Defectibus

Three years after the Catechism of Trent was issued, St. Pius V issued a document called *De Defectibus*, which was incorporated into the Roman Missal promulgated by the decree *Quo Primum* on July 14, 1570. The document intended to address defects that occur during the celebration of the Holy Mass. In Part V, section 20, the document addresses potential defects in the formulae for consecrating the bread and wine:

"Defects on the part of the form may arise if anything is missing from the complete wording required for the act of consecrating. Now the words of the Consecration, which are the form of this Sacrament, are:

HOC EST ENIM CORPUS MEUM, and HIC EST ENIM CALIX SANGUINIS MEI, NOVI ET AETERNI TESTAMENTI: MYSTERIUM FIDEI: QUI PRO VOBIS ET PRO MULTIS EFFUNDETUR IN REMISSIONEM PECCATORUM

If the priest were to shorten or change the form of the consecration of the Body and the Blood, so that in the change of wording the words did not mean the same thing, he would not be achieving a valid Sacrament. If, on the other hand, he were to add or take away anything which did not change the meaning, the Sacrament would be valid, but he would be committing a grave sin."

At first blush, *De Defectibus* appears to teach that the long form is necessary. The document says the words "*Hic est enim...in remissionem peccatorum*" (the long form) constitute "the words of consecration, which are the form of this Sacrament." The document also says that if anything in the form is missing or changed, and this changes the meaning of the words, the sacrament is invalid. The document does not expressly distinguish between essential and non-essential words within the form.

However, it is obvious that we must harmonize *De Defectibus*' apparent teaching on the necessity of the long form with the Catechism's teaching on the sufficiency of the short form. If these texts cannot be harmonized, we would have to accuse a sainted pope of contradicting himself on a grave matter concerning the validity of the sacrament. After all, St. Pius V released the Catechism of Trent around November 1566, and *De Defectibus* only

a little more than three years later, in 1570. Do we really want to accuse St. Pius V in 1570 of not knowing what he taught in 1566? I don't think so. So how do we harmonize these two authorities?

First, from the standpoint of the level of ecclesiastical authority, the Catechism of Trent is more authoritative than *De Defectibus*. If there were a contradiction between the two documents, a universal catechism takes precedence over disciplinary guidelines concerning the liturgy when addressing the same issue. While *De Defectibus* does touch upon matters of faith and morals, its primary purpose is to explicate discipline and not teach doctrine. Certainly, the document was not intended to settle the question on the form of consecration, or this debate would have been over more than four centuries ago.

Most importantly, the Council of Trent directs the Church to use "the form which shall be prescribed for each of the sacraments by the holy Council in the catechism" (Session 24, 7. *De Reformatione*). In other words, the Council tells us to look to the Catechism of Trent, not *De Defectibus*, for the definitive guidance on what constitutes "the form...for each of the sacraments." This Catechism evidently teaches short form is sufficient for a valid consecration.

Second, it cannot be established with any certainty that there is a contradiction between the Trent Catechism and *De Defectibus*. When *De Defectibus* refers to the "wording required for the act of consecrating," it does not tell us *what words are "required."* However, based on the precedent of the Catechism of Trent, the "required" form "consists of those words which signify that the substance of the wine is changed into the blood of our Lord." In other words, *De Defectibus* seems to be following the Catechism's distinction between words in the form that are "required" (the short form) and words in the form that are not "required" (the remaining words in the long form). If not, then the Church contradicted her own Catechism three years after it was released, and not a single theologian of the time made an issue of it.

Hence, when *De Defectibus* refers to changes in "the form of the consecration" so that "the words did not mean the same thing," it can be interpreted to mean only those changes to the words in the short form (the "required" words). Agreeably, *De Defectibus* does not expressly make this distinction, and simply refers to "the form of this Sacrament" as the long form. But its ostensible distinction between required and non-required words can be harmonized with the Catechism of Trent. In fact, *De Defectibus* explicitly acknowledges that the form of consecration contains non-essential words when it says "if he...were to add or take away anything which did not change the meaning, the Sacrament would be valid, but he would be committing a grave sin."

St. Thomas Aquinas

Many also contend that St. Thomas Aquinas believed in the necessity of the long form. Although St. Thomas died almost 300 years before the Trent Catechism was issued, he had a profound influence on the sacramental theology of the Tridentine fathers. In fact, the Council Fathers at Trent referred to St. Thomas' *Summa Theologica* throughout their deliberations – a distinction for a theologian which is unparalleled in the history of the

Catholic Church. Hence, like the council fathers, we shall also examine the teachings of the Angelic Doctor.

Many believe St. Thomas believed in the long form because he says “these (additional) words (referring to the words coming after “blood”) pertain to the substance of the form.” However, based on his use of “substance of the form,” St. Thomas’ position is not crystal clear. On the one hand, St. Thomas seems to say that all of the words in the “substance of the form” (“this is the chalice of my blood...unto the remission of sins”) are necessary for a valid consecration. On the other hand, St. Thomas suggests that only those words which “denote” transubstantiation are necessary. Let’s first look at St. Thomas’ teaching on “the substance of the form.”

In *Scriptum Super Lib. IV Sententiarum* (dist. 8, Q.2. a.2, q.1, ad 3), St. Thomas says, “And therefore those words which follow [that is, which follow ‘This is the chalice of My Blood’] are essential to the blood, inasmuch as it is consecrated in this sacrament; and therefore they must be of the substance of the form.” Here, St. Thomas says that the long form constitutes the “substance of the form,” but does not address what words actually bring about a valid consecration. St. Thomas further refers to the “substance of the form” as the words which “belong to the integrity of the expression” (ST, III, Q. 78 Art 3). The integrity of the expression would include those words which communicate the fruits of Christ’s blood, and not only the words which denote transubstantiation. St. Thomas explains that while Christ’s body is the subject of the Passion, the blood expressly represents the Passion and brings about its fruits (ST, III, Q 78, Art 3, ad 2). Recent theologians like Fr. Maurice de la Taille (1931) and Fr. Francis Wengier (1955) point out that the words “shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins” are necessary to communicate the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist, since Christ could have made His blood present without sacrifice.

In his treatise *In 1 Cor. XI*, (lect. 6), St Thomas says, “In regard to these words which the Church uses in the consecration of the Blood, some think that not all of them are necessary for the form, but the words ‘This is the chalice of My Blood’ only, not the remainder which follows, ‘of the new and eternal testament, the mystery of faith, which shall be shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins.’ But it would appear that this is not said correctly, because all that which follows is a determination of the predicate [namely, ‘This is the chalice of my blood’]: hence those subsequent words belong to the meaning or signification of the same pronouncement. And because, as has often been said, it is by signifying that the forms of sacraments have their effect, hence all of these words appertain to the effecting power of the form.” Again, St. Thomas indicates that all of the words (“This is the chalice of my blood...unto the remission of sins”) are necessary (Latin, *de necessitate*) for “the form.” While St. Thomas does not explicitly say that all of the words in “the substance of the form” are necessary for a valid consecration, that conclusion can be inferred, since “all of these words” effect the “power of the form.”

The conclusion is further supported by St. Thomas’ teaching in the *Summa Theologica* (III, Q. 60, A. 8). St. Thomas says, “Now it is clear that if anything that is of the substance of the sacramental form would be suppressed, then that would destroy the essential sense of the words; and consequently the sacrament would be rendered invalid.” We know from his previous teachings that St. Thomas defines “the substance of the form” as the long form.

Hence, St. Thomas says that if any part of the long form is suppressed, the consecration would be invalid. While this may be proof that St. Thomas held to the long form, the question becomes whether replacing “for many” with “for all” is a suppression of something in the substance of the form which destroys the essential sense of the words. While the use of “for all” points to the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice and its potential application to all men, the use of “for many” *excludes* the sufficiency/potency theology. Using St. Thomas’ construct, because “for all” introduces a different theological aspect of the atonement, one can certainly argue that “for all” changes the essential sense of the words, and thus raises the question of validity.

Let’s now look at the distinction St. Thomas makes between the “substance of the form” and the words which “denote the change” of the matter into Christ’s body and blood. In regard to the consecration of the bread, St. Thomas says, “Now the form of the sacrament ought to denote what is done in the sacrament. Consequently, the form for the consecration of the bread ought to signify the actual conversion of the bread into the body of Christ” (ST, III, Q.78, Art II). In other words, the necessary words of the form must signify transubstantiation.

In regard to the consecration of the wine, St. Thomas similarly says, “Consequently it must be said that all the aforesaid words (“this is the chalice...remission of sins”) belong to the substance of the form; but that by the first words, This is the chalice of my blood, the change of the wine into blood is denoted, as explained above in the form for the consecration of the bread” (ST, III, Q 78, Art 3). Thus, St. Thomas makes a distinction between “the substance of the form” and the words that “denote” or signify the actual conversion of the wine into Christ’s blood. We also recall the Catechism of Trent’s teaching that the words of consecration “consist of those words which signify that the substance of the wine is changed into the blood of our Lord.” While St. Thomas distinguishes the words that “denote” transubstantiation from the rest of the words in the form, St. Thomas does not say these “denoting” words are the only words needed for a valid consecration. We also know St. Thomas’ position that if any of the words in the long form are suppressed so as to change the essential sense of the words, the consecration is invalid.

To further confuse matters, St. Thomas says the words “*mysterium fidei*” are part of the “substance of the form” (see ST, III, Q 78, Art 3), and yet St. Thomas accepted as valid the Eastern rites which omit “*mysterium fidei*” from their consecration formulas. Even though “*mysterium fidei*” is “suppressed” in Eastern rite formulas, St. Thomas accepted them as valid. Thus, when St. Thomas says suppressing any part of the long form invalidates the consecration, he must mean only a suppression which “destroys the essential sense of the words.” Thus, St. Thomas’ teaching concerning “anything” in the long form that is “suppressed” is not as broad as it may first appear. This begs the same question: Does “for all” destroy the essential sense of the words of consecration? Using the Universal Doctor of the Church as an authority, it certainly raises the question of validity.

If St. Thomas did believe in the necessity of the long form, many of his contemporaries disagreed with him, most notably St. Thomas’ mentor, St. Albert the Great, his contemporary, St. Bonaventure, and later on, the noteworthy Dominican Thomist, Cardinal Tommaso Cajetan. Cardinal Cajetan expresses his belief in the short form in his

commentary on the *Summa*. It is interesting to note that St. Pius V – who was a strict, Dominican Thomist – ordered Cajetan to remove that conclusion from his commentary. Some argue this is conclusive proof that St. Pius V believed the long form was necessary. However, another reason why St. Pius may have had Cajetan remove this particular conclusion is because he didn't approve of the Cardinal's distinction between "essence" and "integrity" of the form of consecration.

Cajetan explained that St. Thomas distinguished between the "essence" of the form and the "integrity" of the form, meaning that St. Thomas' use of "substance" referred to the integrity of the expression but did not concern the essential elements of the consecration. Cajetan's interpretation appears to be erroneous because St. Thomas says if any words in the substance of the form which constitute "the integrity of the expression" are suppressed so as to change the meaning of the words, the consecration is invalid. This would include any of the words following "This is the chalice of my blood." Thus, for St. Thomas, there is no distinction between "substance," "essence," and "integrity." That St. Thomas did not distinguish between essential and non-essential elements like the Catechism of Trent may be why St. Pius V had this interpretation excised from Cajetan's commentary. This is another indication of St. Pius's belief in the short form.

Further Analysis

Michael F. Duddy has written an article exegeting the Latin translations of the relevant texts from Trent's Catechism which can be found on the web (the exegesis of the Latin is essential to this analysis, and the English translation of the Catechism of Trent which I have provided follows the Latin very closely). Specifically, Mr. Duddy translates the Catechism's prefatory statement to the consecration formula: "We are then firmly to believe that it [the form] consists in the following words..." (Latin, *eam igitur his verbis comprehendit, certo credendum est*).

Using contextual, syntactical and grammatical exegesis, Duddy demonstrates that "*his verbis comprehendit*" does not mean "consists of these words," but rather "these words are contained in," or "discovered in," or "surrounded by" those words which signify transubstantiation. While "consists of" would presumably mean all the words in the form are necessary for a valid consecration, "consists in" distinguishes essential from non-essential words. This conclusion necessarily follows because we know that some words that are "contained in" the form are non-essential, such as "*mysterium fidei*." This analysis also helps us harmonize the Catechism of Trent with *De Defectibus*.

Thus, Duddy concludes the Catechism of Trent teaches that the words which signify transubstantiation (the short form of "this is my blood") are contained within the longer form which includes "of the new and everlasting covenant, the mystery of faith, which is shed for you and for many unto the remission of sins; as often as you do these things you shall do them in remembrance of me." This means the other words in the long form do not signify transubstantiation and are thus not necessary to bring about the miracle. Duddy's exegesis is consistent with the parallel the Catechism draws between the consecration of the bread and the consecration of the wine.

The sedevacantists have taken issue with Mr. Duddy's analysis, primarily on the basis of the Catechism's sentence, "They moreover express certain admirable fruits..." While Duddy does not specifically address this issue, he already establishes that the words which "express certain admirable fruits" are non-essential words in the legally required form. The sedevacantists also argue that the form must express the "*res sacramenti*," that is, the reality of the sacrament, which St. Thomas explains is union with the Mystical Body (ST, III, Q 73, Arts 3 and 6). The sedevacantists argue that "for all" does not communicate union with the Mystical Body because it includes those outside the Body. However, they misread St. Thomas who says that the "reality" of the sacrament is the "effect" of the sacrament (ST, III, Q 73, Art 3). That is, the effect of the sacrament – which is union with the Mystical Body – principally occurs during Holy Communion, not during the words of consecration. The reality of the union with the Mystical Body does not concern the form of consecration but happens during the reception of Christ's true body and blood, which is the sacrament itself.

If the long form were necessary for transubstantiation, the use of "for all" would bring into question the sacrament's validity (for vernacular translations, not the official Latin translation). We recall the teaching of *De Defectibus*: "If the priest were to shorten or change the form of the consecration of the Body and the Blood, so that in the change of wording the words did not mean the same thing, he would not be achieving a valid Sacrament." St. Thomas also teaches, "Now it is clear, if any substantial part of the sacramental form be suppressed, that the essential sense of the words is destroyed; and consequently the sacrament is invalid" (ST, III, Q 60, Art 8). If "for many" is an essential part of the sacramental form, and its essential sense has been destroyed by the substitution of "for all" (which has a different theological meaning), then, according to *De Defectibus* and St. Thomas, the sacrament would be invalid.

St. Thomas explains that "the form of the sacrament is pronounced as if Christ were speaking in person, so that it is given to be understood that the minister does nothing in perfecting this sacrament, except to pronounce the words of Christ" (ST, III, Q 78, Art 1). St. Ambrose also says, "when the time comes for perfecting the sacrament, the priest no longer uses his own words, but the words of Christ." Based on all the relevant authorities, if the long form is required, and "for all" changes the meaning of the words of consecration, the sacrament would be invalid. If "for all" is only "adding something" (a different aspect of the theology of the atonement, which does not deny the efficacy of the sacrifice for the Elect), then, the sacrament would be valid (but the "addition" raises the issue of whether grave sin is being committed).

Conclusion

So what do I think? I think the Catechism of Trent teaches that the short form suffices for transubstantiation. While the Church has not dogmatized the consecration formula, and there are varying theological opinions regarding the "form," the Catechism of Trent remains the Church's only official word on the question.

Notwithstanding the validity of the short form, I do think the vernacular use of "for all" risks changing the essential sense of the words of consecration, because it introduces a new

theological aspect of the atonement (its sufficiency) which the use of "for many" seems to *expressly exclude* ("for many" communicates the atonement's efficacy for the Elect, and not its sufficiency for the reprobate). In other words, "many" does not include "all" (although one might say "all" includes "many"). This is why the Catechism of Trent says, "With reason, therefore, were the words 'for all' not used..."

It is true that Pope Benedict XIV taught in *De Sacrosancto Missae Sacrificio* that "many" can mean "all" in the context of Christ's atoning work. As we have maintained, God grants "all" sufficient grace for salvation, and "many" among the "all" are saved. Theologically speaking, the sufficiency and efficacy of the atonement are co-relative truths. Nevertheless, Pope Benedict's teaching was about the atonement in general, and not about the necessary words of consecration which the Trent Catechism *was* specifically addressing (also, the pope did not teach that "for all" could be used in the consecration of the wine). More importantly, the Tridentine theologians who drafted the Catechism certainly knew the distinction between the sufficient and efficacious aspects of the atonement (both dogmas of the Faith), and maintained that Christ was speaking of His atonement's efficacy, *not its sufficiency*.

Even so, if the short form suffices for the consecration (I believe it does), the use of "for all" which may change the essential sense of the words would not invalidate the consecration, because the consecration would have already occurred after "...blood..." (the priest cannot undo a consecration; but he can commit sacrilege after the consecration if he does not speak the remaining words as Christ intended).

Following are seven reasons in support of the position that "for all" does not invalidate the consecration of the wine:

1. When the Catechism refers to the "form" as consisting of "this is my blood...remission of sins," it does not explicitly distinguish between the essential form and non-essential form. However, it does imply that distinction grammatically by emphasizing that only "those words" which signify the conversion of the elements into Christ's body and blood effect transubstantiation. In so doing, the Catechism draws a distinct parallel between the consecration of the bread and the consecration of the wine: For the bread, the necessary words are those which "signify...the conversion of the bread into the true body of our Lord." For the wine, the necessary words are "those words which signify that the substance of the wine is changed into the blood of our Lord." While the remaining words "of the New and Eternal Testament...unto the remission of sins" are part of the legally required form (and a priest would sin mortally for omitting them), they do not "signify that the substance of the wine is changed into the blood of our Lord." Rather, "they express certain admirable fruits of the blood shed in the Passion of our Lord." As the Catechism's Header says regarding the consecration of the bread, "NOT ALL THE WORDS USED ARE ESSENTIAL."

2. While one can debate whether St. Thomas and *De Defectibus* teach the short or long form, after the Catechism of Trent and *De Defectibus* were issued, most theologians who had previously held to the long form for validity evidently abandoned that view in favor of the short form, without any rebuke from the Holy See (this is also true for more recent but traditional theologians such as Fr. Heribert Jone and Fr. Felix Cappello). They were able to reconcile the Trent Catechism with *De Defectibus*. We do note that every one of them also

believed that if the words after "blood" were omitted or mutilated, the entire consecration form should be conditionally repeated. This indicates that the greatest minds of the Church were not definitive on the issue. In any event, that most theologians held to the sufficiency of the short form after the Trent Catechism and *De Defectibus* were published demonstrates that it is the accepted theological position which has perdured for centuries. Holding that the "short form" (only those words which signify transubstantiation) confects the sacrament could be an authentic development of the doctrine of the Church.

3. The Eastern Catholic rites (Syrian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Abyssinian, Byzantine, Armenian, etc.) do not generally include "*mysterium fidei*" in the formula for consecrating the wine. "*Mysterium fidei*" (mystery of faith), like "*pro multis*" (for many), is part of the long form. We know that the Eastern rite consecration formulas are valid even though they omit "*mysterium fidei*." Thus, if the omission of "*mysterium fidei*" in the long form does not invalidate the Eastern rite formulas, then it seems that the incorrect vernacular translation of *pro multis* as "for all" in the long form would not invalidate the consecration either. This is another indication that the short form suffices. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that the omission of "*mysterium fidei*" does not change the meaning of the words of consecration, while "*pro omnibus*" (for all) arguably does, and so the comparison is, agreeably, weak.

4. In metaphysics, which is the study of the first principles of things that are, the form of a thing – such as a sacrament – is what the thing is, and not why it is. St. Thomas teaches that "the purpose is not part of the substance of the act" (ST, I-II, Q 7, Art 4, ad 2). Thus, "this is the chalice of my blood" signifies what the thing is (blood), and not why it is blood. Similarly, "for you and for many unto the remission of sins" signifies why the blood is being offered. Thus, from a metaphysical perspective, "for all" would not pertain to "the substance of the act" of consecration.

5. Although the use of "for all" is a mistranslation of Christ's words, the usage does not formally deny divine election and the fruits or efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice. This is not to say that the use of "for all" is a good, by any means. It is not. We may even say that it is a privation of good, which is an evil (see ST, I-II, Q 18, Art 1), because it does not express the theology of the consecration as taught by St. Pius V and the entire Catholic Tradition. Nevertheless, the use of "for all" is not contrary to the Catholic Faith; it also states a truth about the atonement (that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient to save all men) which is as equally dogmatic as the truth that His sacrifice will be efficacious for the Elect only. While "for all" may change the essential sense of the words (and, if the long form were required for validity, would risk rendering the consecration invalid), it does not deny the truth that God simply willed Christ's sacrifice to be efficacious for the predestinated, and not the reprobate.

6. At Fatima, Our Lady told us to make reparation for "the outrages, sacrileges and indifferences" committed against Jesus "present in all the tabernacles of the world." It is reasonable to conclude that these "outrages, sacrileges and indifferences" occur in *Novus Ordo* parishes where the Eucharist is abused (for example, through the use of lay "Eucharistic ministers," sacrilegious Communion by those in mortal sin, and general indifference to the Real Presence). Of course, since almost all the priests in such parishes

are using the “for all” vernacular translation for the consecration, the sacrament must be confected, otherwise Jesus would not be “present” in these “tabernacles.”

7. While the Ecumenical Councils of Nicea II and Trent teach that a pope can despise ecclesiastical traditions and give harmful rites to the Church, it seems incomprehensible to believe the pope could permit an invalid consecration formula to ravage much of the Catholic world for the last 50 years. Such a catastrophe would surely seem to contradict our Lord’s promise that the gates of hell will never prevail against His Church (Mt 16: 18). In my opinion, this is the strongest and most comforting argument supporting the sufficiency of the short form. Christ cannot and will not abandon His Church. Even so, some faithful Catholics who have been scandalized by the liturgical revolution at least speculate whether God could remove Christ’s sacramental presence as a just punishment for the many sacrileges that occur in certain *Novus Ordo* parishes, as well as the widespread and pervasive apostasy among Catholics today.

Catholics who really know their faith have suffered tremendously from the liturgical revolution. They are also grateful that Pope Benedict XVI is eliminating any doubt in their minds by mandating the use of “for many” in vernacular translations. All Catholics have the moral right to be certain of the validity of their sacraments, and the moral obligation to worship God with the greatest measure of honor and devotion. To that end, many Catholics have made great sacrifices by traveling long distances to attend the Traditional Mass exclusively. Let us pray through the intercession of Our Lady that Pope Benedict XVI will continue to restore the Church to her ecclesiastical and liturgical traditions which no one can despise or reject without coming under the anathema of the Second Ecumenical Council of Nicea (A.D. 787).

Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis!

Sancte Pio V, ora pro nobis!

Sancte Thoma Aquino, ora pro nobis!

John F. Salza

15 December, A.D. 2009

Octave of the Immaculate Conception