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. 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, 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;

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. 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’.

It is not the purpose of the 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. 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’.

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’. 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. 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 \textit{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 \textit{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 Jerusalem\(^{13}\) 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 Transitusus for the Institution of the Feast of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, together with the new Office by Thomas Aquinas.\textsuperscript{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 Transitusus 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 reason\textsuperscript{16} 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.\textsuperscript{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? \textit{Questo avvenimento eccezionale poté ben essere il miracolo di Bolsena} (‘This exceptional event might well be the Bolsena miracle’).\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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'.

Leeds University

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.


3. P. Browe 'Die Ausbreitung des Frohlehnamsfestes' 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:
LYNETTE R. MUIR & PETER MEREDITH

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 Proper 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.


19. Proven miracles are necessary for canonisation; was the miracle at Bolsena the final step needed for the establishment of the feast?


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

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.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

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
sumnum et magnumfacium sui
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

69
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 nostrae
recensemus memoriam, in quo a
malo retrahimur, et in bono
confortamur et ad virtutum et
gratiarum proficimus incrementa,
in quo profecto proficimus ipsius
corporalii presentia Salvatoris. Alia
namque, quorum memoriam
agimus, spiritu menteque
complectimur, sed non propter hoc
realem eorum presentiam
obtinemus. In hac vero
sacramentali Christi
commemoratione Jesu Christus
presens, sub alia quidem forma, in
propria vero substantia, est
nobiscum.

Ascensurus 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 nostrumque
interitum interisse ac ligno
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
gaces, 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,
ever 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 letitiae 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 conguadesmus 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 superabundantiae, divine affluentiae 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 ereditatem salutis capiunt, destinati.

Et cum tam copiosa fuerit erga nos eius munificentia, volens adhuc ipse in nobis suam exuerneratem caritatem precipua liberalitate monstrare, semetipsum nobis exhibuit et transcendens omnem
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;
ecidit homo per cibum ligni
mortiferum, relevatus est homo per
cibum ligni vitalis; in illo peependit
esca mortis, in isto peependit vite
alimentum.

Illius esus meruit lesionem,
istiux gustus attulit sanitatem;
gustus sauciavit et gustus sanavit
indeque unde vulnus est ortum;
prodiit et medela; et unde mors
subit, exinde vita evenit. De illo
siquidem gustu dicitur:
Quacumque die comederis, morte
moreris; 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 exitit
et conveniens operatio pietatis, ut
verbum Dei eternum, quod
rationabilis creature cibus est et
receptio, 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 digno
recipientur, sibi recipiens
conformatur.

O excellentissimum
sacramentum, O adorandum,
venerandum, colendum,
glorificandum, precipuis
magnificandum laudibus, dignis
preconis exaltandum, cunctis
honorandum studiis, devotis
prosequendum obsequiis et sinceris
mentibus retinendum!

Huiusmodi memorialis
continuam
debemus celebrare memoram, ut
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.

O 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.
O 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 sollemnis 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,
quod ipse Christus hoc instituit
sacramentum, universalis Ecclesia
pro penitentium reconciliatone,
sacri confectione chrismatis,
adimpletione mandati circa
lotionem pedum et alii plurimum
occupata, plene vacare non potest
celebrationi huius maximi
sacramenti. Hoc enim circa
sanctos, quos per anni circulum
veneramur, ipsa observat Ecclesia,
Ut, quamvis in letaniis et in missis
ac alias etiam ipsum memoriam
sepius renovemus, nichilominus
tamen eorum natalicia certis diebus
per annum sollemniss recolat, festa
propter hoc eisdem diebus specialia
celebrando.

Et quia in his festis circa
solemnitatis 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 festivitatibus 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 alis missarum officiis circa sollemnitatem est forsitan pretermittum, devota diligentia suppleatur et fideles, festivitate ipsa instante, intra se preterita memorantes, id, quod in ipsis missarum sollemnis, secularibus forsans 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 essetum 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
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
inuigentes, quatenus tam
excelsum et tam gloriosum festum
predicta quinta feria singulis annis
devoe ac sollemniter celebratis 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, attentes et sedulas
orationes et alia devotionis et
pietatis opera, taliter se studeant
preparare, quod huius pretiosissimi
sacramenti mereantur fieri
participes illa die possintque ipsum
succipere 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 vesperis 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
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.