

THE CORPUS CHRISTI BULL, 1264: Latin text with modern English translation

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Urban IV and the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi

Despite the importance of the feast of Corpus Christi for the study of medieval drama, there is a serious problem for those who wish to discuss it. Even a simple citation is only possible if there is a text to use.¹ The Latin original is printed in various old and often difficult to obtain collections of Bulls but there is no complete English translation extant. The prime purpose of this article is to make available both the Latin text and an English translation. For the latter we are most grateful to Sr Jane Patricia Freeland, who supplied the original draft text.

The origins of the feast

In an important article on the origin of the Corpus Christi Bull, published in 1954,² Enzo Franceschini began by explaining the two major theories on the origin of the Bull:

- a) a widely accepted view is that the Bull was inspired by the existing veneration of the Eucharist in Liège, especially by Juliana of Cornillon and Eve of St Martin, and the institution of such a celebration in that bishopric in 1246 by Robert of Torota. The feast was taken up and spread in Germany especially by the Dominican Cardinal Hugo of St Cher;³
- b) a claim that it was promulgated as a result of the miracle at Bolsena which took place during Urban IV's residence in Orvieto. Bolsena is a small town a few miles from the cathedral city of Orvieto, north of Rome. According to legend a priest who had doubts about the Real Presence was saying Mass in the church at Bolsena and at the elevation saw blood dripping from the Host onto the corporal. This was reported to the Pope and the corporal was taken to Orvieto where it is still preserved and displayed on special occasions. Soon afterwards, a major rebuilding of the cathedral provided a special chapel for the relic, its walls painted with the story of the miracle. The chapel roof was damaged in the recent earthquake but has now been restored. All the descriptions of the miracle and the chapel clearly imply that this was

the cause of the institution of the feast.⁴ Moreover, in 1460, Pope Pius II declared that ‘This miracle was authenticated by Urban IV and therefore was instituted the feast of the most Holy Body of Christ which is celebrated yearly with the profoundest solemnity and devotion by the nations of the entire Christian world’.⁵

It is not the purpose of this article to analyse these conflicting claims in detail: that has already been done by numerous people, most recently by Miri Rubin who gives a very detailed account of the events in Liège which she calls the birthplace of the feast.⁶ Her main evidence is the importance of the eucharistic devotion of the beguines in Liège, especially the vision of blessed Juliana of Cornillon of a moon with a piece missing. After twenty years the meaning of this recurrent vision was revealed to her by Christ himself: ‘Then Christ revealed to her that the Church was in the moon and that the missing part of the moon stood for the absence of one feast in the Church which he would want his faithful to celebrate on earth’.⁷

Although it was not apparently specified in the vision it was evidently clear to Juliana that the missing feast was one that would celebrate the Eucharist whose importance in the theology and the devotional practice of the Church had been increasing since the declaration of the 1215 Lateran Council on Transubstantiation: the doctrine that at the Eucharist the bread and wine were translated into the Body and Blood of Christ not merely symbolically but as an effective change of substance.

It was in this climate that the church in Liège first celebrated a special feast of the Eucharist in 1246 but it was nearly twenty years before its official promulgation by Pope Urban IV. It is significant that Urban himself had previously been archdeacon in Liège between 1242–49 and, most telling of all for many theorists, he mentions this fact in the Bull: ‘We learned once when we were established in a minor office what had been divinely revealed to certain Catholics, that a feast of this kind must be celebrated generally in the Church’.⁸ That this must be a reference to Liège is obvious (though Urban does not use specific names), but it is a long way from a statement that ‘the feast must be celebrated’ to actually establishing it more than twenty years after. What was the reason for the hiatus and what finally inspired the Pope?

The doctrine of Transubstantiation was increasingly represented at this time in stories and images of the so-called Mass of St Gregory in which the Host was transmuted into the figure of Christ.⁹ Examples of a bleeding Host are also to be found in the miracle of the *Sainte Hostie*: in Paris in

1260 a Jew obtained a Host by blackmailing a Christian woman and tortured it. The Host appeared in many different transformations including the figure of Christ but survived unharmed. The incident was reported and the Jew executed. The miracle was commemorated every year in Paris by a procession of the Host and a church built on the site of the Jew's house became a shrine and place of pilgrimage through to the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁰

There was thus an ever-increasing devotion to the Eucharist and the practice of processing the Corpus Domini was becoming more general. There was also the Bolsena miracle. The most telling objection to the theory that the Bolsena miracle was the immediate source of the feast is, as Franceschini admits, the lack of any contemporary reference to the idea. He quotes several examples of the accepted authenticity of the miracle from the early fourteenth century, including the paintings and carvings in the chapel of the miracle in Orvieto cathedral (1323–1344), which includes citations from the Office composed by Thomas Aquinas (who died in 1265).¹¹ For those who point to the absence of any reference to the miracle in the text of the Bull, Franceschini responds that *un argomento ex silentio non ha alcuno valore scientifico* ('An argument from silence has no scientific value') and, more cogently, that a reference to a local miracle would be out of place in a Bull of the importance of the *Transiturus* and addressed to the universal congregation of the faithful; not to mention the caution with which the contemporary church treated of miracles in official documents.¹²

It is noteworthy that when he was elected Pope, Urban held the office of Patriarch of Jerusalem¹³ and it was for the patriarchy of Jerusalem that he first issued the Bull, in August 1264 (without mentioning Liège). There is also evidence that he had in fact celebrated the feast, in Orvieto, on 19 June of that year which was the Thursday after the octave of Pentecost.¹⁴

Franceschini sets out an interesting time-table of events for the summer of 1264:

19 June.

The feast of Corpus Domini was celebrated in Orvieto (on the Thursday following the octave of Pentecost) by Urban IV according to the form established by Robert of Liège and Ugo of St Cher for Germany. There is no mention of a new Office for the occasion.

11 August.

Composition of the first redaction of the Bull *Transiturus* for the Institution of the Feast of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, together with the new Office by Thomas Aquinas.¹⁵

7 September.

A letter was sent by Urban to Henry of Guelders, Bishop of Liège, ordering him to celebrate the feast in his diocese immediately, on the first Thursday after receiving the letter.

8 September.

1) The second redaction of the Bull *Transiturus* extending the feast of the Corpus Domini to the whole catholic world. This version includes the reference to 'certain Catholics' quoted above. The text of the Office is not included.

2) A letter to Eve de Saint-Martin (one of the Liège mystics) announcing the institution of a universal feast and mentioning the celebration in Orvieto in June. The letter includes the new Office by Thomas with orders to spread it widely, though the Pope specifically states that the people of Liège can retain their own Office if they wish.

9 September

Urban left Orvieto for ever. He died on 2 October and for some reason¹⁶ the Bull was not published. The feast continued to be celebrated in some locations but was only finally confirmed, promulgated and universally accepted by Clement V in 1310.¹⁷ The earliest formal publication of this text is that in the *Clementine* (see below).

Franceschini finally asks the question: why did the pope who had been thinking of the feast for so long wait until the very end of his papacy to promulgate it? What exceptional event caused the rapid sequence of events described above? *Questo avvenimento eccezionale poté ben essere il miracolo di Bolsena* ('This exceptional event might well be the Bolsena miracle').¹⁸ He even goes on to suggest that the Celebration held on the 19 June 1264, described above, may have had a second purpose: to receive the Holy Corporal into the cathedral at Orvieto.

With a reconciliation of the conflicting theories worthy of the Four Daughters, Franceschini concludes that a) the Liège origin of the feast is confirmed both historically and textually; b) the Bolsena miracle is an indispensable element in explaining the events of the summer of 1264.¹⁹

Later official texts referring to the feast

Nothing further was heard of the feast after the death of Urban, whose successor, another Frenchman, Clement IV (1264–1268) was mainly concerned with politics and the struggle of the papacy against the Hohenstaufen Empire. His policy included installing Charles of Anjou as ruler of Sicily. Clement's successor Gregory X (also a former Archdeacon of Liège) was primarily concerned with liberating the Holy Places and, by a crusade, seeking to reunite the warring factors in Europe. After his death several popes followed in quick succession, all of them more or less involved in the struggle between the French-backed Papacy and the Empire: it is not therefore surprising that it was only in the longer reign of Clement V (1303–1314) that the question of the Corpus Christi feast was reconsidered and Urban's Bull finally promulgated. It was Clement who first settled the papacy in Avignon — the beginning of the 'Babylon Captivity'.

A. Clement V's confirmation of the feast: Council of Vienne (1311–12).

From the *Clementine* or Constitutions of Clement V.²⁰

Titulus XVI: On relics and the veneration of saints.

Chapter I. The feast of Corpus Christi should be celebrated on the fifth feria [Thursday] after the octave of Pentecost and certain indulgences shall be granted to those who on the feast or in the octave are present at the Office or the Hours.²¹ If we intend to praise God through his saints, it is certainly worthy, just and wholesome for us that to him himself who, daily, restores us spiritually, we give joyful praises of worship and thanks in remembrance of his Body. Led by this consideration, therefore, of Urban IV, pope, of blessed memory, our predecessor, on this matter, we strictly enjoin the observing of this constitution, brought forth by the advice of our brothers, whose import follows in these words: [then follows the text of the Bull].²²

B. Provincial Council of Sens (1320).

The provincial Council of Sens declared:

- a) On the vigil of the feast bishops should exhort their flock to fast, and indulgences were offered to those who should do so.
- b) 'With regard, indeed, to the solemn procession which is to be made on the said fifth *feria* [Thursday] by the clergy and people carrying the said sacrament at this time, since in some way it may be said to have

been introduced by divine inspiration, we will add nothing to it for the present, leaving it to the devotion of the clergy and people'.²³

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NOTES

1. Unfortunately Miri Rubin in her study *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge UP, 1991) does not include a copy of the text of the Bull in either Latin or English.
2. Enzo Franceschini 'Origine e stile della bolla "Transiturus"' *Aevum* 39 (1965) 218–44.
3. P. Browe 'Die Ausbreitung des Frohleichnamfestes' *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft* 8 (1928) 107–143. Browe describes many early celebrations of the feast, mainly in Germany and by Dominicans.
4. Not surprisingly the same view is expressed in the modern guide book to Orvieto Cathedral.
5. See *The Commentaries of Pius II* translated Florence A. Gragg, introduction and notes Leona C. Gabel, 5 volumes (Smith College Studies in History, 22, 25, 30, 35, 43; Northampton, Mass: Department of History of Smith College, 1936–1957) 30: 378. It is this view which obviously prevailed in the post-Avignon Church; see J.N.D. Kelly 'In 1264 [Urban], impressed by the miracle of Bolsena ... extended the feast of Corpus Christi, with which he had been familiar at Liège, to the whole church' *The Oxford Book of Popes* (Oxford UP, 1986) 196. References to the early dramatic links with Corpus Christi together with a photo of the relic of the corporal are included in *Theatre in Europe, a Documentary History: The Medieval European Stage 500–1500* edited by W. Tydeman (Cambridge UP, 2001) 186–93.
6. Rubin *Corpus Christi* chapter 3. Though an imperial fief, French-speaking Liège in the thirteenth century was a semi-independent prince-bishopric with a strong urban patriciate.
7. Rubin *Corpus Christi* 170.
8. See below text page 75.
9. The most widely disseminated narrative version was probably that in Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea*. For the development of the legend in art see Gertrud Schiller *Iconography of Christian Art* translated J. Seligman, 2 vols (London: Lund Humphries, 1971–1972) 2 200. It is interesting that Schiller sees the establishment of the feast as a natural result of the Lateran council (201). The Mass of the Grail, described in the early-thirteenth-century *La Queste del Saint Graal* edited Albert Pauphilet (Classiques français du moyen âge 33; Paris:

- Champion, 1923, reprinted 1949) 268–70, also emphasises the doctrine of Transubstantiation.
10. See Lynette R. Muir 'Further thoughts on the tale of the profaned host' *EDAM Review* 21 (Spring, 1999) 88–97. The Paris miracle was commemorated in art and dramatised in both France and Italy. Other similar miracles of the Host are also recorded, including that cited as the source of the English Croxton Sacrament play; *Non-Cycle Plays and Fragments* edited Norman Davis *EETS SS 1* (1970) lxxiii–iv.
 11. His authorship of at least some of the Propers of the feast is generally accepted.
 12. It is also possible that the Bolsena miracle had not yet been confirmed. Miracles, like saints, have to pass through several stages of investigation before being officially acknowledged.
 13. Born Jacques Pantaléon, a Frenchman from Troyes, Urban studied in Paris and was a canon in Laon before becoming archdeacon of Liège. Innocent IV noticed him at the Council of Lyons and sent him as a papal legate to Poland, Prussia, and Pomerania. Innocent's successor appointed him Patriarch of Jerusalem in 1255. At this time the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem was a genuine state with a king and a patriarch who had effective (if rather short-lived) power over the Holy Land.
 14. See below under 8 September. It was not until 1324 that the Sunday after Pentecost was formally recognised by Pope John XXII as a feast day in honour of the Holy Trinity.
 15. Aquinas died in 1274 and was canonised in 1323.
 16. One suggestion is that there had not been time for it to be signed or sealed by the necessary officials.
 17. See above page 66.
 18. Franceschini 'Origine' 232.
 19. Proven miracles are necessary for canonisation; was the miracle at Bolsena the final step needed for the establishment of the feast?
 20. *Corpus iuris canonici* edited Emil von Friedberg, 2 volumes (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1879–1881) 2 1174.
 21. The importance attached to the feast by Urban is evident in the very substantial indulgences offered to those who took part in the celebration: from forty to a hundred days off purgatory could be earned by attending the various services during the octave — see below the final section of the text (pages 77–8).
 22. Clement quotes the Bull verbatim, but Franceschini points out that there are some minor verbal changes and that it is not therefore a satisfactory source for the text of the Bull. The present text is taken from *Bullarum diplomatum et*

privilegiorum sanctorum Romanorum pontificum Taurinensis editio 25 vols (Turin: Franco, Fori, and Dalmazzo, 1857–1885) *Volume 3 (1181–1268)* (1858).

23. *Circa vero processionem solemnem, quae dicta Quinta feria fit a clero & populo in delatione dicti sacramenti his diebus, cum quodammodo divina inspiratione introducta videatur, nihil quoad praesens injungimus, devotione cleri & populi reliquentes: Acta conciliorum et epistolae decretales ac constitutiones summorum pontificum* edited Jean Hardouin, 11 vols (Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1714–1715) 7 1456. The report from the 1323 Council of Paris (presided over by the Bishop of Sens) repeats these statements almost verbatim (*Acta conciliorum* 1458). These are the only references to the Corpus Christi procession in any of the Church Councils.

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The Corpus Christi bull with parallel English translation

Transiturus de mundo ad Patrem Salvator noster Dominus Jhesu Christus, cum tempus sue passionis instaret, sumpta cena, in memoriam mortis sue instituit summum et magnificum sui corporis et sanguinis sacramentum, corpus in cibum et sanguinem in poculum tribuendo. Nam quoties panem hunc manducamus et calicem bibimus, mortem Domini annuntiamus.

In institutione quidem huius salutiferi sacramenti dixit ipse apostolis: Hoc facite in meam commemorationem, ut precipuum et insigne memoriale sui amoris eximii, quo nos dilexit, esset nobis hoc precelsum et venerabile sacramentum. Memoriale, inquam, mirabile ac stupendum, delectabile, suave, tutissimum ac super omnia pretiosum, in quo innovata sunt signa et mirabilia immutata, in quo habetur omne delectamentum et

When our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, was about to pass from the world to the Father and the time of His Passion was near, and when the Supper was ended, he instituted in memory of His death the most high and magnificent sacrament of His Body and Blood, giving His Body for food and His Blood for drink. For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord.

Indeed, in the institution of this salvation-bringing Sacrament, He Himself said to the apostles: Do this in memory of Me. So that the pre-eminent and wondrous memorial of His special love with which He loves us, might be for us this heavenly and revered sacrament. A memorial, I say, wonderful and amazing, pleasant, delightful, most safe, and precious above all things, in which signs are made new and miracles changed, in which is held all that is delicious and

omnis saporis suavitas ipsaque dulcedo Domini degustatur, in quo utique vite suffragium consequimur et salutis.

Hoc est memoriale dulcissimum, memoriale sacratissimum, memoriale salvificum, in quo gratam redemptionis nostre recensemur memoriam, in quo a malo retrahimur, et in bono confortamur et ad virtutum et gratiarum proficimus incrementa, in quo profecto proficimus ipsius corporali presentia Salvatoris. Alia namque, quorum memoriam agimus, spiritu menteque complectimur, sed non propter hoc realem eorum presentiam obtinemus. In hac vero sacramentali Christi commemoratione Iesus Christus presens, sub alia quidem forma, in propria vero substantia, est nobiscum.

Ascensus enim in celum dixit apostolis et eorum sequacibus: Ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem seculi, benigna ipsos promissione confortans, quod remaneret et esset cum eis etiam presentia corporali. O digna et nunquam intermittenda memoria, in qua mortem nostram recolimus mortuam nostramque interitum interiisse ac lignum vivificum ligno crucis affixum fructum nobis attulisse salutis!

the delight of every taste, and the sweetness of the Lord is tasted, in which we attain the support of both life and salvation.

This is the most sweet memorial, the most sacred memorial, the saving memorial, in which we acknowledge the welcome remembrance of our Redemption, in which we draw back from evil and are strengthened for good and receive an increase of virtues and graces, in receiving which we gain the bodily presence of the Saviour Himself. For we comprehend other things, whose memory we hold, in spirit and in mind, but it is not through this that we obtain their real presence. In the sacramental commemoration of Christ, Jesus Christ is present with us, certainly under another form, but in His own substance.

When He was about to ascend into heaven He said to the apostles and their followers 'See, I am with you at all times, even to the end of the world', strengthening them with His kindly promise that He would remain and be with them even in bodily presence. O worthy memory, never to be lost, in which we consider our death to be dead and our decease to have ceased; and the life-giving wood affixed in the wood of the Cross to have brought us the fruit of salvation!

Hec est commemoratio gloriosa, que fidelium, animos replete gaudio salutari, et cum infusione letitie devotionis lacrimas subministrat. Exultamus nimirum nostram rememorando liberationem, et recolendo Passionem Dominicam, per quam liberati sumus, vix lacrimas continemus. In hac itaque sacratissima commemoratione adsunt nobis suavitatis gaudium simul et lacrimae: quia et in ea congaudemus pie lacrimantes, et lacrimamur devote gaudentes, letas habendo lacrimas et letitiam lacrimantem. Nam et cor ingenti perfusum gaudio, dulces per oculos stillat guttas.

O divini amoris immensitatis, divine pietatis superabundantia, divine affluentia largitatis! Dedit enim Dominus nobis omnia, quia subiecit omnia sub pedibus nostris et super universas terre creaturas contulit nobis dominii principatum. Ex ministeriis etiam spirituum superiorum nobilitat et sublimat hominis dignitatem; administratorii namque sunt omnes in ministerium propter eos, qui hereditatem salutis capiunt, destinati.

Et cum tam copiosa fuerit erga nos eius munificentia, volens adhuc ipse in nobis suam exuberantem caritatem precipua liberalitate monstrare, semetipsum nobis exhibuit et transcendens omnem

This is the glorious commemoration that fills the souls of the faithful with saving joy and blends tears of devotion with the welling up of joy. We rejoice certainly in remembering our liberation, and in recalling the Lord's Passion by which we are freed we scarcely contain our tears. And so in this most sacred commemoration there are present to us the joy of sweetness along with tears; because in it we both rejoice, piously weeping, and weep, devoutly rejoicing, by having joyful tears and tearful joy, for the heart suffused with great gladness distills sweet drops through the eyes.

O immensity of divine love, superabundance of divine pity, outpouring of divine generosity! Truly the Lord has given us everything, because He has put everything beneath our feet and bestowed on us the dominion over all creatures of the earth. Through the services of higher spirits He indeed ennobles and raises the dignity of man, for all are now made officers in His service, because of those who lay hold on the inheritance of salvation.

When His munificence was so abundant toward us, wishing even then to demonstrate His overflowing charity to us in outstanding liberality, He showed His very self to us, and, transcending every fullness

plenitudinem largitatis omnemque modum dilectionis excedens, attribuit se in cibum. O singularis et ammiranda liberalitas, ubi donator venit in donum et datum est idem penitus cum datore!

Quam larga et prodiga largitas, cum tribuit quis se ipsum! Dedit igitur nobis se Salvator in pabulum, ut, quia per cibum in mortem homo corruerat, et per cibum ipse relevaretur ad vitam; cecidit homo per cibum ligni mortiferum, relevatus est homo per cibum ligni vitalis; in illo pependit esca mortis, in isto pependit vite alimentum.

Illius esus meruit lesionem, istius gustus attulit sanitatem; gustus sauciavit et gustus sanavit indeque unde vulnus est ortum, prodiit et medela; et unde mors subiit, exinde vita evenit. De illo siquidem gustu dicitur: Quacumque die comederis, morte morieris; de isto vero legitur: Si quis comederit ex hoc pane, vivet in eternum. Hic est cibus, qui plene reficit, vere nutrit, summeque impinguat, non corpus, sed cor, non carnem, sed animam, non ventrem, sed mentem. Homini, ergo, qui spirituali alimonia indigebat, Salvator ipse misericors de nobiliori et potentiori huius

of generosity, exceeding every manner of affection, He gives Himself as food. O singular and admirable liberality, when the wonderful giver comes as the gift and the given is essentially the same as the giver!

What liberal and prodigious generosity, when someone gives himself! For this reason He gave us Himself, the Saviour, as food, so that, because through food He was rushing towards death as a man, also through food He might be raised up to life. Man fell through the deathbearing food of the tree, man is raised up through the food of the tree of life. In the one He hung as the food of death; in the other He hung as the nourishment of life.

That eating earned a wound, tasting of this has brought health. Tasting has wounded, and tasting has healed; and whence the wound has sprung, the cure also has appeared and where death entered, hence life has come out. Of that tasting it is truly said: On whatever day you eat it, you will die the death; but of this it is read: If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This is the food that fully refreshes, truly nourishes, and finally fattens not the body but the heart, not the flesh but the spirit, not the stomach but the mind. To the man then who digests this spiritual nourishment, the merciful Saviour

mundi alimento pro anime
refectione pia dispositione providit.

Decens quoque liberalitas extitit
et conveniens operatio pietatis, ut
verbum Dei eternum, quod
rationabilis creature cibus est et
refectio, factum caro, se rationabili
creature, carni et corpori, homini
videlicet, in edulium largiretur.
Panem enim angelorum
manducavit homo, et ideo Salvator
ait: Caro mea vere est cibus. Hic
panis sumitur, sed vere non
consumitur, manducatur, sed non
transmutatur, quia in edentem
minime transformatur, sed si digne
recipitur, sibi recipiens
conformatur.

○ excellentissimum
sacramentum, ○ adorandum,
venerandum, colendum,
glorificandum, precipuis
magnificandum laudibus, dignis
preconiis exaltandum, cunctis
honorandum studiis, devotis
prosequendum obsequiis et sinceris
mentibus retinendum! ○
memorialis nobilissimum, intimis
commendandum precordiis,
firmiter animo alligandum,
diligenter reservandum in cordis
utero et meditatione ac
celebratione sedula recensendum!
Huiusmodi memorialis continuam
debemus celebrare memoriam, ut
illius, cuius ipsum fore memoriale

Himself, from the more noble and
more sustaining food of this world,
provides, by a pious ordering, for the
refreshment of the soul.

Also it is a proper liberality and a
suitable operation of devotion that
the eternal Word of God, which is
the food and sustenance of the
rational creature, made flesh,
bestows Himself as food on the flesh
and body of the rational creature,
namely man. Man has indeed eaten
the bread of angels, and therefore
the Saviour said, My flesh is food
indeed. This bread is taken but not
consumed, is eaten but not
transformed, because in eating it is
very little transformed but if it is
worthily received, the receiver is
reformed through it.

○ most excellent Sacrament, to
be adored, venerated, cultivated,
glorified, magnified with outstanding
praises, exalted with worthy
heraldings, honoured with every
zeal, performed with devout
worship, and held in sincere minds.
○ most noble memorial, to be
commended in innermost hearts,
firmly bound in the soul, diligently
kept in the depths of the heart, and
considered in meditation and careful
celebration! We ought to cultivate a
continual memory of this memorial,
so that we will always be mindful of
Him whose memorial we know it to
be, because the more frequently this
gift or present is looked upon, the

cognoscimus, semper memores existamus, quia, cuius donum vel munus frequentius adspicitur, huius memoria strictius retinetur.

1. Licet igitur hoc memoriale sacramentum in quotidianis missarum sollemniis frequentetur, conveniens tamen arbitramur et dignum, ut de ipso semel saltem in anno, ad confundendam specialiter hereticorum perfidiam et insaniam, memoria sollemnior et celebrior habeatur.

In die namque Cene Domini, quo die ipse Christus hoc instituit sacramentum, universalis Ecclesia pro penitentium reconciliatione, sacri confectione chrismatis, adimpletione mandati circa lotionem pedum et aliis plurimum occupata, plene vacare non potest celebrationi huius maximi sacramenti. Hoc enim circa sanctos, quos per anni circulum veneramus, ipsa observat Ecclesia, ut, quamvis in letaniis et in missis ac alias etiam ipsorum memoriam sepius renovemus, nichilominus tamen eorum natalicia certis diebus per annum sollemnius recolat, festa propter hoc eisdem diebus specialia celebrando.

Et quia in his festis circa sollemnitatis debitum aliquid per negligentiam aut rei familiaris

more firmly this remembrance is retained.

1. Although, therefore, this memorial Sacrament is used in the daily solemnities of masses, we think it suitable nevertheless and worthy that at least once a year, especially to confound the faithlessness and insanity of heretics, a more solemn and more elaborate memory be held.

For on the day of the Supper of the Lord, on which day Christ Himself instituted this Sacrament, the universal Church certainly cannot find a space for the celebration of this greatest Sacrament on account of the reconciliation of penitents, the consecration of the holy Chrism, the fulfilling of the command about the washing of feet; and many other matters. This indeed the Church itself observes with regard to the holy men whom we venerate through the circle of the year, that although often in litanies and masses we renew their memory and others too, nevertheless she recalls more solemnly their birthdays on certain days through the year by celebrating special feasts for this reason on those days.

And because in these feasts through negligence, or because of household business, or for other

occupationem, aut alias ex humana fragilitate omittitur, statuit ipsa mater Ecclesia certam diem, in qua generaliter omnium sanctorum commemoration fieret, ut in hac ipsorum celebratione communi, quicquid in propriis ipsorum festivitibus omissum existeret, solveretur.

Potissime igitur exequendum est erga hoc vivificum sacramentum Corporis et Sanguinis Jesu Christi, qui est sanctorum omnium Gloria et corona, ut festivitate ac celebritate prefulgeat speciali, quatenus in ea, quod in aliis missarum officiis circa sollemnitatem est forsitan pretermisum, devota diligentia suppleatur et fideles, festivitate ipsa instante, intra se preterita memorantes, id, quod in ipsis missarum sollemniis, secularibus forsitan agendis impliciti aut alias ex negligentia vel fragilitate humana minus plene gesserunt, tunc attente in humilitate spiritus et anima puritate restaurent.

Intelleximus autem olim, dum in minori essemus officio constituti, quod fuerat quibusdam catholicis divinitus revelatum festum huius modi generaliter in Ecclesia celebrandum.

2. Nos itaque ad corroborationem et exaltationem

reasons of human frailty some due solemnity is omitted, Mother Church herself ordains a certain day in which in general the commemoration of all saints may be made, so that in that communal celebration of them whatever may have been omitted from their own proper feasts might be amended.

Most positively therefore we must pursue this life-giving Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, who is the glory and crown of all the Saints, so that it may shine forth with a special feast and celebration, to the extent that what is perhaps passed over in other celebrations of masses as regards religious observance may be supplied by devout diligence and the faithful, as this festival is approaching, remembering their own omissions, because in the celebrations of masses, perhaps entangled in worldly affairs, or others from negligence or from human frailty, they have carried them out less single-mindedly, that then, attentive, in humility of spirit and purity of mind they may make restitution.

We learned once when we were established in a minor office what had been divinely revealed to certain Catholics, about the celebration of a feast of this kind generally in the Church.

2. We therefore, for the strengthening and exaltation of the

catholice fidei digne ac rationabiliter duximus statuendum, ut de tanto sacramento preter quotidianam memoriam, quam de ipso facit Ecclesia, sollemnior et specialior annuatim memoria celebretur, certum ad hoc designantes et describentes diem, videlicet feriam quintam proximam post octavam Pentecostes ut in ipsa quinta feria devote turbe fidelium propter hoc ad ecclesias affectuose concurrant, et tam clerici quam gaudentes in cantica laudum surgant. Tunc enim omnium corda et vota, ora et labia hymnos persolvant letitiae salutaris, tunc psallat fides, spes tripudiet, exultet caritas, devotio plaudat, iubilet chorus, puritas iocundetur.

Tunc singuli alacri animo pronaque voluntate convenient, sua studia laudabiliter exequendo, tanti festi sollemnia celebrantes. Et utinam ad Christi servitium sic eius fideles ardor inflammet, ut per haec et alia proficientibus ipsis meritorum cumulis apud eum, qui se dedit pro eis in pretium tribuitque se ipsis in pabulum tandem post huius vite decursum eis se in premium largiatur.

3. Ideoque universitatem vestram monemus et hortamur in

catholic faith worthily and reasonably determine that for so great a sacrament, beside the daily memory that the Church makes for it that the memory should be celebrated solemnly and specially every year, designating and indicating a day fixed for this, namely the fifth day next after the octave of Pentecost; so that on that fifth day the devout throngs of the faithful may enthusiastically come together for this to the churches; and the clergy as well as the rejoicing people may raise songs of praise. Then let the hearts and prayers of all, the mouths and tongues, give out hymns of saving joy; then let faith make music, hope dance, charity rejoice, devotion applaud, the chorus cry out, let purity delight.

Then let all, alive in mind and with compliant will, come together to pursue their zeal laudably, celebrating the solemnity of so great a feast. And would that it might thus inflame His faithful to the service of Christ so that through these services and others, as they gather an accumulation of merits for Him who gave Himself for them as a price to be paid, and gave Himself to them as food, at last after the ending of this life He may bestow Himself on them as reward.

3. Therefore in the Lord we remind and encourage your

Domino, et per apostolica scripta in virtute sancte obedientie districte precipiendo mandamus, in remissionem peccaminum iniungentes, quatenus tam excelsum et tam gloriosum festum predicta quinta feria singulis annis devote ac sollempniter celebretis et faciatis studiose per universas ecclesias civitatum vestrarum et diocesum celebrari, subditos vestros in dominica dictam quintam feriam proxime precedente, salutaribus monitis sollicite per vos et per alios exhortantes, ut per veram et puram confessionem, eleemosinarum largitionem, attentas et sedulas orationes et alia devotionis et pietatis opera, taliter se studeant preparare, quod huius pretiosissimi sacramenti mereantur fieri participes illa die possintque ipsum suscipere reverenter ac eius virtute augmentum consequi gratiarum.

4. Nos enim christi fideles ad colendum tantum festum et celebrandum donis volentes spiritualibus animare, omnibus vere penitentibus et confessis, qui matutinali officio festi eiusdem in ecclesia, in qua idem celebrabitur, interfuerint, centum, qui vero misse, totidem, qui autem in primis ipsius festi vespers interfuerint, similiter centum, qui vero in secundis, totidem; illis vero, qui Prime, Tertie, Sexte, None ac Completorii officii interfuerint, pro qualibet horarum ipsarum

community and we command by the apostolic writings strictly ordering in the power of holy obedience, furthering the remission of sins, that you celebrate devoutly and solemnly so high and glorious a feast on the aforesaid fifth day every year, and zealously make it to be celebrated in all the churches of your cities and dioceses, exhorting those under you carefully on the Sunday next preceding the said fifth day, with salutary admonitions from you and from others; so that by true and pure confession and generosity in alms, and by attentive and careful prayers and other works of devotion and piety, they may be zealous in thus preparing themselves, and that they may be worthy to become participants on that day, and can reverently receive it and acquire an increase of grace by His power.

4. For we, as faithful Christians, in order to cultivate and celebrate so great a feast, wishing to animate you with spiritual gifts, to all true penitents and to those confessing who may have been at the morning Office of this feast in the church in which it is celebrated: a hundred; to those at Mass: the same; to those who may have been in the first Vespers of this feast: also a hundred; those in the second Vespers: the same; and to those who may have been at the offices of Prime, Terce, Sext, None and Compline, for

quadraginta; illis autem, qui per octavas illius festi matutinalibus, vespertinis, misse ac predictarum horarum officii interfuerint, centum dies singulis octavarum ipsarum diebus de omnipotentis Dei misericordia et beatorum apostolorum eius Petri et Pauli auctoritate confisi, de iniunctis sibi penitentiis relaxamus.

whichever of these hours: forty; and to those who may have been present through the octave of this feast, at Matins and Vespers, the offices of the Mass and the preaching hours: a hundred days for each separate day of these octaves; by the mercy of Almighty God, and by the authority of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul invested [in us], we release from the penances enjoined on them.