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THE RESERVATION AND VENERATION
OF THE BLESSED EUCHARIST

by

Rev. Msgr. John T. Pearson

A dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of Canon Law, Saint Paul
University Ottawa, Canada, in
partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Canon Law.

Ottawa, Canada, 1986

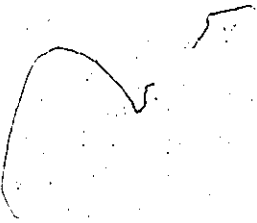
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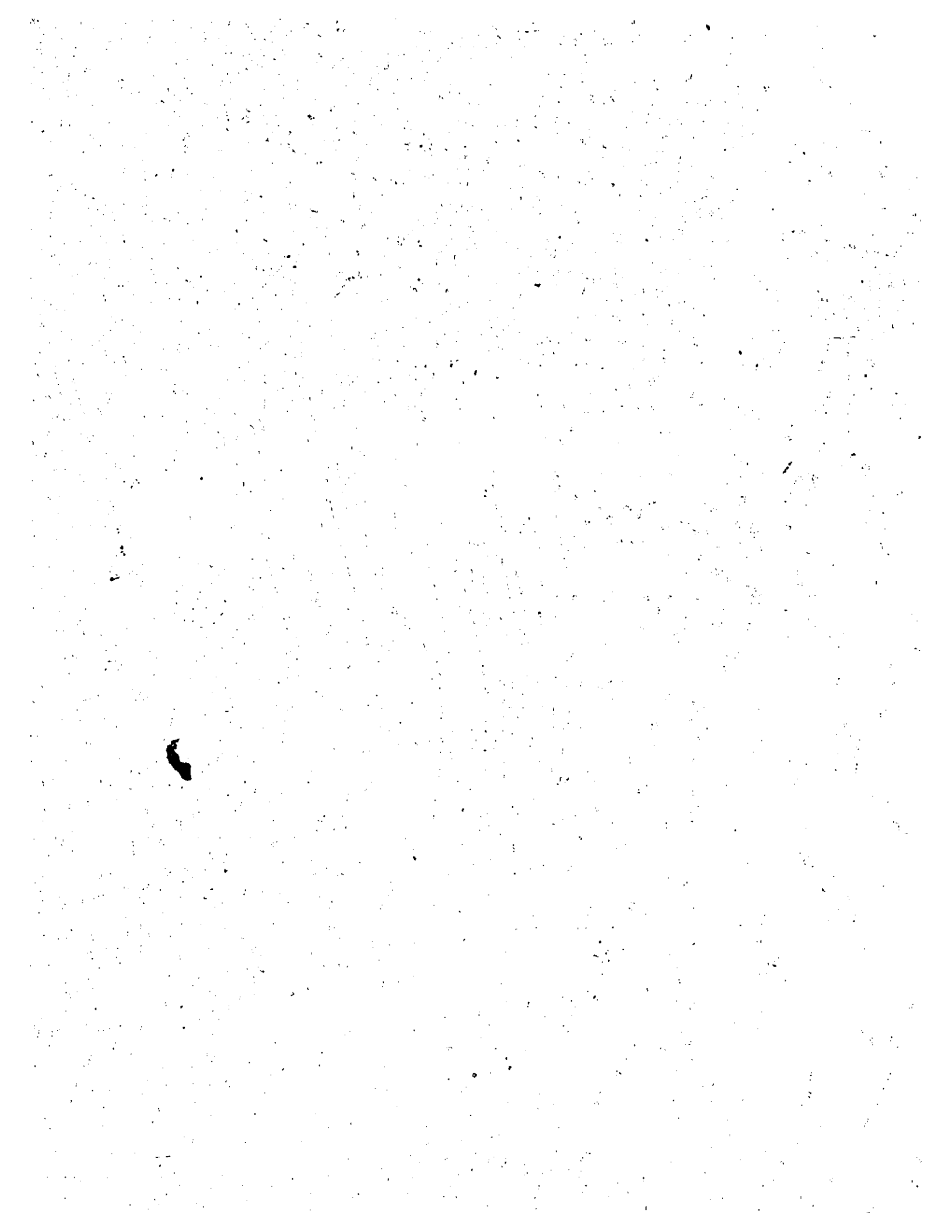
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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|---|
| <u>AAS</u> | Acta Apostolica Sedis |
| <u>ASS</u> | Acta Sanctae Sedis |
| CCCB | Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops |
| CIC, 1917 | Codex Iuris Canonici, 1917 |
| CIC, 1983 | Codex Iuris Canonici, 1983 |
| <u>CLD</u> | Canon Law Digest |
| <u>CLS</u> | Canon Law Studies |
| Consilium | Consilium for the Implementation of the Constitution on the Liturgy |
| <u>DOL</u> | Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979 |
| ed. | editor(s) |
| ed. by | edited by |
| Eng. tr. | English translation |
| <u>HPR</u> | The Homiletic and Pastoral Review |
| ICEL | International Commission on English in the Liturgy |
| NCCB | National Conference of Catholic Bishops (U.S.) |
| <u>NOT</u> | Notitiae |
| <u>PG</u> | Patrologia graeca (Migne) |

| | |
|--------|--|
| SCB | Congregation for Bishops |
| SCC | Congregation for the Clergy |
| SCConc | Congregation of the Council |
| SCCE | Congregation for Catholic Education |
| SCDF | Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith |
| SCDW | Congregation for Divine Worship |
| SCEC | Congregation for the Eastern Churches |
| SCHO | Congregation of the Holy Office |
| SCPF | Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith |
| SCR | Congregation of Rites |
| SCRel | Congregation of Religious |
| SCRSI | Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes |
| SCS | Congregation for the Discipline of the Sacraments |
| SCSDW | Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship |
| SCSU | Congregation for Seminaries and Universities |
| tr. by | translated by |

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INTRODUCTION

Eucharistic worship centres on the celebration of the Mass in which the real presence of Christ is conected in the species of bread and wine and given to the faithful to eat for spiritual nourishment. History from the earliest days of the Church notes that the Sacrament was taken to those who could not be present for the celebration of Mass, and that it was reserved to be given as a special food to sustain the dying in their passage from this life to the Father. As the real presence of Christ, the reserved Eucharist was adored and eucharistic devotions outside Mass gradually developed. Thus, in the practice of the Church the care and veneration of the reserved Sacrament has been held most sacred.

To the present-day Church the Second Vatican Council has brought reform to the theology and liturgy of the Eucharist which in turn has renewed aspects of the reserved Sacrament. For example, all eucharistic devotions outside Mass are seen as flowing from and directed to the celebration of the Eucharist. This emphasis has affected the legislation regarding the place of the reserved Sacrament in the church and the exposition of the Eucharist during the celebration of Mass. It will be the direction of our present study to determine the extent to which this reform as found in the conciliar and post-conciliar texts has affected the revised canonical prescriptions on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist in the Latin Church.

This topic is not new as there have been several studies on different aspects relating to the reserved Eucharist.¹ What is new in our presentation is a study of the canonical developments on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist as a direct effect of the conciliar and post-conciliar documents.

The first chapter of our study will trace the evolution of the various aspects of this practice in the early Church through the norms of Gratian, Gregory IX and the Tridentine period. This will be followed by an analysis of the legislation in the 1917 Code together with the interpretations and applications of some commentators. Having completed this historical dimension, several new aspects will be examined in relation to the Second Vatican Council. This will involve an analysis of the pertinent conciliar and post-conciliar texts and the various presentations of the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law. Finally, our study will direct its attention to an analysis of the canons on the reservation and veneration of the

1 D. Cahill, The Custody of the Holy Eucharist: a Historical Synopsis and Commentary, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1950, xvi-178; W. Cavanaugh, The Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America, 1927, viii-101 p; W. Freestone, The Sacrament Reserved, London, Mowbray Press, 1917, viii-281 p; J. Hannon, Holy Viaticum: a Historical Synopsis and Commentary, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1951, viii-187; D. Sheehan, The Minister of Holy Communion: a Historical Synopsis and Commentary, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1950, x-189 p; F. Statkus, The Minister of the Last Sacraments, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1951, xi-162 p; D. Stone, The Reserved Sacrament, London, R. Scott Publisher, 1918, 177 p.

Eucharist found in the 1983 Code of Canon Law. Special attention will be taken to note the extent to which the liturgical, pastoral and theological renewal in the conciliar and post-conciliar texts has affected the formulation, understanding and application of the 1983 canonical legislation. However, it is important to bear in mind that this is not a theological dissertation but a canonical one. Our method of research, in the beginning will be mainly a historical analysis of the evolution and development outside Mass. As the research progresses to a consideration of the conciliar and post-conciliar teaching, our methodological approach will consist mainly of a theological and canonical analysis of the relevant texts on the subject matter.

Specifically this study will be directed to developing an appreciation for the respectful care of the reserved Sacrament and for the appropriateness of the practice of eucharistic devotions outside of Mass. Nevertheless, it is our hope that it might contribute in some small way to the renewed emphasis on the centrality of the Eucharist to the lives of all of Christ's faithful.

CHAPTER I
THE PRE-CODE PERIOD

To enable us to understand the significance of the legislation found in the 1917 and 1983 Codes of Canon Law on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist, it would be helpful to examine some of the preceding norms which have set the base for the XXth century legislation on the subject. A representative sampling of the legislation throughout the first nineteen centuries of Church life will be sufficient to provide a comprehensive view of the Church's concern for eucharistic reservation and veneration. The particular legislation selected for this survey comes from three specific areas: The Decree of Gratian,¹ The Decretals of Gregory IX,² and the Decrees of the Council of Trent and subsequent legislation.³

¹ Gratianus, Decretum magistri Gratiani, in Corpus iuris canonici, ed. Lipsiensis 2a post Aemilii Ludovici Richteri curas ad librorum manu scriptorum et ed. romanae fidei recognovit et adnotatione critica instruxit Aemilius Friedberg, Lipsiae, Ex Officina B. Tauchnitz, 1879, [Lipsiae, 1928], vol. 1, CII - 1469 p.

² Gregorius IX, Decretalium D. Gregorii Papae IX, in Corpus Iuris Canonici, ed. Lipsiensis 2a post Aemilii Ludovici Richteri curas ad librorum manu scriptorum et ed. romanae fidei recognovit et adnotatione critica instruxit Aemilius Friedberg, Lipsiae, Ex Officina B. Tauchnitz, 1881, [Lipsiae, 1928], vol. 2, pp. 1-927.

³ Concilium Tridentinum, Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, original text with English translation by H. Schroeder, St. Louis, Herder, 1941, xxxiii-608 p. (Hereafter, Council of Trent).

However, basic to this legislation would be the fact of the reservation itself and its purpose. Therefore, prior to our study of the early legislation we will look briefly at the purpose and practice of eucharistic reservation which eventually gave rise to the norms in this regard. The primary purpose for the reservation of the Sacrament is to provide the sick and dying with Viaticum. This nourishment with the Body and Blood of Christ for the passage from this life into eternal life dates to the earliest days of the Church.

In the second century, Justin the Martyr makes reference to Communion outside Mass when he speaks of the deacons distributing the consecrated Bread and Wine to those present and mentions that "they also carry them to those who are absent."⁴ In the early third century, Hippolytus "clearly witnesses to a private reservation of the eucharist in the homes of Christians"⁵ for the purpose of ritual weekday Communion. Both these practices point to the development of a rite of Communion separate from the Mass while still maintaining a relationship to it. It has been observed that "neither of these customs is abusive; indeed, both intend to strengthen the individual christian's relationship to the Sunday assembly and its worship."⁶

4 W. Rordorf, et al., The Eucharist of the Early Christians, New York, Pueblo, 1978, p. 72.

5 N. Mitchell, Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass, New York, Pueblo, 1982, p. 11.

6 Ibid., p. 38.

The First Council of Nicea in 325, aware of the need for the reception of Communion before death, even for those not living up to the practices of their faith, enacted the decree:

Concerning these, who approach death, even now the ancient and regular law will be kept; so that, if anyone is departing from the body, he be not deprived of the last and necessary viaticum. [...] to everyone without exception placed at death and requesting that the grace of communion be given him, the bishop probably ought to give from the oblation.⁷

This legislation does not directly require the reservation of the Eucharist for the dying but "in ordering that the sick should not be deprived of Viaticum, it implied the necessity of the reservation of it for that purpose."⁸

St. Jerome, in the late fourth century, attests to the unapproved practice of receiving Communion at home in reference to those persons prohibited from receiving the Eucharist in churches, who did so in their own houses. His condemnation is not of the domestic ritual of Communion, but of the double standard which forbids the reception at church but allows it at home.⁹ During this same period St. Basil speaks of the practice of the reception of the Eucharist at home by solitaries in the desert and by the laity in both Alexandria and Egypt.

⁷ H. Denzinger, The Sources of Catholic Doctrine, Eng. tr. by R. Deferrari, St. Louis, Herder, 1957, p. 27.

⁸ W. Cavanaugh, The Reservation of the Blessed Eucharist, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America, 1927, p. 5.

⁹ Ibid., p. 17.

All the solitaries in the deserts, where there is no priest, keep the communion by them and partake of it by themselves. At Alexandria too, and in Egypt, each one of the laity, for the most part, keeps the communion at home, and whenever he wishes partakes of it by himself. For, after the priest has completed the sacrifice once and distributed it, he who then received of it in its entirety all together, when he partakes of it each time, must believe that he duly takes and receives it from the hand that first gave it.¹⁰

Of interest here is the relationship which St. Basil draws between the reception of Communion outside Mass with the actual celebration of the Mass itself. The reservation and reception of the Eucharist at home is seen as coming from the Eucharistic action and as part of it. On this, an early twentieth century scholar observed that "private reservation, then, equally with the official distribution, is to be regarded as an extension of public communion, and the postponement of consumption is of no importance."¹¹

There were other practices associated with the reservation of the Eucharist which were either condemned or discontinued. They included the placing of the Eucharist either alone or with relics in newly consecrated altars, the retention of the Sacrament from the Mass of his episcopal ordination by the new bishop for the purpose of private Communion for forty days, the retention of the large Host from the day of consecration by virgins for eight days of private Communion,

¹⁰ Basil the Great, Epistola XCIII, in PG, vol. 32, n. 4, pp. 483-486; Eng. tr. by W. Freestone, The Sacrament Reserved, London, Mowbray Press, 1917, p. 41.

¹¹ W. Freestone, op. cit., p. 41.

and the practice somehow associated with Viaticum of burying the Blessed Sacrament with the dead.¹² It was from the background of these various practices that the canons on eucharistic reservation in the Gratian collection found their origin.

1. The Decree of Gratian

Gratian's twelfth century Concordia discordantium canonum superseded other collections existing at the time. Although this work was never officially endorsed by the Church, it has always been recognized as a primary source of the canonical legislation of the first millennium of the Church's history. The Decree is divided into three parts; part III, De Consecratione, contains the legislation regarding the Eucharist. It, in turn, is divided into twelve distinctions with the legislation regarding the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist found in various canons in the first two distinctions. Gratian attributes the canons to various sources, some authentic, others spurious. However, regardless of the authenticity of the source quoted by Gratian, our concern is for the fact that such legislation did exist and it affected the care and veneration of the reserved Sacrament. The aspects of the reservation of the Eucharist treated by Gratian centre around the purpose, care, place, and renewal

¹² W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., pp. 2-3. See also, J. Hannon, Holy Viaticum: a historical synopsis and commentary, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1951, pp. 1-7.

of the reserved Sacrament, as well as of the vessels containing it, and only indirectly do they treat of the veneration of the reserved Sacrament itself.

Gratian is quite explicit concerning the purpose for the reservation of the Eucharist: to provide the dying with Viaticum and the sick with Holy Communion. He says that "the priest is always to have the Eucharist prepared in order that he might administer the Sacrament immediately to one who has been ill, lest he should die without Communion."¹³ This purpose is indirectly supported in another canon blaming priests for allowing lay people to administer the Eucharist to the sick with the admonition that, "the priest himself, in every situation, is to administer Communion to the sick."¹⁴ Gratian points out that this ancient practice is associated with a person's passage into eternal life, "Christ is the bread of which he who eats lives eternally."¹⁵

¹³ Gratianus, *op. cit.*, c. 93, D. 2. A translation of: "Presbiter eucharistiam semper habeat paratam, ut, quando quis infirmatus fuerit, statim eum communicet, ne sine communione moriatur." (This canon is not from the Council of Worms but from Germanic civil statutes published in Ingelhem in 809 A.D. which attests to its importance to the secular community. The canon was included in a number of other collections prior to Gratian. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1351.)

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, c. 29, D. 2. A translation of: "sed omnimodis presbiter per semetipsum infirmum communicet." (The content of this canon is practically the same as that originating from a Council of Rouen in 650 A.D. and was contained in a number of other collections prior to Gratian. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1323.)

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, c. 57, D. 2. A translation of: "Christus panis est, de quo qui manducat vivit in eternum." (The content of this canon is found in Augustine's letter on St. John, ch. 6, v. 52. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1336.)

The priests, besides having the responsibility of administering the reserved Sacrament to the sick and dying, share with deacons and other consecrated ministers the responsibility for the custody of the reserved Eucharist¹⁶ and of the sacred vessels.¹⁷ Also entry into the sacrarium, the special place of reservation, is restricted to priests and other clergy.¹⁸ Negligence in the care of the Blessed Sacrament could result in penalties for those responsible for its custody.¹⁹

Reference to the sacrarium as a special room for the reservation of the Eucharist is found in Gratian. In it are kept the sacred Elements which are left after the celebration of the Eucharist, and into this place only priests and other clergy might enter.²⁰ This infers that the sacrarium was a type of walk-in tabernacle-safe. This inference is supported by a canon which speaks of the ministers

16 Ibid., c. 40, D. 1; c. 23, D. 2. (Canon 40 has its origin in the Pseudo-Clementine collection but also appeared in the Pseudo-Isidorian and other collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1304. Canon 23 is a Pseudo-Isidorian text found in a number of collections prior to Gratian. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1321.)

17 Ibid., c. 41, D. 1. (This is a Pseudo-Isidorian canon which has appeared in many noted collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1304.)

18 Ibid., c. 29, D. 2.

19 Ibid., c. 94, D. 2. (This canon appeared in a number of collections prior to Gratian. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1352.)

20 Ibid., c. 23, D. 2.

within the sacrarium tending it with the greatest of care.²¹ Gratian's preoccupation is not so much with a description of the sacrarium as to ensure that this sacred place and the reserved Species within it are attributed proper care and reverence.²²

This sense of reverence is also apparent in the prescriptions set forth in respect to the sacred vessels in which the Blessed Eucharist is kept. The legislation requires that these are to be blessed²³ and are to be handled only by the clergy.²⁴ Other canons specify the materials from which they are to be made: there is a progression in the legislated material as it changed from wood, through glass, to silver. This evolution in the quality of the material was indicative of the progression in splendour and ornamentation which surrounded the Eucharist over the years and reflected the desire of the legislator to have the material of the vessels resplendent of the

21 Ibid., c. 40, D. 1.

22 For a description of the receptacles used for the reservation of the Blessed Eucharist prior to, and at the time of, Gratian, see D. Cahill, The Custody of the Holy Eucharist, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1950, pp. 6-7.

23 Gratianus, op. cit., c. 2, D. 1. (This canon originated in Gratian but similar canons are found in noted collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1293.)

24 Ibid., c. 16, D. 1. (This is a Pseudo-Isidorian canon which appeared in other collections prior to Gratian. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1298.)

greater treasure contained within, the Blessed Sacrament.²⁵ Another canon states that the chalice and paten, if not of gold, should be wholly of silver. For the poor, an alloy of lead and silver is permitted. Wood and transparent glass are forbidden as is also copper because of the rusting effect wine has on it.²⁶

Closely associated to the sacred vessels are the sacred linens. There is strict legislation regarding the care of the linens in the sanctuary and the sacrarium.²⁷ In the celebration of Mass, the Eucharist is to be consecrated on pure linen altar cloths blessed by the bishop.²⁸ It is quite probable then, that the sacred linens in the sacrarium upon which the sacred vessels containing the reserved Eucharist are placed, would be governed by prescriptions similar to those for linens on which the consecrated Eucharist at Mass is placed.

There is little legislation in Gratian concerning the renewal of the reserved Species. It would seem from one of the Pseudo-

25 Ibid., c. 44, D. 1. (This is an authentic canon which originated in the Council of Tours and appeared in other collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1305.)

26 Ibid., c. 45, D. 1. (The origin of this canon is uncertain but it had appeared in other collections prior to Gratian. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1306.)

27 Ibid., c. 40, D. 1.

28 Ibid., c. 46, D. 1. (This canon comes from the time of Pope Sylvester and is found in noted collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1306.)

Isidorian canons that a rather frequent renewal was the custom. The canon reads:

But if they (the consecrated species), shall remain, they are not reserved on the next day, but are to be consumed conscientiously with the fear and trembling of the clergy. Likewise, the remaining consecrated species which have been left in the sacrarium are to be consumed.²⁹

It would seem from this legislation that the sacred Elements reserved from one Mass for the possible communion of the sick and dying were renewed at the next celebration of the Mass. Another example of renewal is found in a canon which makes reference to a reservation for a year of a form of the consecrated Wine absorbed in a linen cloth and later dipped in water at the Sacrifice of the Mass.³⁰ From the circumstances, it can be devised that it is most probable that the manner of the reservation was an abuse, and so also was the duration of the reservation.

Gratian did not include any extensive legislation concerning the veneration of the reserved Eucharist. However, based on Saint

²⁹ Ibid., c. 23, D. 2. A translation of: "Quod si remanserint, in crastinum non reserventur, sed cum timore et tremore clericorum et diligentia consumantur. Qui autem residua corporis Domini, que in sacrario relicta sunt, consumunt."

³⁰ Ibid., c. 7, D. 2, "alios vero pannum lineum musto intinctum per totum annum reservare, et in tempore sacrificii aqua partem eius lavare et sic offerre." (Though authentic, this canon is not that of Pope Julius but originates in a Council in Portugal in 675 A.D. It also appeared in other collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1315.)

Augustine's teaching, he included norms on adoration before Communion,³¹ and spoke of the fact that, although Jesus has been eaten in the Eucharist, he remains, after the reception of Holy Communion, whole within the heart and person of the recipient.³² He did, however, include a Pseudo-Isidorian canon, which stated that due to the incomparable value of the Eucharist to man, man should, in turn, acknowledge this gift through veneration.³³ Any other policies encouraging veneration of the reserved Eucharist are derived from the implications of the prescriptions for the care of the sacrarium and the Eucharist reserved within it.

The reality of the Blessed Sacrament which is reserved and venerated is also worthy of some consideration. The raison d'être for the veneration of the Blessed Eucharist lies in that great mystery of faith, the real presence of Christ himself in the Blessed Eucharist. The theological consideration of the sacramental phenomenon is not the matter of this study, but its inclusion in the canonical legislation of Gratian, as an underlying reality for the reservation and veneration of

31 Ibid., c. 92, D. 2. (This is attributed to Augustine, but is not in his homily on psalm 33 as mentioned. The canon is found in other collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1351.)

32 Ibid., cc. 70 and 75, D. 2. (These canons originate in Augustine and are found in other collections. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1341 and p. 1345.)

33 Ibid., c. 8, D. 2. (This is a Pseudo-Isidorian canon found in other collections prior to Gratian. See A. Friedberg edition, p. 1317.)

the Blessed Sacrament', is a matter of concern. Many canons in the Second Distinction of Part III of the Decretum make reference to this theological truth.³⁴ In some of these it is evident from the context that the reference to the reality of the presence has a particular relationship to a specific canonical prescription. For example, in a canon which forbids lay people from administering communion to the sick, the reality of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the veneration with which it is held, seem to be at the basis of the prohibition.³⁵ Then, certain canons which speak of the effect of the consecratory blessing on the bread and wine underline the reality of this same real presence.³⁶

Even the actual words of consecration as prescribed by Christ are found in a canon which concludes with the saying that this presence is not to be doubted because it is supported by Christ's statement.³⁷ Very closely related to the consecratory references, and sometimes

³⁴ Ibid., cc. 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 15, 17, 22, 23, 25, 29, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 65, 69, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 88, 91, 92, D. 2.

³⁵ Ibid., c. 29, D. 2.

³⁶ Ibid., cc. 40, 41, and 61, D. 2. (Canon 40 is authentically that of Ambrose, but canon 41 originated with Lafranc of Canterbury. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1328. Canon 61 originated in Augustine. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1337.)

³⁷ Ibid., c. 55, D. 2. (This canon is not from Ambrose but from Algerius of Liège. It is also found in the works of Peter Lombard. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1334.)

included in the same canons, are references to the perceived and hidden realities of the species of bread and wine.³⁸

It is apparent that Gratian did not present a specific section of legislation treating of the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. His compilation included both authentic and spurious texts. However, since both types were included in various collections, the spurious as well as the authentic were to have an effect not only on Gratian's compilation itself, but also on other canonical collections in the following years.

2. Decretals of Gregory IX

Within a century of Gratian's accomplishment, there appeared another significant canonical collection: the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX, promulgated in 1234 by the Bull Rex pacificus.³⁹ This later collection, which was comprised of papal pronouncements, was the result of the efforts of Raymond of Penyafort⁴⁰ who had undertaken the

³⁸ Ibid., cc. 34 and 48, D. 2. (Canon 34 though authentic was not written by Gregory but by Lafranc of Canterbury. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1324. Likewise canon 48 has its origin in Lafranc and not Augustine. See: A. Friedberg edition, p. 1331.)

³⁹ Gregorius IX, op. cit., pp. 1-4.

⁴⁰ "Raymond of Penyafort was born near Barcelona around 1175. He became a canon of the diocese of Barcelona and afterward joined the Order of Preachers. At the command of Pope Gregory IX, he produced a collection of canon law. He was elected general of his order and directed it wisely. The Summa casuum, which treats of the correct and fruitful administration of the sacrament of penance, is the most notable of his works. He died in 1275," in The Liturgy of the Hours, According to the Roman Rite, New York, Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1975, vol. 1, p. 1288.

task upon the commission of Pope Gregory. Unlike the Decree of Gratian, the Decretals were officially published and thus took on the nature of universal laws which commanded observance by the entire Church. They are "a definitive collection of decretals not included in or coming after, Gratian's Decretum."⁴¹ Because of the specific relationship between the canonical legislation of the Gratian and Gregorian collections, we can have a better understanding of the norms regarding reservation and veneration of the Blessed Eucharist in this period by considering the information found in the Gregorian decretals to be supplemental to that found in Gratian's compilation.

The Gregorian collection is divided into five books, each of which, in turn, is divided into a varying number of titles. Each title has a specific subject area and includes those canons which are pertinent to it. The canons on the reservation and veneration of the Blessed Eucharist are found in two titles of Book III. One of these treats of the celebration of Mass, the sacrament of the Eucharist, and the divine office; only four of the fourteen canons in this title contain information relative to our study.⁴² The other title treats of the care of the Eucharist, the Chrism, and the other sacraments.⁴³

41 L. Boyle, "The History of Canon Law, The Classical Period", in New Catholic Encyclopedia, New York, McGraw Hill, 1967, vol. 3, p. 43.

42 Gregorius IX, op. cit., p. 635-644.

43 Ibid., p. 649-650.

Both canons in this title contain matter of significance to the present research. As the titles signify, the Gregorian emphasis on the reservation of the Blessed Eucharist centres on the proper care of the Sacrament.

The position held from early times that the purpose for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament is Communion to the dying and the sick, is reinforced in the Decretals through a reference in the legislation prescribing certain reverences which should accompany the ministry of bringing Communion to the sick. The pertinent canon includes the words:

Actually without distinction, the priest frequently should teach his people that as at the elevation of the salvific Host at the celebration of Mass one bows reverently, so the same gesture should be made when the priest carries the Eucharist to the sick.⁴⁴

This legislation also supports the earlier teaching, as found in Gratian, that the priest is the proper minister of Communion to the sick.⁴⁵ The veneration prescribed for carrying the reserved Sacrament to and from the sick person included that the vessel in which the reserved Species are contained be covered by a clean veil, and that the

⁴⁴ Ibid., b. 3, tit. 41, c. 10. A translation of: "Sacerdos vero quilibet frequenter doceat plebem suam, ut, quum in celebratione missarum elevatur hostia salutaris, quilibet se reverenter inclinet, idem faciens, quum eam defert presbyter ad infirmum."

⁴⁵ Gratianus, op. cit., c. 29, D. 2.

priest hold the Sacrament before his heart and be preceded by a light-bearer.⁴⁶ Besides the particular respect and veneration these devout practices attributed to the reserved Eucharist, they were also intended to have a teaching and sanctifying effect in relation to the faithful "so that from this faith and devotion among all is increased."⁴⁷

The legislation for the custody of the Blessed Eucharist insists on the specific use of keys for the safeguarding of the reserved Sacrament in some type of compartment which would lend itself to such a method of security. This legislation was prompted by the fear of possible irreverence to the sacred Species, a fear which was well grounded in the knowledge, and, at times, the actual experience of profanation of the Blessed Eucharist. To enforce this prescribed care in instances of carelessness, the priest or other cleric responsible is threatened with the possible penalty of suspension for three months. If he persists in such negligence, he will then become subject to penalties of even more serious consequences. The pertinent canon containing this legislation has its origin in a decree promulgated by Innocent III at the Fourth Lateran Council (1215):

⁴⁶ Gregorius IX, op. cit., b. 3, tit. 41, c. 10.

⁴⁷ Ibid. A translation of: "ut ex hoc apud omnes fides et devotio augeatur."

We decree that in all churches the chrism and Eucharist are to be kept under faithful custody by the use of keys lest through some thoughtless occurrence an irreverent or profane use befall them. And the person responsible who leaves these unguarded is to be suspended from office for three months, and if through further negligence some other profanation occurs, a more serious punishment is to be inflicted.⁴⁸

Hostiensis, in his commentary on the phrase "sub fidei custodia" of this canon,⁴⁹ includes both a prohibition against the laity acting as ministers of the Eucharist to the sick and a restriction on deacons in the exercise of this same ministry. Regarding the prohibition, "nor is the Eucharist to be taken to the sick by lay people,"⁵⁰ Gratian's earlier canon stressing this same ban receives reinforcement.⁵¹ In the restriction he also underlines that the deacon's participation is to be interpreted as limited to times of

48 Ibid., b. 3, tit. 44, c. 1. A translation of: "Statuimus, ut in cunctis ecclesiis chrisma et eucharistia sub fidei custodia clavibus adhibitis conserventur, ne possit ad illa temeraria manus extendi ad aliqua horribilia vel nefaria exercenda. Si vero is, ad quem spectat custodia, ea incaute reliquerit, tribus mensibus ab officio suspendatur, et, si per eius incuriam aliquid nefandum inde contigerit, graviori subiaceat ultioni."

49 Hostiensis, Decretalium librum commentaria, doctissimorum virorum quampluribus adnotationibus illustrata, [...] recens accesserunt summaria, & index locupletissimus, Venetiis, Apud Iuntas, 1581 [Torino, Bottega D'Erasmus, 1965], vol. 3, 1-183A p.

50 Ibid., p. 172. A translation of: "nec laicos ad infirmos debet deferri Eucharistia."

51 Gratianus, op. cit., c. 29, D. 2.

necessity, "but by deacons [...] it need be a necessity."⁵² He also supports by personal knowledge and experience of eucharistic degradation, the canon's concern lest some form of sacrilege, or even irreverence, befall the Blessed Sacrament.⁵³ He refers to some of the abuses inflicted on the sacred Species and previously mentioned by Gratian,⁵⁴ and thus the need for penal legislation to ensure that those under whose care the reserved Sacrament is placed will be responsible.⁵⁵

Joannes Andreae, another commentator, emphasizes that the possibility of incurring penalties for negligence resulting in abuses to the Eucharist might serve as a deterrent to the careless attitude and behaviour of priests and clerics in this area of their ministry.⁵⁶

Another Gregorian canon prescribing legislation on the custody of the Blessed Sacrament demands that proper care and attention be paid to the eucharistic vessels, the cloths and other furnishings

⁵² Hostiensis, op. cit., p. 172. A translation of "sed per diaconus [...] necesse fuerit."

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Gratianus, op. cit., c. 94, D. 2.

⁵⁵ Hostiensis, op. cit., p. 172.

⁵⁶ Joannes Andreae Bononiensis, In quinque Decretalium libros novella commentaria, introd. by S. Kuttner, Torino, Bottega D'Erasmus, 1963, (Venetiis, Apud F. Franciscium Senensem, 1581), vol. 3, p. 229A.

associated with the Sacrament. It states that these articles should be kept ever clean and shining.⁵⁷ Hostiensis and Joannes Andreae both mentioned that articles used for profane purposes are usually destroyed by fire when they become grossly soiled.⁵⁸ They considered this mode of action, at least, a fitting guideline to follow when judging the appropriateness of articles for use in some area of divine significance, such as association with the Holy Eucharist.

There is no direct prescription in the Decretals as to the actual materials to be used in the sacred vessels. However, one canon speaks of the use of wooden goblets as an abuse,⁵⁹ while another speaks of the Old Testament preservation of the manna in golden vessels in comparison to the irreverent care to which the Blessed Eucharist was subjected at times.⁶⁰ The canon states that this Irreverent and careless behaviour reflects an attitude on the part of the priests and clerics which infers not only no fear of God, but almost even contempt for Him.⁶¹ But this canon, in keeping with prior legislation, insists that this irreverent behaviour not only should not go unheeded, but

57 Gregorius IX, op. cit., b. 3, tit. 44, c. 2.

58 Hostiensis, op. cit.; p. 172; Joannes Andreae, op. cit., p. 230.

59 Gregorius IX, op. cit., b. 3, tit. 41, c. 14.

60 Ibid., b. 3, tit. 41, c. 10.

61 Ibid.

is to be counteracted with definite punitive measures. The legislation held the bishop responsible for the execution of such measures. If he failed to carry out this responsibility, he then also became subject to punishment.⁶²

An indication is given in the legislation as to the basis for veneration, as well as to some of the legal implications and possible directions to which this legislation gave rise. First, the basis for the veneration of the Eucharist is the awesomeness of the presence of Christ in the sacred Species, which one of the canons refers to as the "mysterium fidei"⁶³ brought about by the words of confection, "that expression of words which Christ himself pronounced, when He changed bread and wine into his own body and blood."⁶⁴

An obvious legal implication with the placement of the legislation regarding keys within a canon promulgated as universal law, is that the use of keys for the protection of the reserved Sacrament became no longer a suggested method, a local custom, or a consequent of particular law, but a prescription of universal law commanding observance by the entire Church. Another legal clarification was found

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid., b. 3, tit. 41, c. 6.

64 Ibid., a translation of: "quis formae verborum, quam ipse Christus expressit, quum in corpus et sanguinem suum panem transsubstantiavit et vinum."

in the legislation prescribing penalties for carelessness in respect to the Blessed Sacrament: clerics, deacons and priests, were responsible for the proper custody and respectful veneration of the reserved Sacrament.

It is interesting to note the development in the area of reservation and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament since Gratian had incorporated into his Decree reference to the necessity of reserving the Eucharist in order to assure that the venerable and ancient ministry of Communion to the dying would be honoured and preserved.⁶⁵ The practice of this reservation in local churches was soon to become universal. This fact is substantiated in the Decretals by the stress which was placed on the safekeeping of the reserved Sacrament, rather than on the necessity of its reservation. Looking ahead a few years, we could note a further development in this area of canonical legislation with the spread of the use of the tabernacle⁶⁶ and with the ministry of Viaticum being viewed as the right and responsibility of the parish priest.⁶⁷

65 Gratianus, op. cit., c. 93, D. 2.

66 For an overview in the development of the legislation regarding the tabernacle, see: D. Cahill, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

67 For an overview in the development of the pastor's right and duty regarding Viaticum, see: D. Sheehan, The Minister of Holy Communion: a historical synopsis and commentary, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1950, pp. 32-34; J. Hannon, op. cit., pp. 20-34.

3. The Tridentine Legislation

Following the great interest, study and development in canon law during the classical period (1140-1348)⁶⁸ there was a period of decline in the respect for the law and the discipline of the Church. But there was a resurgence of canonical legislation with the Council of Trent (1545-1563). The impact of these norms on the faith and discipline of the Church was to maintain a distinctive influence until the further renewal in the Church effected by the Second Vatican Council. There were few significant developments in Trent's canonical legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament other than a firming up of some aspects of previous legislation which would, in turn, pave the way through the following centuries for a development of the law. This fact has been aptly summarized in the following words: "Tridentine Canon Law did not abolish the older Canon Law but rather restored, supplemented, and renewed it, and thereby created the basis for the modern development."⁶⁹

We shall examine the general Tridentine legislation under these headings: the Decree on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist;⁷⁰

68 L. Boyle, op. cit., p. 41.

69 P. Leisching, "The Council of Trent to The Code of Canon Law," in The Catholic Encyclopedia, New York, McGraw Hill, 1967, vol. 3, p. 47.

70 Council of Trent, pp. 72-80.

the Catechism of the Council of Trent,⁷¹ and, the Post-Tridentine Legislation. The first part will present the teaching and legislation of the Council regarding the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist, and the second will consider those references and pastoral applications of the teaching and legislation as found in the catechism. Then, the third part will concern the development of this particular legislation in the three centuries following the Council of Trent but still greatly influenced by it.

A. The Decree on the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist

The decree on the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist was promulgated on October 11, 1551. The introduction contained a note of determination for truth in doctrine and practice. In part it reads:

The holy, ecumenical and general Council of Trent [...] for the purpose of setting forth the true and ancient doctrine concerning faith and sacraments, and of applying a remedy to all heresies and the other most grievous problems [...] regarding the doctrine, use and worship of the Sacred Eucharist [...] forbids all the faithful of Christ to presume henceforth to believe, teach or preach with regard to the most Holy Eucharist otherwise than is explained and defined in this present decree.⁷²

Reservation of the Eucharist to provide Communion for the sick and dying is indeed honoured as a practice and taught by the

71 Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests, issued by order of Pope Pius V, Eng. tr. by J. McHugh & J. Callan, New York, J.F. Wagner, 1956, The Sacrament of the Eucharist, pp. 213-260. (Hereafter, Catechism of the Council of Trent).

72 Council of Trent, p. 72.

Council. The sixth chapter, "The Reservation of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and taking it to the Sick,"⁷³ presents a compact source of legislation which canonizes many of the earlier prescriptions and developments. Reservation is respected as a custom which dates back to early Church practice and has been supported by the legislation of many Councils throughout the centuries from the Council of Nicea. Trent affirms this venerable practice as salvific and necessary. The brief chapter in its entirety reads:

The custom of reserving the Holy Eucharist in a sacred place is so ancient that even the period of the Nicene Council recognized that usage. Moreover, the practice of carrying the Sacred Eucharist to the sick and of carefully reserving it for this purpose in churches, besides being exceedingly reasonable and appropriate, is also found enjoined in numerous councils and is a very ancient observance of the Catholic Church. Wherefore, this holy council decrees that this salutary and necessary custom be by all means retained.⁷⁴

This statement makes reference to the fact that the Blessed Sacrament was kept in churches, indicating the respect to be held for the reserved Sacrament by the priests as guardians of the Sacrament and dispensers of it to the sick. Implicitly, Trent is affirming that the methods of reservation have been good, and it gives the practice even greater impetus in one of the canons which condemned anyone who denies its lawfulness: "If anyone says that it is not lawful for the Holy Eucharist to be reserved in a sacred place [...] let him be anathema."⁷⁵

73 Ibid., p. 27.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid., p. 80.

By the time of the Council of Trent, the phenomenon of reservation was an established fact, and the presence of Christ in the reserved Sacrament an accepted theological truth. Canon four contains the admonition, "if anyone says [...] that in the hosts or consecrated particles which were reserved or which remain after communion, the true Body of the Lord does not remain, let him be anathema."⁷⁶ This real presence of Christ in the reserved Species is the source for the particular veneration afforded to the Sacrament. Although the theology of this specific divine presence is not a direct concern of this study, the fact that the presence is stated in the decree is, since it provides the basis for the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. Chapters one and three of the decree made reference to Trent's teaching of the Christ-reality of this presence.

The holy council teaches and openly and plainly professes that after the consecration of bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, in truly, really, and substantially contained in the august sacrament of the Holy Eucharist under the appearance of these sensible things.⁷⁷

A further statement is given:

In the Eucharist there is the author Himself of sanctity before it is used. For the apostles had not yet received the Eucharist from the hands of the Lord, when He Himself told them that what He was giving them is His own body.⁷⁸

76 Ibid., p. 79.

77 Ibid., p. 73.

78 Ibid., p. 74-75.

The basis for this veneration is, then, the reality of this Christ-presence. The decree itself includes a chapter, supported by one of the concluding canons, which is specifically directed to this veneration, not only from its theological perspective, but also from its liturgical, devotional and witness viewpoints. The Sacrament is to be adored with worship due to God himself, for such is the reality of the great mystery of faith, the Eucharist. In chapter five of the decree, "The Worship and Veneration to be Shown to the Most Holy Sacrament,"⁷⁹ this particular worship is termed "latria":

There is, therefore, no room for doubt that all the faithful of Christ may, in accordance with a custom always received in the Catholic Church, give to this most holy sacrament in veneration the worship of latria, which is due to the true God. Neither is it to be less adored for the reason that it was instituted by Christ, the Lord in order to be received. For we believe that in it the same God is present.⁸⁰

In keeping with established and cherished customs, the Council legislates that special liturgical, para-liturgical and devotional ceremonies centering on the veneration of the reserved Eucharist be celebrated each year to pay tribute to this divine presence in the midst of the faithful.

The holy council declares, moreover, that the custom that this sublime and venerable sacrament be celebrated with special veneration and solemnity every year on a fixed festival day, and that it be

79 Ibid., p. 76.

80 Ibid.

done reverently and with honor in processions through the streets and public places, was very piously and religiously introduced into the Church of God.⁸¹

These religious celebrations came to be known and cherished as the Feast of Corpus Christi, the Corpus Christi processions, and the Forty Hours' Devotions. In recent times, they are frequently referred to as the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, and the Solemn Annual Exposition of the Eucharist. The Council views the setting aside of these special times of honour to the Blessed Sacrament as befitting the rational nature of man and his need to express gratitude as well as giving witness to his belief.

For it is most reasonable that some days be set aside as holy on which all Christians may with special and unusual demonstration testify that their minds are grateful to and mindful of their common Lord and Redeemer for so ineffable and truly divine a favor whereby the victory and triumph of His death are shown forth.⁸²

Among the canons at the close of this eucharistic decree, the Council reaffirms the Church's recognition of the spiritual validity of veneration of the reserved Sacrament and its sanction of this practice as a secondary purpose for the reservation of the Eucharist. A devotional practice which had become a laudable custom among the faithful.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

was now to be canonized by the Church's legislation as an accepted purpose for the reservation of the Sacrament and one truly directed to the salvific nature of the Church's belief and practice. Canon six reads:

If anyone says that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the worship of latria, also outwardly manifested, and is consequently neither to be venerated with a special festival solemnity, nor to be solemnly borne about in procession according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of holy Church, or is not to be set publicly before the people to be adored and that the adorers thereof are idolaters, let him be anathema.⁸³

The right and responsibility of the priest to reserve the Blessed Eucharist, to maintain a proper vigilance in respect to it, and to administer it as Communion to the sick and dying is upheld: "As regards the reception of the sacrament, it has always been the custom of the Church of God that laics receive communion from priests."⁸⁴ Later, in the Council's treatment of Sacred Orders, this same fact is substantiated by the words: "to the Apostles and their successors in the priesthood was given the power of consecrating, offering, and administering His body and blood."⁸⁵

83 Ibid., p. 80. A translation of: "Si quis dixerit, in sancto Eucharistiae sacramento Christum unigenitum Dei Filium non esse cultu latriae etiam externo adorandum, atque ideo nec festiva peculiari celebritate venerandum, neque in processionibus secundum laudabilem et universalem ecclesiae sanctae ritum et consuetudinem solemniter circumgestandum, vel non publice, ut adoretur, populo proponendum, et ejus adoratores esse idololatrias: anathema sit." See also, ibid., p. 356.

84 Ibid., p. 78.

85 Ibid., p. 160.

The deacon's role as an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist remained intact with Trent. This was seen, as from earlier times, as a ministry to be exercised in times of necessity. However, the practice of this ministerial role of the deacon was in fact to be at the commission of the priest, except in the case of some extreme necessity such as when a person was dying and no priest was available. This area was one open to development in the years that followed Trent.

The Council's eucharistic decree sanctioned the earlier legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament. But, in addition to this, it displayed a real respect for the venerability of established customs in this area of eucharistic practice. This is seen in the frequent references to these customs throughout the decree, and even more significantly, in its incorporation of many of these into the promulgated legislation of the Council. With the close of Trent, the actual practice of the faithful in relation to the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist was not marked by any significant changes, but, in reality, not only was the former legislation reinforced, but even former customs now took on the force and respect of promulgated law. Much of this legislation was to affect the pastoral practice of the Church. To facilitate the implementation of these norms at the local and parish level, the Council's pastoral catechism was prepared.

B. Catechism of The Council of Trent for Parish Priests

The need for a catechism to supply parish priests with an official book of instruction for the faithful was seen at the beginning of the Council of Trent and the completed text was promulgated the year after the Council, in 1566. The catechism had four main divisions: the creed, the sacraments, the decalogue, and the Our Father. The solidity of the content from the viewpoint of both doctrine and practical application gained it a reputation as an authoritative manual of Catholic doctrine.⁸⁶ Thus any reference in the text to the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist is of interest to our study.

The primary purpose for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament for the dying is explicitly set out in the pastoral catechism:

It is also frequently called the Viaticum by sacred writers, both because it is spiritual food by which we are sustained in our pilgrimage through this life, and also because it paves our way to eternal glory and happiness. Wherefore, according to an ancient usage of the Catholic Church, we see that none of the faithful are permitted to die without this Sacrament.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Catechism of the Council of Trent, pp. xxiii-xxxvii.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 215.

Later, the catechism concludes its presentation of the effects of the Eucharist, stressing its efficacy to assist the believer to reach the fullness of glory in heaven. This particular reference expands on the description of the Eucharist as Viaticum.

Finally, to comprise all the advantages and blessings of this Sacrament in one word, it must be taught that the Holy Eucharist is most efficacious towards the attainment of eternal glory. For it is written: He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up on the last day. That is to say, by the grace of this Sacrament men enjoy the greatest peace and tranquility of conscience during the present life; and, when the hour of departing from this world shall have arrived, like Elias, who in the strength of the bread baked on the hearth, walked to Horeb, the mount of God, they, too, invigorated by the strengthening influence of this (heavenly food), will ascend to unfading glory and bliss.⁸⁸

The care and veneration of the reserved Eucharist, and the responsibility to keep before the faithful the excellence of its presence in their midst primarily rests with pastors.

In order that the faithful, therefore, aware of the divine honors due to this heavenly Sacrament, may derive therefrom abundant fruit of grace and escape the most just anger of God, pastors should explain with the greatest diligence all those things which may seem calculated more fully to display its majesty.⁸⁹

88 Ibid., p. 244.

89 Ibid., p. 213.

The catechism stresses "that to priests alone has been given power to consecrate and administer to the faithful, the Holy Eucharist,"⁹⁰ with an explicit reference to the Council of Trent's teaching. This precaution, which was directed at the preservation and development of the attitude of awesomeness of this eucharistic presence of Christ, included not only the administration of the Sacrament but even the handling of those vessels, linens, and other sacred furnishings closely associated with it. These were strictly priestly functions. The laity were banned from any such participation except in rare instances of grave necessity.

To safeguard in every possible way the dignity of so august a Sacrament, not only is the power of its administration entrusted exclusively to priests, but the Church has also prohibited by law any but consecrated persons, unless some case of great necessity intervene, to dare handle or touch the sacred vessels, the linen, or other instruments necessary to its completion.⁹¹

This is not new legislation but a reiteration of that found in Gratian's Decretum and the Decretals of Gregory IX.⁹²

No doubt, because of the irreverences to which the Blessed Sacrament had been subjected at times throughout the history of the Church, the catechism wanted to instill the reality of the Eucharist in the minds of the faithful through the instruction and devotedness of their pastors.

90 Ibid., p. 253.

91 Ibid., p. 254.

92 Gratianus, op. cit., cc. 2, 16, 40, and 41, D. 1, and cc. 23 and 29, D. 2; Gregorius IX, op. cit., b. 3, tit. 41, c. 10.

As of all the sacred mysteries bequeathed to us by our Lord and Saviour as most infallible instruments of divine grace, there is none comparable to the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist; so, for no crime is there a heavier punishment to be feared from God than for the unholy or irreligious use by the faithful of that which is full of holiness, or rather which contains the very author and source of holiness.⁹³

There is a continued insistence that parish priests stress the reality of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

To begin with the first (of these mysteries), pastors should give their best attention to show how clear and explicit are the words of our Saviour which establish the Real Presence of His body in this Sacrament.⁹⁴

Again, pastors are requested to assist the faithful to perceive the great mystery of faith present in the Eucharist beyond the sensible signs of the species.

We must now return to an explanation of those truths concerning the Eucharist about which the faithful are on no account to be left in ignorance. Pastors, aware of the warning of the Apostle that those who discern not the body of the Lord are guilty of a most grave crime, should first of all impress on the minds of the faithful the necessity of detaching, as much as possible, their mind and understanding from the dominion of the senses.⁹⁵

Through veneration of the reality of the sacramental Christ-presence, people would be "excited to contemplation of the

93 Catechism of the Council of Trent, p. 213.

94 Ibid., p. 229.

95 Ibid., p. 228.

stupendous might and power of God."⁹⁶ Their faith-life would be deepened and open to ever greater growth as they "admire and adore the Sacrament of the Eucharist."⁹⁷ The catechism stressed that for those open to the Spirit of God in their lives, nothing contributes more to the spiritual joy and advantage of pious persons than the contemplation of the exalted dignity of this most august Sacrament.⁹⁸ This same eucharistic veneration, after having contributed to their growth in grace, is seen as a fitting devotional practice for the faithful and an acknowledgement of the divine presence. It is ever advantageous to their deeper communion with Him. Nothing more becomes the piety of the faithful than, omitting all curious questionings, to revere and adore the majesty of this august Sacrament, and to recognize the wisdom of God.⁹⁹

The catechism made no express reference to the regulations regarding the sacrarium or the tabernacle, to the use of keys, to the custodian of the reserved Sacrament, or to the ritual for taking Communion to the sick. The only references to the sacred vessels were the prohibition forbidding the laity to handle them and the mention of the reality of the Eucharist remaining "to be a Sacrament, though kept in a pyx."¹⁰⁰ The lack of mention of these items is understandable

96 Ibid.

97 Ibid., p. 232.

98 Ibid.

99 Ibid., p. 241.

100 Ibid., p. 217.

since the intent of the catechism was to provide the parish priest with assistance to fulfill his obligation to instruct his parishioners in their faith and devotion toward the Eucharist. However, due to the favorable reception of the catechism as an authoritative and excellent summary of catholic doctrine, its emphasis on the reality of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the care of the Sacrament, and the primary purpose of reservation as necessary food for the dying, the development of the legislation on reservation and veneration throughout the post-Tridentine period was indeed to be influenced by this catechism.

C. The Post-Tridentine Legislation

In the centuries prior to the promulgation of the 1917 Code of Canon Law, we note the strong influence of the Council of Trent's legislation. This section will treat of the topic under five particular aspects: the custodian of the reserved Eucharist; the tabernacle; the pyx or ciborium; the renewal of the consecrated Species; and the reservation of the Eucharist outside of the church.

(1) Custodian of the Reserved Eucharist

After Trent, various Roman documents upheld the role of the priest as guardian of the Eucharist. The Congregation of Rites, in 1593, had prescribed that the care of the tabernacle key was not to be

left to a sacristan or lay person but only to a priest.¹⁰¹ The Caeremoniale episcoporum, in 1600, entrusted its care to the sacristan but stipulated that this person be in priestly orders.¹⁰² The Rituale Romanum, in 1614, specifically named the pastor as the person responsible.¹⁰³ The Congregation of Rites in 1616 repeated its position of 1593 on the care of the tabernacle key.¹⁰⁴ The Congregation of the Council in 1689 again insisted on the fact that "Notwithstanding any contrary statute or contrary customs, the tabernacle key was to be in the sole and exclusive care of the pastor."¹⁰⁵ In 1833, it was decreed by the Congregation of Rites that

101 Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum et Instructio Clementina ex actis eiusdem collecta ab Aloisio Gardellini, in usum cleri commodiorem ordine alphabetico concinnata opera et studio Wolfgangi Mühlbauer, Monachii, Sumptibus Librariae J.J. Lentnerianae, E. Stahl, 1862-1867, vol. 3-2, p. 362. (Hereafter, W. Mühlbauer).

102 Caeremoniale episcoporum Clementis VIII, Innocentii X et Benedicti XIII jussu editum, Benedicti XIV et Leonis XIII auctoritate recognitum, ed. 3a post typicam, Taurini, Marietti, 1948, b. 1, ch. 6, nn. 1-2, p. 14. (Hereafter, Caeremoniale episcoporum).

103 Rituale Romanum, Pauli V Pontificis Maximi jussu editum, atque a felicis recordationis Benedicto XIV, auctum et castigatum, in quo, quae parochis ad administrationem sacramentorum, benedictiones, et conjurationes necessaria censentur, accurate sunt posita, Mechliniae, J. Hanicq, 1850, pp. 67-68. (Hereafter, Rituale Romanum).

104 W. Mühlbauer, op. cit., pp. 362-363.

105 M. André, "Tabernacle", in Dictionnaire de droit canonique, ou le cours de droit canon de Mgr. André (d'Avallon) entièrement rev. corr. augm. et actualisé par M. l'Abbé Condis, Paris, H. Walzer, 1890, vol. 3, p. 580. A translation of: "Clavem tabernaculi privative et exclusive ad parochum pertinere, non obstante contrario statuto et quaecumque consuetudine."

the priest was to live near the church, and, when absent, to arrange for a substitute to celebrate daily Mass.¹⁰⁶

In the nineteenth century, there was some relaxation in the legislation regarding the guardian of the Blessed Sacrament. One of the first concessions was granted in 1833 to the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. They were given an indult whereby a resident chaplain was not required and the sister sacristan was left in charge of the key to the tabernacle. In effect, this indult made the sister sacristan the custodian of the reserved Sacrament at any of the houses where a chaplain was not in residence.¹⁰⁷ That same year, the Sacred Congregation of the Council resolved a problem in the diocese of Fulda: lay people were guardians of the Eucharist in chapels where a priest celebrated Mass only twice a month. The Congregation allowed this form of guardianship to remain provided, however, Mass was celebrated once a week.¹⁰⁸ These two examples are indicative of the divergent practices arising in communities and religious houses concerning the custom of

106 Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum ex actis eiusdem collecta eiusque auctoritate promulgata sub auspiciis SS. Domini Nostri Leonis Papae XIII, Romae, Ex Typographia Polyglotta, 1898-1901, vol. 2, n. 2700, p. 248.

107 Ibid., vol. 3, n. 3662, p. 183, "Dubium III. An tolerari possit quod in eiusmodi privatis Oratoriis SSma Eucharistia diu noctuque servetur absque Sacerdote ibidem commorante, solis Sororibus veluti concredita? [...] Ad III. Affirmative; servatis conditionibus in Apostolico Brevi contentis."

108 SCConc, Reply, Consuetudinis et facultatis adservandi SS. Eucharistiam in ASS, 15 (1898), p. 531.

the reservation of the Eucharist in the absence of a priest as the specific guardian. One commentator suggested that the Holy See, because of the scarcity of priests, would insist on the abolition of these customs.¹⁰⁹ Another pointed out that many communities of women enjoyed the apostolic indult which permitted them to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in their oratories when they were unable to have a resident chaplain.¹¹⁰

(ii) The Tabernacle

The material for tabernacles prescribed by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops on October 26, 1575, was wood, gilded on the outside and lined with white silk on the inside.¹¹¹ It was obvious from some of the later directions that the use of wood was a minimum requirement and that when possible the use of more precious materials was encouraged.¹¹² The specific material used was left to the discretion of the local Ordinary.¹¹³

¹⁰⁹ L. Koster, De Custodia sanctissimæ Eucharistiæ; disquisitio historico-iuridica, Romæ, Catholic Book Agency, 1940, p. 154.

¹¹⁰ P. Gasparri, Tractatus canonicus de Sanctissima Eucharistia, Parisiis, Delhomme et Brigue, 1897; vol. 2, p. 267. (Hereafter, De Eucharistia).

¹¹¹ W. Muhlbauer, op. cit., p. 365.

¹¹² C. Borromeo, Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis a S. Carlo Cardinali S. Praxides archiepiscopo condita, Patavii, Typis Seminarii, Apud J. Manfrè, 1754, vol. 1, part 4, pp. 543-544.

¹¹³ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 264.

The prescriptions of the Rituale Romanum of 1614 presented the tabernacle legislation in the setting of the purpose, care and honour due to the reserved Eucharist which was to be kept within a pyx made of solid material and locked in the tabernacle.¹¹⁴ The legislation continues:

And further, this tabernacle is to contain nothing else, have a suitable canopy over the opening, and be placed on the principal altar, or another altar which seems more convenient and becoming to the veneration and worship of this great Sacrament.¹¹⁵

Although this legislation was respected and implemented in new or reconstructed churches, it is evident that many long-standing customs relating to existing repositories were honoured. A statement of the Synod of Paderborn in 1688 is witness to this. "Where there is not a tabernacle the pastor is encouraged to install one, which may be placed either in the middle of the altar or in the wall near the altar."¹¹⁶

Many examples of these exceptions were to be found in France, Germany and Belgium. These were frequently in the form of towers,

¹¹⁴ Rituale Romanum; p. 70.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., a translation of: "Hoc autem tabernaculum canopeo decenter opertum, atque ab omni alia re vacuum, in altari majori vel in alio, quod venerationi et cultui tanti Sacramenti commodius ac decentius videatur, sit collocatum."

¹¹⁶ L, Koster, op. cit., p. 136. A translation of: "Tabernaculum ubi nondum est, sollicitus sit Pastor, ut id conficiatur, quod fiat vel in medio altaris, vel in parieto iuxta altare."

columba or ornamented suspended vessels.¹¹⁷ One rather striking exception was the reservation of the Sacrament in a wall ostensarium from which the sacred Species was visible to both chapel and choir. When the custom was explained to the Sacred Congregation of Rites, the answer issued on December 11, 1885, said: "Piam consuetudinem tolerari posse."¹¹⁸

Tabernacles were to be well constructed and closed-in on all sides.¹¹⁹ Metal tabernacles were to be lined with certain woods or other suitable materials which would eliminate dangers to the reserved species resulting from dampness.¹²⁰ If the ornamentation of tabernacle doors included perforations, an inside covering was prescribed to prevent the entry of flies or other insects.¹²¹ At times there was an additional rear door to the tabernacle which had the advantage of an easy access to the tabernacle during celebrations for the purpose of Viaticum or other distribution.¹²² A canopy or veil was prescribed to be placed over the entire tabernacle and a special lining of silk or

117 J.F. Van Der Stappen, Tractatus de administratione sacramentorum et de sacramentalibus, Mechliniae, H. Dessain, 1900, pp. 98-99; W. Freestone, op. cit., pp. 188-218.

118 P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1926-1939, vol. 8, n. 6170, p. 264.

119 Ibid., vol. 8, n. 6192, pp. 277-278.

120 C. Borromeo, op. cit., pp. 543-544.

121 W. Mühlbauer, op. cit., p. 366.

122 C. Borromeo, op. cit., p. 544.

other suitable material for the interior. A corporal was to be placed on the base of the tabernacle on which would rest the vessels containing the reserved Eucharist. Flowers or pictures were not to be placed on or in front of the tabernacle.¹²³

The major concern of the Church in this post-Tridentine period regarding the tabernacle was its security. The Provincial Councils of Cologne and Prague in 1860 cite examples of this concern.¹²⁴ The legislator's position is well expressed by a mid-twentieth century commentator in the following words:

Regardless of the material used, as long as the tabernacle enjoyed structural strength, was immovable, and remained well-enclosed, the Church was satisfied. As long as due protection was afforded against possible profanation by thieves, against likely disturbance by insects, and against the process of a quick corruption in consequence of heavy moisture, the ordinary could safely act according to his own discretion and judgement in the specification of the material to be used for the construction of the tabernacle.¹²⁵

(iii) The Pyx or Ciborium

The Rituale Romanum prescribed that the reserved Species were to be kept in a pyx which was to be well constructed of a solid

¹²³ For a summary of the legislation concerning the ornamentation of the tabernacle, see W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., pp. 55-65.

¹²⁴ W. Mühlbauer, op. cit., p. 363.

¹²⁵ D. Cahill, op. cit., p. 27.

suitable material¹²⁶ and securely locked in a tabernacle.¹²⁷ While there and when being carried, the pyx was to be covered with a white veil.¹²⁸ Then, the Caeremoniale episcoporum prescribed that gold be the chief material of pyxes and that as a secondary material silver could be used, with the provision that the interior of such pyxes be gold-plated.¹²⁹ However, while by exception some other materials including copper were used,¹³⁰ glass was explicitly forbidden by the Sacred Congregation of Rites,¹³¹ and wood, compressed cardboard, bronze and ivory, disapproved by Gasparri.¹³²

On many occasions the Apostolic See prohibited the practice of the reservation of the Eucharist outside of pyxes.¹³³ Such prohibitions were even enacted when the Eucharist was being protected in times of persecution.¹³⁴ However, by the nineteenth century the

126 Rituale Romanum, p. 70.

127 Ibid.

128 Ibid.

129 Caeremoniale episcoporum, b. 2, ch. 30, n. 3, p. 197.

130 P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 270.

131 P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, vol. 8, n. 6123, p. 231.

132 P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 271.

133 P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, vol. 7, n. 5564, p. 916.

134 Ibid., vol. 1, n. 339, p. 803, and vol. 7, n. 4846, p. 377.

Host for exposition was left in the ostensorium which was placed in the tabernacle. When the Sacred Congregation of Rites was asked about the legitimacy of the reservation of the Host for exposition in the glass luna, the response was in the affirmative.¹³⁵

(iv) The Renewal of the Consecrated Species

The Caeremoniale episcoporum prescribed that the reserved Species be renewed once a week.¹³⁶ F. Van der Stappen maintains that this became the universal norm for the Church, although he himself allowed for a period of fifteen days provided dampness did not necessitate a more frequent renewal.¹³⁷ Koster maintained that the Holy See never urged the weekly renewal in an inflexible manner and he cites the customs of different dioceses and countries to illustrate a variance in the time prescription for renewal.¹³⁸ The statutes of many provincial councils which allowed for the renewal every fifteen days seemed to receive support from popes who demanded that the time limit for renewal be between eight and fifteen days.¹³⁹ However, many of the

¹³⁵ Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Ritus, vol. 3, n. 3974, p. 338. "Affirmative; dummodo sacra Hostia in dictis crystallis bene sit clausa atque crystalli non tangat, iuxta Decreta alias edita."

¹³⁶ Caeremoniale episcoporum, b. 1, ch. 6, n. 2, p. 14.

¹³⁷ F. Van der Stappen, op. cit., pp. 120-125.

¹³⁸ L. Koster, op. cit., p. 167.

¹³⁹ P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, vol. 1, n. 179, p. 343, and n. 328, p. 742.

pre-Code canonists supported the regulation for renewal each week.¹⁴⁰ Even Gasparri agreed with them, but he made allowances for up to fifteen days in exceptional circumstances.¹⁴¹

The Rituale Romanum indicated that the hosts used for the consecration should be baked frequently¹⁴² and St. Charles Borromeo set the time between the baking of the hosts and their consecration at twenty days.¹⁴³ Gasparri stated that those who used the fifteen day interval for the renewal of hosts should use freshly baked hosts. Thus, if they used hosts which were baked no earlier than fifteen days before they were consecrated, the time-space from when hosts could be baked until they would be renewed would fall within a period of one month.¹⁴⁴

The renewal process included the prohibition of placing newly consecrated Hosts in the same pyx or ciborium with formerly consecrated ones. The Caeremoniale episcoporum stated that the reserved host "is to be removed and renewed."¹⁴⁵ This prescription was more clearly

¹⁴⁰ For a list of some of these canonists, see D. Cahill, op. cit., p. 35.

¹⁴¹ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 274.

¹⁴² Rituale Romanum, p. 70.

¹⁴³ C. Borromeo, op. cit., p. 436.

¹⁴⁴ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 276.

¹⁴⁵ Caeremoniale episcoporum, b. 1, ch. 6, n. 2, p. 14. A translation of: "mouetur et renovetur."

declared by the Rituale Romanum: "and as often as he shall consecrate these, he shall first distribute or consume the old ones."¹⁴⁶ Finally, if perchance the sacred Species became corrupt, Gasparri suggested that the incorrupt Hosts be separated and the others consumed or, if necessary, burned and the ashes be disposed of properly.¹⁴⁷

(v) Reservation Outside of the Church

The post-Tridentine period saw a revival of some of the ancient practices of the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in private homes and of taking it on journeys. The Apostolic See, aware of these happenings, once again condemned many of them.¹⁴⁸ Through the Sacred Congregation of Rites, in 1638, it legislated that the priest could transfer the reserved Eucharist outside the church only for Corpus Christi processions, Forty Hours' Devotions, and to take Communion to the sick.¹⁴⁹

Many of the Popes were severe in the penalties they imposed on those who violated the legislation regarding the reservation of the

¹⁴⁶ Rituale Romanum, p. 70. A translation of: "et ubi eas consecraverit, veteres primo distribuat, vel sumat."

¹⁴⁷ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 276.

¹⁴⁸ L. Koster, op. cit., pp. 105-107.

¹⁴⁹ SCR, Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum, vol. 1, n. 640, p. 149. "Delationem SS. Sacramenti extra ecclesiam non esse permissam, nisi occasione solemnium Processionum in Festo et per octavam Corporis Christi, necnon occasione infirmorum, et orationis quadraginta horarum iuxta Sac. Canonum Decreta."

Blessed Eucharist.¹⁵⁰ All those involved in unlawful practices in this area were suspected of heresy and subjected to investigation by the Holy Office. Further, unless they were cleared beyond doubt, they were handed over to the secular authorities to be punished proportionately to the crime committed.¹⁵¹

One of these practices which received the approval of local Ordinaries was the retention of the reserved Eucharist at night in the priest's house or a special safe in the church's sacristy because of the danger of thefts and subsequent profanation. Also, there were occasions when through apostolic indult permission was given to reserve the Eucharist in private homes. One noteworthy indult was that granted to Mary, Queen of Scots, (1542-1587), to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in her prison cell in order that she might avail herself of Viaticum prior to her execution.¹⁵² Indults were granted to keep the Eucharist in private homes or other suitable places when there was danger from heretics or infidels, when the church could not be properly secured, or when missionaries were in an area where there was no church. There

¹⁵⁰ P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, vol. 1, n. 250, p. 479, n. 255, p. 488, and n. 340, p. 810.

¹⁵¹ F. Schmalzgrueber, Jus ecclesiasticum universum brevi methodo ad discentium utilitatem explicatum, seu Lucubrationes canonicae in quinque libros Decretalium Gregorii IX Pontificis Maximi, Romae, Ex Typographia Rev. Cam. Apostolicae, 1843-1845, b. 3, part 3, tit. 44, n. 9, vol. 9, p. 545.

¹⁵² Ibid., b. 3, part 3, tit. 44, n. 4, vol. 9, pp. 543-544.

were even occasions when indulgences were granted to reserve the Eucharist in the bedroom of a sick person.¹⁵³

It is ever apparent that the Church was determined in its legislation to see that this august sacrament received fitting veneration. The introduction to the section on the Eucharist in the Rituale Romanum in 1614 reflected this attitude which the legislation of the Church through the succeeding centuries would endeavour to protect. This reads:

Indeed, conscientious and attentive care displaying devotion and veneration is to be given to all the Sacraments of the Catholic Church; but foremost it is to be shown in the administration and reception of the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, compared to which the Church of God has nothing more worthy, nothing holier and more wonderful, since in it is contained the principal and greatest gift of God, both the chief source Himself of all grace and holiness, and its author, Christ the Lord.¹⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

From the earliest times in the Church the practice of eucharistic reservation has been observed. The faithful held sacred the custom of receiving the Eucharist prior to death. This provided

¹⁵³ P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, vol. 8, n. 6035, p. 169, and vol. 7, n. 4832, p. 341.

¹⁵⁴ Rituale Romanum, p. 95. A translation of: "Omnibus quidem Ecclesiae catholicae Sacramentis religiose, sancteque tractandis, magna, ac diligens cura adhibenda est; sed precipue in administrando, ac suscipiendo sanctissimo Eucharistiae Sacramento, quo nihil dignius, nihil sanctius et admirabilius habet Ecclesia Dei; cum in eo continentur praecipuum et maximum Dei donum, et ipsemet omnis gratiae et sanctitatis fons, auctorque Christus Dominus."

them with the necessary nourishment for the passage into eternal life. Also, they reserved the Eucharist in their homes for Communion outside of Mass. For them this reception was seen in relationship to the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist.

Gratian in his compilation stressed the need to reserve the Blessed Sacrament for possible Communion to the sick and dying and the corresponding responsibilities of the priest in this regard. He also included legislation touching on the special care of the reserved Sacrament in proper vessels within a secure room called the sacrarium. Although the Sacrament itself was venerated at this time, the eucharistic devotions of exposition, benediction, processions and visits, were virtually unknown in this period.

Gregory IX added support to the legislation found in Gratian's compilation regarding the secure custody of the Eucharist. By the time of his official universal legislation, the custom of reservation in churches seemed to have taken a firm hold. And although his legislation contained no prescription about eucharistic devotions outside Mass, it was during this time that worship of the Eucharist outside the celebration emerged.

By the time the Council of Trent convened, the reservation of the Eucharist and its veneration as the presence of Christ were established facts. One of the Council's specific contributions was a systematic

presentation of legislation in this area. As part of the overall norms regarding veneration of the Eucharist, mention was made of the eucharistic devotions of exposition and processions.

In the period following Trent there was much development in the prescriptions for tabernacle construction and care, on the person responsible for the reserved Sacrament, particularly where no priest was in residence, and on the renewal of the sacred Species. In the area of eucharistic devotions there was a great flourish in the grandeur of expositions and processions.

All in all, at the close of this period, there was need to have the legislation in respect to the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist presented in a systematic and official manner. The 1917 Code of Canon Law met this requirement. A consideration of it will comprise the next chapter of our study.

CHAPTER II

PRESCRIPTIONS OF THE 1917 CODE OF CANON LAW

The Church's revised legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Blessed Eucharist was promulgated as universal law in the 1917 Code of Canon Law.¹ This chapter will concern itself with twelve canons from this Code: canons 1265-1275 which treat of the custody and worship of the Most Holy Eucharist; and canon 1291 which treats of the Corpus Christi procession.² This presentation also includes references to the studies of some of the commentators on these specific canons from 1917 until the revision of Canon Law was called for in 1959. It is important to be aware of the characteristics of the 1917 legislation, in order to understand more clearly the changes introduced in the Vatican II conciliar and post-conciliar period. Our study will look first at the aspect of reservation and then at veneration.

1. Reservation of the Eucharist

The first part concerning the reserved Sacrament will treat of the relevant canons under six topics: conditions and places of reservation, accessibility of churches for visitation, the altar of

1 Codex Iuris Canonici, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, in Civitate Vaticana, 1918. (Hereafter, CIC, 1917).

2 These canons are not found in the Code in the section on the Eucharist, but in the part on Divine Worship. This is indicative of the theological thought of the time which treated the reserved Sacrament independently of the Celebration of the Eucharist.

reservation, the tabernacle, the receptacle for the reserved Hosts, and the renewal of the Hosts.

A. Conditions and Places of Reservation (c. 1265)

The introduction to the legislation on the places of reservation prescribes two conditions. As a rule, Mass is to be celebrated in this place once a week, and there is to be some person designated as custodian of the Blessed Sacrament.³ This was seen as a softening in the law which had previously called for daily Mass and a priest to be the regular guardian of the Sacrament.⁴ The necessity for this guardian is a serious responsibility which, although it belongs to the priest in charge of the sacred place, may be committed to a lay person who has been proven dependable.⁵ The obligation of the daily Mass is to be honoured when possible since the underlying reason for this is to renew the sacred Species.⁶ However, Mass every ten to fifteen days would seem to suffice for this purpose.⁷

3 CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 1, "Sanctissima Eucharistia, dummodo adsit qui eius curam habeat et regulariter sacerdos semel saltem in hebdomada Missam in sacro loco celebret..."

4 M. Coronata, Compendium juris canonici ad usum scholarum, Taurini, Marietti, 1937-38, vol. 2, p. 68.

5 E. Cappello, Tractus canonico - moralis de sacramentis... Taurinorum Augustae, Romae, Marietti, 1947, vol. 1, p. 283.

6 C. Bachofen, "Reservation and Worship of the Blessed Sacrament", in A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law, by P. Chas. Augustine, St. Louis, Herder, 1925-1936, vol. 6, p. 216. (Hereafter, C. Augustine).

7 F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 283.

(1) Places of Obligatory Reservation.

The 1917 Code lists the churches which are obliged to reserve the Blessed Sacrament: cathedrals, the principal church of an abbey nullius or a prelaty nullius, the principal church of a vicariate apostolic or a prefecture apostolic, every parish or quasi-parish church, and a church attached to a house of exempt religious men or women.⁸ The cathedral is seen as the main church of the entire diocese and in a sense, is the overseer of the other churches since it exists only with the bishop and diocese. Likewise is the principal church of an abbacy or prelaty nullius and of a vicariate or prefecture apostolic, since the person in charge has power similar to that of a bishop in his diocese. A parish church or a quasi-parish church, one not yet established as a parish, exist for certain groups of persons. The churches attached to houses of exempt religious men or women are considered to be the equivalent of parish churches for the religious family.⁹ For the obligation to reserve the Eucharist to apply, the religious house must have been canonically erected.¹⁰ It is not necessary that the house be exempt, only that it be used by exempt religious.¹¹

8 CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 1, n. 1, "Custodiri debet in ecclesia cathedrali, in ecclesia principe Abbatiae vel Praelaturae nullius, Vicariatus et Praefecturae Apostolicae, in qualibet ecclesia paroeciali vel quasi-paroeciali et in ecclesia/adnexa domui religiosorum exemptorum sive virorum sive mulierum."

9 F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 280-281.

10 C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 214-215.

11 M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 68.

The Blessed Sacrament may also be reserved in filial or mission churches as well as in the main church in a parish. One opinion suggests that this permission is included in the Code's reference to parish or quasi-parishes,¹² and another that it is left to the discretion of the Ordinary.¹³

Since the reception of the Eucharist in danger of death is a prescription of divine law, the obligation of reservation is considered grave. However, poor parishes, unable to provide the requirements of law for Eucharistic reservation, may with the permission of the bishop transfer the Sacrament to the mother church or some other church or oratory.¹⁴ And, in parish churches which Catholics share with non-Catholics, it is more suitable to reserve the Eucharist in the residence of the pastor or another priest.¹⁵

¹² S. Woywod, "The Law of the Code, Custody and Cult of the Blessed Sacrament", in HPR, 27(1927), pp. 37-38.

¹³ P. Gasparri, Tractatus Canonici de Sanctissima Eucharistia, Parisiis, Delhomme et Briquet, 1897, vol. 2, p. 250. (Hereafter, De Eucharistia).

¹⁴ F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 281-284.

¹⁵ R. Naz, Traité de droit canonique, Paris, Letouzey et Ané, 1947-49, vol. 3, p. 84. See also: Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda fidei; seu, Decreta, instructiones, rescripta pro apostolicis missionibus, Romae, ex Typographia Polyglotta, 1907, vol. 1, n. 681, p. 407.

(ii) Places of Possible Reservation

The law specifies that the Eucharist may be reserved with the permission of the local Ordinary in collegiate churches, the principal public or semi-public oratory of a charitable or religious house, and the chapels of ecclesiastical colleges administered by secular or religious clergy.¹⁶ A collegiate church is "one which has a canonically erected college or chapter of clerics,"¹⁷ and an ecclesiastical college is "a house or residence under the control of the Church, for young men who are being educated for the clerical or religious life."¹⁸ Under pious homes or charitable institutions are: "houses of retreats, hospitals, and orphan asylums conducted chiefly for a charitable purpose, colleges and schools for the Christian education of the young."¹⁹

A religious or pious house annexed to a public church may have its own chapel of reservation if the church is not used for the ordinary exercises of the religious community.²⁰ In the religious house itself, the Blessed Sacrament is reserved only in one place,²¹ the principal

¹⁶ CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 1, n. 2, "Custodiri potest, de licentia Ordinarii loci, in ecclesia collegiata et in oratorio principali sive publico sive semi-publico tum domus pie aut religiosae, tum collegii ecclesiastici quod a clericis saecularibus vel a religiosis regatur."

¹⁷ T. Bouscaren, A. Ellis, and F. Korth, Canon Law; a Text and Commentary, 4th revision, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1966, p. 716.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 644-645.

¹⁹ H. Ayrinhac, Administrative Legislation in the New Code of Canon Law, New York, Longmans, 1930, p. 134.

²⁰ M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 69.

²¹ CIC, 1917, c. 1267.

chapel, unless the same physical building serves for different groups or communities. Examples of this would be: a seminary with clerics and with sisters in charge of the domestic operations, a provincial house which is at the same time a retreat house, or a house with different sections shared by members of the same religious community with different religious superiors.²²

The second paragraph of the canon provides that for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in any other church or oratory, an apostolic indult is required; local Ordinaries for a just cause and in individual instances can only grant permission for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in churches and public oratories.²³ Churches and oratories which required the indults included those of confraternities which were not erected in parish churches or in churches of exempt religious orders. Other oratories include: all private oratories except those of cardinals or bishops; all semi-public oratories which are not the principal chapels for religious or charitable houses; and, all public oratories belonging to confraternities or sodalities. However, such is not required for the oratories of pious associations who may claim the favour by law through their local Ordinaries.²⁴ The

²² H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 136-137; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 286.

²³ CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 2, "Ut in aliis ecclesiis seu oratoriis custodiri possit, necessarium est indultum apostolicum; loci Ordinarius hanc licentiam concedere potest tantummodo ecclesiae aut oratorio publico ex iusta causa et per modum actus."

²⁴ C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 216-217.

granting of an apostolic indult usually included the conditions that the oratory be suitably decorated, that there be a custodian and a lamp, and that Mass be celebrated regularly once a week.²⁵ It is apparent from the documents that the Holy See was most cautious about the granting of these indults and asked the bishops to weigh seriously all the circumstances before submitting a request.²⁶

Among the reasonable causes allowing local Ordinaries by law to permit reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in a church or public oratory in individual instances, we could mention lack of seating, repairs, danger from fire or flood, and the celebration of a special feast, novena, or triduum.²⁷

(iii) Places Forbidden for Reservation

For fear of possible profanation to the Eucharist, the Code forbids the retention of the Eucharist in one's home or on one's person, and the carrying of the Sacrament on journeys.²⁸ Early Christians had

25 Ibid., p. 217.

26 SCS, "An Instruction on Asking Indults for: Private Oratories; Portable Altars; Mass Without a Server; Keeping the Blessed Sacrament in Public Chapels", in CLD, vol. 3, pp. 338-339; SCR, "The Custody of the Blessed Sacrament, Tabernacle," in CLD, vol. 4, p. 387.

27 C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 217.

28 CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 3, "Nemini licet sanctissimam Eucharistiam apud se retinere aut secum in itinere deferre."

kept the Blessed Sacrament in their homes, especially during persecutions, and frequently carried it with them on journeys.²⁹ Both these practices had been abrogated before the Code.³⁰ Persons retaining the Eucharist in such a manner were suspected of heresy and punished accordingly.³¹ The Pope is the only one who retained the privilege to carry the Eucharist with him on travels.³²

The Code also forbids the reservation of the Eucharist within the choir or walls of a monastery of nuns with the specific statement that all contrary privileges are revoked.³³ The monasteries referred to are those under strict papal cloister. Since the Blessed Sacrament may be kept in the monastery chapel, the purpose of the legislation is to enable the priest to have access to the Blessed Sacrament.³⁴

²⁹ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 247; H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 137; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 217.

³⁰ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 248; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 217.

³¹ Ibid.

³² H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 138-139; W. Cavanaugh, The Reservation of the Blessed Eucharist, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America, 1927, p. 40.

³³ CIC, 1917, c. 1267, "Revocato quolibet contrario privilegio, in ipsa religiosa vel pia domo sanctissima Eucharistia custodiri nequit, nisi vel in ecclesia vel in principali oratorio; nec apud moniales intra chorum vel septa monasterii."

³⁴ T. Bouscaren, A. Ellis, and F. Korth, op. cit., p. 716.

B. Accessibility of Churches for Visitation (c. 1266)

The law states that churches in which the Eucharist is reserved, especially parish churches, are to be open to the faithful for a few hours each day.³⁵ Although the legislation is directed primarily to parish churches, those responsible for other churches, such as mission churches, are to make every possible attempt to see that these are accessible to the faithful.³⁶

Commentators interpret this obligation for the rectors of churches as serious.³⁷ For, as one adds, "it would be entirely unbecoming that the faithful be prevented from visiting Jesus Christ present in the Holy Eucharist."³⁸ Related to this obligation is the need for an outside door to the church or chapel to make entry accessible to the faithful.³⁹ The exclusion of such a door required a

35 CIC, 1917, c. 1266, "Ecclesiae in quibus sanctissima Eucharistia asservatur, praesertim paroeciales, quotidie per aliquot saltem horas fidelibus pateant."

36 W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., pp. 40-41.

37 E. Regatillo, Ius sacramentarium, ed. 4a, Santander, Sal Terrae, 1964, p. 226; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 286; D. Cahill, The Custody of the Holy Eucharist: a historical synopsis and commentary, Washington, D.C., Catholic University of America Press, 1950, p. 45.

38 W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 40.

39 F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 286.

special mandate from the Holy See.⁴⁰ However this prescription does not apply to chapels intended for the exclusive use of some communities. In these cases, it is sufficient that the members of such communities have access to the Blessed Sacrament since the reservation is for their benefit.⁴¹

C. The Altar of Reservation (c. 1268)

The reserved Eucharist is not to be kept habitually at more than one altar in the same church.⁴² Although in the early ages of the Church the place of reservation varied, for several centuries prior to this legislation, the custom and law of the Church had associated the reserved Sacrament with the altar.⁴³ This one altar, even in churches of regulars, was to be designated by the Ordinary.⁴⁴ The reservation at the one altar was a sub gravi obligation and to keep the Eucharist away from the altar in cases other than those expressed by the law would require the permission of the Holy See.⁴⁵ The word "habitually"

40. Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum ex Actis eiusdem collecta eiusque auctoritate promulgata sub auspiciis SS. Domini Nostri Leonis Papae XIII, Romae, Ex Typographia Polyglotta S.C. de Propaganda Fidei, 1898-1901, vol. 3, n. 3706, p. 199. (Hereafter, Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII).

41. H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 144; W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 41.

42. CIC, 1917, c. 1268, par. 1, "Sanctissima Eucharistia continuo seu habitualiter custodiri nequit, nisi in uno tantum eiusdem ecclesiae altari."

43. H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 139.

44. C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 219.

45. F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 292.

allows for an occasional departure from the general rule. The most prevalent exception is the Forty Hours' Devotion or perpetual adoration. Other times would be during novenas, triduums, or the May and June devotions, when a separate altar is used for the distribution of Communion or Benediction.⁴⁶

The legislation calls for the altar of reservation to be in the most prominent place in the church unless some other place is more suitable for veneration. It also requires that the liturgical rules for the last days of Holy Week be observed.⁴⁷ The basic reason the legislation demands such prominence is the dignity and the excellence of the Eucharistic presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The main altar is generally the most prominent and noblest place.⁴⁸

The third part of the legislation on the altar of reservation,⁴⁹ and the reason behind it, is well paraphrased by Woywod:

⁴⁶ C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 219-220; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 292.

⁴⁷ CIC, 1917, c. 1268, par. 2, "Custodiatur in praecellentissimo ac nobilissimo ecclesiae loco ac proinde regulariter in altari maiore, nisi aliud venerationi et cultui tanti sacramenti commodius et decentius videatur, servato praescripto legum liturgicarum quod ad ultimos dies hebdomadae maioris attinet."

⁴⁸ F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 293; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 220.

⁴⁹ CIC, 1917, c. 1268, par. 3, "Sed in ecclesiis cathedralibus, collegiatis aut conventualibus in quibus ad altare maius chorales functiones persolvendae sunt, ne ecclesiasticis officiis impedimentum afferatur, opportunum est ut sanctissima Eucharistia regulariter non custodiatur in altari maiore, sed in alio sacello seu altari."

In cathedral, collegiate and conventual churches in which choir functions are conducted at the main altar, it is as a rule more convenient not to keep the Blessed Sacrament on the main altar but on a side altar or in some chapel of the church, so that the ecclesiastical offices shall not be interfered with.⁵⁰

Although commentators say that this is not a strict law, nevertheless aware of the fact that "the Caeremoniale Episcoporum prescribes removal of the Blessed Sacrament from the altar on which the bishop solemnly pontificates,"⁵¹ they hold that as a general rule the Blessed Sacrament should be kept at another altar. However, under certain circumstances it might be more fitting or necessary to keep it at the main altar.⁵²

The final paragraph of the canon concerning the Blessed Sacrament altar speaks of the obligation of the rectors of churches to see that this altar is more elaborately decorated than the other ones in the church so as to foster the piety and devotion of the faithful⁵³ because Christ, truly present in the Eucharist, is deserving of absolute

⁵⁰ S. Woywod, A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, revised by C. Smith, New York, Wagner, 1957, vol. 2, p. 72.

⁵¹ C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 220-221. See also, Caeremoniale episcoporum Clementis VIII, Innocentii X et Benedicti XIV, et Leonis XIII auctoritate recognitum, ed. 3a post typicam, Taurini, Marietti, 1941, b. 1, ch. 12, nn. 8-12, pp. 36-38.

⁵² F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 266; C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 220-221; W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 65.

⁵³ CIC, 1917, c. 1268, par. 4, "Curent ecclesiarum rectores ut altare in quo sanctissimum Sacramentum asservatur sit prae omnibus aliis ornatum, ita ut suo ipso apparatu magis moveat fidelium pietatem ac devotionem."

worship, and people are sensibly excited and moved to piety and devotion by the exterior showing of ornateness.⁵⁴ To enhance the decor commentators suggest the use of ornate lights, linens, flowers, a canopy or curtain over the tabernacle, and a baldachino over the altar.⁵⁵ A practical effect of the ornamentation is to draw the attention of the faithful to the altar of reservation which indirectly helps curtail possible abuse to the Holy Eucharist.⁵⁶ And, in ornateness, the altar of reservation is to have precedence over any altar dedicated to Mary or another saint.⁵⁷

D. The Tabernacle (c. 1269)

By the fifteenth century the tabernacle as we know it, firmly fixed and securely locked, was in general use throughout continental Europe.⁵⁸ However, it was not until a decree of the Sacred

⁵⁴ F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 297-298; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 228.

⁵⁵ R. Naz, op. cit., p. 85; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 228; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 261; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 221; F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 297-298.

⁵⁶ W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 65.

⁵⁷ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 221; F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 297-298.

⁵⁸ H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 140.

Congregation of Rites, August 21, 1863, that the obligatory use of the tabernacle was sanctioned.⁵⁹

This, in turn, set the basis for the Code's legislation on the tabernacle in Canon 1269.⁶⁰ Because of the emphasis on tabernacle legislation we will treat first of the Code's legislation and then of the later legislation from the Congregation of Sacraments in the decree, Nulla unquam.⁶¹

(i) Canon 1269

The purpose of the tabernacle is the custody of the reserved Eucharist. It should therefore house only those sacred vessels which

59 Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum et Instructio Clementina ex actis eiusdem collecta ab Aloisio Gardellini, in usum cleri commodiorem ordine alphabetico concinnata opera et studio Wolfgangi Mühlbauer, Monachii, Sumptibus Librariae J.J. Lentnerianae, E. Stahl, 1862-1867, vol. 3-2, p. 363. "Quum sanctam Sedem non lateret, in nonnullis Belgii ecclesiis vel oratoriis Augustissimum Eucharistiae Sacramentum non in medio altaris, verum aut in dextera aut laeva pariete in custodia servari eodem modo, quo sacra Olea recondi solent, Sacra Congatio legitimis protuendis Ritibus praeposita, quod attinet ad custodiam SSmi Sacramenti, Sanctitatis Suae nomine omnino prohibet, illud alio in loco servari praeter quam in tabernaculo in medio altaris posito." See also, W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., pp. 56-57.

60 CIC, 1917, c. 1269, pars. 1 and 2, "1. Sanctissima Eucharistia servari debet in tabernaculo inamovibili in media parte altaris posito.

2. Tabernaculum sit affabre exstructum, undequaque solide clausum, decenter ornatum ad normam legum liturgicarum, ab omni alia re vacuum, ac tam sedulo custodiatur ut periculum cuiusvis sacrilegae profanationis arceatur."

61 SCS, Instruction, Nulla unquam, On the Careful Custody of the Most Blessed Sacrament, May 26, 1938, in AAS, 30 (1938), pp. 198-207; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 2, pp. 377-388. (Hereafter, Nulla unquam).

contain the Blessed Sacrament or are awaiting purification. Purified vessels, unconsecrated hosts, holy oils, and similar items are not to be kept in the tabernacle.⁶²

The tabernacle is to be in the middle of the altar, well-constructed, and immovable. It is usually constructed of wood, marble, or some other solid material. Due to the immoveable requirement and the need for greater security, metal came into use. The tabernacle is to be solidly enclosed, securely locked, and free from any danger from fire or vandalism.⁶³ The tabernacle, in accordance with liturgical laws, is to be skillfully decorated depicting the elegance of good craftsmanship and Christian art. Various images of the Eucharist may be engraved or sculptured into the tabernacle and a crucifix may be placed on it.⁶⁴

The canopy-veil to cover the tabernacle is not explicitly mentioned in canonical legislation but is prescribed in liturgical laws and the Rituale Romanum.⁶⁵ All contrary customs are forbidden. The

62. R. Naz, op. cit.; p. 86; S. Woywod, Commentary, vol. 2, pp. 75-76; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 265.

63. C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 222; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 298-299; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 263; R. Naz, op. cit., pp. 85-86; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 228.

64. C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 222; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 298; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 229.

65. Rituale Romanum, Pauli V Pontificis Maximi jussu editum, atque a felicis recordationis Benedicto XIV, auctum et castigatum, in quo, quae parochis ad administrationem sacramentorum, benedictiones, et conjurationes necessaria censentur, accurate sunt posita, Mechliniae, J. Hanicq, 1850, p. 70. (Hereafter, Rituale Romanum).

canopy may be white or the colour of the feast of the day, with the exception of black for which purple is substituted. It is to be used even if the tabernacle is made of gold, silver, or some other precious metal.⁶⁶ The form of the canopy is to be tent-like with an opening in the front for access to the tabernacle. It came to take on the symbolism of proclaiming the presence of Christ among his people.⁶⁷ It is suggested that the interior of metal or marble tabernacles be lined with wood or silk padding to counteract any possible ill-effects of humidity. Also, the lining or gilding of the inside walls adds to the decor and fittingness of the tabernacle. A corporal should be placed on the inside base of the enclosure and a white silk veil is allowed to hang inside the door.⁶⁸

The canonical legislation is quite explicit that the care of the tabernacle key is the grave responsibility of the priest in charge of the church or oratory.⁶⁹ It is suggested that the priest keep the

⁶⁶ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 263-265; M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 299.

⁶⁷ E. Regatillo, op. cit., pp. 229-230.

⁶⁸ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 222; M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 71; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 264-265; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 229.

⁶⁹ CIC, 1917, c. 1269, par. 4, "Clavis tabernaculi, in quo sanctissimum Sacramentum asservatur, diligentissime custodiri debet, onerata graviter conscientia sacerdotis qui ecclesiae vel oratorii curam habet."

key on his person, or in a cupboard or drawer with other keys where it could not be identified by a stranger.⁷⁰ It is not to be kept by nuns within the enclosure of a monastery, but in cases where private oratories have reservation by indult, the key is to be kept in the sacristy in the care of the family.⁷¹

The legislation allows for the transferal of the reserved Eucharist from the tabernacle to a safer location at night provided there is, in the judgement of the local Ordinary, some serious reason. The place of transfer is to be suitable and more secure, and the Blessed Sacrament when there is to be placed upon a corporal and have the traditional lamp burning.⁷² In the transference of the Eucharist for security purposes the liturgical laws for the transferring process are to be observed.⁷³ Two other suggested situations which would occasion such a transfer would be when a church is used for both Catholic and Protestant services and when a missionary who is far from a church needs to reserve the Blessed Eucharist for Viaticum.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ G. Augustine, op. cit., p. 223.

⁷¹ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 267.

⁷² CIC, 1917, c. 1269, par. 3. "Gravi aliqua suadente causa ab Ordinario loci probata, non est vetitum sanctissimam Eucharistiam nocturno tempore extra altare, super corporali tamen, in loco tutiore et decenti, asservari, servato praescripto can. 1271."

⁷³ P. Naz, op. cit., p. 86.

⁷⁴ G. Augustine, op. cit., p. 222.

The tabernacle is to be blessed as prescribed in the Rituale Romanum.⁷⁵ This blessing may be performed by the rectors of churches or oratories. And lastly, these same rectors are exhorted to implement the overall tabernacle legislation to ensure that the Blessed Sacrament receives proper reverence and veneration.⁷⁶

(ii) Nullo unquam

In 1938 the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments published Nullo unquam, an instruction on the careful custody of the Blessed Sacrament.⁷⁷ In the opening paragraph, canon 1269 containing the tabernacle legislation was quoted in its entirety. The instruction intended, through an interpretation and application of this legislation,

to supply the Ordinaries of places with support and safeguards to the end that the Most Blessed Eucharist which either by common law or by indult is reserved in our churches should be diligently guarded and safe from all profanation.⁷⁸

The instruction underlines the fact that the tabernacle is to be immovable and solidly closed is a grave obligation from which the bishop may not dispense, nor any centenary or immemorial custom derogate. The materials, wood, marble or metal, as liturgically

75 Rituale Romanum, p. 70.

76 R. Naz, op. cit., p. 86; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 231.

77 Nullo unquam, pp. 377-388.

78 Ibid., p. 377.

prescribed in the Caeremoniale Parochorum,⁷⁹ are mentioned with a preference for metal as the stronger material. Yet, the greater emphasis is on the actual construction of the tabernacle.

But, what is of more importance, the tabernacle must be made of solid material, its parts must be firmly joined together, the lock must be as secure as possible and firmly attached to the door, whose hinges must be strongly made and firmly attached, connecting the door to the tabernacle itself.⁸⁰

Some bishops have prescribed that the tabernacle be made entirely of metal in the manner of a real safe, which "cannot be pierced or broken open by the means commonly employed by thieves."⁸¹ It is to be attached to the altar or opposite wall by iron bars. These iron safe-tabernacles must be made in the form of tabernacles and covered with marble and properly ornamented "or at least they must be so constructed that they can be put into tabernacles already made."⁸² Bishops are encouraged to prescribe such tabernacles for churches to be built in the future.

The instruction is emphatic in its insistence that every possible care be taken to avoid any danger of sacrilegious profanations. It is not sufficient that there be a custodian and that the tabernacle

79 P. De Amicis, Caeremoniale parochorum iuxta novissimas apostolicas sanctiones concinnatum, Romae, Artero, 1910-1912, vol. 1, p. 22.

80 Nullò unquam, p. 379.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

cannot be opened, by other keys and is able to withstand the tools of vandals. Over and above these, another prescription reads,

A third safeguard is prescribed by law -- "careful" custody. This vigilance, to be exercised all the time, includes several precautions both common and extraordinary, according to the circumstances of time and place.⁸³

Among these the instruction insists that the custodian be near the church day and night, and never be away from it when it is open, especially in cities, and little frequented or when outside workers are engaged. The method of observation may vary with the circumstances of the place according to the prudent judgement of those responsible.

Recommended as ordinary precautions at night are: the use of strong doors with firm locks and bars and windows with bars or gratings; the assurance that no one is left inside the church; the entrusting of the keys to a person beyond suspicion; and, the employment of an electric burglar alarm. An extraordinary precaution is the removal of the Blessed Sacrament during the night for security purposes. The usual place of special repose is a well-locked safe in the sacristy but if necessary for security a more private place may be used. Besides the prescriptions already discussed regarding the use of the ciborium, corporal and lamp during this special reservation, the instruction adds,

⁸³ Ibid., p. 381.

Moreover, when the Blessed Sacrament is withdrawn from the tabernacle of the church, or is being taken back to it, the priest must be vested in surplice and stole, and accompanied, at least as a rule, by a cleric carrying a lighted candle.⁸⁴

The instruction indicates that all the precautions are useless if the principal one, the careful custody of the tabernacle key, is not adhered to. This responsibility is a grave obligation in conscience on the part of the priest in charge of the church or oratory. The key is not to be kept in the tabernacle lock or on the altar table even during liturgical services.

In order that the rector of the church may fulfill this obligation of most careful custody, prescribed by the canon, he is strictly enjoined never to leave the tabernacle key on the altar table or in the lock of the tabernacle door, not even during morning hours when divine services are held at the altar of the Blessed Sacrament and Holy Communion is distributed, especially if this altar is not in a conspicuous place.⁸⁵

The key is to be kept by the priest in his house or on his person, or in the sacristy locked under a second key which the priest keeps on his person or in his house.

Bishops and local Ordinaries are exhorted through visitation to see that the tabernacle legislation is carefully kept. If profanation of the Blessed Sacrament takes place, the diocesan bishop is to conduct "an administrative process against the pastor or other

84 Ibid., p. 383.

85 Ibid.

priest, whether secular or religious, even though exempt."⁸⁶ And, if negligence is proven, the bishop is to consider the penalties provided and see to it that a proportionate one is inflicted. And finally, where the privilege of reservation exists by means other than common law, bishops are to inquire whether the right for such is legitimate, and if it is not, they are to endeavour to have the privilege removed.

E. The Receptacle for the Reserved Hosts

The Code specifies that the consecrated Hosts are to be kept in a pyx made of a solid and suitable material. This pyx is to be clean, tightly closed, and covered with a white silk veil decorated to the extent the rubrics allow.⁸⁷ The text of this prescription comes from the Rituale Romanum⁹⁰ and it is intended also for the Oriental Catholics, "who should like the Latins, preserve the particles in a pyx, not in a dried or unbecoming form, as if they were mere bread."⁸⁹

Gold or silver are suggested as suitable materials for the pyx or ciborium but other metals, such as copper, are acceptable if the

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 386.

⁸⁷ CIC, 1917, c. 1270, "Particulae consecratae, eo numero qui infirmorum et aliorum fidelium communioni satis esse possit, perpetuo conserventur in pyxide ex solida decentique materia, eaque munda et suo operculo bene clausa, cooperta albo velo serico et, quantum res feret, ornato."

⁸⁸ Rituale Romanum, p. 70.

⁸⁹ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 224.

vessel is gold-plated on the inside and silver-plated on the outside. Among the unacceptable materials are crystal, glass and wood.⁹⁰ Even the fear of theft of a sacred vessel does not justify the use of a ciborium of a lesser quality nor the placing of the Hosts on a corporal alone.⁹¹

The ciborium is to be kept clean and free from rust.⁹² It is to be blessed with the blessing for all sacred vessels as found in the Rituale Romanum.⁹³ The ciborium, according to a custom which in the opinion of many has the force of law, is to be placed on a corporal or pall in the tabernacle.⁹⁴ The white silk veil may be embroidered and bear emblems suitable to the Eucharist but it should not be so ornate as to make it difficult to remove the cover from the ciborium.⁹⁵ The prescription for the veil to cover the ciborium in the tabernacle and when it is used to carry Communion to the sick is found in the Rituale Romanum.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 232; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 224; M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 71; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 271.

⁹¹ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 224; H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 141-142.

⁹² C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 225.

⁹³ Rituale Romanum, p. 70; R. Naz, op. cit., p. 87; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 272; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 308.

⁹⁴ F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 308.

⁹⁵ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 225.

⁹⁶ Rituale Romanum, p. 70.

F. The Renewal of the Hosts (c. 1272)

The Code insists on the frequent renewal of the reserved Hosts.

The consecrated hosts, whether for the Communion of the faithful or for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, must be fresh and renewed frequently, and the old particles must be consumed as prescribed, so that there may be no danger of corruption. The instructions of the local Ordinary in this matter must be faithfully observed.⁹⁷

Gasparri's earlier treatment of this subject serves as a worthwhile commentary on this canon.⁹⁸ He refers to the Rituale Romanum⁹⁹ to state that the particles of bread are to be renewed frequently, that they are to be fresh, and that the old particles are to be distributed to the faithful or consumed. Basing himself on the teaching of St. Charles Borromeo,¹⁰⁰ he maintains that the hosts are to be consecrated within twenty days of their baking, and following the Caeremoniale episcoporum,¹⁰¹ consumed within eight days of their

⁹⁷ CIC, 1917, c. 1272, "Hostiae consecratae, sive propter fidelium communionem, sive propter expositionem sanctissimi Sacramenti, et recentes sint et frequenter renoventur, veteribus rite consumptis, ita ut nullum sit periculum corruptionis, sedulo servatis instructionibus quas Ordinarius loci hac de re dederit." Eng. trs. by S. Woywod, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 77.

⁹⁸ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 124, and pp. 274-279.

⁹⁹ Rituale Romanum, p. 70.

¹⁰⁰ C. Borromeo, Acta Ecclesiae Mediolanensis a S. Carlo cardinali S. Praxides archiepiscopo condita, Patavii, Typis Seminarii, Apud J. Manfrè, 1754, vol. 1, part 4, p. 436.

¹⁰¹ Caeremoniale episcoporum Clementis VIII, Innocentii X et Benedicti XIII jussu editum, Benedicti XIV et Leonis XIII auctoritate recognitum, ed., 3a post typicam, Taurini, Marietti, 1948, , b. 1, ch. 6, n. 2, p. 14. (Hereafter, Caeremoniale episcoporum).

consecration. This would allow for a period of one month between the baking of the particles and their consumption. He supports his position through references to statements of the Popes and to replies of the Sacred Congregation of Rites. Among the former are: Innocent IV's apostolic letter, Sub catholicae, March 6, 1254,¹⁰² stressing the fifteen day period for renewal in contrast to a Greek custom of reserving the Eucharist from one year to another between the celebrations of the Lord's Supper Mass, Clement VIII's Sanctissimus, August 31, 1595,¹⁰³ and Benedict XIV's Etsi pastoribus, May 26, 1742¹⁰⁴ stressing that the period for renewal be eight, or at most fifteen days. Two of the replies from the Sacred Congregation of Rites to which Gasparri refers are: September 3, 1672, that the Hosts are to be consumed within eight days and the Precious Blood consumed before the purification of the chalice;¹⁰⁵ and, September 12, 1884, that the Caeremoniale episcoporum is to be followed regarding the renewal of hosts eight days after consecration.¹⁰⁶

102 P. Gasparri, Codicis iuris canonici fontes, Romae, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, in Civitate Vaticana, vol. 1, n. 34, pp. 30-32.

103 Ibid., n. 179, pp. 343-346.

104 Ibid., n. 328, pp. 534-755.

105 Decreta authentica Congregationis Sacrorum Rituum ex actis eiusdem collecta, cura et studio Aloisii Gardellini, Romae, Typis S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1856-1890, vol. 1, n. 2602, p. 448. (Hereafter; Decreta Authentica ab A. Gardellini).

106 Ibid., vol. 5, appendix 5, n. 5925, p. 91.

2 Commentators caution that to avoid all danger of corruption Hosts should be made a short time before they are consecrated and consumed weekly. Shorter periods would be in order in some areas affected by heat and humidity. Local Ordinaries are encouraged to give detailed instructions on this topic and those responsible for care of the reserved Eucharist are exhorted to observe these directives scrupulously.¹⁰⁷ The Congregation for the Sacraments, December 7, 1918, stated that hosts baked for two or three months were not to be used for the Eucharist.¹⁰⁸ Coronata maintained that the use of hosts baked six weeks prior to consecration was illicit.¹⁰⁹ According to Cavanaugh, if perchance the words of consecration are said over corrupt matter the sacramental Presence of Christ is not effected.¹¹⁰ He adds, based on the teaching of the Council of Trent,¹¹¹ that "the Real Presence of Christ remains in the Holy Eucharist only so long as the Species remains incorrupt."¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ R. Naz, op. cit., p. 88; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 277, and vol. 4, p. 8; W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 73.

¹⁰⁸ SCS, Instruction, S.S. Eucharistiae, in AAS, 11 (1919), p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 72.

¹¹⁰ W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 73.

¹¹¹ Concilium Tridentinum, Canons and decrees of the Council of Trent. Original text with Eng. translation by H. Schroeder, St-Louis, Herder, 1941, p. 79. (Hereafter, Council of Trent).

¹¹² W. Cavanaugh, op. cit., p. 73.

Two of the commentators discuss the procedure to be followed if perchance the consecrated Hosts become corrupted. If the corruption is total the remaining residue is to be burned and the ashes mixed with water and poured down the piscina. If the Hosts are only partially corrupted there should be an attempt to consume what is possible. If it excites nausea, the remaining substance is to be left in the ciborium in the tabernacle until there is total corruption. This is to ensure that there will be no disrespect to the sacred Species. Once the corruption is total the procedure beginning with the burning is to be carried out.¹¹³

It is most obvious that the emphasis throughout the legislation and commentaries is on the care of the Sacrament as the Real Presence of Christ. Now we proceed in our study to a canonical consideration of the veneration given the reserved Sacrament.

2. Veneration of the Eucharist

This second part concerns those canons relating to the veneration of the Eucharist outside Mass. It will treat of five topics: fostering eucharistic devotion, the sanctuary lamp, exposition and benediction, the Forty Hours' devotion, and the Corpus Christi procession.

¹¹³ F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 316; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 233.

A. Fostering Eucharistic Veneration (c. 1273)

Cañon 1273 exhorts those who are in charge of religious instruction to foster devotion to the Eucharist by encouraging the faithful to attend Mass on weekdays as well as Sundays and holydays and to visit the Blessed Sacrament often.¹¹⁴ This duty is seen as belonging to all those who have anything at all to do with the religious instruction of the faithful.¹¹⁵ Supporting this teaching, the Sacred Congregation of the Council, July 14, 1941, issued an instruction explaining the spiritual benefits of the Mass and inviting the faithful to assist actively at Mass and to receive Communion daily.¹¹⁶

B. The Sanctuary Lamp (c. 1271)

The Code's legislation for the Sanctuary lamp is summed up in four prescriptions: the lamp is to be placed in front of the Blessed Sacrament; it is to burn day and night; the burning is to be continual; and, the substance of the lamp is to be olive oil or beeswax, unless

114 CIC, 1917, c. 1273, "Qui in religiosam fidelium institutionem incumbunt, nihil omittant ut pietatem erga sanctissimam Eucharistiam in eorum animis excitent, eosque praesertim hortentur ut, non modo diebus dominicis et festis de praeepto, sed etiam diebus ferialibus intra hebdomadam, frequenter, quantum fieri potest, Missae sacrificio assistant et sanctissimum Sacramentum visitent."

115 H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 143.

116 SConc, Instruction, "Exhorting the Faithful to Frequent and Devout Assistance at the Sacrifice of the Mass", in AAS, 33 (1941), pp. 389-391, Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 2, pp. 358-360.

in situations where olive oil is unavailable, the local Ordinary substitutes another vegetable oil.¹¹⁷

This custom which dates to the thirteenth century is rooted in the burning of lights among heathen nations and the Israelites, as a sign of respect.¹¹⁸ The purpose, as presented in the Rituale Romanum is twofold: to honour Christ present in the Eucharist, and to indicate to the people the place of the reserved Sacrament.¹¹⁹ The lamp must burn only for the purpose for which it is prescribed and is not to serve also for some profane use.¹²⁰ It is to be in front of or to the side of the altar of reservation but not above or behind it nor far away.¹²¹ Missionary Ordinaries could allow the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved for the sake of the sick without a lamp for a just cause such as lack of adequate material or danger of sacrilege. It was preferred that there be reservation without a light rather than have the faithful deprived of the Sacrament.¹²²

117 CIC, 1917, c. 1271, "Coram tabernaculo, in quo sanctissimum Sacramentum asservatur, una saltem lampas diu noctuque continenter luceat, nutrienda oleo olivarum vel cera apum; ubi vero oleum olivarum haberi nequeat, Ordinarii loci prudentiae permittitur ut aliis oleis commutetur, quantum fieri potest, vegetabilibus." See also, F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 309.

118 H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 142; S. Woywod, Commentary, vol. 2, p. 76.

119 Rituale Romanum, p. 70; see also, P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 272.

120 C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 225; Decreta Authentica ab A. Gardellini, vol. 2, n. 3525, p. 180.

121 F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 310-311; C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 225-226; T. Bouscaren and A. Ellis, op. cit., p. 648.

122 E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 233.

The Rituale Romanum did not determine the matter of the lamp, but generally, because it dates back to Old Testament times, olive oil or a mixture of olive oil and beeswax was used.¹²³ Prior to the publication of the 1917 Code, the Sacred Congregation of Rites on February 23, 1916, authorized bishops, considering the conditions brought on by war and other such causes, to use substitute oils and as a last resort even an electric light.¹²⁴ Although the Code did not authorize the use of electricity, the former decree

seems to pave the way for the use of electric or gas light as an aid to reading and for ornamental purposes, even on the altar. Hence the former rigorous decisions may be taken with a goodly dose of discretion.¹²⁵

Yet, nearly twenty-five years later, during the Second World War, the Sacred Congregation of Rites on March 13, 1942 acknowledged that it had refrained from allowing the general use of electric light for the Sanctuary lamp and gave as a reason that it

has constantly followed the traditional rule requiring the use of beeswax and olive oil, other oils being permitted in case of necessity: in order that the symbolic significance by which the tabernacle light represents our faith and love might be retained, and also, according to the nature of divine worship, the destruction of visible matter.¹²⁶

123 P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 273.

124 SCR, Decree, De lampade coram Sanctissimo Sacramento, in AAS, 8 (1916), pp. 72-73; see also, H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 142.

125 C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 226.

126 SCR, Decree, De lampade Ssmi Sacramenti et de luminibus in sacris functionibus adhibendis, Tabernacle Lamp and Lights Used in Sacred Functions, in AAS, 34 (1942), p. 112, Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 2, pp. 389-390.

Then it proceeds to allow the bishops as in 1916 to authorize the use of electrical lights while the war conditions prevail.

Gasparri suggested that bishops may allow in the place of olive oil another vegetable oil¹²⁷ and Cappello adds, that only in the grave necessity of a very poor church may petroleum be used.¹²⁸ However, the bishops of Quebec endorsed "the use of mineral oils or their extracts, such as paraffine."¹²⁹ It is noted that, for lawfulness, the decision to use some other substance is to be pronounced by the Ordinary.¹³⁰ And finally, the use of the sanctuary lamp is a grave obligation placed upon the person responsible for the custody of the reserved Sacrament.¹³¹

C. Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament (c. 1274)

Initially, the Code of Canon Law, in its treatment of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, makes a distinction between private and public exposition. It states that private exposition for any just reason and without the permission of the Ordinary, may be

¹²⁷ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 273.

¹²⁸ F. Cappello, op. cit., pp. 309-310.

¹²⁹ T. Bouscaren, A. Ellis, and F. Korth, op. cit., p. 720.

¹³⁰ H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 142.

¹³¹ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 225; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 272; F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 309.

celebrated in any church or oratory where the Sacrament may be reserved lawfully, and that public exposition with the monstrance may be celebrated on the feast and octave days of Corpus Christi, or on other days for a just cause with the permission of the local Ordinary.¹³²

Private exposition takes place when the tabernacle door is opened and the ciborium is placed near the opening but not out of the tabernacle. The sacred Species itself is not seen.¹³³ For public exposition to be genuine, the exposition must be conducted with an ostensorium and the Eucharist must be openly displayed so as to be plainly seen by the people. If either of these essentials is lacking, public exposition according to both canonical and liturgical requirements is not held. The length of time of the exposition does not affect the reality of whether it is public or not.¹³⁴

Cappello as Gasparri, used the terms "solemn" and "non-solemn" as well as "public" and "private" in reference to the

132 CIC, 1917, c. 1274, par. 1, "In ecclesiis aut oratoriis quibus datum est asservare sanctissimam Eucharistiam, fieri potest expositio privata seu cum pyxide ex qualibet iusta causa sine Ordinarii licentia; expositio vero publica seu cum ostensorio die festo Corporis Christi et intra octavam fieri potest in omnibus ecclesiis inter Missarum sollempnia et ad Vesperas; aliis vero temporibus non nisi ex iusta et gravi causa praesertim publica et de Ordinarii loci licentia, licet ecclesia ad religionem exemptam pertineat."

133 Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 1, n. 80, p. 168; see also, C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 228.

134 F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 816; M. Coronata, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

forms of exposition. The circumstances that would make a variance in solemnity included the number of ministers, the use of the throne, the pomp of the ceremony, and the inclusion or non-inclusion of other particular adornments.¹³⁵

The permission of the Ordinary was required to celebrate solemn exposition at times other than the Feast of Corpus Christi and the days of the octave. This regulation obliges even the churches of regulars.¹³⁶

A general exception to the requirement for permission was Pope Leo XIII's statement that, because of the widespread practice of celebrating exposition at the October rosary devotions, permission for public exposition did not have to be sought.¹³⁷ However, it was to be kept in mind that there needs be a just cause besides the permission of the Ordinary for public exposition.¹³⁸

The cause for public exposition needs to be a just and weighty reason of a public character. A public cause is not only one which

¹³⁵ F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 817; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 281-283.

¹³⁶ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 286-288; see also Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 1, n. 1673, p. 355; and, vol. 2, n. 3104, pp. 430-431.

¹³⁷ F. Wernz, op. cit., p. 545.

¹³⁸ C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 231-232.

affects an entire parish, diocese, municipality, or country, but sometimes is even a reason of lesser extent.

Such a reason would be the eradication of vice and fostering of virtue, public peace and tranquility, impending disasters, etc., or any other reason which one way or another, according to the judgement of the Ordinary, affects a community or at least the larger part thereof.¹³⁹

The cause or reason for exposition is, together with the manner of celebration, the basis for the difference between public and private exposition. The reasons for private exposition are judged by the discretion of the priest or deacon responsible for the church or oratory where the devotion is allowed by law or indult. These causes may be private and personal such as sickness, the desire of a pious person, or the wish of a religious community.¹⁴⁰

The law states that the minister of exposition and reposition is a priest or deacon but that only the priest can give benediction. The deacon, however, may give the blessing with the Eucharist when he is administering Viaticum.¹⁴¹ The minister himself is to elevate the

¹³⁹ Ibid., p. 231; see also, H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 147-148.

¹⁴⁰ C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 229-230.

¹⁴¹ CIC, 1917, c. 1274, par. 2, "Minister expositionis et repositionis sanctissimi Sacramenti est sacerdos vel diaconus; minister vero benedictionis Eucharisticae est solus sacerdos, nec eam impertire diaconus potest, nisi in casu quo, ad normam can. 845, par. 2, Viaticum ad infirmum detulerit." See also, M. Coronata, op. cit., p. 73; Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 2, n. 3074, pp. 413-415.

Host and is not to use some type of machine for this purpose.¹⁴² Other practices such as placing the exposed Sacrament in the arms of a statue, the breast of a picture or statue, or the heart of a crucifix are forbidden.¹⁴³

The regulations for the rites for private exposition called for six candles to adorn the altar and for the minister to be vested in a surplice and stole, although the use of a cope was not forbidden. Incense was not allowed, and the prayers, including the Tantum Ergo could be sung or recited.¹⁴⁴ For public exposition the ostensorium displaying the Host in the lunula was to be placed on a pall or a corporal on a throne over which there is a canopy. Twenty candles, or at least twelve, are to be burning on the altar and the colour of the stole, cope, humeral veil, canopy, and antependium is white. These may be the colour of the day but never black.¹⁴⁵ Any relics of the saints were to be removed.¹⁴⁶ Gasparri speaks of the baldachino being over the altar of exposition and of flowers being placed between the candles.

¹⁴² P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 296-297; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 232; Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 3, n. 3425, p. 81.

¹⁴³ Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 3, n. 3349, p. 51; see also, S. Woywod, Commentary, vol. 2, p. 79.

¹⁴⁴ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 284; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 229.

¹⁴⁵ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 230.

¹⁴⁶ Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 2, n. 2365, pp. 79-80.

Twelve candles would indicate a minor solemnity. He considers that the singing of hymns and the use of incense are an integral part of solemn exposition.¹⁴⁷ During the period of exposition at least one person is to remain in devout adoration.¹⁴⁸

Attentiveness to liturgical laws in the celebration of exposition is insisted upon.¹⁴⁹ Although the Sacred Congregation of Rites permitted the custom of exposing the Blessed Sacrament in the early morning with a low Mass,¹⁵⁰ a sung or solemn Mass is suggested.¹⁵¹ However, Mass is not to be celebrated at an altar where the Sacrament is exposed except during the Forty Hours' devotion.¹⁵² A double genuflection is required during both forms of exposition, and the ostensorium is not to be covered with a veil if the Blessed Sacrament is to be exposed after the Communion of the Mass.¹⁵³

It is suggested that the ostensorium, the lunula, and the custode be the same material as prescribed for ciboria or pyxes.

¹⁴⁷ P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, pp. 297-298.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 282.

¹⁴⁹ F. Cappello, op. cit., p. 817; F. Wernz, op. cit., p. 544; P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 282.

¹⁵⁰ De Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 3, n. 3558, p. 135.

¹⁵¹ C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 230.

¹⁵² P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 299.

¹⁵³ C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 230-231.

The lunula is to be constructed so that the Host within does not rest on the glass but is supported by an inner rim made of a suitable and solid material. The ostensorium, the lunula, and the custode are to be blessed with the same blessing as prescribed for the tabernacle and sacred vessels.¹⁵⁴

Closely associated with exposition in the same devotional practices is Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. These are really two distinct practices by both nature and origin. Exposition grew out of the practice of the elevation of the Host and it consists in exposing the Blessed Sacrament for worship.¹⁵⁵ Benediction implies of itself only the blessing bestowed upon the people by performing the sign of the Cross over them with the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁵⁶ This practice had its origin in the Corpus Christi processions of the fifteenth century. In the sixteenth century it was prescribed by St. Charles Borromeo after the administration of Viaticum, and by the seventeenth century it was required by liturgical texts after every exposition.¹⁵⁷

Benediction was not formerly allowed with private exposition but came into practice by a decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites,

154 P. Gasparri, De Eucharistia, p. 286.

155 H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 144-146.

156 Ibid., p. 144.

157 F. Wernz, op. cit., p. 549.

November 30, 1895.¹⁵⁸ The permission to hold public exposition included permission to bless the people with the ostensorium.¹⁵⁹ The Ordinary could grant permission for several benedictions on the same day.¹⁶⁰

D. Forty Hours' Devotion (c. 1275)

Canon 1275 legislates that the Forty Hours' Devotion be celebrated in every church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. If for reasons of inconvenience or irreverence the uninterrupted format of the ceremony cannot be followed, the local Ordinary shall arrange for solemn exposition on certain days for a number of consecutive hours.¹⁶¹ The devotion itself has been aptly defined as: "A continuous period of

¹⁵⁸ Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 3, n. 3875, p. 294; see also, S. Woywod, Commentary, vol. 2, p. 79; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 228; R. Naz, op. cit., p. 89.

¹⁵⁹ R. Naz, op. cit., p. 89.

¹⁶⁰ Decreta Authentica Leonis XIII, vol. 3, n. 3448, pp. 92-93.

¹⁶¹ CIC, 1917, c. 1275, "Supplicatio Quadraginta Horarum in omnibus ecclesiis parochialibus aliisque, in quibus sanctissimum Sacramentum habitualiter asservatur, statutis de consensu Ordinarii loci diebus, maiore qua fieri potest sollemnitate quotannis habeatur; et sicubi ob peculiaria rerum adiuncta nequeat sine gravi incommodo et cum reverentia tanto sacramento debita fieri, curet loci Ordinarius ut saltem per aliquot continuas horas, stans diebus, sanctissimum Sacramentum sollemniori ritu exponatur."

prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, begun and terminated with a solemn high Mass, procession when possible, Litany of the Saints, and special prayers.¹⁶²

Historically, the devotion began in 1536-37, through the initiative of a Capuchin priest, Joseph Plantanida.¹⁶³ The devotion was to continue night and day without interruption and is representative of the forty hours Jesus was in the tomb. Pope Paul III approved the devotion as early as 1539 and enriched it with indulgences, and in 1592 Clement VIII approved the devotion for Rome as a method to combat the dangers threatening Christendom. He decided

to establish in the city of Rome an uninterrupted course of prayer by the observation in the different churches of the devotion of the Forty Hours in such an order that at every hour of the day and night, the whole year round, the incense of prayer would ascend without interruption before the face of the Lord.¹⁶⁴

It was in 1731 that Clement XII issued the elaborate rules for the Forty Hours' devotion known as the Clementina and which remain in force in Rome and provide guidelines to others which have been used through the centuries up to and including the period of the 1917 Code of Canon

¹⁶² J. Champlin, "Forty Hours' Devotion", in New Catholic Encyclopedia, New York, McGraw Hill, 1967; vol. 5, p. 1036.

¹⁶³ R. Naz, op. cit., p. 89; C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 234; H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 149-151.

¹⁶⁴ H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., pp. 149-151.

Law. These general instructions and modifications are presented in English translation by Fortescue and O'Connell.¹⁶⁵

Participants in this devotion could receive an indulgence of fifteen years for each visit to the exposed sacrament during the devotion; provided they recited five Our Fathers, Hail Marys and Glories for the intention of the Pope, a plenary indulgence was granted with the additional requisites of confession and communion.¹⁶⁶ All the altars in the church had the prerogative of privileged altars during the duration of the Forty Hours Devotion. However, the privileges of the devotion were granted only by indult.¹⁶⁷ On January 22, 1914, Pius X extended these indulgences and privileges to the interrupted form¹⁶⁸ with certain provisions:

The Blessed Sacrament shall be exposed on the first day at any hour in the forenoon, and shall remain exposed during the day; it shall be exposed throughout all the second day and also on the third. On the third day the devotion may close either about noon or in the evening.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ A. Fortescue and J. O'Connell, The Ceremonies of the Roman Rite Described, Westminster, Newman, 1958, pp. 333-342.

¹⁶⁶ E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 235.

¹⁶⁷ H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 151.

¹⁶⁸ SCHO, Decree, De Indulgentiis et privilegiis expositioni Ssmi Sacramenti adnexis, in AAS, 6 (1914), pp. 74-75.

¹⁶⁹ S. Woywod, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 79. To assist in the conducting of the devotion some well compiled manuals are: C. Finnegan, Priest's Manual for the Forty Hours' Devotion, Patterson, N.J., St. Anthony Guild Press, 1958, 92 p., and, The Forty Hours' Devotion and the Revised Rubrics, Patterson, N.J., St. Anthony Guild Press, 1961, 14 p.; L. O'Connell, "The Forty Hours' Devotion," in The Book of Ceremonies, L. O'Connell and W. Schmitz, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1956, pp. 403-423; D. Unger, Handbook of Forty Hours' Adoration, Westminster, Newman, 1949, 70 p.

E. Corpus Christi Procession

In the 1917 Code of Canon Law, the legislation pertaining to the Corpus Christi procession was treated in the chapter dealing with sacred processions. The law has two paragraphs: the first treats of the fact of the procession itself and who is to participate in it; the second speaks of parish churches having processions during the Octave days of Corpus Christi and the possible need for the local Ordinary to establish the times and routes for each.¹⁷⁰ To be a sacred procession, the Corpus Christi procession needs to possess four essential elements: the participation of a group of the faithful; the official participation of clergy; at least two physical points of reference between which the procession moves; and, a pious purpose.¹⁷¹

Historically, the Bishop of Liège established the feast at the request of Blessed Juliana and it was confirmed and extended by

¹⁷⁰ CIC, 1917, c. 1291, "1. Nisi aliter ferat immemorabilis consuetudo, vel locorum circumstantiae, prudenti Episcopi iudicio, aliud exigant, die festo corporis Christi unica tantum sollemnisque per publicas vias processio in uno eodemque loco fieri debet ab ecclesia digniore, eique clerici omnes religiosaeque virorum familiae, etiam exemptae, et laicorum confraternitates interesse debent, regularibus exceptis qui in strictiore clausura perpetuo vivant, aut a civitate ultra tria milia passuum distent.

2. Ceterae parociae et ecclesiae etiam regulares possunt, intra octavam, proprias processiones extra ecclesiae ambitum agere, sed ubi plures sunt ecclesiae, Ordinarii loci est dies, horas ac vias praestituere quibus suam quaeque processionem agant."

¹⁷¹ J. Abbo and J. Hannon, The Sacred Canons: a concise presentation of the current disciplinary norms of the Church, St. Louis, Herder, 1957, vol. 2, p. 535.

Urban IV in 1264, Clement V and the Council of Vienna in 1311, and by John XXII in 1318.

Their decrees contain no mention of the theophoric procession but some churches had already begun to hold it and before many years it had spread everywhere and become one of the most popular and most solemn religious celebrations of the year.¹⁷²

The Protestants attacked it as superstitious, but the Council of Trent maintained it was good and meritorious.¹⁷³

The obligation to have the solemn Corpus Christi procession is transferred with the feast to the following Sunday in those places where such a transference takes place. In light of the second paragraph of the canon, it would be contrary to the intention of the Church to have a principal procession on the feast day and another less pompous one on the Sunday.¹⁷⁴ However, there is nothing in the liturgical laws to prevent holding more than one procession on the same day provided they are conducted at different times. The local Ordinary is to establish the times for the different processions.¹⁷⁵

The procession should be led by the clergy of the most distinguished church, followed by the collegiate church provided it is

172 H. Ayrinhac, op. cit., p. 164.

173 Council of Trent, p. 76 and p. 80.

174 C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 257-258.

175 S. Woywod, Commentary, vol. 2, p. 87.

also a parish church. Among parish churches precedence is determined according to the year of establishment. All the clergy, both secular and regular, and the men and women of all confraternities are expected to participate. Lay people and sisters from congregations or orders who do not live in enclosure are free to participate.¹⁷⁶ The obligation to participate for regular clerics, even exempt ones, was firmly set by the Council of Trent.

All exempt persons, secular as well as regular clerics, also monks, summoned to public processions, shall be obliged to attend, those only being excepted who live permanently in strict enclosure.¹⁷⁷

The proper manner for carrying the Blessed Sacrament in procession is in the hands of a priest with a humeral veil over his shoulders walking and accompanied by other ministers. This method is in keeping with the Caeremoniale episcoporum¹⁷⁸ and the Rituale Romanum;¹⁷⁹ the use of horse-drawn chariots or automobiles is forbidden. However, in Spain, due to the weight of the Ostensoria, permission for the use of some form of conveyance was given.¹⁸⁰

176 C. Augustine, op. cit., pp. 257-258.

177 Canons and decrees of the Council of Trent, p. 225.

178 Caeremoniale episcoporum, b. 2, ch. 33, pp. 201-208.

179 Rituale Romanum, pp. 326-335.

180 R. Naz, op. cit., p. 100; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 236; F. Wernz, op. cit., p. 549.

For participation in the Corpus Christi procession a member of the faithful could gain a plenary indulgence provided he or she received the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist and prayed for the intentions of the Holy Father. This indulgence was applicable whether the procession was conducted within or outside the church.¹⁸¹

CONCLUSION

The detailed treatment both in the 1917 Code and in the commentaries indicates the Church's need to present in the Code, legislation concerning eucharistic devotion outside Mass which had flourished throughout the preceding centuries. This, in turn, reflects the extent to which these devotions, acknowledging the eucharistic presence of Christ, had become ingrained in the faith-practice of the Catholic community.

It is evident that the Code of 1917 had succeeded in bringing together legislation on the care and worship of the Eucharist which had developed through the previous centuries. The law and commentaries attempted to present a systematic guide to be followed in the care and veneration of the reserved Sacrament. However, the legislation

¹⁸¹ Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary, Indulgentia plenaria iis conceditur, qui sollemnibus processioni bus Eucharisticis pie intergunt, in AAS, 25 (1933), pp. 478-479; S. Woywod, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 87.

does not appear in the section of the Code treating of the Eucharist.

This tends to exaggerate the division between the Eucharist as sacrament and as celebration and results in a static approach to

Eucharistic worship. Such was to continue until the renewal of the

Vatican II period to which we now direct our study.

CHAPTER III

THE CONCILIAR AND POST-CONCILIAR PERIOD

The reshaping of the legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist took place gradually throughout the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent period lasting until the promulgation of the 1983 Code of Canon Law. The conciliar, papal, and curial texts of this era which refer to the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist, provide the textual sources for the development of the renewed legislation. The beginnings for this renewal appear in the very first document of the Council, Sacrosanctum Concilium, the Constitution on the Liturgy, which saw reform and promotion of the liturgy as imperative to the implementation of the Council's aims to invigorate the Christian life of the faithful and to adapt present institutions to meet the needs of our times.¹ The document insists that:

To accomplish so great a work, Christ is always present in his Church, especially in its liturgical celebrations. He is present in the sacrifice of the mass, not only in the person of the minister, [...] but especially under the eucharistic elements.²

¹ Vatican Council II, Constitution, Sacrosanctum Concilium, Constitution on the Liturgy, Dec. 4, 1963; in AAS, 56 (1964), pp. 97-138, Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 1, p. 4. (Hereafter, Sacrosanctum Concilium).

² Ibid., n. 7, p. 6.

The document, while endorsing popular devotions, speaks of the need for them to be in accord with the liturgical norms.³

To bring eucharistic devotions into conformity with the revised liturgical norms, the Congregation of Rites in 1967 issued an instruction on the worship of the Eucharist, Eucharisticum mysterium. A significant part of this text addressed the purpose and place of reservation, and the public and private devotional exercises related to the reserved Sacrament. This document was to form the basis for the later 1973 decree, Eucharistiae sacramentum, from the Congregation of Divine Worship which was to establish in the revised Rituale Romanum the official liturgical legislation on eucharistic practices outside Mass.⁵ Among the liturgical texts, these two documents were to exercise by far the greatest influence during the period of formulation

3 Ibid., n. 13, p. 8, "Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly endorsed, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church, above all when they are ordered by the Apostolic See. [...] But these devotions should be so fashioned that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some way derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them."

4 SCR, Instruction, Eucharisticum mysterium, On Worship of the Eucharist, May 25, 1967, in AAS, 59 (1967), pp. 539-573; Eng. tr. in DOL, pp. 395-420. (Hereafter, Eucharisticum mysterium).

5 Rituale Romanum, "Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass," in The Rites of the Catholic Church, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI, Eng. tr. by ICEL, New York, Pueblo, 1976, vol. 1, pp. 447-512. (Hereafter, Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass).

of the revised canonical legislation on the subject. However, many of the other conciliar and post-conciliar texts contributed substantially to the formulation and interpretation of the revised legislation. Of special note among these is Paul VI's encyclical letter, Mysterium fidei,⁶ the General Instruction of the Roman Missal⁷ in 1975 from the Congregation of Divine Worship, and the liturgical norms for the care of the sick⁸ and the dedication of altars⁹ in the revised Rituale Romanum.

Another text which is directly involved in this study is the Variationes published by the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine

6. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter, Mysterium fidei, On the Doctrine and Worship of the Eucharist, Sept. 3, 1965, in AAS, 57 (1965), pp. 753-774; Eng. tr. in DOL, pp. 378-392. (Hereafter, Mysterium fidei).

7. SCDW, Instruction, "General Instruction of the Roman Missal," in The Roman Missal, revised by the decree of the Second Vatican Council and published by the authority of Pope Paul VI, 4th ed., March 27, 1975, in DOL, pp. 465-533. (Hereafter, General Instruction of the Roman Missal).

8. Rituale Romanum; "Rite of Anointing and Pastoral Care of the Sick," in The Rites of the Catholic Church, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI, Eng. tr. by ICEL, New York, Pueblo, 1976, vol. 1, pp. 571-642. (Hereafter, Anointing and Care of the Sick).

9. Rituale Romanum, "Dedication of a Church and an Altar", in The Rites of the Catholic Church, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI, Eng. tr. by ICEL, New York, Pueblo, 1980, vol. 2, pp. 183-293. (Hereafter, Dedication of a Church and an Altar).

Worship on September 12, 1983.¹⁰ The promulgation of the revised Code of Canon Law on January 25, 1983,¹¹ made it necessary to introduce a number of modifications into the liturgical texts prior to its coming into force on the following first Sunday of Advent. The new Code, while respecting the principle that liturgical laws have their own autonomy, maintained that "should there be . . . a clear and irreconcilable conflict between the existing liturgical norms and the Code, the Code must prevail."¹² Canon 2 reads:

For the most part the Code does not determine the rites to be observed in the celebration of liturgical actions. Accordingly, liturgical laws which have been in effect hitherto retain their force, except those which may be contrary to the canons of the Code.¹³

The Variationes is the official compilation of the 76 numbers of the praenotanda in the liturgical texts affected to varying degrees by the new Code.

10. SCSDW, Variationes in novas editiones librorum liturgicorum ad normam Codicis iuris canonici nuper promulgati introducendae, in NOT, 19 (1983), pp. 540-555. (Hereafter, Variationes).

11. Codex Iuris Canonici, Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1983; Eng. tr. The Code of Canon Law, by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland in association with the Canon Law Society of Australia and New Zealand and the Canadian Canon Law Society, Collins Liturgical Publications, London, C.C.C.B., Ottawa, 1983. (Hereafter, CIC, 1983).

12. J. Coriden, et al., The Code of Canon Law, A Text and Commentary, New York, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 26.

13. CIC, 1983, c. 2.

The chapter will have two parts: an examination of the liturgical texts, and a study of the discussions and proposals pertaining to the revision of the Code.

1. The Liturgical Texts

The matter from the liturgical texts will be treated under three headings: The purpose of reservation, the place and care of the reserved Eucharist, and the veneration of the reserved Eucharist.

A. Purpose of Reservation

The post-conciliar texts reaffirm the traditional purpose for the reservation of the Blessed Eucharist.¹⁴ The administration of Viaticum is the primary purpose; and the secondary ends are distributing Communion outside Mass and adoration of the eucharistic Lord. To support these traditional practices, references are made to noted sources including the Council of Trent¹⁵ and the writings of Popes

¹⁴ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 49, p. 414; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 5, p. 456.

¹⁵ Concilium Tridentinum, Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent. Original text with Eng. tr. by H. Schroeder, St. Louis, Herder, 1941, pp. 72-80. (Hereafter, Council of Trent).

Pius XI⁶ and Pius XII.¹⁷ In keeping with the trend in eucharistic theology to stress the unity of the Eucharist, these various texts emphasize the fact that sharing somehow in the celebration of the Eucharist in the Sacrifice of the Mass justifies the reservation of the Eucharist outside of Mass. The faithful who are unable to participate in the Mass are thus able to be united to the celebration, in the Sacrifice of Christ, through the reception of Communion.

The celebration of the Eucharist in the sacrifice of the Mass is truly the origin and the purpose of the worship that is shown to the Eucharist outside Mass.

Public and private devotion to the Holy Eucharist outside Mass also is highly recommended; for the presence of Christ, who is adored by the faithful in the Sacrament, derives from the Sacrifice and is directed towards sacramental and spiritual Communion.¹⁸

¹⁶ Pius X, Decree, Sacra Tridentina Synodus, Dec. 20, 1905, in Catechetical Documents of Pope Pius X, J. Collins, Ed. Patterson, N.J., St. Anthony Guild, 1946, pp. 148-153; Eng. tr., ibid., pp. 43-49.

¹⁷ Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, Mediator Dei, On The Sacred Liturgy, Nov. 20, 1947, in AAS, 39 (1947), p. 569; Eng. tr. in Papal Encyclicals, vol. 4, p. 140.

¹⁸ SCSDW, Instruction, Inaestimabile donum, On Certain Norms Concerning the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, April 3, 1980, in NOT, 16; (1980), pp. 287-297; Eng. tr. in A. FLANNERY, Documents of Vatican II, vol. 2, n. 20, p. 98. (Hereafter, Inaestimabile donum); see also, Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 3e, p. 397.

(1) Viaticum

The revised legislation on Viaticum is quite precise.¹⁹ It begins with an affirmation of the belief that Christians, in their passage from this life, are strengthened by the Eucharist as the pledge of Christ's promise of resurrection. Every member of the faithful in danger of death and capable of receiving Communion is obliged to do so. Priests with pastoral responsibilities are to see that such persons are given the Sacrament without delay, so that they receive the spiritual advantages of reception while still in full possession of their faculties.²⁰ The administration is to take place, when possible, during Mass with reception under both species to emphasize the participation in the death of the Lord and the passage to the Father. Also, it is recommended that a faith commitment be made through a renewal of the baptismal promises.²¹

The ordinary minister of Viaticum is the pastor or one of his assistants, the priest chaplain for a hospital or similar institution, or the superior of a clerical institute. In case of necessity, any priest, with at least presumed permission, is a competent minister. If a priest is unavailable, a deacon or a lay person, man or woman, duly appointed to distribute communion to the faithful may administer this

19 Anointing and Care of the Sick, nn. 26-31, p. 587-589.

20 Ibid., n. 27, p. 588; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 39, p. 411.

21 Anointing and Care of the Sick, nn. 26-28, pp. 587-588.

Sacrament. The deacon is to follow the rite laid down in the ritual, while the lay person is to follow the rite ordinarily used for the distribution of Communion.²²

Members of the faithful who, on a particular day, received Communion prior to being in danger of death, are exhorted to receive again under the form of Viaticum.²³ Likewise, family members and friends present with the sick person may receive the Sacrament even if it is for the second time in that day.²⁴

There are indications of some obvious developments in the legislation during this period. Foremost is the impact of the theological relationship between the Mass and Communion outside Mass with the prescription for Viaticum to be administered, when possible, under two species during the celebration of the Mass. The renewal of the baptismal promises to express the faith commitment reflects the stages of passage from death to life. There is significant development in the legislation on the minister of Viaticum. What was viewed in the post-Tridentine period as the almost exclusive right of the pastor, as

22. Ibid., n. 29, p. 588.

23. Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 39, p. 411.

24. SCS, Instruction, Immensae caritatis, On Facilitating Reception of Communion in Certain Circumstances, Jan. 29, 1973, in AAS, 65 (1973), pp. 264-271; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 653. (Hereafter, Immensae caritatis).

well as his responsibility, has taken on a much more practical and sensible, pastoral approach. While recognizing that the pastor, and those associated to him are the ordinary ministers, the legislation allows for other priests, deacons and lay persons to act as ministers. The prescriptions allow for women, as well as men, to fulfill an important and ancient ministry of the Church under certain conditions. Lastly, less significant, but nonetheless a development, is the permission for those members of the faithful accompanying the sick person to receive the Eucharist, even if they have already received Communion on that day.

(ii) Communion Outside Mass

The documents indicate that the faithful have a right to receive the Eucharist outside of Mass since priests are instructed not to refuse to administer Communion to those who for a just reason make such a request.²⁵ Stress is placed on the fact that the origin and the purpose of this practice of Communion outside of Mass is found in the Sacrifice of the Mass itself.

For the sacred elements that remain after the Mass come from the Mass and they are reserved after Mass, so that the faithful who cannot be present at Mass may be united to Christ and the celebration of His sacrifice through sacramental communion received with the right dispositions.²⁶

²⁵ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 39, p. 411; and, Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 14, p. 459.

²⁶ SCDF, Letter, Cum Oecumenicum Concilium, On Errors of Interpretation Concerning The Teachings of Vatican Council II, to presidents of the conferences of bishops, July 24, 1966, excerpts in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 659-661; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 3, p. 397.

Furthermore, the faithful are to be carefully instructed to comprehend the relationship between the reception of Communion outside Mass and the Sacrifice of the Mass itself together with the Sacrifice of the Cross.²⁷

Communion may be administered, with few exceptions, on any day, at any hour, provided due concern is shown for the spiritual and practical welfare of the faithful.²⁸ This legislation is an expression of the earlier powers granted to bishops²⁹ and superior generals of clerical institutes.³⁰ The exceptions are found in the practice for the last three days of holy week. On Holy Thursday outside of Mass, and on Good Friday outside of the celebration of the Lord's passion, Communion may be taken to the sick at any hour, but on Holy Saturday, Communion may be given only to the dying.

The usual species for Communion outside of Mass is the consecrated Bread, but for those unable to receive the Host, the species of consecrated Wine may be used.³¹ For such occasions, prescriptions are

27 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 15, pp. 459-460.

28 Ibid., n. 16, p. 460; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 40, p. 411.

29 Paul VI, Motu Proprio, Pastorale munus, On the Powers and Privileges Granted to Bishops; Nov. 30, 1963, in AAS, 56 (1964), pp. 5-12; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 4, p. 259. (Hereafter, Pastorale munus).

30 Secretariat of State, Rescript, Cum admotae, On Faculties Delegated to the Superiors General of Clerical Religious Institutes of Pontifical Rank and to the Abbots-President of Monastic Congregations, Nov. 6, 1964, in AAS, 59 (1967), pp. 374-378; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 1, p. 312. (Hereafter, Cum admotae).

31 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 14, p. 459.

set for the retention of the Precious Blood in a chalice in the tabernacle after Mass, for the conveyance of the Sacrament in a sealed vessel, and for its administration to the sick person.³² The minister is to consume any of the Precious Blood which remains and conduct the proper ablutions.³³

The minister of Communion is primarily the priest or deacon and then the acolyte who for pastoral reasons assists the priest and deacon,³⁴ since the Eucharist is the focal point of his ministry.³⁵ Also, for pastoral reasons, the local Ordinary may grant other special ministers the faculty to administer Communion.³⁶ He may even allow individual priests to appoint a given person to administer the Sacrament on a particular occasion for a just cause. The minister of Eucharist outside of Mass is encouraged to provide a celebration of the Word prior to the giving of Communion.³⁷ The need for this service is of greater importance in situations where a priest is not available to

32 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 41, p. 412.

33 Ibid.

34 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 17, pp. 460-461.

35 Paul VI, Motu Proprio, Ministeria quaedam, On First Tonsure, Minor Orders, and the Subdiaconate, Aug. 15, 1972, in AAS, 64 (1972), pp. 529-534; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 910. (Hereafter, Ministeria quaedam).

36 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 17, pp. 460-461; Immensae caritatis, p. 651.

37 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 33, p. 409.

celebrate Mass on a Sunday or holy day of obligation. The prescriptions call for the service to be based on the liturgy of the Mass of the particular day. If the minister is a deacon, he is to preach a homily. The prayer of the faithful followed by the Lord's prayer concludes this part of the service. It is the responsibility of the diocesan liturgical commission to make resources available, which assure that these ceremonies will be conducted with proper dignity and devotion.³⁸

The regular place for the administration of Communion outside of Mass is a church or oratory where the Eucharist is celebrated or reserved, or a place where the faithful gather for liturgical functions. However, the Sacrament is frequently administered in private homes and other places because of the circumstances of the recipients who are restricted from going to a church or oratory through sickness, imprisonment, or some form of personal danger or difficulty.³⁹

Certain prescriptions have been established for the reception of Communion outside of Mass. If the administration is in a church or oratory, a corporal is to be placed on an altar already covered with a cloth; two lighted candles are to be placed on the altar, and a communion plate is to be used. In other places, there is to be a table

³⁸ SCR, Instruction, Inter Oecumenici, On the Orderly Carrying Out of the Constitution of the Liturgy, Sept. 26, 1964, in AAS, 56 (1964), pp. 877-900; Eng. tr. in DOL nn. 37-39, p. 95. (Hereafter, Inter Oecumenici).

³⁹ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 18, p. 461.

covered with a cloth and candles.⁴⁰ The minister, priest or deacon, is to wear an alb with a stole, or a cassock, surplice and stole. Other ministers are to wear the attire approved for use by tradition or by the Ordinary. When the Eucharist is taken to a house or other place, the minister is to wear appropriate attire and carry the Eucharist in a pyx or another covered vessel.⁴¹ The traditional practice of the reception of Communion on the tongue is to be maintained without prejudice to the prerogative of conferences of bishops to allow reception in the hand.⁴² Fragments are to be gathered and placed in a ciborium or vessel of water and, if the species of wine has been used, the chalice or vessel is to be washed with water. The water used for cleansing may be drunk or poured into a suitable place.⁴³

Recipients of Communion, outside or within Mass, are encouraged to have the proper dispositions and a clear conscience. Regular reception of the sacrament of Penance is advocated for recipients of Communion. The original text of the revised rite also prescribed that communicants were to fast before Communion for one hour from solid foods and beverages, with the exception of water.⁴⁴ In the Variationes to the liturgical texts brought about by the promulgation of the new Code

40 Ibid., n. 19, p. 461.

41 Ibid., n. 20, pp. 461-462.

42 Ibid., n. 21, p. 462.

43 Ibid., n. 22, p. 462.

44 Ibid., n. 24, pp. 463-464.

of Canon Law⁴⁵ this exception was later extended to include medicine. The revised rites allowed for a period of fast reduced to fifteen minutes for the sick and elderly receiving Communion, and for sick and elderly priests celebrating Mass. This same prescription could be applied to those who cared for the sick and elderly, when a one hour fast would be an inconvenience.⁴⁶ However, the Variationes eliminated even this fifteen minute period.⁴⁷

(iii) Adoration of the Eucharistic Presence

The practice of adoration of the reserved Species has as its firm foundation faith in the real presence of the Lord,⁴⁸ and "therefore deserves worship that is given to the living God and to him alone."⁴⁹ Repeatedly throughout the eucharistic texts of this period, there is a

45 Variationes, n. 24, p. 544.

46 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 24, pp. 463-464.

47 Variationes, n. 24, p. 544.

48 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 5, p. 456.

49 John Paul II, Address to the American Bishops at Quigley Seminary, Chicago, Oct. 5, 1979, in AAS, 71 (1979), pp. 1218-1229; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 209; see also, John Paul II, Epistle, Dominicae Cenae, Feb. 24, 1980, in NOT, 16 (1980), pp. 125-154; Eng. tr. in A. Flannery, ed., Documents of Vatican II, vol. 2, 1982, n. 3, pp. 66-67. (Hereafter, Dominicae Cenae).

reaffirmation of the faith in the real presence⁵⁰ and the fittingness in eucharist worship for "the worship that is known as latria, and that is the worship due to God alone."⁵¹

In respect to eucharistic real presence and latria worship, the teaching of the conciliar and post-conciliar texts reaffirms that of the Council of Trent,⁵² and expressly states that such reaffirmation is its intention. For instance,

The celebration of the Mass also proclaims the sublime mystery of the Lord's real presence under the eucharistic elements which Vatican II and other documents of the Church's magisterium have reaffirmed in the same sense, and as the same teaching that the Council of Trent had proposed as a matter of faith.⁵³

⁵⁰ Mysterium fidei, n. 39, p. 385, and nn. 44-55, pp. 386-389; Paul VI, Allocution, Sollemnis professio fidei, Solemn Profession of Faith, June 30, 1968, in AAS, 60 (1968), pp. 433-445; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 26, p. 358, (Hereafter, Sollemnis professio fidei); Paul VI, Letter, Saluberrimum sacramentum eucharistiae, to the Blessed Sacrament Fathers, Jan. 10, 1968, in AAS, 61 (1969), pp. 169-171; Eng. tr. in DOL, pp. 690-691; (Hereafter, Saluberrimum sacramentum Eucharistiae); Paul VI, Message to the 41st International Eucharistic Congress at Philadelphia, Aug. 8, 1974, in AAS, 68 (1976), pp. 561-562; John Paul II, Homily at Phoenix Park, Dublin, Sept. 29, 1979, in NOT, 15 (1979), pp. 604-607, (Hereafter, Homily, Dublin); Dominicae Cenae, n. 3, pp. 66-67; General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 3, p. 466.

⁵¹ Mysterium fidei, n. 55, p. 389; see also, ibid., nn. 56-63; pp. 389-390; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 3, p. 398; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, p. 453.

⁵² Council of Trent, p. 76, and p. 80.

⁵³ General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 3, p. 466; see also, Mysterium fidei, n. 44-46, pp. 386-387.

In the tradition of Trent, the Vatican II teaching on the real presence, "aptly and correctly terms this mysterious change, transubstantiation."⁵⁴

The text of Mysterium fidei, sensitive to the theological discussions in the area of eucharistic presence, and yet loyal to the faith of the Church as defined by the Council of Trent, teaches:

After transubstantiation has taken place, the appearances of bread and wine undoubtedly take on a new meaning and a new purpose, for they no longer remain ordinary bread and ordinary drink, but become the sign of something sacred and the sign of spiritual nourishment. But, the reason they take on this new meaning and this new purpose, is that they contain a new 'reality,' which with good reason we term ontological.⁵⁵

Paul VI in this same document outlines the continuity of the Church's teaching in this area by the presentation of an overview of the teaching of some of the Fathers, Doctors, Councils and Popes of the Church through to present times.⁵⁶

The actual references in the Vatican II sources to the various methods of expressing private and public adoration of the reserved Eucharist will be discussed later under veneration of the Sacrament. Prior to that treatment, however we will consider what these same sources teach regarding the place and care of the reserved Eucharist.

⁵⁴ Sollemnis professio fidei, n. 25, p. 358.

⁵⁵ Mysterium fidei, n. 46, p. 387.

⁵⁶ Ibid., nn. 47-55, pp. 387-389.

B. Place and Care of the Reserved Eucharist

The post-conciliar texts provide new prescriptions, formulated regarding the place and care of the reserved Eucharist in keeping with the principles of renewal in the liturgy and the current theology of the Eucharist. The process indicates a sensitivity in the transition from the old to the new, as emphasis emerges on the distinction between the altar of celebration and the altar of reservation. In the texts themselves, there is little consideration given to the actual places in which the Eucharist is to be reserved. This probably indicates that there is no significant change in the legislation regarding them.⁵⁷ References are made, however, to the bishop's prerogative to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in an oratory in his residence,⁵⁸ to the possibility of a pontifical indult for such reservation in the lawfully erected chapel of a ship,⁵⁹ and to the faculties given to Nuncios and Apostolic Delegates in 1968,⁶⁰ and to Legates in 1974,⁶¹ to allow reservation in non-parish churches or in public oratories provided they are suitably furnished and Mass is celebrated there once a week.

57 CIC, 1917, c. 1265.

58 Pastorale munus, Part 2, n. 5, p. 261.

59 SCB, Decree, Apostolatus maris, On the Pastoral Care of Seamen and Ship Passengers, Sept. 24, 1977, in AAS, 69 (1977), pp. 737-746; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 8, p. 220, n. 7.

60 SCB, Private, "Faculties Granted to Apostolic Nuncios, Internuncios and Delegates", 1968; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 9, pp. 179-180, n. 32.

61 SCEC, Private, "Faculties Granted to Legates of the Roman Pontiff", Oct. 31, 1974, Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 9, p. 184.

Prescriptions in the texts concerning the care of the reserved Eucharist appear frequently. Most of these refer directly or indirectly to the tabernacle and the sacred vessels. However, there is a directive that the hosts are to be renewed frequently,⁶² and precaution taken to see, "that the wine does not turn to vinegar or the bread spoil or become too hard to be broken easily."⁶³ The remainder of this consideration of the place and care of the Sacrament will treat in more detail of the altar and chapel of reservation, the tabernacle, and the sacred vessels.

(1) The Altar and Chapel of Reservation

The former provision of law⁶⁴ that the Blessed Sacrament be reserved at only one altar in each Church; the most prominent and best suited for personal veneration, is upheld.⁶⁵ Related to, but going beyond the former prescriptions, the post-conciliar texts repeatedly refer to a special chapel for the reservation and veneration of the Blessed Sacrament.⁶⁶ There is a continual emphasis on the preeminence

62 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 7, p. 457.

63 General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 285, p. 522.

64 CIC, 1917, c. 1268.

65 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 52-54, pp. 415-416.

66 Consilium, Letter, "Le renouveau liturgique," from Cardinal G. Lercaro to the presidents of conferences of bishops, June 30, 1965, in NOT, 1 (1965), pp. 257-264; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 7, pp. 120-121. (Hereafter, Le renouveau liturgique); Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 53, pp. 415-416; General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 277, p. 521; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 9, p. 457; Dedication of a Church and an Altar, Chp. 4, n. 7, pp. 252-253.

of the area and its suitability for the promotion of personal prayer.⁶⁷ Although these prescriptions are to be followed in the building of new churches,⁶⁸ when it comes to the specific area in the church where the Sacrament is to be reserved, the local Ordinary is to be consulted.⁶⁹ However, the decision to reserve the Eucharist in churches shared by different denominations should be arrived at only after a thorough consideration of sound sacramental theology and the sensitivities of those who worship in the church.⁷⁰ For such, the Ordinary must give permission based on the norms established by the Episcopal Conference.⁷¹

The altar of reservation is seen as an altar distinct from the altar of celebration and "if possible separated to a certain extent from the main body of the church."⁷² Yet, reference is made to the

67 Mysterium fidei, n. 66, p. 390; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 23, p. 463; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 54, p. 416; SCCE, Instruction, In ecclesiasticam futurorum sacerdotum, On Liturgical Formation in Seminaries, June 3, 1979, in NOT, 15 (1979), pp. 526-566; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 27, p. 880. (Hereafter, In ecclesiasticum futurorum sacerdotum).

68 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 56, p. 416.

69 Ibid., n. 54, p. 416; Consilium, Letter, "L'heureux développement", from Cardinal G. Lercaro to the presidents of conferences of bishops, Jan. 25, 1966, in NOT, 2 (1966), pp. 157-161; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 6, p. 124.

70 Secretariat For Christian Unity, Directory, "Ecumenical Collaboration at the Regional and Local Levels", Feb. 22, 1975, in DOL, p. 348.

71 Ibid.

72 Dedication of a Church and an Altar, Chp. 4, n. 7, p. 252.

lawfulness of celebrating Mass on an altar facing the people, "where there is a small, but becoming tabernacle."⁷³ However, because of the singular way of Christ's presence in the eucharistic elements and the confecting of this presence in the celebration of the Eucharist, it is strongly recommended that in keeping with the sign value, "Christ not be present eucharistically from the beginning on the altar where Mass is celebrated. That presence is the effect of the consecration and should appear as such."⁷⁴ In the original text of the revised rite, provision was made for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in a properly ornate area of the church without an altar of reservation. Such placement, however, requires the permission of the local Ordinary.⁷⁵ Yet, this text when amended by the Variationes contains the words, "This may be placed on an altar or not on an altar at the discretion of the local Ordinary."⁷⁶ It now stresses the significance, ornateness and devotional decor of the tabernacle's place in the Church.⁷⁷

⁷³ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 54, p. 416; Infer Oecumenici, n. 95, p. 109.

⁷⁴ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 55, p. 416.

⁷⁵ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 10, p. 457.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Variationes, n. 10, p. 543; See also, Inaestimabile donum, n. 24, p. 98.

During the transition period involving the placement of altars, so as to facilitate celebrating Mass facing the people and the removal of the tabernacle from the altar of celebration, certain questions arose. For example, could the Blessed Sacrament be reserved on the main altar when an altar was constructed between it and the people for the purpose of celebration? An affirmative reply was given with the provisions that there be a suitable distance between the two altars and that the tabernacle be visible over the head of the celebrant.⁷⁸ However, we should bear in mind that, throughout this entire transition period, the intention of the Church was that the main altar be the altar facing the people where the Eucharist is celebrated, and that the altar of reservation be a minor one in an ornate setting presenting the faithful with an atmosphere conducive to prayer and adoration.⁷⁹

(ii) The Tabernacle

From the beginning of the liturgical reform in the Second Vatican Council, the intent to revise the statutes involving "the nobility, placement and security of eucharistic tabernacles"⁸⁰ was expressly mentioned. All that has already been said concerning the altar and chapel of reservation directly applies to the place of the

⁷⁸ Consilium, Documentorum Explanatio, in NOT 1 (1965), n. 10, p. 138, and n. 62, p. 251.

⁷⁹ Ibid., n. 63, p. 251.

⁸⁰ Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 128, p. 26.

tabernacle. It remains now to examine the prescriptions regarding the material and construction of tabernacles, as well as those concerning the tabernacle lamp and key.

The texts repeatedly stress that the material of the tabernacle is to be solid and secure,⁸¹ and that it is to be opaque or non-transparent.⁸² The Variationes re-emphasize the need for the tabernacle to be built in a manner that is closed in a way to prevent profanation.⁸³ In the construction and remodeling of churches, caution is to be taken to observe these prescriptions regarding the place and material of the tabernacle.⁸⁴ The responsibility rests with the bishop who "makes sure that the construction and placement of the tabernacle meet liturgical norms."⁸⁵ In this respect, territorial groups of bishops may make adaptations to meet the needs and customs of specific

81. Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 52, p. 415; Inter Oecumenici, n. 95, p. 109; General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 277, p. 521; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 10, pp. 457-458; Inaestimabile donum, n. 25, p. 98.

82. Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 10, pp. 457-458; Variationes, n. 277, p. 543; SCDW, "Tabernacolo Di Vetro," Glass Tabernacle, in NOT, 7 (1971), pp. 738-741, (Hereafter, Glass Tabernacle); SCDW, Sanctissimi eucharistia asservari nequit in tabernaculo transparenti, Glass Tabernacle Forbidden, in Leges Ecclesiae, 5, n. 4315, p. 6852; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 9, pp. 740-741.

83. Variationes, n. 277, and, n. 10, p. 543.

84. Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 24, pp. 405-406, and n. 56, p. 416.

85. SCB, Ecclesiae Imago, Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, Feb. 22, 1973, in Leges Ecclesiae, 5, n. 4174; Eng. tr. Ottawa, CCC Publications, n. 90, p. 48. (Hereafter, Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops).

regions.⁸⁶ In a letter to the presidents of the conferences of bishops, Cardinal Lercaro cautioned that:

If the local Ordinary agrees to its location away from the altar, the location should make it possible for the tabernacle to serve unmistakably as a sign and to give a sense of the Savior's presence in the midst of his people.⁸⁷

As a help to the bishops in their decisions in this regard, the Cardinal gave a list of unsatisfactory solutions for tabernacle placement.

It is therefore pertinent to take note of solutions sometimes proposed or already in effect that do not seem really to achieve a satisfactory result. They would include the following: tabernacles permanently inserted into the altar table or retracted automatically at the time of celebration; tabernacles placed in front of the altar, sometimes on a slightly lower pedestal, sometimes on another altar at a lower level and used in conjunction with the altar of celebration; finally, tabernacles built into the wall of the apse or those placed upon an already existing altar having the celebrant's chair in front of or below it.⁸⁸

In this period, a discussion arose again regarding glass as a possible material for tabernacles. The Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship,⁸⁹ although it recognized that there was some historical and

⁸⁶ Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 128, p. 26.

⁸⁷ Le renouveau liturgique, n. 7, p. 121.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Glass Tabernacle, pp. 738-741.

theoretical justification for the use of glass, suggested that a glass tabernacle would give the impression of permanent exposition, that it would give an excessive prominence to the Blessed Sacrament, which would not be fitting during liturgical celebrations, and, if a glass tabernacle were in the sanctuary area the celebration of Mass would be forbidden.⁹⁰ However, in this discussion it is important to realize that all glass is not necessarily transparent, and that the texture of some glass is very durable. No doubt, it is because of these and similar considerations that the Sacred Congregation concluded its reply as follows:

We should not affirm that glass is absolutely excluded as material apt for the construction of tabernacles. Tabernacles, if they are "solid and unbreakable," may also be made of crystal or glass, provided that they may be covered with a veil and their exposition be limited to particular times, that is at the time and in the manner provided for by the current legislation for prolonged or short exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.⁹¹

The use of the veil is viewed as a means to indicate the presence of the reserved Eucharist, although some other effective means designated by the competent authority is also permitted.⁹² For instance, a reply from the Sacred Congregation of Rites states that if

⁹⁰ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 55, p. 416.

⁹¹ Glass Tabernacle, p. 741.

⁹² Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 57, p. 416; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 11, p. 458; and, Inaestimabile donum, n. 25, p. 98.

there is a baldachino decorated with a cloth of white or the color of the day, a veil is not required.⁹³ The implication here is that the baldachino so decorated fulfills the requirement for the necessary effective means of indicating the presence of the Eucharist.

As to the tabernacle lamp, the texts reaffirm the prescriptions of the 1917 Code of Canon Law,⁹⁴ and state that "according to the traditional practice, a lamp should burn continuously near the tabernacle as a sign of honor shown to the Lord."⁹⁵ In keeping with this tradition, the original texts of the Vatican II period called for an oil lamp or a lamp with a wax candle.⁹⁶ This position was quite emphatically supported by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship in a reply that, "in the case of the sanctuary lamp, the fuel [...] must be oil or wax."⁹⁷ There was an apparent opposition to the use of electric lighting in favour of the symbolism of oil and wax. This is evident in the statement: "No electrical lighting will ever have the value of the living flame of wax or oil being visibly

93 SCR, Reply, "On the Tabernacle and Baldachin", July 3, 1965, in NOT, 1 (1965), n. 90, p. 308; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 1362.

94 CIC, 1917, c. 1271.

95 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 57, p. 416; Inaestimabile donum, n. 25, p. 98.

96 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 11, p. 458.

97 SCDW, Documentorum explanatio, in NOT, 10 (1974), n. 4, p. 80; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 519.

consumed as an offering of the Lord, the Light eternal."⁹⁸ Another such statement was: "electric bulbs are banned in the interest of safeguarding authenticity and the full symbolism of light."⁹⁹ Yet, it needs to be noted that as late as 1973, due to the possibility of fire, American military facilities were granted a rescript to have an electric light before the tabernacle.¹⁰⁰

With the Variationes, it is now prescribed that a lamp be before the tabernacle; that it honour not only the presence of Christ but also indicate this presence, and, that it be sustained by oil or wax only in so far as such is possible.¹⁰¹ An electric light is thus permissible. It is of interest to note in the Variationes, the use of the Vatican II terminology "presence of Christ," in reference to honouring and indicating the reserved Eucharist.¹⁰²

Lastly, in regard to the tabernacle key, the original text stated that the priest, or other minister of Communion, was to have

⁹⁸ Consilium, Editorial, "Mécanique et Liturgie", in NOT, 3 (1967), pp. 3-4; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 135.

⁹⁹ SCDW, Documentorum explanatio, in NOT, 10 (1974), n. 4, p. 80; Eng. tr., in DOL, footnote 47, p. 519.

¹⁰⁰ SCDW, Rescript, "Tabernacle Lamp in U.S.A. Military Facilities", Nov. 30, 1973, in CLD, vol. 8, p. 908; see also, CLD, vol. 3, p. 518.

¹⁰¹ Variationes, n. 11, p. 544.

¹⁰² Ibid.

custody of the key.¹⁰³ The Variationes shifted this responsibility to the person in charge of the church or oratory.¹⁰⁴

(iii) The Sacred Vessels

The Vatican II documents attribute a dignity proper to receptacles for the reserved Eucharist.¹⁰⁵ They are called sacred vessels, are made from valuable material, and are given a special blessing. The material used is to be solid and considered precious in the area the vessel is used. The cup of the chalice or other vessel for the reservation of the wine, must be of a non-absorbent material, while the pyx, ciborium or monstrance for the reservation of the Hosts may be any precious material found in the locality, such as ebony or other hard wood. A guiding principle here, then, is that such be suitable for sacred use. Also, if a metal material which could rust is used, the inside of the vessel is to be gilded. The shape or design may be in keeping with local culture, provided the vessel is suited to liturgical use. The Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship cautions that "use is not to be made of simple baskets or other receptacles meant for ordinary use outside the Sacred celebrations, nor are the sacred vessels to be of poor quality or lacking any artistic style."¹⁰⁶

103 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 10, pp. 457-458.

104 Variationes, n. 10, p. 544.

105 General Instruction of the Roman Missal, nn. 289-296, p. 523.

106 Inaestimabile donum, n. 16, p. 97.

The role of the bishop in relation to the sacred vessels is explicitated in the texts. Regional groups of bishops are to decide on the suitability of certain materials for sacred vessels, and are to inform the Holy See of these decisions.¹⁰⁷ Before vessels are used, individual bishops are to decide on their fittingness.¹⁰⁸ At first the conciliar and post-conciliar texts spoke of these vessels being consecrated or blessed by a bishop, or a deputed priest, according to the prescriptions of the liturgical books.¹⁰⁹ However, in the new Rituale Romanum it is evident that they are to be blessed, not consecrated with oil, and the blessing may be administered by any priest.¹¹⁰ It is preferred that blessings take place during Mass which serves to underline not only the relationship of the vessels to the Mass, but also the primacy of the celebration of Mass in all matters pertaining to Eucharistic devotions.

C. Veneration of the Reserved Eucharist

The cult of adoration has as its firm foundation, faith in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament. It is a worship

¹⁰⁷ Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 128, p. 26; Inaestimabile donum, n. 16, p. 97; SCDW, Instruction, Liturgicae instaurationes, On the Orderly Carrying Out of the Constitution on the Liturgy, Sept. 5, 1970 in AAS, 62 (1970), pp. 692-704; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 8d, p. 165. (Hereafter, Liturgicae instaurationes).

¹⁰⁸ Liturgicae instaurationes, n. 8b, p. 165.

¹⁰⁹ Pastorale munus, n. 27, p. 260; Liturgicae instaurationes, n. 8b, p. 165, Inaestimabile donum, n. 16, p. 97; General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 296, p. 523.

¹¹⁰ Dedication of a Church and an Altar, ch. 7, nn. 1-14, pp. 286-288.

directed to the Father through Jesus in the Holy Spirit, which effects a special intimacy with the Lord, and fills our spiritual being, ensuring its life.¹¹¹ This veneration "has as its purpose both sacramental and spiritual communion."¹¹² This faith in Jesus' presence in the Eucharist leads to acts both private and public, which are outward expressions of that belief.¹¹³ The present consideration will centre on the texts which treat of three of these manifestations: visits to the Blessed Sacrament, exposition, and Corpus Christi processions. The choice of these three aspects is in keeping with the legislation concerning the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist found in the new Code of Canon Law:

(1) Visits

Paul VI encouraged daily visits to the reserved Eucharist as important to the faith practice of all the faithful. In Mysterium fidei he said,

In the course of the day, the faithful should not omit to visit the blessed Sacrament, which must, in keeping with liturgical laws, be reserved in the churches with great reverence in a most honorable location. Such visits are a proof of gratitude, a pledge of love, a service of adoration owed to Christ the Lord there present.¹¹⁴

111 Dominicae Cenaе, nn. 3-7, pp. 66-72.

112 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 80, pp. 484-485; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 50, p. 414.

113 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 5, p. 456.

114 Mysterium fidei, n. 66, p. 390.

This same position is reinforced by John Paul II in his stress on the importance of the visit as a means of helping the members of the faithful live out their Catholic faith. He said

The visit to the Blessed Sacrament [...] is a great treasure of the Catholic faith. It nourishes social love and gives us opportunities for adoration and thanksgiving, for reparation and supplication.¹¹⁵

Other post-conciliar texts show that the visit is a means of drawing people of faith into deeper communion with God and leads to a responding to the gift of life He continually pours into us. The intimacy of the relationship which develops in these moments of spiritual communion, calls the faithful to a deeper prayer life, to an offering of self in union with Christ, to an increase of faith, hope and love, and to a fostering of right dispositions for the celebration and reception of the Eucharist.¹¹⁶

It is, then, in a frame of mind conscious of the deep spiritual value of visits to the Blessed Sacrament, that the Vatican II texts include exhortations and prescriptions to pastors and the faithful, and to priests, clerics, religious and seminarians, in this regard. Pastors have the responsibility to see that churches or oratories where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in conformity with the law, are open daily

¹¹⁵ Homily, Dublin, p. 606.

¹¹⁶ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 50, p. 414; Dominicae Cenae, n. 3, p. 67.

at convenient times, "so that the faithful may easily pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament."¹¹⁷ The Variationes have added a nisi clause to this prescription, which indicates that a pastor is not obligated to do so if he is prevented by some grave difficulty.¹¹⁸

Related to this is the priest's responsibility to see that the church and the reserved Eucharist are well cared for, both for safety's sake and the provision of an atmosphere conducive to the prayer and adoration of the faithful.¹¹⁹

In light of this particular emphasis, it seems most appropriate that the documents of the conciliar and post-conciliar period focus on the specific importance of these visits to the life and ministry of priests, seminarians and religious. In Presbyterorum ordinis, the daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament is mentioned among the recommendations given to priests as helps toward fostering an interior life which, in turn, assists in the meaningful carrying out of the priestly ministry. The document suggests that

As a help towards faithful fulfillment of their ministry, priests should love to talk daily with Christ the Lord in their visit to the most Blessed Sacrament and in their personal devotion to it.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 8, p. 457; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 51, p. 415.

¹¹⁸ Variationes, n. 8, p. 543.

¹¹⁹ Vatican Council II, Decree, Presbyterorum ordinis, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Dec. 7, 1965, in AAS, 58 (1966), pp. 991-1024; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 5, pp. 73-74. (Hereafter, Presbyterorum ordinis).

¹²⁰ Ibid., n. 18, p. 897.

It follows, then, that those responsible for preparing candidates for this priestly ministry "will bring the students to a more ardent devotion to the holy eucharist."¹²¹ A recommended means to assist in this aspect of formation is the seminarian's "visiting the chapel during the day to pray before the Blessed Sacrament."¹²² This means that

In arranging seminary chapels, the tabernacle in which the holy eucharist is reserved is to be located in a place that favors private visits, so that the students will not neglect to honor our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament fruitfully and easily, even by private adoration.¹²³

This eucharistic concern of the Church in priestly formation is a reiteration of an earlier text of the conciliar period which encouraged that

Clerics should be instilled with the duty of adoration and special devotion toward the body and blood of Christ really present under the eucharistic appearances. They should be counseled in such practices as [...] daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament.¹²⁴

Religious, mindful that the Eucharist as a sign of love and unity is the basis for their own coming together, are encouraged by Paul VI to meet publicly in the chapel "where the presence of the eucharist

121 In Ecclesiasticam futurorum sacerdotum, p. 880.

122 Ibid.

123 Ibid.

124 SCSU, Instruction, Doctrina et exemplo, On the Liturgical Formation of Future Priests, December 25, 1965, in Leges Ecclesiae, 3, n. 3378; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 39, p. 851.

at once signifies and causes the reality that must be the main responsibility of every religious family and of every Christian gathering."¹²⁵ In another text he reminds them of their particular calling "as persons bound in a special manner to the adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament."¹²⁶ In still another text Paul VI assures religious that "this adoration [...] has a beneficial effect on the entire community of the Church."¹²⁷ Finally, the Rituale Romanum, in its liturgical legislation on the eucharistic adoration of religious communities, reminds religious of the spiritual effects of this practice on themselves as a community, and on the larger Church community.

This will promote among the members of a religious house the spirit of unity and brotherhood which the eucharist signifies and effects, and the cult of the Sacrament may express a noble form of worship. [...] In accordance with the life of the institute, as approved by the Church, the worshippers adore Christ the Lord in the sacrament and pray to him in the name of the whole community and of the Church.¹²⁸

One author, in an attempt to encourage restoring visits to the Blessed Sacrament, points out that they are a special time of prayer to continue the work of salvation and the work of praise, to call

¹²⁵ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelica testificatio, On the Renewal of Religious Life, June 29, 1971, in AAS, 63 (1971), pp. 497-526; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 48, p. 1044. (Hereafter, Evangelica testificatio).

¹²⁶ Mysterium fidei, n. 71, p. 391.

¹²⁷ Saluberrimum sacramentum Eucharistiae, p. 691.

¹²⁸ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 90, p. 488.

us to personal prayer and to conversion, and a time to pray for the Church. He concludes with the exhortation:

Now is the time to reclaim this part of the Church's eucharistic treasure, and come back to the custom of frequent, even daily visits to the blessed sacrament. Perhaps less sentimentally than in the past, with a stronger balance between the total eucharistic theology and the scriptures, we can share our lives more fully with the Lord for the glory of God and the salvation of the human race.¹²⁹

(ii) Exposition

Exposition is intended to be an acknowledgement of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and serves as a special invitation to the faithful to enter into spiritual communion with him. The final direction of this devotion is sacramental communion and care must be taken not to obscure Christ's intention for instituting the Eucharist.¹³⁰

This eucharistic devotion may take place by exposition of the Eucharist in the ciborium or in a monstrance. For ciborium exposition, at least two candles are required and incense may be used, but for monstrance exposition, there are to be four to six candles and incense should be used.¹³¹ The reverence of genuflection during exposition is

¹²⁹ P. Byrne, "Visits Should Be Restored", in National Bulletin on Liturgy, 12 (1979), n. 69, p. 127.

¹³⁰ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 82, p. 486; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 60, p. 417.

¹³¹ Eucharisticum Worship Outside Mass, n. 85, pp. 486-487.

now the same as for the reserved Sacrament in the tabernacle, that is, on one knee.¹³² For a brief exposition, the ciborium or monstrance should be placed on the altar table, but for a more prolonged period, it may be placed on a throne in a prominent, but not too distant setting. The atmosphere is to be such that it is conducive to prayer. To assist in developing the intimacy of prayer, scriptural readings and a homily or brief inspirational words are permitted. It is proper to have hymns or sung responses after the readings, prayers, intervals of silence; the ceremony closes with benediction. At the discretion of the conference of bishops when the vernacular is used, another eucharistic hymn may be substituted for the Tantum ergo.¹³³

During exposition, the celebration of Mass is prohibited, unless such takes place in a separate chapel and at least some of the faithful remain in adoration.¹³⁴ It is forbidden to have exposition after Mass, or at any time, merely for the sake of giving benediction. A reasonable time span for scriptural readings, hymns and prayer should exist between the actual exposition and the benediction.¹³⁵ However, the correlation between the meaning of exposition with that of the Mass must be safeguarded and evident. This is promoted by the consecration

¹³² Ibid., n. 84, p. 486.

¹³³ Eucharisticum mysterium; n. 62, p. 418.

¹³⁴ Ibid., n. 61, p. 417; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 83, p. 486.

¹³⁵ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 66, p. 419; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 89, pp. 487-488.

of the exposition host at a Mass preceding solemn or prolonged exposition. Such a Mass ends with the Benedicamus Domino and no blessing.¹³⁶

If exposition continues for a day or several successive days, it is to be interrupted for the celebration of Mass. In places of a long-established contrary custom where an interruption would upset the faithful, "the local Ordinary should fix a sufficient, but not overly, long period for instructing them before the present norms take effect."¹³⁷ The liturgical text states that in places where there are not sufficient worshippers, the Blessed Sacrament can be reposed, but not more than twice a day.¹³⁸ However, an official explanation now allows for the Sacrament to be reposed twice besides the night reposition.

The purpose of the law is to avoid solemn exposition, with perhaps, some external display, but with only a few people present for adoration. The better course seems to be to plan the times for community adoration as far as possible at fixed hours at which to bring together a great number of adorers, rather than to spread out the numbers with small groups over the different hours of the day. Then it is permissible to put the Blessed Sacrament back in the tabernacle for the night and twice during the day.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 60, p. 417; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 82, p. 486.

¹³⁷ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 61, p. 417.

¹³⁸ Ibid., n. 65, p. 419; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 88, p. 487.

¹³⁹ Consilium, Documentorum explanatio, in NOT, 4 (1968), n. 113, p. 135; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 419.

In churches where the Eucharist generally is reserved, solemn exposition of the Eucharist over an extended period of time is recommended each year. Although this is not usually a continuous period, it does provide the faithful with a special opportunity for adoration and meditation. Such a devotion needs the consent of the local Ordinary upon assurance of reasonable attendance of the faithful.¹⁴⁰ Also, he may order prayer before the Blessed Sacrament exposed for an extended period in churches where the faithful come in larger numbers, where there arises a serious and general need.¹⁴¹

The ordinary minister of exposition is a priest or deacon, who before reposition blesses the people with the Sacrament.¹⁴² Although the text does not speak of the deacon acting in the absence of a priest, the official interpretation speaks of the role of a deacon as an assistant to the priest or as a substitute for him in his absence, and states that he, even though an ordinary minister of exposition, may not impart benediction, if a priest who is not impeded is present.¹⁴³ If a priest or deacon is not present or impeded by reasons of health, age or other pastoral duty, "an acolyte may be entrusted with publicly exposing the blessed sacrament for adoration by the faithful and

¹⁴⁰ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 65, p. 419; and, Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 86, p. 487.

¹⁴¹ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 64, p. 419; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 87, p. 487.

¹⁴² Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 91, pp. 488-489.

¹⁴³ SCSDW, Documentorum explanatio, in NOT, 12 (1976), pp. 46-47.

afterward replacing it, but not with the blessing of the people."¹⁴⁴ The liturgical texts relating to ministers of exposition indicate that this role pertains not only to the acolyte, but also to special ministers of the Eucharist. The original text extended this ministry also to those appointed by the local Ordinary from religious communities or pious associations devoted to Eucharistic adoration.¹⁴⁵ However, the Variationes changed this to persons deputed by the local Ordinary.¹⁴⁶

Prior to the above legislation around 1970, the faculty was granted to a number of religious communities of women for the superior, or another religious Sister, to open the tabernacle door in the absence of a proper minister of exposition to allow for community adoration of the Eucharist.¹⁴⁷ When the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship was asked if bishops could grant this faculty to Sisters, the reply was in the negative, stating that the power to grant the faculty belonged to the Sacred Congregation.¹⁴⁸ However, with the document on worship outside Mass (1973), this matter became obsolete.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁴ Paul VI, Motu Proprio, Ministeria quaedam, On First Tonsure Minor Orders and the Subdiaconate, Aug. 15, 1972, in AAS, 64 (1972), pp. 529-534; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. VI, p. 910.

¹⁴⁵ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 91, p. 488-489.

¹⁴⁶ Variationes, n. 91, p. 545.

¹⁴⁷ SCDW, Private, "Faculty, Tabernacle Door: Religious Women", Dec. 9, 1970, in CLD, vol. 7, pp. 830-831.

¹⁴⁸ SCDW, Documentorum explanatio, in NOT, vol. 6 (1970), n. 32, p. 104.

¹⁴⁹ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 91, pp. 488-489; Variationes, n. 91, p. 545.

As minister of exposition, the priest or deacon should vest in an alb and stole, or in a cassock, surplice and stole. The other ministers are to vest according to the dress of the region or that which is befitting and approved by the Ordinary. For benediction with the monstrance, the priest or deacon should wear a white cope and humeral veil and for benediction with the ciborium, just a humeral veil.¹⁵⁰ However, where there is interrupted exposition arranged for set hours, the priest or deacon vested in alb and stole or in cassock, surplice and stole, reposes the Blessed Sacrament after a brief period of adoration and a prayer with those present and exposes it again at the set time in a similar manner.¹⁵¹

(iii) Corpus Christi Processions

Eucharistic processions are one of the ways in which the faithful give witness to faith and their devotion to the sacrament of Christ's special presence.¹⁵² The early post-conciliar texts stated that it was the right and duty of the local Ordinary to decide on the advisability of such processions and the time, place and plan for them. He was to see that they were carried out with proper decorum and without

¹⁵⁰ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 92, p. 489.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., n. 88, p. 487; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 65, p. 419.

¹⁵² Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 59, p. 417; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 101, p. 493.

any loss of reverence for Jesus' presence in the Sacrament.¹⁵³

However, the Variationes restrict this prerogative and the accompanying responsibilities to the diocesan bishop himself.¹⁵⁴

The Corpus Christi procession because of its significance for a parish or a city is to continue to be conducted in accordance with the law. This assumes that the local conditions at the time are favorable, and that the procession will be a sign of faith and adoration. For pastoral reasons, additional processions may take place in the main sections of large cities. If for any reason the eucharistic procession cannot be held, it is fitting that a special eucharistic celebration be held in the cathedral or some other convenient place.¹⁵⁵ In regard to this last provision, the Congregation for Divine Worship recommends that:

This is to be carried out either by celebration of Mass or by adoration of the blessed Sacrament, accompanied by Scripture readings, singing, a homily and a period of meditation.¹⁵⁶

153 Ibid.; Inaestimabile donum, n. 22, p. 98.

154 Variationes, n. 101 and 102, p. 545.

155 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 102, p. 493.

156 SCDW, Reply, De processionibus eucharisticis, in NOT, 11 (1975), p. 64; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 698. (Hereafter, De processionibus eucharisticis).

The prescriptions for the carrying out of the procession are explicit in the Vatican II texts. The Host to be carried in the procession is consecrated in the Mass preceding the procession, although it is allowed to have a lengthy period of adoration between the Mass and the procession. The route of the procession and the decor surrounding it are to be arranged according to local custom. If custom and pastoral advantages so indicate, it is permitted to have stations along the route where eucharistic benediction is given. The prayers and hymns are to be expressions of faith and centred on the Lord. When the procession follows immediately upon the Mass, the priest who carries the Eucharist may wear either the Mass vestments or a white cope. But, if there is a period of adoration intervening, he is to wear the cope. Candle-bearers and incense accompany the priest and if local custom suggests it, a canopy or baldachino is carried over him. The procession may go to another church or return to the church from where it began; benediction is given and the holy Eucharist is reposed.¹⁵⁷ Processions inside the church are not processions in the full sense of the term nor is the solemn transfer of the Eucharist on Holy Thursday.¹⁵⁸

2. Commission for the Revision of the Code

Although the revision of canon law was called for by Pope John XXIII on January 25, 1959, in his announcement of the Second

¹⁵⁷ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, nn. 104-108, pp. 493-494.

¹⁵⁸ De processionibus eucharisticis, p. 698.

Vatican Council, ¹⁵⁹ he did not formally establish the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law until March 28, 1963. ¹⁶⁰ However, since after his death the members of the Commission postponed the task of revision until the close of the Council, it was not undertaken until shortly before the Council's close, when on November 20, 1965, Pope Paul VI officially inaugurated the work of the Commission. ¹⁶¹

In November 1971 questions pertaining to the legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist were first discussed by the Commission, ¹⁶² and the general thrust of its orientations was published in 1972. A published schema of the revised canons appeared in 1975 and a revised version in 1980; a Relatio discussing questions arising on the latter was published in 1981. A final schema of the revised Code was presented to Pope John Paul II in 1982, and in 1983 the revised Code of Canon Law was promulgated. It is our intention now to study these various drafts of the revised legislation.

¹⁵⁹ John XXIII, Solemnis allocutio, January 25, 1959, in AAS, 51 (1959), pp. 65-69.

¹⁶⁰ John XXIII, "Commissione per la Revisione del Codice di Diritto canonico", March 28, 1963, in AAS, 55 (1963), pp. 363-364.

¹⁶¹ Paul VI, Allocution, Ad E. mos Patres Cardinales et ad Consultores Pontifici Consilii Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, November 20, 1965, in AAS, 57 (1965), pp. 985-989.

¹⁶² Pontificia Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, Acta Commissionis, in Communicationes, 4 (1972), p. 31. (Hereafter, Communicationes).

A. The 1972 Proposal

The 1972 proposal was the first appearance of any suggested revised canonical legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist.¹⁶³ It appeared as the second of three chapters of legislation pertaining to the Blessed Eucharist. The chapter preceding it concerned the celebration of the Eucharist and the following one, the standards offered for the celebration of Mass. Interestingly, this initial proposal for the chapter headings was readily accepted and was to appear eventually as such in the revised Code. In the 1917 Code, the legislation for the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist did not appear with the rest of the canonical legislation on the Eucharist in the section on the sacraments, but in the section on divine worship. This realignment of the eucharistic legislation into the same section of the Code seems most fitting in view of the present-day emphasis on the unity of the Eucharist as both sacrament and sacrifice.

The proposed legislation determining the churches or oratories where the Blessed Sacrament should or may be reserved substantially remains the same as in the 1917 Code.¹⁶⁴ One significant change, however, does appear in the reference to reservation in churches attached to houses of religious. Whereas the law in effect restricted this to

¹⁶³ Ibid., pp. 51-59.

¹⁶⁴ CIC, 1917, c. 1265.

churches attached to houses of exempt religious¹⁶⁵ the proposed revision extended the prerogative to all religious houses.¹⁶⁶

In regard to the tabernacle, the former legislation requiring that it be placed on the principal altar¹⁶⁷ was replaced with a proposal which called for it to be situated on another altar or some other suitable and prominent location.¹⁶⁸ Also, the revised text on the tabernacle lamp shifted the emphasis from the fuel components¹⁶⁹ to the significance of the lamp as an indicator of the presence of Christ in the reserved Sacrament.¹⁷⁰

The proposed legislation for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, mindful of more recent liturgical directives¹⁷¹ included mention of the deacon as an ordinary minister of benediction and forbade the celebration of Mass in the same church or oratory in which the Blessed Sacrament was exposed.¹⁷² The role of the local Ordinary in

165 Ibid.

166 Communicationes, 4 (1972), p. 56.

167 CIC, 1917, c. 1268.

168 Communicationes, 4 (1972), p. 56.

169 CIC, 1917, c. 1271.

170 Communicationes, 4 (1972), p. 56.

171 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 2, p. 455, and n. 83, p. 486; Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 61, p. 417.

172 Communicationes, 4 (1972), p. 57.

relation to the convoking and conducting of eucharistic processions was emphasized along with the proposal that in cities of more than one parish there be only one procession.¹⁷³

B. The 1975 Schema

The proposed legislation consisted of ten canons.¹⁷⁴ The only canon from the 1917 Code not mentioned in this schema is canon 1273 whose basic thrust was the duty of those responsible for religious education to promote veneration of the Eucharist. It would appear that the Commission considered that the content of this canon would be most appropriately treated in those areas of the Code dealing with the responsibilities of teachers of religion, pastors, and parents.

Four of these canons have footnotes referring to the document Eucharisticum mysterium, which immediately points to the influence of this 1967 text on the Commission's discussions. The footnotes refer respectively to the prescriptions treating of the tabernacle, the tabernacle lamp, exposition, and eucharistic processions.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Pontificia Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, Schema documenti pontificii quo disciplina canonica de sacramentis recognoscitur (reservatum), Rome, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1975, pp. 40-42. (Hereafter, Schema 1975).

¹⁷⁵ Eucharisticum mysterium, nn. 52-66, pp. 415-419.

The prescription of the 1917 Code which called for a priest to celebrate Mass weekly in the sacred place¹⁷⁶ was modified in the proposal to state that where possible, a priest should celebrate Mass at least twice a month.¹⁷⁷ In the same canon it is stated that a bishop, even a titular one, may retain the Blessed Sacrament in his chapel.¹⁷⁸ This canon still required an apostolic indult for habitual reservation in other chapels, although this proposal was to be eliminated later on in the drafting process. The proposed legislation calling for these places of reservation to be open to the faithful for some hours each day included the addition of the words, "so they may pray before the Blessed Sacrament."¹⁷⁹ This indicated an awareness of the liturgical directions of the Vatican II period.¹⁸⁰

The importance of the solid construction of the tabernacle and the care of the key were clearly prescribed in the legislation as means of avoiding profanation.¹⁸¹ The proposed revision did not restrict the

176 CIC, 1917, c. 1265.

177 Schema 1975, c. 99, "Sanctissima Eucharistia, dummodo adsit qui eius curam habeat et pro posse sacerdos saltem bis in mense Missam in sacro loco celebret..."

178 Ibid.

179 Schema 1975, c. 100. A translation of: "ut coram Sanctissimo Sacramento orationi vacare valeant."

180 Eucharisticum mysterium, nn. 50-51, pp. 414-415; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 8, p. 457.

181 Schema 1975, c. 102.

responsibility of the key to priests alone as was the case in the 1917 Code,¹⁸² but applied it to the person who is in charge of the church or oratory.¹⁸³

In addition to the proposals of the 1972 draft for exposition and processions, two more factors are worthy of note. First, the acolyte is recognized as a minister of exposition and reposition in extraordinary instances. In this ministry he is to follow the prescription set by the local Ordinary and is not to administer benediction.¹⁸⁴ Secondly, in reference to the one procession in each city on the feast of Corpus Christi, the proposed legislation states that such is to be so "unless there is an immemorial custom to the contrary or local circumstances require otherwise."¹⁸⁵ This missi clause is exactly the same as that found in the 1917 Code.¹⁸⁶

C. Commission Meeting, 1978

The 1978 meeting of the Commission addressed the observations submitted by those who reviewed the 1975 Schema.¹⁸⁷ Some of the more important deliberations are summarized as follows.

182 CIC, 1917, c. 1269.

183 Schema 1975, c. 102.

184 Ibid., c. 107.

185 Ibid., c. 108.

186 CIC, 1917, c. 1291.

187 Communicationes, 13 (1981), pp. 425-430.

In the observations presented, a concern surfaced for a recognition of the purpose of the reservation of Eucharist. The members agreed that, although there might be a lessening in present-day devotion to the Eucharist, there was no need to include in the legislation anything regarding the purpose since such was already included in the liturgical directives.¹⁸⁸

In a discussion of the species of reserved Sacrament, the point was made that there was no prescription that reservation was to take place only for the consecrated Bread. Yet, for a grave reason the person responsible to reserve the Eucharist for the communion of the sick possesses the freedom to reserve the Sacrament under the species of the consecrated Wine for the purpose of Viaticum in particular cases.¹⁸⁹

In the study of the observations, the consultants discussed reservation in an oratory as well as in a church, since the oratories of some religious are often not open to the public. Also, in the discussion, some members expressed the opinion that the chapel with the reserved Sacrament was as central to the life of those in secular institutes as it was for religious.¹⁹⁰

188 Ibid., p. 425.

189 Ibid.

190 Ibid., p. 426.

The Commission suggested that a nisi clause be added to the prohibition against the Eucharist's being kept in a person's house or taken on a journey. This suggestion reads "unless for an urgent pastoral necessity and observing the prescriptions of the local Ordinary."¹⁹¹

After a consideration of the observations concerning the tabernacle, the Committee included in the legislation the following:

The tabernacle in which the Eucharist is regularly reserved should be immovable, made of solid and opaque material, and locked so that the danger of profanation may be entirely avoided.¹⁹²

Lastly, the consultants agreed that the canon which gave the directives for the minister of exposition, be brought into line with the liturgical directives of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship.¹⁹³ This would amend the proposed canon to read that in "special circumstances" the minister of exposition could be "an acolyte or other extraordinary minister of Holy Communion deputed by the local Ordinary."¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ Ibid. A translation of: "nisi necessitate pastorali urgente et servatis loci Ordinarii praescriptis."

¹⁹² Ibid. A translation of: "Tabernaculum in quo habitualiter Sanctissima Eucharistia asservatur sit inamovibile, materia solida non transparenti confectum ut ita clausum at quam maxime periculum profanationis vitetur." The English translation is taken from: CLSA, Working Translation, Revised Code of Canon Law, For Study Purposes Only, 1982, p. 198.

¹⁹³ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 91, pp. 488-489.

¹⁹⁴ Communicationes, 13 (1981), p. 429. A translation of: "in peculiaribus adiunctis," and "acolythus, minister extraordinarius sacrae communionis aliusve ab Ordinario loci deputatus."

D. The 1980 Schema

The canons in the 1980 Schema are an application of the Commission's 1978 suggestions. There is, however, the elimination of the nisi clause which permitted eucharistic reservation in some chapels only with an apostolic indult,¹⁹⁵ and the placement of this responsibility in the hands of the local Ordinary.¹⁹⁶ In regard to the prescription that places of reservation be open for visits to the Blessed Sacrament, the Commission had requested the addition of a nisi clause which would allow for exceptions to this norm for a serious reason. In the 1980 Schema, the clause "unless a grave reason prevents it,"¹⁹⁷ appears as the opening phrase of the canon. As such it seems to indicate that it is not just an appendage to the legislation, but a condition which needs to be looked at seriously before the place of reservation is freely opened to the public.

The proposed prescription on the tabernacle lamp reflects the recommendations of the Commission's study. The lamp is said now to be not only a sign of Christ's presence in the tabernacle but is also a means of paying homage to this presence.¹⁹⁸ A point of some

¹⁹⁵ Schema 1975, c. 99.

¹⁹⁶ Pontificia Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, Schema Codex iuris canonici (Patribus Commissionis reservatum), Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1980, c. 886, p. 208. (Hereafter, Schema 1980).

¹⁹⁷ Schema 1980, c. 888. A translation of: "Nisi gravis obstat ratio."

¹⁹⁸ Schema 1980, c. 891.

significance; the schema speaks of this as a light with no specifications as to the means of lighting. This opens the way to the use of other forms of lighting besides lamps fed by beeswax, or olive oil, and brings to a close the ongoing discussion in recent years regarding the practicality of an electric lamp for this purpose. The Schema, if accepted, definitely would place its stamp of approval on this common method of lighting.

The Schema presents the Commission's suggested revisions for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. These bring the legislation up to date in areas pertaining to the minister of exposition. The needed extension in this area will have practical implications particularly in houses of non-clerical religious. It also makes clear that this eucharistic devotion is still quite valid among the contemporary celebrations of the Church. Supporting this is the exhortation, "it is recommended"¹⁹⁹ that annual solemn exposition take place.

E. The Relatio, 1981

The Relatio²⁰⁰ reproduces observations received by the Commission in 1981 after the publication of the 1980 Schema. There were

¹⁹⁹ Schema, 1980, c. 892. A translation of: "commendatur."

²⁰⁰ Pontifica Commissio Codicis Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, Relatio complectens synthesim animadversionum ab Em. mis atque Exc. mis Patribus Commissionis ad novissimum schema Codicis iuris canonici exhibitarum, cum responsionibus a Secretaria et consultoribus datis (Patribus Commissionis stricte reservata), Città del Vaticano, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1981, 358 p. (Hereafter, Relatio).

only five interventions on the canons on reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. One raised the concern of possible random reservation of the Eucharist with permission of the local Ordinary and suggested a change in the proposed legislation. The response was, "This change is neither necessary nor useful. The Ordinary himself will consider the reasons."²⁰¹

A second concerned the location of the tabernacle and held that because more and more emphasis is being placed on the Eucharist as the centre of our entire worship and as the summit and source of Christian life, that the tabernacle of reservation should be so placed in any church or oratory that it might be immediately visible to all.²⁰² The response was short, "This is already provided for in the words 'distinctive' and 'prominent'.²⁰³

The third intervention centred on the norm regarding the reservation of a number of hosts for the needs of the faithful. Cardinal J. Willebrands maintained that the content of this canon was in open contradiction to the exhortation in Sacrosanctum Concilium: "that more complete form of participation in the Mass by which the faithful, after the priest's communion, receive the Lord's body from the same sacrifice is strongly endorsed."²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 219. A translation of: "Mutatio non necessaria nec utilis videtur: Ordinarius ipse rationes considerabit."

²⁰² Ibid., pp. 219-220.

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 220. A translation of: "Iam provisum est verbis 'insigni, conspicua'."

²⁰⁴ Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 55, p. 15.

To support his stand he referred to some of the post-conciliar documents: Eucharisticum mysterium,²⁰⁵ General Instruction of the Roman Missal,²⁰⁶ and Eucharistiae sacramentum.²⁰⁷ The response began: "There is no contradiction because SC 55 and the other documents in no way exclude, nor ever could exclude, the right of the faithful to receive Communion outside Mass."²⁰⁸

The fourth intervention called for the suppression of the norm prohibiting exposition during the celebration of Mass because such was contained in the liturgical legislation. The Commission thought it better that this norm remain.²⁰⁹ And the final intervention proposed that the requisite judgment for eucharistic processions be that of the diocesan bishop and not the local Ordinary. This was accepted.²¹⁰

205 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 31, p. 408.

206 General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 13, p. 469, and n. 56h, p. 484.

207 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 13, p. 459.

208 Relatio, p. 220. A translation of: "Nulla datur contradictio, quia SC 55 aliæque documenta nullo modo excludent, nec unquam excludere possunt, ius fidelium sese extra Missam communicandi."

209 Ibid., p. 220.

210 Ibid.

F. The 1982 Schema

The 1982 Schema²¹¹ presented to Pope John Paul II for his personal study and correction, contained basically the same eight canons on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist as the 1980 one with the minor proposals of the Relatio implemented.

One additional change is found in the first paragraph of the opening canon concerning the conditions for reservation and its place: The condition that Mass be celebrated at least twice a month was now qualified by the words: "in so far as possible,"²¹² Regarding the place of reservation in a church or oratory attached to a house of a religious institute, there were added the words: "or societies of apostolic life."²¹³ The purpose here is to make it clear that the prerogative and obligation belonged to these societies as well as to religious institutes.

²¹¹ Pontificia Commissio Codicis Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, Codex iuris canonici: schema novissimum iuxta placita Patrum Commissionis emendatum atque Summo Pontifici praesentatum. Città del Vaticano, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1982, 308 p. (Hereafter, Schema 1982).

²¹² Ibid., c. 932. A translation of: "quantum fieri potest."

²¹³ Ibid. A translation of: "aut societatis vitae apostolicae."

G. The Code of Canon Law, 1983

The official revised Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1983 contained the same legislation for eucharistic reservation and veneration as the 1982 Schema. However, for emphasis and clarification, two of the canons were divided: one concerning the conditions for reservation and the place of reservation, and the other concerning exposition. The division of the first of these situates the places of reservation and the conditions for it in one canon, and in another, the prohibition against retaining it on one's person or carrying it on trips.²¹⁴ The division of the canon on exposition into three sections allows for the norm for exposition and the prohibition against the celebration of Mass during such, to be in separate paragraphs of the same canon; the legislation for solemn annual exposition and the minister of exposition is now contained in two separate canons.²¹⁵ This division, while resulting in a clearer presentation, indicates the legislator's intent to place more emphasis in the Code on this eucharistic celebration and thus suggests the prominence in which this devotion is to be held.

214 CIC, 1983, cc. 934 and 935.

215 Ibid., cc. 941-943.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion to this chapter focusing on the reservation and veneration of Eucharist during the conciliar and post-conciliar period, the gradation in the liturgical and canonical process from Sacrosanctum Concilium to the Variationes brought about by the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law in 1983 is remarkable. However, it is only in viewing the writings of this twenty year period as a unit that one is able to resolve the frustration arising from a liturgical directive which was later to be proven as having been in a developmental stage. Still, this developing liturgical thought influenced the discussions of the members of the Commission for the Revision of the Code.

Having viewed the relevant texts of the conciliar and post-conciliar period, we will now proceed to study their impact on the formation of the canonical norms themselves as found in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

CHAPTER IV
THE CODE OF CANON LAW, 1983

The final chapter of our study will focus on the eleven canons in the 1983 Code on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist.

The 1972 proposal to situate these canons in the section of the Code treating of eucharistic legislation,¹ establishes the direction whereby the norms will express in a concrete way the developments in theology, liturgy and canon law. The perspective in which these canons will be studied is three-fold: a comparison with the 1917 Code, the implementation of the Vatican II directives, and, the application of the new legislation. Our presentation will be divided into two sections: the first will treat of the reservation of the Eucharist and the second of its veneration.

1. The Reservation of the Eucharist

A numerical division of the relevant canons would place the first six canons, cc., 934 to 939, in this section. However, in our consideration we will treat only of five of these, since canon 937, prescribing the accessibility to churches for the faithful to visit the Blessed Sacrament, will be studied in the section on veneration.

¹ Pontificia Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Recognoscendo, Acta Commissionis, in Communicationes, 4 (1972), pp. 51-59. (Hereafter, Communicationes).

A. Sacred Places of Reservation (c. 934)

The initial canon states quite precisely the places where the Blessed Sacrament must be reserved, those where it may be retained, and the conditions requisite for reservation. The first paragraph lists the places as follows:

The Blessed Eucharist:

- 1° must be reserved in the cathedral church or its equivalent, in every parish church, and in the church or oratory attached to the house of a religious institute or society of apostolic life;
- 2° may be reserved in a Bishop's chapel and, by permission of the local Ordinary, in other churches, oratories and chapels.²

The listing of the places of obligatory reservation remains, in essence, the same as in the 1917 legislation.³ The Blessed Sacrament is to be reserved in cathedral churches or churches equivalent to them. This includes the principal churches of a territorial prelate or abbat, a vicariate or prefecture apostolic, or an apostolic administration.⁴ It is to be reserved in every parish church, which includes the church of a quasi-parish since "unless the law provides otherwise, a quasi-parish is equivalent to a parish."⁵ And lastly, the

2 CIC, 1983, c. 934, par. 1.

3 CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 1.

4 CIC, 1983, cc. 370-372.

5 Ibid., c. 516, par. 1.

Blessed Sacrament must be reserved in the church or oratory attached to the house of a religious institute or society of apostolic life. This latter stipulation for obligatory reservation is expanded from the 1917 Code which had required only that the Blessed Sacrament be reserved in churches attached to houses of exempt religious.⁶ This requirement is repeated in canon 608 in the section treating of religious houses and will be further developed in our consideration of canon 936.

The Blessed Sacrament may be reserved in the chapels of bishops and in other churches,⁷ oratories,⁸ and chapels,⁹ with the permission of the local Ordinary.¹⁰ The reference to a bishop's chapel is to that of any bishop whether he be diocesan or titular, active or retired. Among the other churches or chapels the subsidiary or mission churches in a parish would be included. Although these churches are not considered canonically as parish churches, each of them generally serves as the place of divine worship for a group of the faithful, usually from a specific geographical area.

The revised law makes a local Ordinary responsible for granting permission to reserve the Eucharist in a place not designated

6 CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 1, n. 1.

7 CIC, 1983, c. 1214.

8 Ibid., c. 1223.

9 Ibid., c. 1226.

10 Ibid., c. 134, pars. 1 and 2.

by the law. Since he is familiar with the circumstances surrounding such requests, he is able to grant or withhold permission prudently. From a practical point of view, this offers a rather simplified procedure which at the same time indicates good pastoral concern. It results in a significant change from the 1917 legislation which required an apostolic indult for reservation in those places not listed specifically in the canon.¹¹

The final paragraph of this canon stipulates the two conditions for the reservation of the Eucharist in these sacred places:

In sacred places where the blessed Eucharist is reserved there must always be someone who is responsible for it, and as far as possible a priest is to celebrate Mass there at least twice a month.¹²

The first condition remains the same as in the 1917 Code.¹³ Someone has to be responsible for the safe-keeping of the Blessed Sacrament. "This person need not have any ecclesiastical office or be a cleric since the chief purpose of the law is to prevent the desecration of the Blessed Sacrament."¹⁴ One Spanish edition of the Code, in a footnote

11 CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 1, n. 2, and par. 2.

12 CIC, 1983, c. 934, par. 2.

13 CIC, 1917, c. 1265.

14 J. Coriden, et al., The Code of Canon Law, A Text and Commentary, New York, Paulist Press, 1985, p. 663. (Hereafter, Commentary).

commentary on the condition, includes in this responsibility those aspects which honour this presence such as cleanliness, ornateness, and the presence of the tabernacle light.¹⁵ This reflects a similar opinion of a commentator on this same condition as it appeared in the 1917 Code.¹⁶

The second condition, that Mass be celebrated in the place of reservation twice a month as far as possible, allows for more flexibility in practice than did the 1917 Code which required weekly Mass.¹⁷ It provides some assurance that the reserved species will be renewed frequently, the reason which seemed to have been the main purpose for this condition in the 1917 Code.¹⁸ However, in the light of the Vatican II teachings on the Eucharist "even more importantly, it reinforces the primacy of the Eucharistic action and its intimate connection to the Sacrament reserved."¹⁹

15 Código de derecho canonico, Edición Anotada a cargo de Pedro Lombardia y Juan Ignacio Arrieta, Pamplona, Ediciones Universidad de Navarra, 1983, p. 569. (Hereafter, Spanish Code 1).

16 S. Woywod, "The Law of the Code, Custody and Cult of the Blessed Sacrament", in HPR, 27 (1927), p. 36.

17 CIC, 1917; c. 1265.

18 C. Bachofen, "Reservation and the Worship of the Blessed Sacrament", in A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law, by P. Chas. Augustine, St. Louis, Herder, 1925-1936, vol. 6, p. 216. (Hereafter, C. Augustine).

19 Commentary, p. 663.

The wording of the present law permits a broader interpretation than the prior law would have, in that it allows explicitly for the consideration of reasonable causes in the application of the requisite condition for Mass twice a month. For its practical application, this legislation relies on the directives of the diocesan bishop and the pastoral prudence of the priest responsible for the celebration of the Mass.

When the local Ordinary has permitted the reservation of the Eucharist in a private chapel where Mass is celebrated occasionally, the reserved Sacrament should be replaced with freshly consecrated Species from time to time.²⁰ If it is not possible to celebrate Mass because of a shortage of priests, the Hosts should be consumed and new ones brought in, using an extraordinary minister.

B. Personal Retention of the Eucharist (c. 935)

It is not lawful for anyone to keep the blessed Eucharist in personal custody or to carry it around, unless there is an urgent pastoral need and the prescriptions of the diocesan Bishop are observed.²¹

Canon 935, with the exception of the nisi clause, restates the legislation of the 1917 Code.²² In the early Church some

²⁰ E. Regatillo, "De Custodia et Cultu S. Eucharistiae", in Jus Sacramentarium, ed. 4A, Santander, Sal Terrae, 1964, Part 2, p. 225.

²¹ CIC, 1983, c. 935.

²² CIC, 1917, c. 1265, par. 3.

Christians kept the Eucharist in their homes or carried it on journeys. "Reservation of the eucharist on one's person or in the home was a kind of insurance that viaticum would be available whenever it was needed."²³ One writer, in looking at the early Church in comparison to the present-day one states:

Today such a practice is both unnecessary and undesirable due to modern means of transportation, the accessibility of churches, and the primacy of receiving Communion during the Eucharistic celebration, even as Viaticum.²⁴

However, the Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law recognized the possibility that on occasion the pastoral needs of a certain time or place would call for personal retention of the Eucharist. With this in mind the nisi clause was formulated with the insistence that such reservation of the Blessed Sacrament be supervised by specific directives of the diocesan bishop.²⁵ In commenting on this clause, one of the Spanish editions of the Code states that besides the extraordinary occasions such as floods, fires or danger of profanation there are also ordinary ones that spring from the need to take Communion to the faithful who otherwise would be deprived of it.²⁶

²³ N. Mitchell, Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass, New York, Pueblo, 1982, pp. 277-278.

²⁴ Commentary, p. 664.

²⁵ Communicationes, 13 (1981), p. 426.

²⁶ Codigo de derecho canonico, Edicion bilingua comentada por los profesores de la Facultad de derecho canonico de la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 4a Ed., Madrid, Editorial catholica, 1984, p. 464. (Hereafter Spanish Code 2).

We could at this time refer to the penalty of a latae sententiae excommunication reserved to the Apostolic See incurred by "one who throws away the consecrated species or, for a sacrilegious purpose takes them away or keeps them."²⁷ If the violator is a cleric he may be further punished, even to the extent of dismissal from the clerical state.²⁸ This penalty is most grave. But the crime is also most grave for the profanation of the Sacrament of the Eucharist is the profanation of Christ himself, and thus the most serious of crimes.²⁹ This penalty is the same as that prescribed by the 1917 Code,³⁰ prior to which there was no excommunication for this delict.³¹ A slight difference in the penalty in regard to clerics is that in the earlier Code they were to be deposed, whereas under the present law they may be further punished, including even dismissal from the clerical state.

C. Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life (c. 936)

Canon 934, states that the Blessed Sacrament "must be reserved [...] in the church or oratory attached to the house of a religious institute or society of apostolic life"³² and canon 936

²⁷ CIC, 1983, c. 1367.

²⁸ Ibid., c. 1336.

²⁹ M. Coronata, Compendium iuris canonici ad usum scholarum, Taurini, Marietti, 1937-38, vol. 2, p. 440.

³⁰ CIC, 1917, c. 2320.

³¹ S. Woywod, A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, New York, Wagner, 1957, vol. 2, pp. 518-519. (Hereafter, S. Woywod, Commentary).

³² CIC, 1983, c. 934, par. 1, n. 1.

stipulates that the Sacrament is to be reserved only in this one designated place. The intent of the norm is to avoid the multiplicity of reservations of the Eucharist in the one house. However, the canon does provide that the Ordinary, for a just reason, may allow the Eucharist to be reserved in another oratory of the same house.

The specified church or oratory of reservation is the one used, as a rule, by the religious community and by the other members of the faithful who participate in worship there. But, if the church or oratory used by the members of the house is different from that used by the others, then the Eucharist may be reserved in each of these sacred places.³³ Also, separate oratories of reservation may exist for each religious house dwelling in the same physical building.³⁴ Otherwise, reservation of the Sacrament in a second oratory requires the permission of the Ordinary to be given for a just cause. It would seem that any good pastoral reason should suffice for the latter.

We could recall that the major superior of a clerical institute of pontifical right has the faculty to establish an oratory or oratories in those specific houses which fall under his

³³ Commentary, p. 664.

³⁴ H. Ayrinhac, Administrative Legislation in the New Code of Canon Law, New York, Longmans, 1930, p. 134; Pontifical Commission for the Authentic Interpretation of the Code of Canon Law, Interpretation, in AAS, 10 (1918) p. 346; Eng. tr. in CLD vol. 1, p. 53.

jurisdiction. In other institutes, the local Ordinary has also the right to see that the place is appropriate.³⁵

Canon 608 which specifies that a religious community is to live in a lawfully constituted house also includes the prescription that "Each house is to have at least an oratory in which the Eucharist is celebrated and reserved, so that it may truly be the centre of the community."³⁶ This leaves no question as to the mind of the legislator on the importance of the Eucharist to the very essence of community living. "The provision for at least an oratory in every house focuses on the centrality of Christ for the life of the community and its worship. Eucharistic presence is the norm."³⁷

Canonical emphasis on the Eucharist as central to community life is not reserved to religious communities alone. The Eucharist is understood to be at the heart of a parish community where "the parish priest is to take care that the blessed Eucharist is the centre of the parish assembly of the faithful."³⁸ And, when treating of the

35 M. O'Reilly, Norms of Consecrated Life, Private Notes, Course DCA 2203b, Faculty of Canon Law, Saint Paul University, Ottawa, 1983-84, p. 186.

36 CIC, 1983, c. 608.

37 Commentary, p. 471.

38 CIC, 1983, c. 528, par. 2.

formation of clerics, the Code prescribes that "the celebration of the Eucharist is to be the centre of the whole life of the seminary."³⁹

During the Commission's deliberations on the formation of what is the present canon 608, the question was discussed whether the oratory should be obligatory or not. It was suggested that the statement for the inclusion of an oratory in a lawfully erected house should be qualified so as to allow for its exclusion under certain circumstances. However, the consultors were not in favour of such a clause which, in their opinion, would only have negated the basis for the prescription in the first place.⁴⁰

Since the number of small communities is increasing, there is need for special concern in setting up an oratory for Eucharistic reservation. The technicalities as to whether or not a small community is constituted as a house, are left to the constitutions of the particular institute or society involved.⁴¹ Our concern relates more to the actual presence of the reserved Eucharist in the residence of such a community. Basic to any decision to have or not to have an oratory of reservation should be the fact that "reservation of the Blessed Sacrament is a normal factor in a community so as to enhance

39 Ibid., c. 246, par. 1.

40 Communicationes, 13, (1981), pp. 135-136.

41 M. O'Reilly, op. cit., p. 184.

a life of personal and community prayer.⁴² It would seem then that permission to reserve the Eucharist in one of these communities should not be denied unless some grave reason is present.⁴³ Nevertheless, certain factors are suggested for consideration prior to an affirmative or a negative decision regarding the establishment of such an oratory. These are: a proper physical surrounding indicative of respect and security, the relative proximity of the residence to a parish church or other place of worship, the presence of members of the community in the residence during the day, and, the possible future use of such a place for other groups.⁴⁴

When permission is granted, the basic conditions for reservation -- someone to care for the Eucharist and the celebration of Mass twice a month as far as possible -- are to be observed. However, the application of the second condition is to be broadly interpreted, "especially in the case of lay religious in areas where there are few clergy or where this would impose an undue burden."⁴⁵

⁴² SCRSI, Private, "Small Communities", 1976; Eng. tr. in CLD vol. 8, p. 327. (Hereafter, Small Communities).

⁴³ Commentary, p. 472.

⁴⁴ Small Communities, pp. 327-328.

⁴⁵ Commentary, p. 472.

Canon 733 provides the same right for societies of apostolic life for reservation of the Eucharist as it does for religious institutes. A house is established by the competent superior with the prior written consent of the diocesan bishop; such consent to erect a house entails the right of having at least an oratory in which the Most Holy Eucharist is celebrated and reserved.⁴⁶ In formulating this particular canon, the Commission, sensitive to the presence of societies of apostolic life comprised only of women or other groupings of non-clerics, and aware that the centrality of the Eucharist to their lives was as important as to religious, was determined to ensure their right to an oratory.⁴⁷

Since members of Secular Institutes usually live alone, no such permission is found for them. Where a house exists, permission could readily be granted by the Ordinary.

It is apparent that these canons concretize the Vatican II concern for the place of the Eucharist in the renewal of religious life as expressed in Evangelica testificatio.⁴⁸ The Eucharist celebrated and reserved in these houses is the source and centre of unity for those persons so specially united together.

46 CIC, 1983, c. 733, par. 2.

47 Communicationes, 13 (1981), p. 391.

48 Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortatio, Evangelica testificatio, On the Renewal of Religious Life, June 29, 1971, in AAS, 63 (1971), pp. 497-526; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 7, n. 48, p. 445.

The Eucharistic action is the preeminent source and sign of ecclesial unity as well as the origin of the sacrament reserved. Therefore the reservation of 'the one bread and the one cup' in a single place better preserves the sign of unity and better recognizes the close association between Eucharistic celebration and reservation.⁴⁹

D. Tabernacle (c. 938)

The tabernacle legislation, brought together in one canon, is of special importance in our study of the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. Canon 938 in its entirety reads:

1. The Blessed Eucharist is to be reserved habitually in only one tabernacle of a church or oratory.
2. The tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is reserved should be sited in a distinguished place in the church or oratory, a place which is conspicuous, suitably adorned and conducive to prayer.
3. The tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is habitually reserved is to be immovable, made of solid and non-transparent material, and so locked as to give the greatest security against any danger of profanation.
4. For a grave reason, especially at night, it is permitted to reserve the blessed Eucharist in some other safer place, provided it is fitting.
5. The person in charge of a church or oratory is to see to it that the key of the tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is reserved, is in maximum safe keeping.⁵⁰

In our earlier discussion of the post-conciliar texts and the deliberations of the Commission for the revision of the Code, it became evident that each of the five parts of this canon was the result of

⁴⁹ Commentary, p. 664.

⁵⁰ CIC, 1983, c. 938.

significant consideration by liturgists and canonists. The theological basis for the one tabernacle separate from the altar of celebration, the setting depicting proper honour and prompting reverential worship, as well as the constant concern to eliminate any possibility of profanation to the Sacrament, have been articulated well in the canon. Following a general introductory consideration of the canon, each of the five paragraphs will be treated as a unit to emphasize the importance of the legislation.

In content this canon brings together the legislation of canons 1268 and 1269 of the 1917 Code⁵¹ in a much more precise yet complete manner. One obvious change in the legislation is the deletion of references to the altar of reservation and the new references to the tabernacle in which the Most Holy Eucharist is reserved. Under the former Code, the Blessed Sacrament was to be reserved in the most prominent place in the Church, which was usually the main altar where Mass was celebrated.⁵² In the new Code, the prominence of the location of the tabernacle of reservation is still stressed, but due to the renewed understanding of the principal modes of Christ's presence in the Church in the celebration of the Eucharist,⁵³ the liturgical

51 CIC, 1917, cc. 1268-1269. For comments on this see: S. Woywod, Commentary, vol. 2, pp. 72-76.

52 Ibid., c. 1268.

53 SCR, Eucharisticum mysterium, On the Worship of the Eucharist, May 25, 1967, in AAS, 59 (1967), pp. 539-573; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 9, pp. 400-401, and n. 55, p. 416. (Hereafter, Eucharisticum mysterium).

prescriptions call for the tabernacle in which the Sacrament is reserved to be distinct from the altar of the celebration of the Eucharist.⁵⁴

Reference to an altar in relation to the tabernacle may still be found in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal⁵⁵ and the Rituale Romanum.⁵⁶ But, all in all, it would seem from the mind of the legislator that the tabernacle should not be placed on an altar where the Eucharist is celebrated. The contemporary practice, in churches where the tabernacle is separate from the altar of celebration, is to place the tabernacle on a table structure which is frequently referred to as the altar of reservation. No doubt this arrangement is part of an attempt to make the tabernacle conspicuous, prominent, and in a setting conducive to prayer. But the table surface also serves for a number of practical purposes. Here the ciboria may be set before and after distributing Communion, the monstrance placed on it during exposition, as well as the candles prescribed for the services, and the flowers used for decoration.

⁵⁴ Ibid., n. 55, p. 416.

⁵⁵ SCDW, Instruction, "General Instruction of the Roman Missal", in The Roman Missal, revised by the decree of the Second Vatican Council and published by the authority of Pope Paul VI, 4th ed. March 27, 1975; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 276, p. 521. (Hereafter, General Instruction of the Roman Missal).

⁵⁶ Rituale Romanum, "Dedication of a Church and Altar", in The Rites of the Catholic Church, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope Paul VI; Eng. tr. by ICEL, New York, Pueblo, 1980, vol. 2, pp. 183-293. (Hereafter, Dedication of a Church and Altar).

Technically, this table is not an altar of sacrifice as is the altar of celebration. However, in many Christian churches which do not have the Mass, the table used for the Communion service is called an altar. And on the other hand, the Church itself refers to the altar of celebration of the Eucharist as a table. "The altar is a table for a sacrifice and for a banquet."⁵⁷ At this altar, the sacred Elements are confectioned and from it the faithful are fed with the Body and Blood of Christ. From the altar or table of reservation the faithful, outside Mass, are nourished with this same food either sacramentally through reception of Communion or spiritually through a union brought about by prayerful adoration. The ultimate action in each place is the Eucharistic nourishment of the faithful. It would seem that the union between the celebration of the Eucharist and the reserved Sacrament, so stressed in the conciliar and post-conciliar texts,⁵⁸ is somehow enhanced by the references to the altar of reservation in its relationship to the altar of celebration.

(1) One Tabernacle

The law calls for "the blessed Eucharist to be reserved habitually in only one tabernacle of a church or oratory."⁵⁹ Focusing

⁵⁷ Ibid., ch. 4, n. 3, p. 251.

⁵⁸ Eucharisticum mysterium, p. 397, n. 3e; Rituale Romanum, "Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass", in The Rites of the Catholic Church, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope Paul IV; Eng. tr. by ICEL, New York, Pueblo, 1976, vol. 1, n. 2, p. 455. (Hereafter, Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass).

⁵⁹ CIC, 1983, c. 938, par. 1.

on the one place of reservation, is a sign of the ecclesial unity of the members of the faithful, their communion with Christ and with one another.⁶⁰ It is also a sign of the unity which exists between the reserved Eucharist and the Eucharistic celebration.⁶¹ In essence this same legislation is found in the 1917 Code which stated that "the Blessed Sacrament cannot be kept continually or habitually on more than one altar of a church."⁶²

The liturgical law provides for the Blessed Sacrament to be reserved in another tabernacle during the Easter Triduum.⁶³ There is not a duplicate reservation of the Eucharist in this instance, but merely a transference to another tabernacle in order to accommodate a specific Holy Week liturgical ceremony. In practice, this same second tabernacle could be used for occasions when transference would seem pastorally fitting, as during prolonged exposition at the altar or chapel of reservation. As a precaution against possible interruption of the exposition liturgy, the Sacrament could be transferred for availability for Communion outside Mass, particularly for the sick and dying. Another practical occasion for such transference could be during the cleaning or refurbishing of the tabernacle or place of reservation.

60 Dedication of a Church and Altar, ch. 4, n. 3, p. 251.

61 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 3e, pp. 397-398.

62 CIC, 1917, c. 1268, par. 1. A translation of: "Sanctissima Eucharistia continuo seu habitualiter custodiri nequit, nisi in uno tantum eiusdem ecclesiae altari."

63 Commentary, p. 665.

(11) The Tabernacle Setting

The canon states that "the tabernacle [...] should be sited in a distinguished place [...] conspicuous, suitably adorned and conducive to prayer."⁶⁴ In content and wording this is basically the same as the revised text in the Rituale Romanum.⁶⁵

The liturgical norms of both the Rituale Romanum and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal recommend that there be a chapel of reservation separate from the main body of the church. Respectively these read:

The place of reservation of the eucharist should be truly preeminent. It is highly recommended that the place be suitable also for private adoration and prayer so that the faithful may easily, fruitfully, and constantly honor the Lord, present in the Sacrament, through personal worship. This will be achieved more easily if the chapel is separate from the body of the church, especially in churches where marriages and funerals are celebrated frequently and churches which are much visited by pilgrims or because of their artistic and historical treasures.⁶⁶

And,

Every encouragement should be given to the practice of eucharistic reservation in a chapel

⁶⁴ CIC, 1983, c. 938, par. 2.

⁶⁵ SCSDW, Variationes in novas editiones librorum liturgicorum ad normam Codicis iuris canonici nuper promulgati introducendae, in NOT, 19 (1983), n. 10, p. 543. (Hereafter, Variationes).

⁶⁶ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 9, p. 457.

suitable to the faithful's private adoration and prayer. If this is impossible because of the structure of the church, the sacrament should be reserved at an altar or elsewhere in keeping with local custom, and in a part of the church that is worthy and properly adorned.⁶⁷

Further, Eucharisticum mysterium recommended "that as far as possible the tabernacle be placed in a chapel set apart from the main body of the church."⁶⁸ The American bishops in their liturgical prescriptions openly support this norm, saying, "most appropriately, this reservation should be designated in a space designed for individual devotion."⁶⁹ They explain that this separate area ensures that "no confusion can take place between the celebration of the eucharist and reservation."⁷⁰ Pastorally, they assure the faithful that this removal of the Blessed Sacrament from the altar of celebration in no way distracts from devotion to the reserved Eucharist; rather, it occasions an opportunity to enhance it.

Having the eucharist reserved in a place apart does not mean it has been relegated to a secondary place of no importance. Rather, a space carefully designed and appointed can give proper attention to the reserved sacrament.⁷¹

67 General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 276, p. 521.

68 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 53, p. 416.

69 NCCB, Committee on the Liturgy, Environment and Art in Catholic Worship, 1978, Washington, United States Catholic Conference Press, n. 78, p. 40. (Hereafter, Environment and Art).

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.

Also, the Irish bishops treated to some extent of the location of the tabernacle in a eucharistic chapel:

A eucharistic chapel may more easily provide a place of quiet, calm withdrawal. It possesses a scale and intimacy and can create a contemplative atmosphere conducive to private prayer and spiritual communion.⁷²

The bishops called upon those responsible for the placement of the tabernacle in different churches to appreciate that "each instance must be studied with discernment and care."⁷³ To achieve a dignified and prayerful atmosphere

will require sincere effort on the part of architects and artists in cooperation with priests to find creative ways of expressing eucharistic truth through signs and fostering eucharistic adoration through a sensitive treatment of space and atmosphere.⁷⁴

The Constitution on the Liturgy, in its discussion on sacred art and furnishings, called for ecclesiastical statutes pertaining to "the worthy and well-planned construction of places of worship, [...] the nobility, placement, and security of the Eucharistic tabernacle."⁷⁵

⁷² Irish Episcopal Conference, "Tabernacle", in CLD, vol. 7, p. 828.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 827.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Vatican Council II, Constitution, Sacrosanctum Concilium, "Constitution on the Liturgy," December 4, 1963, in AAS, 56 (1964), pp. 97-138; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 128, p. 26. (Hereafter, Sacrosanctum Concilium).

Later, the third instruction for the implementation of these liturgical instructions, Liturgicae instaurationes, suggested that the diocesan commission on the liturgy could ensure that the elegance and dignity of church furnishings are such as to promote the aims of the renewed liturgical norms.⁷⁶ On the practical level, guidelines from this diocesan commission would be an asset to pastors and other members of the faithful responsible for establishing the proper physical setting for the tabernacle of reservation.

Eucharisticum mysterium which had recommended a eucharistic chapel,⁷⁷ also stressed the responsibility of pastors to see that the place of reservation promotes attitudes of reverence and solace to the faithful.⁷⁸ A similar exhortation had appeared earlier in Presbyterorum ordinis,

The church, the house of prayer, must be well cared for and suited to prayer and liturgy. There the eucharist is celebrated and reserved and the faithful gather for worship. There the presence of the Son of God, our Savior offered on the altar of sacrifice for us, is treasured as the aid and solace of the faithful. There priests and people are called together to respond gratefully to the gift of Christ, who through his humanity never ceases to pour forth the divine life upon the members of his Body. Priests should carefully devote themselves to the science and art of

⁷⁶ SCDW, Instruction, Liturgicae instaurationes, On the Orderly Carrying Out of the Constitution on the Liturgy, September 5, 1970, in AAS, 62 (1970), pp. 692-704; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 10, pp. 165-166. (Hereafter, Liturgicae instaurationes).

⁷⁷ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 53, pp. 417-418

⁷⁸ Ibid., n. 24, p. 405.

liturgy, so that through their liturgical ministry the Christian communities in their care will offer an always more perfect praise to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.⁷⁹

To make sure that pastors remain faithful to this responsibility, the universal law places the duty and right on vicar foranes "to ensure [...] that the elegance and neatness of the churches and sacred furnishings are properly maintained, particularly in regard to the celebration of the Eucharist and the custody of the blessed Sacrament."⁸⁰

(iii) Tabernacle Design

Canon 938 stipulates that

The tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is habitually reserved is to be immovable, made of solid and non-transparent material, and so locked as to give the greatest security against any danger of profanation.⁸¹

In essence the content of this legislation is the same as that found in the 1917 Code.⁸² It is not surprising then to find a commentary in one

⁷⁹ Vatican Council II, Decree, Presbyterorum ordinis, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Dec. 7, 1965, in AAS 58, (1966), pp. 991-1024; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 5, p. 74. (Hereafter, Presbyterorum ordinis).

⁸⁰ CIC, 1983, c. 555, par. 1, n. 3.

⁸¹ Ibid., c. 938, par. 3.

⁸² CIC, 1917, c. 1269, pars. 1 and 2.

of the Spanish editions of the Code⁸³ referring to the applicability of the regulations prescribed in 1938 in Nullò unquam.⁸⁴ Among other things, these regulations suggested that the tabernacle be made of solid material with the parts firmly joined together. -

The traditional materials of wood, marble and metal are still applicable but any solid or opaque material may be used. This even allows for the use of certain types of glass which by nature are durable.⁸⁵ Besides the qualities of the material for the tabernacle, the other aspects of its design are not prescribed. Of this fact one commentator says: "liturgical law leaves much leeway for determining the shape, size and ornamentation of the tabernacle according to pastoral need and artistic tastefulness."⁸⁶

The American bishops state that the tabernacle is to be "dignified and properly ornamented,"⁸⁷ and that "if iconography or statuary are present, they should not obscure the primary focus of reservation."⁸⁸ As suggested by commentators on the 1917 legislation,

83 Spanish Code 1, p. 570.

84 SCS, Nullò unquam, Instruction on the Careful Custody of the Most Blessed Sacrament, May 26, 1938, in AAS, 30 (1938), pp. 198-207; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 2, pp. 379-381. (Hereafter, Nullò unquam).

85 SCDW, Reply, "Tabernacolo di vetro", Glass Tabernacle, in NOT, vol. 7 (1974), pp. 414-415; Eng. tr. in CLD, vol. 9, pp. 738-740.

86 Commentary, p. 665.

87 Environment and Art, n. 80, p. 41.

88 Ibid., n. 79, p. 40.

it would be expected that the design would reflect good craftsmanship and christian art.⁸⁹ This, however, does not eliminate the appropriateness of contemporary or local artistic expression in the design of tabernacles for "the church seeks out the service of the arts and welcomes the artistic expressions of all peoples and regions."⁹⁰ For the contemporary design of tabernacles one guiding principle could be:

The art of our own days, coming from every race and region, shall also be given free scope in the Church, on condition that it serves the places of worship and sacred rites with reverence and honor due to them.⁹¹

The universal and local prescriptions for sacred art and furnishings should always be consulted in the designing of a tabernacle, for these laws seek "the nobility, placing and security of the eucharistic tabernacle."⁹² And, it is to be remembered that the ultimate responsibility for its design rests with the bishop who "makes sure that the construction and placement of the tabernacle meet liturgical norms."⁹³

89 C. Augustine, op. cit., p. 222; E. Regatillo, op. cit., p. 229.

90 General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 254, p. 517.

91 Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 123, p. 25.

92 Ibid., n. 128, p. 26.

93 SCB, Directory, Ecclesiae Imago, Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, Feb. 22, 1973, in Leges Ecclesiae, 5, n. 4174, Eng. tr. by Benedictine Monks, Mission, B.C.; in Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops, Ottawa, CCC Publications, 1974, n. 90, p. 48.

(iv) Tabernacle Key

The care of the tabernacle key, as in the 1917 Code,⁹⁴ continues to be of importance. "The person in charge of a church or oratory, is to see to it that the key of the tabernacle in which the blessed Eucharist is reserved, is in maximum safe keeping."⁹⁵ The obvious basis for this emphasis is the reality of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the need to take all necessary precautions against any possibility of degradation to this presence. One difference in the new legislation is that the responsibility for the key no longer is restricted by law to a priest, but rests with the person in charge of the church or oratory. This is, then, a serious responsibility. The prescriptions of Nullus unquam⁹⁶ regarding the key still provide a valid source of guidance to the person responsible for its safe-keeping.

(v) Reservation Outside a Tabernacle

The intent of the legislation "for a grave reason, especially at night, it is permitted to reserve the blessed Eucharist in some other safer place, provided it is fitting," is to provide a secure place to reserve the Eucharist outside the tabernacle when the need arises.⁹⁷ The most obvious occasion for such a transference would be

94 CIC, 1917, c. 1269, par. 4.

95 CIC, 1983, c. 938, par. 5.

96 Nullus unquam, pp. 383-385.

97 CIC, 1983, c. 938, par. 4.

when danger of profanation of the Eucharist arises. In neighbourhoods where such a danger would be ongoing, a practical pastoral solution would be the establishment of a proper safe in the priest's home or some other more suitable and safer place. Other occasions which might present a similar need would be extensive renovations to the church, danger of fire or of floods.

The same legislation in the 1917 Code required the approval of the local Ordinary and prescribed that in the alternate place of reservation the corporal be placed under the sacred vessel and a lamp be burning.⁹⁸ The less detailed new legislation relies on the pastoral prudence of the person responsible.

E. The Reserved Species (c. 939)

Canon 939 is concerned with the number of Hosts to be reserved, their frequent renewal and the receptacles used for reservation. It reads: "Consecrated hosts, in a quantity sufficient for the needs of the faithful, are to be kept in a pyx or ciborium, and are to be renewed frequently, the older hosts having been duly consumed."⁹⁹ The content is a more precise version of similar legislation found in two canons in the 1917 Code.¹⁰⁰

98 CIC, 1917, c. 1269, par. 3.

99 CIC, 1983, c. 939.

100 CIC, 1917, cc. 1270 and 1272.

(1) Quantity

The number of consecrated Hosts to be reserved is based on the needs of the faithful. The Rituale Romanum more specifically states that Hosts are to be reserved "in a number sufficient for the communion of the sick and others outside Mass."¹⁰¹ Besides Communion to the sick and others outside Mass, this includes the presence of the reserved Sacrament for the adoration of the faithful and the exposition liturgy.

A commentary on the new canon mentions that "the same principle holds true for the quantity of consecrated wine for reservation."¹⁰² This is in conformity with the legislation that Viaticum is to be administered under the two species during Mass if possible.¹⁰³ Even on those occasions where it is not possible to celebrate Mass, Communion under both species seems most appropriate for the dying person.

Contrary to the widespread practice, Hosts are not to be reserved in numbers sufficient to distribute Communion to the faithful

101 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 7, p. 457.

102 Commentary, p. 665.

103 Rituale Romanum, "Rite of Anointing and Pastoral Care of the Sick", in The Rites of the Catholic Church, revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by authority of Pope Paul IV; Eng. tr. by ICEL, New York, Pueblo, 1976, vol. 1, n. 26, pp. 587-588. (Hereafter, Anointing and Care of the Sick).

during the celebration of another Mass. On this point a commentator states that,

In order for the sign of Communion to be expressed more clearly as a sharing in the sacrifice actually being celebrated, Communion should not be given during Mass from the reserved elements but from the bread and wine consecrated at the Mass.¹⁰⁴

This is based on liturgical law which states that

It is most desirable that the faithful receive the Lord's body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and that, in the instances when it is permitted, they share in the chalice. Thus even through the signs Communion will stand out more clearly as a sharing in the sacrifice actually being celebrated.¹⁰⁵

It would seem, then, that the quantity of the reserved Elements of the consecrated Bread and Wine should be kept at a minimum. Such would indeed facilitate their frequent renewal.

(ii) Frequent Renewal

The manner of renewal of the sacred Species is to consume the consecrated Elements reserved in the tabernacle and replace the original amount with freshly consecrated Bread and Wine.¹⁰⁶ This manner is

¹⁰⁴ Commentary, p. 665.

¹⁰⁵ General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 56h, p. 484; see also, Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 55, p. 15.

¹⁰⁶ Commentary, pp. 665-666.

simple and should be carried out with relative ease provided the prescription on the quantity of the reserved species is observed. No time limit is set for this renewal, but the decision of the person in charge of the reserved Eucharist should take into consideration the climate and other involved variables. The liturgical law itself cautions that "care must be taken to ensure that the elements are kept in good condition: that the wine does not turn to vinegar or the bread spoil or become too hard to be broken easily."¹⁰⁷ On the level of practice, it would be advisable in places where the priest celebrates Mass only every two weeks or so, to renew the reserved Species at each celebration, and in other places about every two weeks. This suggestion is prompted by the fact that the small host quickly becomes brittle or damp depending on climatic conditions, and the small portion of consecrated wine suffers in quality due to exposure to the air.

(111) Receptacles for Reservation

The receptacles for the reserved Sacrament, as sacred vessels, are governed by liturgical laws. In general, the material for these is to be solid and regarded as noble in the region. Designs may follow local cultures provided they are suited to the designated liturgical use.¹⁰⁸

107 General Instruction of the Roman Missal, n. 285, p. 522.

108 Ibid., nn. 289 to 296, p. 523.

On the legislation directed to the specific material of receptacles for reservation, it is provided that

Vessels that serve as receptacles for the eucharistic bread, such as a paten, ciborium, pyx, monstrance, etc., may be made of other materials that are prized in the region, [...] as long as they are suited to sacred use.¹⁰⁹

Another states that the receptacles for the consecrated wine, "are to have a cup of nonabsorbent material."¹¹⁰ Still another prescription says, "the precious blood must be carried to a sick person in a vessel so secured as to eliminate all danger of spilling."¹¹¹

Regional groups of bishops are to approve the suitability of the materials and designs for sacred vessels and are cautioned that use not be made of [...] receptacles meant for ordinary use outside the Sacred celebration."¹¹² Lastly, these vessels are to be blessed by a priest according to the liturgical norms of the revised Rituale Romanum.¹¹³

109 Ibid., n. 292, p. 523.

110 Ibid., n. 291, p. 523.

111 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 55, p. 475; see also, Anointing and Care of the Sick, n. 95, p. 608.

112 SCSDW, Instruction, Inaestimabile donum, On Certain Norms Concerning the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, April 3, 1980, in NOT, 16 (1980), pp. 287-297; Eng. tr. in A. Flannery, ed., Documentary of Vatican II, n. 16, p. 97. (Hereafter, Inaestimabile donum).

113 Dedication of a Church and an Altar, chp. 7, nn. 1-3, pp. 286-291.

2. The Veneration of the Eucharist

Our treatment on veneration will consider the practice of a burning lamp before the reserved Sacrament (c. 940) the private devotion of visiting the Blessed Sacrament (c. 937) and the public liturgical rites of exposition and eucharistic processions (cc. 941 to 944).

The revised liturgical laws and the contemporary liturgical texts place the faithful themselves at the centre of the renewal in liturgical devotions. One commentator sees the purpose for this as quite obvious since "there can be no liturgical rites for venerating the eucharist, after all, without a community of worshippers."¹¹⁴ And this same commentator places these devotions in the perspective that "Eucharistic devotions are seen not so much as opportunities for expressing piety, but as a means of renewing the assembly itself and of intensifying its participation in the Mass."¹¹⁵

Another noted author after commenting on the sad fact that at times the true significance of the Mass had been obscured by participation in the popular eucharistic devotions, states that the Second Vatican Council has reestablished a healthy appreciation of the relationship of these eucharistic devotions to the celebration of the Sacrifice of Christ in the Mass.¹¹⁶ This relationship in the veneration

114 N. Mitchell, op. cit., p. 351.

115 Ibid.

116 A. Martimort, ed., L'Eglise en prière, vol. 2, L'Eucharistie, par R. Cabié, Paris, Desclée, 1983, p. 265.

of the reserved Sacrament with the celebration of Mass keeps a proper eucharistic perspective before the faithful. Concerning this; the liturgical legislation states that

When the faithful honor Christ present in the sacrament, they should remember that this presence is derived from the sacrifice and is directed toward sacramental and spiritual communion. The same piety which moves the faithful to eucharistic adoration attracts them to a deeper participation in the paschal mystery. [...] Thus they nourish the proper disposition to celebrate the memorial of the Lord as devoutly as possible and to receive frequently the bread given to us by the Father.¹¹⁷

A. The Tabernacle Lamp (c. 940)

The revised legislation on the tabernacle lamp stresses that "A special lamp is to burn continuously before the tabernacle in which the Blessed Eucharist is reserved, to indicate and to honour the presence of Christ."¹¹⁸ This is indicative of the growing awareness throughout the conciliar and post-conciliar period of the various ways in which Christ is present to his faithful. Further, this burning lamp is a symbol of the constancy and the devotedness of the faithful in their belief in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist and its adoration.

¹¹⁷ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 80, p. 484.

¹¹⁸ CIC, 1983, c. 940. See also, Rituale Romanum, Pauli V Pontificis Maximi jussu editum, atque a felicis recordationis Benedicto XIV, auctum et castigatum, in quo, quae parochis ad administrationem sacramentorum, benedictiones, et conjurationes necessaria censentur, accurate sunt posita, Mechliniae, J. Hanicq, 1850, p. 70.

The liturgical norm in the present Rituale Romanum suggests that "according to traditional usage, in so far as it is possible, the lamp will be sustained by oil or by wax."¹¹⁹ The phrase "in so far as possible" allows for a broader interpretation of the liturgical norm,¹²⁰ which in turn supports the understanding that the new law permits the use of different forms of energy for the tabernacle lamp. Finally, following years of discussion as to its possibility and practicality, the legislation allows for the use of electric energy. Electric lamps come in many designs, both simple and ornate, and allow for much choice in artistic appropriateness. Among the practical factors of a lamp fed by electric energy is the relative assurance that it will burn continuously. It also provides a safety feature in the face of possible fire hazards. Furthermore, it may well reduce the cost of fire insurance because candles would not be left burning in a church building.

Regardless of what fuel is used to light the tabernacle lamp, whether it be oil, wax, gas or electric power, the choice should be influenced by the lamp's suitability to the purpose and atmosphere of the specific Blessed Sacrament chapel or area and by the liturgical

¹¹⁹ Variationes, n. 11, p. 544. A translation of: "secundum traditam consuetudinem [...], quantum fieri potest, lampas oleo vel cera nutriatur." See also, Spanish Code 2, p. 466; CIC, 1917; c. 1271.

¹²⁰ Commentary, p. 663.

norms for church furnishings.¹²¹ The final choice as to which form of lighting is best suited for any particular church or oratory at a particular time "may now freely be made by the persons in charge of sacred places."¹²²

B. Visits (c. 937)

Unless there is a grave reason to the contrary, a church in which the blessed Eucharist is reserved is to be open to the faithful for at least some hours every day, so that they can pray before the blessed Sacrament.¹²³

Canon 937 focuses on the right of the faithful to have access to a church where the Eucharist is reserved for the purpose of visitation of the Blessed Sacrament. The similar legislation in the 1917 Code stated only that "the churches in which the Holy Eucharist is reserved, especially parish churches, ought to be accessible to the faithful for some hours each day."¹²⁴

¹²¹ Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 128, p. 26; Liturgicae instaurationes, n. 10, pp. 165-166; Presbyterorum ordinis, n. 5, p. 872.

¹²² Commentary, p. 666.

¹²³ CIC, 1983, c. 937.

¹²⁴ CIC, 1917, c. 1266. A translation of: "Ecclesiae in quibus sanctissima Eucharistia asservatur, praesertim paroeciales, quotidie per aliquot saltem horas fidelibus pateant."

The new law is distinguished by a nisi clause which was not present in the former legislation. The Commission for the Revision of Canon Law at its meeting in October 1978 expressed some concern over the format of the draft legislation as it appeared in the 1975 Schema.¹²⁵ The concern centred around a lack of provision in the legislation for situations where churches were subject to vandalism with the related possibility of profanation of the Holy Eucharist. As a result, such a provision was implemented in the 1980 Schema¹²⁶ and eventually became part of the revised Code. This provides the needed legal exception for leaving churches open only if conditions so warrant. As a result, it brings about a shift in emphasis from the earlier legislation to the position where "the canon appears to be more a pastoral recommendation than a true legal obligation."¹²⁷

Although the observation has been made that "this canon refers only to churches in the strict sense of canon 1214 but not to oratories and other sacred places,"¹²⁸ the importance which the Church places on the role of the visit in the spiritual lives of all the

125 Communicaciones, 13 (1981), p. 426.

126 Pontificia Commissio Codicis Iuris Canonici. Recognoscendo, Schema Codex iuris canonici, (Patribus Commissionis Reservatum), Città del Vaticano; Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1980; pp. 207-209. (Hereafter, Schema, 1980).

127 Commentary, p. 664.

128 Ibid. (Canon 1214 reads: "The term church means a sacred building intended for divine worship, to which the faithful have right of access for the exercise, especially the public exercise, of divine worship").

faithful suggests that oratories and other sacred places of reservation should be accessible at least to those members of the faithful for whose use they are designated.

Paul VI¹²⁹ and John Paul II¹³⁰ mentioned that visits to the Blessed Sacrament were important for the spiritual lives of all the faithful. The ministerial outreach and personal spiritual life of the priest is seen in need of these daily visits.¹³¹ They also comprise a necessary aspect in the spiritual formation and life of the seminarian,¹³² the religious, and the member of a society of apostolic life.¹³³

We are aware that the eucharistic visit received prominence in the various post-conciliar texts.¹³⁴ It is of significance then

129 Paul VI; Encyclical Letter, Mysterium fidei, On the Doctrine and Worship of the Eucharist, September 3, 1965, in AAS, 57 (1965), pp. 753-774; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 66, p. 390, (Hereafter, Mysterium fidei).

130 John Paul II, Homily at Phoenix Park, Dublin, September 29, 1979, in NOT, 15 (1979), p. 606.

131 Presbyterorum ordinis, n. 18, p. 897.

132 SCCE, In ecclesiasticam futurorum sacerdotum, On Liturgical Formation in Seminaries, June 3, 1979, in NOT, 15 (1979) pp. 526-566; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 27, p. 880; and, SCSU, Doctrina et exemplo, On the Liturgical Formation of Future Priests, December 25, 1965, in Leges Ecclesiae, 3, n. 3378; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 39, p. 851.

133 CIC, 1983, cc. 608 and 733, par. 2.

134 See this study, ch. 3, pp. 123-127.

that in this canon the visit received specific mention as the purpose for keeping places of reservation accessible to the faithful. The words of one author, conscious of the relationship between the devotional visit and the Mass,¹³⁵ sum up the richness of the visit to the Blessed Sacrament for the members of the faithful:

By Eucharistic devotion, dwelling with Christ our Lord, we enjoy his intimate friendship and pour out our hearts before him for ourselves and our dear ones and pray for the peace and salvation of the world. This is the ultimate purpose of the Eucharist which was given for many, that is for the salvation of all ...¹³⁶

C. Exposition (cc. 941, 942 and 943)

In the area of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament there has been a remarkable change in the canonical and related liturgical norms. Indeed the directives have been simplified with the elimination of much superfluous detail. This has been accomplished without detracting in any way from the importance of the cultic role of the liturgy of exposition.

The 1917 Code had two canons pertaining to exposition.¹³⁷ The first, canon 1274, treated in one paragraph of private and public

¹³⁵ Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 50, p. 414.

¹³⁶ E. Lussier, Getting to Know the Eucharist, New York, Alba House, 1974, p. 128.

¹³⁷ CIC, 1917, cc. 1274 and 1275.

exposition and of the required permissions, and, in a second paragraph, of the minister of exposition and benediction. The other, canon 1275, contained the legislation for the Forty Hours' Devotion.

The 1983 Code has three canons. The first, canon 941, has two paragraphs which treat respectively of exposition according to the liturgical norms in places of reservation, and the prohibition against holding exposition during the celebration of the Eucharist. The second, canon 942, concerns solemn annual exposition, and the third, canon 943, the minister of exposition and benediction.

The influence of the conciliar and post-conciliar texts on the formulation of this legislation is easily discerned. The document Eucharisticum mysterium came in response to the statements of Sacrosanctum Concilium that

Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly endorsed, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church, [...] accord with the sacred liturgy, and are in some way derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them.¹³⁸

One author points out that this constitution on eucharistic worship "not only outlined basic principles on eucharistic theology, viewed from a liturgical perspective,¹³⁹ but it also treated of the Eucharist as a permanent sacrament. "Devotions, processions, exposition and

138 Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 13, p. 8.

139 N. Mitchell, op. cit., p. 210.

Benediction are described, and norms for their celebration given [...] these norms provided the framework for the rites published in 1973."¹⁴⁰ It is from these norms for the liturgy of exposition found in the Rituale Romanum¹⁴¹ that the canonical legislation is eventually formulated. The only exception to this is in the legislation for the minister of exposition for special circumstances, where the Code states "or another person deputed by the local Ordinary, in accordance with the regulations of the diocesan Bishop."¹⁴² This effected a change in wording in the section in the Rituale Romanum which had read, "a) an acolyte or special minister of communion; b) a member of a religious community or of a lay association of men or women which is devoted to eucharistic adoration, upon appointment by the local Ordinary,"¹⁴³ to read "an acolyte, another extraordinary minister of the Eucharist or another person deputed by the local Ordinary."¹⁴⁴

Our study of the particulars of the canonical legislation on exposition will correspond respectively to the four aspects presented in the Code: the liturgical norms, the Mass and exposition, solemn annual exposition, and the minister of exposition.

140 Ibid.

141 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, nn. 82-100, pp. 486-492.

142 CIC, 1983, c. 943.

143 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 91, p. 488.

144 Variationes, n. 91, p. 545. A translation of: "acolythus et alius minister extraordinarius sacrae communionis aliisque ab Ordinario loci deputatus."

(1) The Liturgical Norms

The first paragraph of canon 941 reads:

In churches or oratories which are allowed to reserve the blessed Eucharist, there may be exposition, either with the pyx or with the monstrance, in accordance with the norms prescribed in the liturgical books.¹⁴⁵

This simple direct statement stands out in contrast to the 1917 legislation with its distinction between public and private exposition and its requiring of permissions from the local Ordinary.¹⁴⁶ Contained in the Rituale Romanum in the same section with the regulations for exposition are the explicit provisions for lengthy or brief expositions and for exposition for the adoration of religious communities.¹⁴⁷ Brief exposition is to be so arranged as to include scripture readings, songs, and both vocal and silent prayer before the blessing.¹⁴⁸ "Exposition which is held exclusively for the giving of benediction is prohibited."¹⁴⁹ Where exposition for perpetual adoration of religious communities and other groups is held, "it is strongly recommended that they pattern this holy practice in harmony with the spirit of the liturgy."¹⁵⁰ Lengthy exposition will be treated in detail in the section

145 CIC, 1983, c. 941, par. 1.

146 CIC, 1917, c. 1274, par. 1.

147 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, nn. 84-90, pp. 486-488.

148 Ibid., n. 89, pp. 487-488.

149 Ibid., n. 89, p. 488.

150 Ibid., n. 90, p. 488.

on solemn annual exposition. The actual rite of exposition and benediction is presented in the Rituale Romanum under four main divisions: exposition, adoration, benediction, and reposition.¹⁵¹

(ii) Mass and Exposition

The second paragraph of canon 941 stating that "exposition of the blessed Sacrament may not take place while Mass is being celebrated in the same area of the church or oratory,"¹⁵² finds its basis in the post-conciliar liturgical teaching that

The celebration of Mass is prohibited within the body of the church during exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, all contrary concessions and traditions hitherto in force, even those worthy of special mention, notwithstanding.¹⁵³

The rationale for this is to avoid having Christ already eucharistically present when such a presence is about to be conferred.¹⁵⁴ One commentator adds "the Mass includes in a more perfect way the spiritual communion to which exposition should lead the faithful."¹⁵⁵

151 Ibid., nn. 93-100, pp. 490-492.

152 CIC, 1983, c. 941, par. 2.

153 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 61, p. 417.

154 Ibid., n. 55, p. 416.

155 E. Lussier, op. cit., p. 173.

This legislation came as quite a significant change to the faithful who had been used to a Forty Hours' Devotion which not only was "begun and terminated with a solemn high Mass,"¹⁵⁶ but during which there were special liturgies for Mass before the Blessed Sacrament exposed.¹⁵⁷ Yet they are reminded to see this worship of the Eucharist in its correlation with the Mass, and to avoid anything "that could in any way obscure Christ's intention of instituting the holy eucharist above all in order to be near us to feed, to heal, and to comfort us."¹⁵⁸

These liturgical norms for the relation between exposition and the Mass were to appear almost verbatim in the revised Rituale Romanum.¹⁵⁹ The official liturgical law had stated that

During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the celebration of the Mass is prohibited in the body of the Church. In addition to the reasons given in no. 6, the celebration of the eucharistic mystery includes in a more perfect way the internal communion to which exposition seeks to lead the faithful.¹⁶⁰

156 J. Champlin, "Forty Hours' Devotion", in New Catholic Encyclopedia, New York, McGraw Hill, 1967, vol. 5, p. 1036.

157 L. O'Connell, "Forty Hours' Devotion", in The Book of Ceremonies, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1956, pp. 403-423.

158 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 60, p. 417.

159 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, nn. 82-83, p. 486.

160 Ibid., n. 83, p. 486.

The liturgical law goes on to state that when there is prolonged exposition for a day or more, exposition is to be interrupted during Mass. However, Mass is permitted in a chapel distinct from the area of exposition provided some of the faithful remain in adoration.¹⁶¹

(iii) Solemn Annual Exposition (c. 942)

It is recommended that in these churches or oratories, there is to be each year a solemn exposition of the blessed Sacrament for an appropriate, even if not for a continuous time, so that the local community may more attentively meditate on and adore the eucharistic mystery. This exposition is to take place only if a fitting attendance of the faithful is foreseen, and the prescribed norms are observed.¹⁶²

The canonical legislation is a reinforcement of the liturgical law and contains the same prescriptions.¹⁶³ Related to this form of lengthy exposition is that form which the local Ordinary may prescribe "for a grave and general necessity."¹⁶⁴

Although this annual exposition parallels the Forty Hours' Devotion in the 1917 Code¹⁶⁵ it is a more contemporary form of lengthy meditation and eucharistic adoration. The Forty Hours' devotion was

161 Ibid.

162 CIC, 1983, c. 942.

163 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 86, p. 487.

164 Ibid., n. 87, p. 487.

165 CIC, 1917, c. 1275.

intended to be "a continuous period of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, begun and terminated with a solemn high Mass, procession when possible, Litany of the Saints, and special prayers."¹⁶⁶ However, with changing times, an interrupted form of the devotion was permitted. Eventually the recognition of the fact that the format of the Forty Hours' Devotion in many aspects had become obsolete, led to the introduction of a similar devotion but with a different format.

Liturgically, this form as solemn annual exposition first surfaced in the liturgical norms of the post-conciliar document, Eucharisticum mysterium.¹⁶⁷ The official liturgical and canonical legislation was to remain as found in this earlier liturgical instruction. The only obvious development was the shift in emphasis from what at first was a suggestion of a possible devotion, to what was promulgated as an exhortation of a devotion to take place, provided certain conditions were met. These conditions included the presence of a suitable number of the faithful and an adherence to the prescribed liturgical norms, such as the consent of the local Ordinary.¹⁶⁸ The earlier document in part read: "In churches where the eucharist is regularly reserved, there may be an annual, solemn exposition of the blessed sacrament."¹⁶⁹ Now, the promulgated legislation is stronger

166 J. Champlain, loc. cit., vol. 5, p. 1036.

167 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 63, p. 419.

168 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 86, p. 487.

169 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 63, p. 419.

and reads: "It is recommended that in these churches and oratories, there is to be each year a solemn exposition of the blessed Sacrament."¹⁷⁰

However, before leaving this consideration of solemn annual exposition, of interest is a comment stating that "exposition is an optional devotion which may not be suitable when it is not a true expression of popular piety."¹⁷¹ Although what this states is true; it would seem, however, in the light of the liturgical development in the area of eucharistic devotions outside Mass, that there is a pastoral responsibility to instruct the faithful in the Church's teachings on exposition as a true expression of piety.

A contemporary liturgical scholar concludes his presentation of an ecclesiology centred in the eucharistic practice of the Church with the statement that "the new rites for holy communion and worship of the eucharist outside Mass (1973) appeal to this kind of ecclesiology rooted in the Church's liturgical praxis."¹⁷² This is in conformity with the repeated teaching of the conciliar and post-conciliar texts that

¹⁷⁰ CIC, 1983, c. 942.

¹⁷¹ Commentary, p. 667.

¹⁷² N. Mitchell, op. cit., p. 242.

The eucharistic mystery is truly the center of the liturgy and indeed the whole Christian life. Consequently the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, continually seeks to understand this mystery more fully and more and more to derive its life from it.¹⁷³

Repeatedly throughout Lumen gentium, the constitution on the Church, reference is made to the centrality of the Eucharist in the Church.¹⁷⁴

—Depicting an understanding of the relationship of exposition to the celebration of the Eucharist in which the presence of Christ in his Church is sacramentally renewed, pastoral instruction should stress, as the revised Rituale Romanum states, that "exposition of the holy eucharist [...] is intended to acknowledge Christ's marvellous presence in the Sacrament."¹⁷⁵ Such instruction would assist the pastors as well as the faithful in fulfilling the obligation expected of them in the Church's universal law:

Christ's faithful are to hold the blessed Eucharist in the highest honour. They [...] should reverence it with the greatest adoration. [...] pastors of souls are assiduously to instruct the faithful about their obligation in this regard.¹⁷⁶

173 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 1, p. 395.

174 Vatican Council II, Constitution, Lumen gentium; Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Nov. 21, 1964, in AAS, 57 (1965), pp. 5-67; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 3, p. 29; n. 7, pp. 29-30; n. 11, pp. 30-31; n. 26, pp. 33-34; n. 28, pp. 35-36; and, n. 50, pp. 39-40.

175 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 82, p. 486.

176 CIC, 1983, c. 898.

This instruction also may be seen as part of the pastor's responsibility to keep the Eucharist at the heart of the ecclesial community entrusted to his care. The law requires that "the parish priest is to take care that the blessed Eucharist is the centre of the parish assembly of the faithful."¹⁷⁷ Related to this is the comment that

Solemn annual exposition as a liturgical devotion to the Lord present in the reserved sacrament emphasizes the centrality of the Eucharist in the Church. For this presence of Christ is seen within the much larger context of Christ's presence in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the assembly of the faithful gathered before the exposed sacrament in prayer.¹⁷⁸

(iv). The Minister of Exposition (c. 943)

The minister of exposition of the blessed Sacrament and of the eucharistic blessing is a priest or deacon. In special circumstances the minister of exposition and deposition alone, but without the blessing, is an acolyte, and extraordinary minister of holy communion, or another person deputed by the local Ordinary, in accordance with the regulations of the diocesan Bishop.¹⁷⁹

The canon is quite explicit in its presentation of the legislation on the minister of exposition and benediction. This results in a noticeable change from the 1917 Code which limited the

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., c. 528, par. 2.

¹⁷⁸ N. Mitchell, op. cit., p. 213.

¹⁷⁹ CIC, 1983, c. 943.

minister of exposition to a priest or deacon and allowed only the priest to give benediction.¹⁸⁰ However these changes were introduced gradually into the liturgical texts throughout the conciliar and post-conciliar period.¹⁸¹ The canonical legislation "basically restates the liturgical law on the minister of exposition and of benediction."¹⁸²

The minister of exposition, whether priest, deacon, acolyte, extraordinary eucharistic minister or properly deputed person, is to vest in the attire prescribed by the Rituale Romanum.¹⁸³ If a deacon and priest are both present for the benediction, the deacon, even though he is an ordinary minister, may not impart the benediction if the priest present is not impeded from doing so.¹⁸⁴

180 CIC, 1917, c. 1274, par. 2.

181 Paul VI, Sacrum diaconatus ordinem, Restoring the Permanent Diaconate, June 18, 1967, in AAS, 59 (1967), pp. 697-704; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. 22, p. 781; Paul VI, Ministeria quaedam, On First Tonsure, Minor Orders, and the Subdiaconate, Aug. 15, 1972, in AAS, 64 (1972), pp. 529-534; Eng. tr. in DOL, n. vi, p. 910; Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 91, p. 488; Variationes, n. 91, p. 545.

182 Commentary, p. 667.

183 Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, nn. 88 and 92, pp. 487-489.

184 SCSDW, Reply, Documentorum explanatio, in NOT, 12, (1976), pp. 46-47.

D. Eucharistic Processions (c. 944)

1. Wherever in the judgement of the diocesan Bishop it can be done, a procession through the streets is to be held, especially on the solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ, as a public witness of veneration of the blessed Eucharist.

2. It is for the diocesan Bishop to establish such regulations about processions as will provide for participation in them and for their being carried out in a dignified manner.¹⁸⁵

It is obvious from the legislation that sacred processions are not given the same significance as at the time of the 1917 Code when there were six canons under a special title for processions.¹⁸⁶ In some parts of the world, they are still very much in keeping with local devotional customs, while in other parts it is not customary to hold such a form of public demonstration of faith. An awareness of this aspect appeared in Eucharisticum mysterium which suggested that as far as the Corpus Christi procession was concerned, "it is for the local Ordinary to decide on [...] the advisability of such processions in today's conditions."¹⁸⁷ Commenting on this, one author says:

The document recognizes that today such expressions of piety may not be opportune always and everywhere; hence the local bishop is given discretionary authority to decide if, when, and how such processions are to be held in his diocese.¹⁸⁸

185 CIC, 1983, c. 944.

186 CIC, 1917, cc. 1290-1295.

187 Eucharisticum mysterium, n. 59, p. 417.

188 N. Mitchell, op. cit., p. 211.

When, for one reason or another a Corpus Christi procession is not held, the Rituale Romanum recommends that "it is fitting to hold some kind of public celebration for the entire city or its principal districts in the cathedral church or other appropriate place."¹⁸⁹ Furthermore, the Congregation for Divine Worship suggests that this be done "by celebration of Mass or by adoration of the blessed Sacrament, accompanied by Scripture readings, singing, a homily and a period of meditation."¹⁹⁰

But when a procession is held, the prescriptions of the Rituale Romanum are to be followed.¹⁹¹ These pertain to the sacred Host which is carried, the route to be followed, the prayers and hymns proclaimed, the vestments worn, the use of candles, incense and a canopy, and the final station at a church for benediction and reposition. Obvious in the law itself as it appears in the new Code is that both the judgment as to the opportuneness of holding the Corpus Christi procession and the regulations governing it, are reserved to the diocesan bishop.

¹⁸⁹ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, n. 102, p. 493.

¹⁹⁰ SCDW, Reply, De processionibus Eucharisticis, in NOT, 11 (1975), p. 64; Eng. tr. in DOL, p. 698.

¹⁹¹ Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass, nn. 101-107, pp. 493-494.

CONCLUSION

The revised legislation in the area of the reservation and veneration of the Blessed Eucharist for the Latin Church, shows the influence of the view of the Eucharist as one, and the primacy of the celebration of the Eucharist in relation to the reserved Sacrament.¹⁹² The veneration of the Eucharist outside of Mass in such devotional practices as exposition, benediction, processions, and visits to the Blessed Sacrament, is seen in its relationship to the celebration of the Eucharist. These devotions stimulate the faithful to spiritual union with Christ which reaches its completion in sacramental Communion. Furthermore, the celebration of the Eucharist in the place of reservation twice a month where possible ensures the frequent renewal of the Species, but also reinforces the primacy of the Eucharistic celebration in its association with the reserved Sacrament.

The centrality of the Eucharist to the life of the Church appears at the local parish level of Church in the maintaining of a

192 The Revised Code of Canon Law for the Oriental Church has not been promulgated yet. However, a 1982 draft proposed one canon on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. This reads: "1. In ecclesiis ubi publici cultus caerimoniae et saltem aliquoties in mense Divina Liturgia celebratur Sancta cuatodiantur, praesertim pro infirmis, Eucharistica Mysteria, pfaescriptis liturgicis cultusque Ecclesiae sui iuris fideliter servatis, atque summa reverentia a clero et Dei populo adorentur. 2. Haec asservatio Divinae Eucharistiae est sub vigilantia ac moderamine Hierarchae ecclesiae Rectoris proprii." Pontifical Commissio Codici Iuris Canonici Orientalis Recognoscendo, Denua Recognito Dello Schema Dei Canonu sul culto Divino e Sacramenti, in Nuntia, vol. 15, 1982, c. 49, p. 33.

proper decorum in the area of reservation of the parish church, in the gathering of a number of the faithful for solemn annual exposition, or in members visiting the reserved Sacrament as representatives of the larger parish community. Likewise, for members of a religious community, the presence of an oratory in the house is meant to emphasize the centrality of the Eucharist to their special committed way of life. This one chapel in a religious house, as the one tabernacle in a church, is a sign of the unity of the ecclesial community which worships there.

The emphasis on the sign value of the Mass by which the Eucharist is consecrated has in turn reversed earlier legislation regarding the celebration of Mass before the Blessed Sacrament exposed and the placing of the tabernacle on the altar of the celebration of the Eucharist. The new norms do not allow for the Eucharist already consecrated to be present on the altar of sacrifice.

Also, the principle of subsidiarity promoted in the teachings of Vatican II is evident in the revised legislation. Local Ordinaries shall make decisions regarding the reservation of the Eucharist in places not mentioned in the legislation, whereas the former law required an apostolic indult for such reservation. Local Ordinaries shall also determine if suitable conditions are present for solemn annual exposition and the reservation of the Eucharist in another oratory of the same house of a religious institute or society of apostolic life. Diocesan bishops shall provide the prescriptions determining the

procedures for eucharistic processions, the non-ordinary ministers of exposition, and the retention of the Eucharist in personal custody. The persons in charge of churches or oratories shall make the decision as regards the presence of a grave reason affecting the opening of a church to the faithful for private adoration, the care of the tabernacle key, the proper decorum of the area of reservation, and, the choice of fuel for the tabernacle lamp.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Providing Viaticum for the sick and dying has from the earliest days of the Church been the primary purpose for the reservation of the Eucharist. The Council of Nicaea in 325 attested to the antiquity of this practice which was expressed in legislative form in the Decree of Gratian. By the time of Gratian, however, other prescriptions related to the reservation of the Sacrament had also come into being. These included the requiring of a sacrarium, a secure safe-like structure, in which the Blessed Sacrament was to be kept, the prescribing of responsibility to the priest to protect the reserved Sacrament and to administer Communion to the sick and dying, the designating of suggested materials for the sacred vessels, the using of sacred linens, and the renewing of the reserved species. In the Decretals of Gregory IX, the church was designated as the place for reservation, the Sacrament was to be secured by keys, and certain norms were to be observed in taking Communion to the sick.

By the time of the Council of Trent in 1545 the secondary purposes for reservation, Communion outside Mass and veneration of the reserved Sacrament, were already common practices of the Church. In the then current theological perspective of treating the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the Sacrifice of the Mass independently, the Council presented its legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. There was a reiteration of the earlier legislation regarding

the reserved Sacrament and additional legislation decreeing that public devotions, including processions, were to honour the Blessed Sacrament on a festive day each year. Trent spoke of this veneration to the reserved Eucharist as latria devotion, devotion to God Himself. The centuries following this Council show the development of the Corpus Christi processions and the Forty Hours' Devotion. They also give evidence of the detail in liturgical prescriptions and interpretations which arose in the area of the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist.

It was from the theological and canonical background of the Council of Trent and the intervening years that the legislation on the custody and worship of the Eucharist was to appear in the 1917 Code. Over the years there was much direction taken from this legislation and the official interpretations and commentaries associated with it. Then, after forty years, the Second Vatican Council and the Commission for the Revision of the Code were to affect greatly the content and understanding of this law for the present-day Church. The basic format of the 1983 Code remains much the same in this area, but the contents reflect the unavoidable changes brought about by the theological, liturgical, and pastoral developments related to the reserved Eucharist.

Some obvious effects in the formulation of the revised canonical legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist resulting from the conciliar and post-conciliar texts and the Commission's discussions, are;

1. The placement of these norms (see cc. 934 to 944) in the same section of the Code with the rest of the eucharistic legislation. This change from the 1917 Code is a result of the repeated emphasis in the Vatican II period on the unity of the Eucharist as both sacrament and sacrifice.
2. The local Ordinary may grant permission for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in churches, oratories, or chapels, not designated in the law (see c. 934). This significant change from the 1917 Code reflects the growing emphasis on subsidiarity in the Church.
3. Mass need be offered only every two weeks where possible in places where the Eucharist is retained (see c. 938). This introduces a flexibility in the law while still assuring the frequent renewal of the Species and a respect for the relationship between the reserved Sacrament and the celebration of the Eucharist.
4. It is not recommended that the Blessed Sacrament be reserved on the altar where the Eucharist is confectioned in the celebration of Mass (see c. 938). This stresses the norm that Christ not be present already on the altar where the Eucharist is celebrated. It also lends support to the implementation of the liturgical directives regarding a chapel or other suitable place of reservation.
5. The sanctuary lamp may be fueled by various forms of energy (see c. 940). There is a shift in emphasis from the fuel components of

the lamp to its role as both indicating and honouring the presence of Christ.

6. The right of the faithful to pray before the Blessed Sacrament is recognized and encouraged (see cc. 937 and 938). This results from the concern in the conciliar and post-conciliar texts that the faithful recognize the importance of the visit to the Blessed Sacrament as a help to their way of life.
7. The Eucharist is recognized as the source and centre of unity for members of societies of apostolic life as well as those in houses of religious institutes (see cc. 934 and 936; also cc. 608 and 733). This key role of the Eucharist is seen also by the law in respect to parish life and the formation of clerics in seminaries (see cc. 528 and 246).
8. For a grave reason churches of reservation may be closed outside of the times for worship (see c. 937). Aware of increased vandalism in some areas, the members of the Commission proposed this provision as a safeguard against possible profanation of the Eucharist.
9. The celebration of the Mass is forbidden in the body of the church or oratory during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (see c. 941). This reversal from practices dating to the pre-Tridentine period supports the renewed theological and liturgical recognition

of the primacy of the eucharistic celebration and its sign value in relation to the exposition of the reserved Sacrament.

10. An annual solemn exposition with an appropriate format is recommended in churches and oratories of reservation (see c. 942). This provides a contemporary and viable alternate devotion to the 'Forty Hours' Devotion which had become antiquated in many regions of the universal Church.
11. Exposition is to be carried out according to the prescriptions of the liturgical books (see cc. 941 and 942). These simplified directions are in the revised Rituale Romanum.
12. The deacon is an ordinary minister of benediction (see c. 943). This is a change from the 1917 Code which forbade the deacon to give benediction other than when administering viaticum to the sick.
13. In special circumstances an acolyte, an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, or a deputed person, may be minister of exposition and reposition (see c. 943). This legislation developed gradually throughout the conciliar and post-conciliar period. This significant change is particularly practical for non-clerical religious and members of societies of apostolic life; it also alludes to the role of women in this ministry.

It is evident that the Commission for the Revision of the Code intended to implement the eucharistic teachings of the conciliar and post-conciliar texts of the Second Vatican Council in the formulation of the revised canonical legislation on the reservation and veneration of the Eucharist. However, in doing so, the Commission took special care to retain those aspects of the former legislation which were aimed at ensuring that the reserved Eucharist, which contains the real presence of Christ par excellence, is kept safe from any danger of profanation and is revered with the greatest adoration.

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