

through the sacrament of Penance; she feeds us with the Flesh and Blood of our God in the Sacrament of the Eucharist; and lest in the long and wearisome strife we at last succumb, she invites us most urgently to return often to that strengthening and life-giving Sacrament of Holy Communion.

That we may hold out firmly against the many attacks of infidel scoffers against our faith, the Church fortifies our youth in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Faith is that divine virtue, "without which it is impossible to please God." Without faith there is no morality, despite all arguments in the philosophy of hypocrites and worldlings to the contrary. At that age when faith is most endangered, the bishop of the Church "signs us with the sign of the cross and confirms us with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," that we may preserve that priceless virtue unsullied, notwithstanding all efforts of satan and his followers, until the day of our eternal reward.

When frail man is to assume the dread responsibility of faithfully dispensing the mysteries of Christ, the Church confers on him the power of the priesthood, and the grace to discharge his duties well, through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Our Saviour could not brook to see His priests shoulder extraordinary burdens and venture into every danger for the salvation of souls, without conferring on them especial graces through a particular Sacrament instituted by Him for just that state of life.

And when the hour comes that we must pay the wages of sin, which is death; when satan with his legion of helpers, redoubles all his former efforts, knowing they are his last; when the world and its vanities appear in their true colors to our unbiassed judgment; ah! then, who is our faithful consoler,

the prop of our tottering hopes? Earthly friends prove false; relatives prove forgetful; wealth proves powerless; all proves vain, save the Church and her priest. He it is to whom we turn in that moment for consolation, nor does he disappoint us. Jesus provided for death's awful hour with more than usual love; for he lifts us up, not only through Penance and the Holy Eucharist, but also through that Sacrament instituted for the special comfort and consolation of the sick and the dying—Extreme Unction. "Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the Priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him."

Now let me ask you: does it look reasonable, does it seem probable, that God who accompanies us at every step of life, who has an abundant measure of His helping grace for all occasions, should have forgotten that all important, hazardous moment when you launch out on the uncertainties of the wedded state? If through the *Sacrament* of Baptism, He admits the child into His Church; if through the *Sacrament* of Confirmation He fortifies the youth against temptation; if through the *Sacraments* of Penance and Holy Eucharist He nourishes our souls in all circumstances; if through the *Sacrament* of Holy Orders He communicates the Holy Ghost to His priests; if through the *Sacrament* of Extreme Unction, He strengthens the sick and kindles anew the spark of dying hope; how could He have forgotten the *Sacrament* of Matrimony for that occasion, which decides the fate of an entire life? He could not, nor did He.

The council of Trent declares that whoever says that Matrimony is not one of the Seven Sacraments of the New Law, places himself without the pale of