

we can. It is, indeed, a bad sign if we cannot, in meditation and prayer, entertain ourselves for half an hour, or at least for fifteen minutes, with our dear Redeemer.

68. What sort of prayers ought we especially to say after Holy Communion?

Those in which we humble ourselves before the Lord, thank Him, offer ourselves up to Him, express our love, and implore His graces.

69. In what manner may we say these prayers?

We may say them in the following manner:

AN ACT OF HUMILITY.

O my Jesus, whence is this to me that Thou, my God, shouldst have vouchsafed to come to me, a poor sinner!

AN ACT OF THANKSGIVING AND OBLATION.

Most amiable Jesus, what return can I make to Thee for all that Thou hast done for me? I offer to Thee my body, and my soul, and all that I possess. All my thoughts, my desires, my words, and all that I do, shall be Thine, shall be for Thee.

AN ACT OF LOVE.

O Jesus, inflame my cold heart with the fire of Thy love, in order that I may love Thee more than all things, more than myself.

AN ACT OF PETITION.

O my Lord and my God, grant me, a poor creature, all the graces I stand in need of; for Thou art, indeed, infinitely rich and infinitely good.

O most bountiful Jesus, remain within me with Thy grace; strengthen and bless me by the virtue of this Holy Sacrament, now and at the hour of my death. Amen.

70. How should we spend the day of Communion?

We should spend it, as much as possible, in pious exercises, and avoid worldly recreations and amusements.

Application. Consider how the Lord pours forth, in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the treasures of His Divine Love for mankind; and resolve, therefore, to approach to the Holy Table as often as you can with permission, and to receive the Bread of Angels with as much devotion and purity of heart as you can possibly attain to.

ON PENANCE.

1. What is understood by Penance?

By Penance is understood, 1. The *Virtue* or disposition of heart by which man repents of his sins and is converted to God; 2. The *Punishment* by which he atones for the sins committed; and 3. The *Sacrament* of Penance.

2. What is the Sacrament of Penance?

It is a Sacrament in which the Priest, in the place of God, forgives sins, when the sinner is heartily sorry for them, sincerely confesses them, and is willing to perform the penance imposed upon him.

3. Does the Priest truly remit the sins, or does he only declare that they are remitted?

The Priest does really and truly remit the sins in virtue of the power given to him by Christ.

4. When did Christ give the power of remitting sins?

When after His resurrection He breathed on the Apostles, and said to them: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained' (John xx. 22, 23).

5. Did not Christ impart this power to the Apostles alone?

No ; He imparted it also to all those who were to succeed the Apostles in the Priesthood, as the Church has always believed and taught. (Comp. page 133, quest. 18, 19.)

6. Why was the power of forgiving sins to pass from the Apostles to their Successors also ?

Because Christ instituted His means of salvation for all times, and for all men, who stand in need of them.

7. Can all sins be forgiven by the Sacrament of Penance ?

Yes, all the sins we have committed after Baptism can be forgiven, if we confess them with the necessary disposition of repentance.

‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity’ (1 John i. 9).

Yet not *all* sins can be forgiven by *every* Priest. For, 1. In order that a Priest may be able to absolve validly from sins, it is not only required that he should have received this power in Holy Order, but also that he should have been especially authorized by his Bishop to administer the Sacrament of Penance in his diocese. 2. According to an ancient, lawful, and salutary practice, the Pope and the Bishops are accustomed to reserve to themselves the absolution from certain very grievous sins, from which, therefore, other Priests can absolve only in virtue of a particular authorization. When, however, there is immediate danger of death, and no Priest peculiarly authorized to hear Confessions is present, any other Priest can absolve from *all* sins.

8. But why must we confess our sins in order to have them forgiven ?

Because Christ ordained it so when He instituted the Sacrament of Penance.

9. How do we prove that Christ has ordained Confession ?

We prove it, 1. By his own words. ‘Whose sins you shall forgive,’ etc. ; for unless we declare our sins, and the whole state of our soul, to the Priest, he cannot know whether, in virtue of the judicial power which God has conferred on him, he is to forgive or to retain them ;

2. By the testimony of the holy Fathers of the Church, who unanimously teach that we have not to expect from God forgiveness of our sins, if we are ashamed to confess them to the Priest ;¹ and

3. By the custom that has existed at all times and among all nations of confessing sins ; for if Confession had been instituted by human laws, and not by Christ Himself, people would certainly never have generally complied with it.²

¹ ‘Whosoever is ashamed to declare his sins to man, and will not confess them, he shall be confounded in the day of judgment in the face of the whole world’ (St. John Chrysostom). ‘If the sick man is ashamed to discover the wounds of his soul to the physician, he cannot be cured’ (St. Jerome). Thus likewise Origen, St. Cyprian, St. Basil, St. Pacian, St. John Climacus, St. Gregory the Great, and others. ² That Confession was practised as early as in the times of the Apostles, is proved by tradition ; and even the Holy Scripture testifies (Acts xix. 18) that, when the Apostle St. Paul was at Ephesus, ‘Many of them that believed came confessing and declaring their deeds.’

10. But could we not also receive forgiveness of our sins by confessing them to God alone ?

By no means ; or else the full power which Christ gave to the Priests, of retaining or remitting them according to their judgment, would, indeed, be vain and useless.

‘Confess your sins one to another [not, then, to God alone], that you may be saved’ (James v. 16). ‘Let no one say : I do penance privately before God ; God, who knows me, sees what is going on in my heart. Was it, then, said in vain : Whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven ? Were, then, the keys given in vain to the Church of God ?’ (St. Augustine.)

11. Is, then, the Sacrament of Penance necessary for salvation to all those who have sinned ?

It is necessary for salvation to all those who have committed a grievous sin after Baptism.

12. Can the Sacrament of Penance never be supplied ?

When the Sacrament of Penance cannot be received,

it can be supplied by a perfect Contrition, and a firm resolution to confess our sins as soon as an opportunity offers.

13. What are the effects of the Sacrament of Penance ?

1. It remits the sins committed after Baptism ;
2. It remits the eternal, and at least a part of the temporal, punishment due to our sins ;
3. It restores, or, if it is not lost, it increases, sanctifying grace ; and
4. It also confers other particular graces to enable us to lead a holy life.

14. How many things are required on our part, in order to receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily ?

These five : 1. Examination of Conscience ; 2. Contrition ; 3. Resolution of Amendment ; 4. Confession ; and 5. Satisfaction.

§ 1. *On the Examination of Conscience.*

15. What is meant by *examining our conscience* ?

To examine our conscience means to meditate seriously upon our sins, in order that we may know them well.

16. How must we begin the Examination of Conscience ?

By imploring the assistance of the Holy Ghost, that He may give us the grace rightly to know, to repent, and to confess our sins.

17. How do we implore the assistance of the Holy Ghost ?

Come, O Holy Ghost, enlighten my understanding, that I may rightly know my sins ; and move my heart, that I may properly repent of them, sincerely confess them, and truly amend my life.

18. In what manner should we examine our conscience ?

1. We should examine when it was that we last

made a good Confession, and whether we performed the penance then laid upon us ; and

2. We should go through the Commandments of God and of the Church, and through the obligations of our state of life, and also through the different kinds of sin, carefully examining in what way and how often we have offended God by thoughts, words, actions, and omissions.

19. Must we also examine ourselves on the number and the circumstances of our sins ?

Yes ; at least, when they are mortal.

20. Against what faults are we to guard in the Examination of Conscience ?

1. We must not examine ourselves too hastily and superficially ; 2. We must not conceal our favorite sins from ourselves ; 3. We must not take all that to be trifling which the world considers as such ; but we should place ourselves in spirit before the tribunal of God ; 4. On the other hand, we must avoid becoming too scrupulous.

21. How much time ought we to employ in the Examination of Conscience ?

The more carelessly we have lived, and the longer we have stayed from Confession, the more time and diligence ought we to employ in examining ourselves.

22. How can we facilitate this examination ?

By examining our conscience every day, and by going frequently to Confession.

§ 2. *On Contrition.*

23. What is Contrition ?

Contrition is a hearty sorrow for our sins, and a detestation of them.

24. What qualities must Contrition have, that our sins may be forgiven ?

These three : It must be, 1. *Interior* ; 2. *Universal* ; and 3. *Supernatural*.

25. How must Contrition be *interior*?

We must not merely grieve for our sins in words, but we must also detest them in our heart as the greatest evil, and sincerely wish we had not committed them.

'Rend your hearts, and not your garments' (Joel. ii. 13).
'A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise' (Ps. l. 19).

26. How must Contrition be *universal*?

We must be sorry for *all* the sins we have committed, or, at least, for all mortal sins.

27. If a penitent has no sorrow for his venial sins, would his Confession nevertheless be valid?

If he has to confess venial sins only, and is not truly sorry for any one of them, his Confession is null.

If since our last Confession we have to accuse ourselves of venial sins only, and, because they do not seem to be grievous, we doubt whether we have sufficient Contrition for them, it is advisable to repent again of some *grievous* sin of our former life, which we have already confessed, and to include it in our Confession, saying at the end of it: 'For these, and all my other sins which I cannot at present call to my remembrance, and also for the sins of my past life, especially for . . . I am heartily sorry,' etc. This should also be done when we are not quite certain whether we have committed any sin since the last Confession (comp. page 287, quest. 65).

28. How must Contrition be *supernatural*?

The sorrow for our sins must arise not from the consideration of their natural evil consequences, but from supernatural motives; namely, because we have offended God, lost his grace, deserved hell, etc.

29. Would it not, then, be sufficient to be sorry for our sins on account of the temporal loss incurred by them?

To be sorry for our sins only because we have lost by them our health, property, reputation, etc., is nothing but a natural sorrow, which is of no avail for everlasting life.

Thus the sorrow of King Saul, Antiochus, and others was a merely natural sorrow; on the contrary, that of King David, Mary Magdalen, Zacheus, the Apostles Peter and Paul, and other Scripture penitents, was supernatural.

30. What, then, should we do in order to obtain supernatural Contrition?

We should, 1. Earnestly ask God for His grace; and 2. We should seriously call to our mind what Faith teaches us concerning the malice of sin, and its fatal consequences;* for supernatural Contrition must proceed from grace and motives of Faith.

31. Why must Contrition proceed from motives of Faith?

1. Because Faith is the foundation and root of all Justification; and 2. Because, otherwise, Contrition does not prompt us to renounce evil entirely and for ever, but only inasmuch as we have to dread temporal losses.

32. How many kinds of supernatural Contrition are there?

Two: *Perfect Contrition* and *Imperfect Contrition*, commonly called *Attrition*.

33. When is Contrition *Perfect*?

When it arises from Perfect Love; *i.e.*, when we detest sin more than all other evils, for the reason that it offends God, the Supreme Good.

Since Perfect Contrition proceeds from Perfect Love, in order to excite ourselves to Perfect Contrition it is very profitable, previously, or at the same time, to excite ourselves to Perfect Love of God.

34. When is Contrition *Imperfect*?

When our Love is not Perfect, and when, therefore, our fear of Hell and of the loss of Heaven, or our sense of the heinousness of sin itself, must unite with it in causing us to detest sin above all other evils, and to resolve to offend God no more.

* See pp. 221 and 222, quest. 11-15; and page 128, quest. 14.

Perfect Contrition is, therefore, a sorrow for sin arising from the Perfect Love of God; *Imperfect Contrition* is, on the contrary, a sorrow for sin arising from any other motive which, though good and supernatural, is not perfect. In order to excite ourselves to *Perfect Contrition*, let us consider how much God deserves to be loved by us, on account of His infinite goodness—*i.e.*, on account of that perfection which He, as the Sovereign Good, possesses; and how, nevertheless, we have despised and insulted Him, our most amiable Father; how we have expelled Him from our heart, and renounced His love and friendship for ever. In order to excite ourselves to *Imperfect Contrition*, let us consider how terrible are the pains of Hell or of Purgatory, which we have deserved; how beautiful Heaven, which we have lost; how detestable sin, which nailed the Son of God to the Cross, has deprived our soul of grace, disfigured her, rendered her foul and execrable before God and His Angels, *etc.*; and let us, therefore, repent of the offence given to God, and detest it more than any other evil in the world.

35. Must Contrition necessarily be perfect?

It is not necessary for the remission of sins that we should have Perfect Contrition; we should, however, strive to obtain it.

36. Why should we strive to obtain Perfect Contrition?

Because the more Perfect our Contrition is, the more is our repentance meritorious and acceptable to God, and the more certainly it obtains our pardon.

37. When should we make an Act of Perfect Contrition, even *without* the Sacrament of Penance?

1. In danger of death; and 2. As often as we have the misfortune to commit a mortal sin and cannot immediately go to Confession.

38. When must we make the Act of Contrition *in* the Sacrament of Penance?

We must make it before our Confession, or, at least, before the Priest gives us Absolution.

39. Can Contrition ever be supplied in case of necessity?

No; Contrition is so necessary that it cannot be supplied by anything or in any case.

§ 3. *On the Resolution of Amendment.*

40. What must Contrition necessarily include?

Contrition must necessarily include, 1. Hope of pardon; and 2. Resolution of Amendment.

41. What is a Resolution of Amendment?

A Resolution of Amendment is a sincere determination to amend our life and to sin no more.

42. What must be the qualities of our Resolution of Amendment?

Our Resolution of Amendment must be, like our Contrition, 1. *Interior* or *Sincere*; 2. *Universal*; and 3. *Supernatural*.

43. What must he be determined to do who forms a firm and sincere Resolution of Amendment?

He must be determined,

1. To avoid, at least, all grievous sins, so that he will suffer anything rather than commit even one;
2. To shun the danger, and especially the proximate occasion, of sin;
3. To use the necessary means of amendment;
4. To make due satisfaction for his sins; and
5. To repair whatever injury he may have done to his neighbor.

44. What is meant by the proximate occasion of sin?

By the proximate occasion of sin is meant a person, a company, an amusement, and such like, by which people usually have been, or, if they do not avoid them, probably will be again, led into sin.

45. Is it a strict duty to shun the proximate occasions of sin?

Yes, whenever it is possible; for he who will not avoid the occasion of sin has not a sincere purpose to avoid sin itself.

46. What ought they to consider who will not avoid

the proximate occasion, or will not desist from their habitual sins?

That the Priest's Absolution is of no avail to them, but only aggravates their guilt.

47. How can we make an Act of Imperfect and Perfect Contrition, together with a Resolution of Amendment?

In this manner:

O my God, from the bottom of my heart I am sorry for all my sins; not only because by them I have rendered myself unworthy of Thy grace, and liable to Thy just punishment in this life and in the next, but especially because I have offended Thee, the Sovereign, Most Perfect, and Most Amiable Good, whom I now love above all things. I hate and detest all my sins, and am firmly resolved never more to offend Thee, my most amiable God, and carefully to avoid the occasion of sin.

§ 4. *On Confession.*

48. What is Confession?

Confession is a sorrowful declaration of our sins to a Priest, in order to obtain Absolution from him.

49. What are the necessary Qualities of Confession?

Confession must be, 1. *Entire*; 2. *Sincere*; and 3. *Clear*.

50. When is Confession *entire*?

When we confess, at least, all grievous sins which we remember, together with their number and necessary circumstances.

51. But what must we do, if we do not recollect the number rightly?

We must declare it as well as we are able, and say, for instance: I have committed this sin *about* times a day, week, or month.

52. What sort of circumstances must we confess?

We must, 1. Especially confess such circumstances

as change the nature, or aggravate the guilt, of our sins; and 2. Mention in general everything by which the Confessor may be enabled to judge rightly of the state of our conscience, and to put us on our guard against relapsing into sin.

1. Should a person have stolen *Church property*, wished his *parents* dead, coveted his neighbor's *wife*, *injured* some one by telling a lie, etc., it would not be sufficient for him to confess merely that he has stolen, wished some persons dead, had an evil desire, told a lie. 2. Therefore, we must also declare whether we have injured our neighbors much or little, knowingly or unknowingly; whether the occasion of sin still continues; whether we have often before confessed the evil habit, and never corrected it.

53. What is to be observed in the declaration of the circumstances?

We must avoid making known any person who may be concerned in our sins; we must refrain from all superfluous narrations, and must express ourselves in as modest and decent a manner as the nature of the sin allows.

54. Must we also confess venial sins?

We are not, indeed, obliged to confess venial sins; yet it is good and wholesome to do so.

55. But if we do not know whether something is a mortal or a venial sin, what are we to do?

We are to confess it, because many people mistake mortal sins for venial ones.

56. When is Confession *sincere*?

When we accuse ourselves just as we sincerely believe ourselves guilty before God, without concealing or disguising anything, or excusing it by vain pretences.

57. What should the penitent consider, if he is ashamed to make a sincere Confession?

He should consider, 1. That a Confession which is not sincere procures him neither remission of sins nor peace of conscience; but that the Confession, as well as

the Communion which follows it, is another grievous sin—a sacrilege—and deserves eternal damnation; and

2. That it is much better for him to confess his sins to one Priest, bound by secrecy, than to live always uneasy in sin, to die unhappy for ever, and to be put to shame at the last day before the whole world.

As the Confessor is bound to suffer even martyrdom rather than reveal anything heard in Confession, so is every one else, who may have accidentally overheard any part of a Confession, bound to the strictest secrecy.

58. What must we do if we have omitted something in Confession which we were obliged to declare?

1. If we have omitted it without our fault, it is only required to mention it in the next Confession; but

2. If we have omitted it, either because we were ashamed to confess it or because we did not carefully examine our conscience, we must also say in how many Confessions we have omitted it through our fault, and repeat them all.

59. When is Confession *clear*?

When we so express ourselves that the Confessor can understand everything well, and clearly see the state of our conscience.

60. Would our Confession be clear if we accused ourselves in general only?—for example, that we have not loved God, that we have thought or spoken evil?

By no means; we must distinctly name and specify the different sins.

61. What is a *General Confession*?

A General Confession is that in which we repeat all or some of our former Confessions.

62. When is a general Confession necessary?

As often as our former Confessions were sacrilegious, either through want of sincerity, or of sorrow and resolution, or through a culpable negligence in the examination of our conscience.

63. When principally is a general confession useful and advisable?

1. As a preparation for first Communion; 2. On entering on a state of life; 3. In dangerous illness; 4. At the time of a Jubilee, a Mission, etc.

64. How do you begin your Confession?

Having made the sign of the Cross, I say: 'I, a poor and miserable sinner, accuse myself to God, the Almighty, and to you, my Father, in His stead, that since my last Confession, which was . . . I have committed the following sins.' (Here I confess my sins.)

Or in the following manner:

Having arrived at the Confessional, I kneel down, make the sign of the Cross, and ask the Priest's blessing by saying: 'Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.' After receiving his blessing, I say the first part of the *Confiteor* as far as 'through my most grievous fault.' Then I say how long it is since my last Confession, whether I then received Absolution and performed my Penance. After this I confess all the sins I can recollect, beginning with those which I may have forgotten in my last Confession.

65. How do you finish your Confession?

In conclusion, I say: 'For these, and all the sins of my whole life, I am most heartily sorry, because by them I have offended God, the Supreme and Most Amiable Good. I detest all my sins, and am firmly resolved to amend my life, and to sin no more. I humbly ask Penance and Absolution of you, my Ghostly Father.'

Or I conclude by saying: 'For these, and all my other sins which I cannot at present call to my remembrance, and also for the sins of my past life, especially for . . .' (see p. 280, quest. 27, note), 'I am heartily sorry, purpose amendment for the future, and most humbly ask pardon of God, and Penance and Absolution of you, my Ghostly Father.' Here I finish the *Confiteor*: 'Therefore I beseech the Blessed Mary ever Virgin,' etc.

66. What should we do after this ?

We should listen with attention to the instruction which the Confessor may think proper to give, and to the Penance he enjoins ; and when he asks us questions, we should answer them with sincerity and humility.

Take care not to leave the Confessional before the Priest has given you notice, by saying, for instance: 'Go in peace'; or, 'May God Almighty bless you!' or something similar.

67. What are we to do if we should not receive Absolution ?

We should humbly submit to the decision of the Confessor, and, by true amendment, render ourselves worthy of it.

§ 5. *On Satisfaction.*

68. What is Satisfaction in the Sacrament of Penance ?

It is the performance of the Penance enjoined by the Confessor.

69. For what purpose does the Confessor impose a Penance on us ?

1. For the expiation of the temporal punishment of sin ; and
2. For the amendment of our life.

70. When God remits the sin, does He also remit all punishment due on account of it ?

With the sin God always remits the eternal punishment, but He does not always remit the temporal punishment due for it ; therefore the Prophet Nathan said to David: 'The Lord hath taken away thy sin ; nevertheless, the child that is born to thee shall surely die' (2 Kings xii. 13, 14).

71. What is the temporal punishment due to our sins ?

It is that punishment which we have to suffer either here on earth, or in Purgatory.

72. Why does God not always remit the temporal punishment together with the eternal ?

1. Because His *Justice* demands that, by the enduring of the punishment, we should make some reparation for the injury done to Him ; and

2. Because in His *Mercy* He will, by the fear of such punishment, render us more cautious, and guard us against relapsing into sin.

73. Has not Christ, then, made full satisfaction for our sins ?

Yes, Christ has abundantly satisfied for our sins ; nevertheless, He requires that we also, in union with Him, should make satisfaction ; just as He has prayed for us, and nevertheless requires that we also should pray in order to be saved.

'I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ' (Col. i 24). 'If we suffer with Him, we shall be also glorified with Him' (Rom. viii. 17).

74. From whom has the Priest the power to impose works of Penance ?

From Jesus Christ, who gave to His Church the power, not only to loose, but also to bind (Matt. xviii. 18).

75. Is the Confession invalid, if the penitent does not perform the Penance enjoined ?

If after Confession he does not perform the Penance which in Confession he was willing and sincerely intended to perform, the Confession is not rendered invalid ; but he commits a new sin, and deprives himself of many graces.

76. When should we comply with the Penance enjoined ?

If the Confessor has fixed no time for it, the best way is to comply with it directly, and before we have fallen again into any grievous sin.

77. What should we do if the Penance seems to be too severe ?

We should consider how light the present Penances are in comparison with the ancient Canonical Penances, and with the eternal punishment we have deserved ; but if we should really be unable to do the Penance, we should respectfully mention it to the Confessor.

78. Should we perform that Penance only which the Confessor lays upon us ?

We should also endeavor to satisfy the Divine Justice by other voluntary penitential works, and by patience in our sufferings.

79. What shall we have to expect, if we neglect to make due satisfaction to the Divine Justice ?

We shall have so much the more to suffer in Purgatory, and that without any merit for Heaven.

80. Are we, after Confession, under no other obligation than to satisfy the Divine Justice ?

We are also obliged,

1. To repair to the utmost of our power, the scandal we have given and the injury we have unjustly done to our neighbor ; and

2. To employ the means necessary not to relapse into sin, and to amend our life.

1. Example of Zacheus : ' Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor ; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold ' (Luke xix. 8). 2. ' Behold, thou art made whole : sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee ' (John v. 14).

81. What should they think, who always relapse into their former grievous sins ?

That their Confessions are much to be suspected, and that their state is extremely dangerous.

' When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man . . . he goeth and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than him-

self, and entering in they dwell there ; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first ' (Luke xi. 26).

82. What means should we especially use in order that we may not relapse into sin ?

We should, 1. Strictly follow the instructions and directions of our Confessor ; 2. Carefully avoid the occasions of sin ; 3. Daily examine our conscience ; 4. Be assiduous in praying, in hearing the word of God, and receiving the Sacraments of Penance and of the Holy Eucharist ; and 5. We should often meditate on the Four Last Things of man.

Application. When you have sinned, go to Confession without delay, but never without a diligent Examination of Conscience, a true Contrition, a firm Resolution of Amendment, and a sincere declaration of your sins ; that the Sacrament of Penance, so replete with grace, may not become for you a source of eternal perdition.

ON INDULGENCES.

83. By what means does the Church assist us in the discharge of the temporal punishment due to our sins ?

By the grant of Indulgences.

84. What is an *Indulgence* ?

An Indulgence is a remission, granted out of the Sacrament of Penance, of that temporal punishment which, even after the sin is forgiven, we have yet to undergo, either here or in Purgatory.

85. How does the Church remit the punishment due to our sins ?

By making to the Divine Justice compensation for us from the inexhaustible treasure of the merits of Christ and His Saints.

Indulgences, therefore, derive their value and efficacy from the spiritual treasure of the Church, which consists of the superabundant merits and satisfactions of Christ and the Saints.