

## QUESTION 68

### The Recipients of Baptism

Next we have to consider those who receive baptism. And on this topic there are twelve questions: (1) Is everyone obliged to receive baptism? (2) Can anyone be saved without baptism? (3) Should baptism be deferred? (4) Are sinners to be baptized? (5) Should works of satisfaction be imposed on sinners when they are baptized? (6) Is confession required of sinners [who are going to be baptized]? (7) Is an intention required on the part of the one to be baptized? (8) Is faith required? (9) Should children be baptized? (10) Should the children of Jews [or other non-believers] be baptized against the will of their parents? (11) Should some individuals be baptized while they are in their mother's womb? (12) Should the insane or the mentally impaired (*furiosi et amentes*) be baptized?

#### Article 1

##### Is everyone obliged to receive baptism?

It seems that not everyone is obliged to receive baptism (*non teneantur omnes ad susceptionem baptismi*):

**Objection 1:** The path to salvation for men is not narrowed by Christ. But before Christ's coming men were able to be saved without baptism. Therefore, after Christ's coming as well.

**Objection 2:** Baptism seems to have been instituted especially as a remedy for original sin. But since an individual who has been baptized does not have original sin, it seems that he is unable to pass it on to his children. Therefore, it does not seem that the children of those who have been baptized need to be baptized.

**Objection 3:** Baptism is given in order that an individual might be cleansed from sin through grace. But those who are sanctified in the womb attain this without baptism. Therefore, they are not obliged to receive baptism.

**But contrary to this:** John 3:5 says, "Unless a man is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he will not enter into the kingdom of God." And in the book *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* it says, "We believe that the road to salvation is only for those who have been baptized."

**I respond:** Men are obliged to do that without which they cannot attain salvation. But it is clear that no one can attain salvation except through Christ; hence, in Romans 5:18 the Apostle says, "Just as from the offense of one man the result was condemnation unto all men, so, too, from the righteousness of one man the result is unto justification of life to all men." But baptism is given in order that an individual, regenerated through Christ, might be incorporated into Him, having been made a member of Him. Hence, Galatians 3:27 says, "All you who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ." Hence, it is clear that all are obliged to receive baptism, and without baptism salvation is not possible for men.

**Reply to objection 1:** Human beings would never have been able to be saved, even before Christ's coming, unless they became members of Christ. For as Acts 4:12 says, "There is no other name given to men by which we must be saved."

However, before Christ's coming, men were incorporated into Christ through faith in His future coming, and the mark of this faith was circumcision, as the Apostle explains in Romans 4:11. On the other hand, before circumcision was instituted, men were incorporated "by faith alone," as Gregory says, along with the offering of the sacrifices by which the ancient fathers professed their faith.

Even after Christ's coming, men were incorporated into Christ through faith—this according to Ephesians 3:17 ("... to have Christ dwelling in your hearts through faith"). But faith in a reality that is already present is made manifest through a sign that is different from that through which it was demonstrated when the reality was future—just as the present, the past, and the future are signified by

different verbs. And so even though the sacrament of baptism was not always necessary for salvation, nonetheless faith, of which baptism is the sacrament, was always necessary.

**Reply to objection 2:** As was explained in the Second Part (*ST* 1-2, q. 81, a. 3, ad 2), those who are baptized are renewed through baptism with respect to their spirit, but the body remains subject to the old condition of sin (*remanet subiectum vetustati peccati*)—this according to Romans 8:10 (“The body, it is true, is dead by reason of sin, but the spirit is alive because of justification”). Hence, in *Contra Julianum* Augustine shows that “it is not the case that whatever exists in a man is baptized in him.” But it is clear that it is through his body, and not through his spirit, that a man generates by means of a carnal generation. And that is why the children of baptized individuals are born with original sin. Hence, they need to be baptized.

**Reply to objection 3:** Those who are sanctified in the womb do indeed receive grace that cleanses them from original sin, but they do not receive the character by which they would be configured to Christ. And because of this, if individuals were now sanctified in the womb, it would be necessary for them to be baptized in order to be conformed to the other members of Christ by receiving the character.

## Article 2

### Can anyone be saved without baptism?

It seems that without baptism no one can be saved (*sine baptismo nullus possit salvari*):

**Objection 1:** In John 3:5 our Lord says, “Unless a man is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he will not enter into the kingdom of God.” But those alone are saved who enter the kingdom of God. Therefore, no one can be saved without baptism, by which an individual is born again of water and the Holy Spirit.

**Objection 2:** In the book *De Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus* it says, “We believe that no catechumen, even if he has died with good works, will have eternal life—unless he has died through martyrdom, where the whole sacramental\* power\* of\* baptism is brought to completion.” But if an individual could be saved without baptism, this would especially hold in the case of catechumens who have good works, since they seem to have “faith operating through love” (Galatians 5:6). Therefore, it seems that no one can be saved without baptism.

**Objection 3:** As was explained above (a. 1 and q. 65, a. 4), the sacrament of baptism is necessary for salvation. But as *Metaphysics* 5 says, “The necessary is that without which such-and-such a thing cannot exist.” Therefore, it seems that without baptism no one can attain salvation.

**But contrary to this:** In *Super Leviticum* Augustine says, “An invisible sanctification has been present to some individuals and it has been of profit to them without the visible sacraments, whereas visible sanctification, which comes with the visible sacrament, may be present without invisible sanctification, but is of no profit.” Therefore, since the sacrament of baptism involves visible sanctification, it seems that without the sacrament of baptism an individual can attain salvation through invisible sanctification.

**I respond:** There are two ways in which an individual can lack the sacrament of baptism:

(a) In one way, both *in reality* and *in his desire* (*et re et voto*)—something that occurs in the case of those who are not baptized and desire not to be baptized. This clearly involves contempt for the sacrament and has to do with those who have the use of free choice (*quantum ad illos qui habent usum liberi arbitrii*). And so those who are lacking baptism in this manner cannot attain salvation, since they are neither sacramentally nor mentally incorporated into Christ, through whom alone there is salvation.

(b) In the second way, an individual can lack the sacrament of baptism *in reality*, but *not in his*

*desire (re sed non voto)*, as when someone desires to be baptized, but death intervenes by chance before he receives baptism. Now such an individual can attain salvation without baptism because of his desire for baptism, where his desire proceeds from “faith operating through love.” For God, whose power is not tied to the visible sacraments, sanctifies the individual interiorly through this faith. Hence, Ambrose says of Valentinian, who died as a catechumen, “I lost the one I was going to regenerate, but he did not lose the grace that he desired.”

**Reply to objection 1:** As 1 Kings 16:7 says, “Men see appearances, but the Lord sees the heart.” But an individual who desires to be reborn of water and the Holy Spirit has been reborn in his heart even if not in his body; as the Apostle puts it in Romans 2:29, “Circumcision is a matter of the heart in the spirit, not in the letter; his praise is not from men but from God.”

**Reply to objection 2:** No one arrives at eternal life unless he has been absolved of all sin and debt of punishment. This universal absolution is effected in the reception of baptism and in martyrdom, and that is why it is said that “the whole sacramental\* power\* of\* baptism is brought to completion” in martyrdom, viz., as regards the full liberation from sin and punishment. Therefore, if a catechumen has a desire for baptism (since otherwise he would not die in good works, which cannot exist without “faith operating through love”), such a deceased individual does not immediately attain to eternal life, but instead undergoes punishment for his past sins, “and yet he will be saved as if through fire,” as 1 Corinthians 3:15 says.

**Reply to objection 3:** The sacrament of baptism is said to be necessary for salvation to the extent that a man cannot be saved unless baptism is had at least in his intention (*saltem in voluntate habeatur*)—“which, in God’s eyes, counts for the deed” (Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, 57).

### Article 3

#### Should baptism be deferred?

It seems that baptism should be deferred (*baptismus sit differendus*):

**Objection 1:** Pope Leo says, “Two times, viz., Easter and Pentecost, have been fixed for baptizing by the lawful Roman pontiff. Hence, we warn Your Love not to mix other days into this observance.” Therefore, it seems necessary for some individuals not to be baptized immediately, and for their baptism to be deferred until the times noted above.

**Objection 2:** The Council of Agde says, “If Jews, whose bad faith often ‘returns to their vomit’, wish to submit to the laws of the Catholic Church, let them for eight months enter the threshold of the Church among the catechumens; and if they are found to have come in good faith, then in the end they deserve the grace of baptism.” Therefore, men should not be baptized at once, and baptism should be deferred for a certain fixed time.

**Objection 3:** Isaiah 27:9 says, “... and this is all the fruit, that the sin thereof should be taken away.” But if baptism is deferred, sin seems to be taken away, or at least diminished, to a greater degree. First of all, because those who sin after baptism sin more grievously—this according to Hebrews 10:29 (“How much worse punishments do you think he deserves who ... has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant in which he was sanctified,” viz. through baptism?). Second, because baptism removes past sins but not future sins, and so to the extent that baptism is deferred for a longer time, it will remove more sins. Therefore, it seems that baptism should be deferred for a long time.

**But contrary to this:** Ecclesiasticus 5:8 says, “Do not delay being converted to the Lord, and do not defer it from day to day.” But complete conversion to God belongs to those who are regenerated in Christ through baptism. Therefore, baptism should not be delayed from day to day.

**I respond:** On this matter we have to distinguish whether it is children or adults who are to be baptized.

For if it is children who are to be baptized, then baptism should not be deferred. First of all, since in their case one is not waiting for more formation (*maior instructio*) in them or, again, a more complete conversion (*plenior conversio*). Second, because of the danger of death, since this cannot be helped by any remedy except through the sacrament of baptism.

By contrast, as was said above (a. 2), adults can be helped by just a desire for baptism. And that is why the sacrament of baptism should not be conferred on adults as soon as they are converted; instead, it is necessary to defer baptism until some set time. First of all, because of the Church's caution about being deceived and conferring baptism on those who come to her under false pretenses (*fictæ accedentibus conferens*)—this according to 1 John 4:1 (“Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God”). This sort of testing is made in the case of those who approach for baptism when their faith and morals are examined throughout some length of time. Second, this is necessary for the good of those who are being baptized, since they need some length of time to become fully instructed in the Faith and to become accustomed to those things that belong to the Christian life. Third, when men are admitted to baptism on the principal feast days, viz., Easter and Pentecost, this is necessary to foster a certain reverence for the sacrament, and so they receive the sacrament with more devotion.

Nonetheless, there are two reasons for eliminating this sort of delay. First of all, when those who are to be baptized appear to be perfectly instructed in the faith and fit for baptism—in the way that, as Acts 10 reports, Phillip baptized the eunuch. Second, because of illness or some sort of danger of death. Hence, Pope Leo says, “Those who are threatened by death, sickness, siege, persecution, or shipwreck should be baptized at any time.”

However, if, while an individual is awaiting the time instituted by the Church, he is overtaken by death and this emergency excludes the sacrament, he is saved, though “through fire,” as was explained above (a. 2, ad 2). On the other hand, an individual commits a sin if he puts off receiving baptism beyond the time appointed by the Church, except because of an unavoidable cause and with the permission of the leaders of the Church. But even this sin, along with his other sins, can be erased by his subsequent contrition, which, as was explained above (q. 66, a. 11), takes the place of baptism.

**Reply to objection 1:** As has been explained, this command of Pope Leo concerning the two times to be observed for baptism should be understood to apply except in the danger of death (which is always to be feared in the case of children).

**Reply to objection 2:** This decree concerning Jews was meant to protect the Church, so that Jews would not corrupt the faith of simple people if it turned out that they were not fully converted. And yet, as is added in the same place, “If within the prescribed time they incur the danger of illness, they should be baptized.”

**Reply to objection 3:** Through the grace that it confers, baptism not only removes past sins, but also impedes future sins from being committed.

However, the main thing to be taken into consideration is that men not sin, whereas it is a secondary matter that they sin less grievously or even that their sins be cleansed—this according to 1 John 2:1-2 (“My little children, I write these things to you *in order that you might not sin*. But even if someone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just, and He is the propitiation for our sins”).

## Article 4

### Are sinners to be baptized?

It seems that sinners are to be baptized (*peccatores sint baptizandi*):

**Objection 1:** Zachariah 13:1 says, “On that day there shall be a fountain open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for the washing of the sinner and of the unclean woman.” This is understood to be about the font of baptism. Therefore, it seems that the sacrament of baptism is to be made available even to sinners.

**Objection 2:** In Matthew 9:12 our Lord says, “A physician is needed not for the healthy, but for those who are sick (*male habentibus*).” But those who are sick are the sinners. Therefore, since the medicine of the spiritual physician, viz., Christ, is baptism, it seems that the sacrament of baptism should be made available to sinners.

**Objection 3:** No assistance should be taken away from sinners. But sinners are spiritually aided by the baptismal character itself, since it is a sort of disposition toward grace. Therefore, it seems that the sacrament of baptism should be made available to sinners.

**But contrary to this:** Augustine says, “He who created you without you will not justify you without you.” But since a sinner has a will that is not disposed, he does not cooperate with God. Therefore, baptism would be given to him in vain as regards justification.

**I respond:** There are two ways in which an individual can be called a sinner:

In one way, because of a *past stain and debt of punishment* (*propter maculum et reatum praeteritum*). And the sacrament of baptism should be conferred on those who are sinners in this sense, because baptism was instituted especially in order that through it the filth of sinners might be washed away—this according to Ephesians 5:26 (“... washing her”—viz., the Church—“in a bath of water in the word of life”).

In the second way, an individual is called a sinner because of *his desire to sin, along with his intention to persist in sin* (*ex voluntate peccandi et proposito persistendi in peccato*). And the sacrament of baptism should not be conferred on those who are sinners in this sense. First of all, because through baptism men are incorporated into Christ—this according to Galatians 3:27 (“All of you who been baptized in Christ have put on Christ”). But as long as an individual has the desire to sin, he cannot be conjoined to Christ—this according to 2 Corinthians 6:14 (“What does justice have in common with iniquity?”). Hence, in the book *De Poenitentia* Augustine says, “No one constituted as the arbiter of his own will can begin a new life unless he repents of his old life.” Second, because in the works of Christ and the Church nothing should be done in vain, and what does not pertain to the end toward which a work is ordered is in vain. But no one who has the desire to sin can at the same time be cleansed of sin, which is what baptism is ordered toward, since this would be to posit contradictories existing simultaneously. Third, because there should not be any sort of falsity in the sacramental signs. But the fact that an individual presents himself to be cleansed by baptism signifies that he is disposing himself toward an interior washing—something that is not possible in the case of an individual who has the intention of persisting in sin. Hence, it is clear that the sacrament of baptism is not to be conferred on such individuals.

**Reply to objection 1:** This passage has to be understood as applying to sinners who have the desire to withdraw from sin.

**Reply to objection 2:** There are two ways in which the spiritual physician, viz., Christ, operates:

In one way, interiorly through Himself, and when He operates in this way, He prepares the will of the man to will the good and hate evil.

In the other way, He operates through His ministers by applying the sacraments exteriorly, and

when He operates in this way, He does so by bringing to completion what has been started exteriorly. And so the sacrament of baptism is not to be made available to an individual unless some sign of an interior conversion is apparent in him—just as bodily medicine is not applied to a sick individual unless some vital movement is apparent in him.

**Reply to objection 3:** Baptism is the sacrament of faith. But unformed faith is not sufficient for salvation and it is not a foundation; only informed faith, which, as Augustine says in *De Fide et Operibus*, “operates through love,” is a foundation. Hence, neither can the sacrament of baptism confer salvation on someone who has a desire to sin—something that excludes informed faith (*quae fidei formam excludit*).

Moreover, as long as the desire to sin is apparent in an individual, it is not the case that he is going to be disposed toward grace by the impression of the baptismal character. For “God compels no one toward virtue,” as Damascene puts it.

## Article 5

### Should works of satisfaction be imposed on sinners when they are baptized?

It seems that works of satisfaction should be imposed on sinners when they are baptized (*peccatoribus baptizatis sint opera satisfactoria imponenda*):

**Objection 1:** It seems to belong to God’s justice that an individual is punished for each of his sins—this according to Ecclesiastes 12:14 (“God will bring to judgment all things that are done”). But works of satisfaction are imposed on sinners as punishment for past sins. Therefore, it seems that works of satisfaction should be imposed on sinners when they are baptized.

**Objection 2:** Through acts of satisfaction sinners are roused to be converted anew to righteousness, and occasions for sinning are removed, since to make satisfaction is to excise the causes of sin and not to indulge in the leadup to sin. But this is especially necessary for the newly baptized. Therefore, it seems that works of satisfaction should be enjoined upon the baptized.

**Objection 3:** It is no less obligatory for a man to make satisfaction to God than to make satisfaction to his neighbor. But the newly baptized should be enjoined upon to make satisfaction to their neighbors if they have injured them. Therefore, they should also be enjoined upon to make satisfaction to God through acts of penance.

**But contrary to this:** In commenting on Romans 11:29 (“The gifts and the call of God are without acts of penance (*sine poenitentia*)”), Ambrose says, “The grace of God requires neither sighs nor groans in baptism, nor indeed any work at all, but faith alone, and it remits all things without cost.”

**I respond:** As the Apostle says in Romans 6:3-4, “All of us who have been baptized in Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death,” so that a man is incorporated by baptism into the very death of Christ. But it is clear from what was said above (q. 48, aa. 2 and 4, and q. 49, a. 3) that Christ’s death made sufficient satisfaction for sins—“not only for our sins but also for the sins of the whole world,” as 1 John 2:2 puts it. And so there is no need to enjoin any satisfaction for any sins upon an individual who is baptized. Moreover, this would be an insult to Christ’s passion and death, as if they were not sufficient to make full satisfaction for the sins of those who are to be baptized.

**Reply to objection 1:** As Augustine says in *De Baptismo Parvulorum*, “Baptism brings it about that those who have been baptized in Christ are incorporated as His members.” Hence, Christ’s pain itself made satisfaction for the sins of those who were to be baptized, just as the pain of one member can make satisfaction for the sin of another member. Thus, Isaiah 53:4 says, “Surely, He has borne our iniquities and carried our sorrows.”

**Reply to objection 2:** The newly baptized have to be roused toward righteousness not by works of penance (*non per opera poenalia*), but by easy works, so that they move forward “by, as it were, the milk of easy exercises toward more perfect works,” as a Gloss Psalm 23:2 (“As a child is weaned beyond his mother”) puts it. In this way, our Lord excused His disciples from fasting when they were newly converted, as is clear from Matthew 9:14ff. And this is what 1 Peter 2:2 is getting at: “Desire, as newborn babies ... milk, that you might grow to salvation.”

**Reply to objection 3:** To make restitution to one’s neighbors for things that have been taken from them in a sinful way (*ablata male*), and to make satisfaction to them for injuries inflicted on them, is to stop sinning against them. For an individual sins by the very fact that he holds on to what belongs to another and by the very fact that he does not make restitution to his [injured] neighbor. And so the reason why baptized sinners have to be enjoined upon to make satisfaction to their neighbors is that they have to be enjoined upon *to stop sinning* and not that they have to be enjoined upon to *suffer punishment for past sins*.

## Article 6

### Are sinners who come forth for baptism obligated to confess their sins?

It seems that sinners who come forth for baptism are obligated to confess their sins (*peccatores ad Baptismum accedentes teneantur sua peccata confiteri*):

**Objection 1:** Matthew 3:6 says, “Many were being baptized by John in the Jordan, confessing their sins.” But Christ’s baptism is more perfect than John’s baptism. Therefore, it seems that, *a fortiori*, those who are about to be baptized with Christ’s baptism should confess their sins.

**Objection 2:** Proverbs 28:13 says, “He who hides his sins will not be made straight, but he who confesses them and leaves them behind will receive mercy.” But individuals are baptized in order to receive mercy for their sins. Therefore, those who are about to be baptized should confess their sins.

**Objection 3:** Penance is required before baptism—this according to Acts 2:38 (“Do penance and be baptized, every one of you”). But confessing is a part of penance. Therefore, it seems that confessing one’s sins is required before baptism.

**But contrary to this:** The confession of sins should come with tears. As Augustine puts it in *De Poenitentia*, “The whole variety [of sins] should be considered and wept over.” But as Ambrose points out, “God’s grace in baptism does not require either groans or lamentation.” Therefore, the confession of sins should not be required of those who are about to be baptized.

**I respond:** There are two sorts of confession of sins:

The one is *interior and made to God*. And this sort of confession of sins is required before baptism, so that the man, recalling his sins, expresses sorrow for them. “For he cannot begin his new life unless he repents of his old life,” as Augustine puts it in *De Poenitentia*.

The second sort of confession is *exterior and made to a priest*. And this sort of confession is not required before baptism. First of all, because given that this sort of confession involves the person of a minister, it belongs to the sacrament of penance (*ad poenitentiae sacramentum*), and it is not required before baptism because baptism is the gateway to all the sacraments. Second, because exterior confession, which is made to a priest, is ordered toward the priest’s absolving the one who is confessing from his sins and binding him to works of satisfaction, which, as was explained above (a. 5), are not to be imposed on those who have [just] been baptized. Nor, again, do those who are being baptized need remission of their sins by the keys of the Church (*per claves Ecclesiae*), since all their sins are forgiven through baptism. Third, because a particular confession made to a man is itself painful because of the

shame of the one confessing, whereas no exterior pain is imposed on the one who is being baptized.

And this is why a *specific* confession of sins is not required of those who are to be baptized; all that is required is a *general* confession of sins—something that they make when, according to the Church’s rite, they renounce Satan and all his works. And it is along these lines that a certain Gloss on Matthew 3:6 says, “In the baptism of John, those about to be baptized are given an example of confessing their sins and promising to do better.”

If, however, any of those about to be baptized wish, because of their devotion, to confess their sins, then their confession should be heard, not in order that a work of satisfaction might be imposed upon them, but in order that formation in the spiritual life might be given to them to help counter their usual sins.

**Reply to objection 1:** Sins were not remitted in John’s baptism; instead, it was “a baptism of repenting” (Matthew 1:4). And so those who came forth for that baptism appropriately confessed their sins, in order that their penance might be determined by the nature of the sins. By contrast, Christ’s baptism is without an exterior penance, as Ambrose points out. And so the two cases are not similar.

**Reply to objection 2:** An interior confession made to God suffices for the baptized, along with an exterior general confession, in order that they might be directed and might receive mercy. But, as has been explained, an exterior specific confession is not required.

**Reply to objection 3:** Confession is part of the *sacrament* of penance, which, as has been explained, is not necessary before baptism. Instead, what is required is the interior *virtue* of penance.

## Article 7

### Is the intention to receive the sacrament of baptism required on the part of the one to be baptized?

It seems that the intention to receive the sacrament of baptism is not required on the part of the one to be baptized (*ex parte baptizati non requiratur intentio suscipiendi sacramentum baptismi*):

**Objection 1:** The baptized individual is, as it were, what is being acted upon in the sacrament (*se habet sicut patiens in sacramento*). But an intention is required on the part of what is acting and not on the part of what is being acted upon. Therefore, it seems that the intention to receive baptism is not required on the part of the one being baptized,

**Objection 2:** If something required for baptism is omitted, then the man needs to be baptized a second time—for instance, as was explained above (q. 66, a. 6), when the invocation of the Trinity is omitted. But it does not seem that because an individual did not have the intention to receive baptism, he needs to be baptized a second time; otherwise, since the intention of an individual who has been baptized is never evident, anyone would be able to ask to be baptized again because of a lack of the relevant intention. Therefore, it does not seem that the intention to receive the sacrament is required on the part of an individual who is baptized.

**Objection 3:** Baptism is given to counter original sin. But original sin is contracted without the intention of the one who is born. Therefore, it seems, baptism does not require an intention on the part of the one who is baptized.

**But contrary to this:** According to the Church’s rite, those who are about to be baptized profess that they are seeking baptism from the Church. They thereby express their intention with respect to receiving the sacrament.

**I respond:** Through baptism an individual dies to his old life of sin and begins a sort of newness of life—this according to Romans 6:4 (“We were buried with Christ by means of baptism into death, in



order that just as Christ has risen from the dead, so we also may walk in a newness of life”). And so just as, in order for a man to die to his old life, what is required, according to Augustine, in an individual having the use of free choice, is an act of the will “by which he repents of his old life,” so, too, an act of will is required by which he intends a newness of life, the beginning of which is the very reception of the sacrament. And so what is required on the part of the one to be baptized is an act of the will, viz., the act of intending to receive the sacrament.

**Reply to objection 1:** In justification, which is brought about through baptism, the being acted upon is not forced, but voluntary. And so what it is required [on the part of the one being baptized] is an intention to receive what is being given to him.

**Reply to objection 2:** If the intention to receive the sacrament were lacking in an adult, then he would have to be rebaptized. But if this were not clear, then [the minister] would have to say, “If you have not been baptized, then I baptize you, etc.”

**Reply to objection 3:** Baptism is ordered not only toward countering original sin but also toward countering actual sins, which are caused by one’s own act of willing and act of intending.

## Article 8

### Is faith required on the part of the one being baptized?

It seems that faith is required on the part of the one being baptized (*fides requiratur ex parte baptizati*):

**Objection 1:** The sacrament of baptism was instituted by Christ. But when He handed down the form of baptism in Mark 16:16, Christ placed faith prior to baptism by saying, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” Therefore, it seems that the sacrament of baptism cannot exist unless there is faith.

**Objection 2:** In the sacraments of the Church nothing is done in vain. But according to the Church’s rite, an individual who comes forth for baptism is questioned about the Faith when it is asked, “Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?” Therefore, it seems that faith is required for baptism.

**Objection 3:** The intention to receive baptism is required for baptism. But this intention cannot exist without correct faith (*sine recta fide*), since baptism is the sacrament of correct faith; for it is through baptism that men “are incorporated into Christ,” as Augustine puts it in *De Baptismo Parvulorum*, and that cannot occur without correct faith—this according to Ephesians 3:17 (“... to have Christ dwelling through faith in your hearts”). Therefore, it seems that an individual who does not have correct faith cannot receive the sacrament of baptism.

**Objection 4:** As was established in the Second Part (*ST* 2-2, q. 10, a. 3), unbelief is the most grievous sin of all. But those who persist in sin should not be baptized. Therefore, neither should those who persist in unbelief.

**But contrary to this:** Writing to the bishop Quiricus, Gregory says, “From the ancient practice of the Fathers we have learned that those who, in heresy, are baptized in the name of the Trinity, are such that when they come back to the Holy Church, they are recalled to her bosom either by an anointing with chrism, or by an imposition of hands, or by a simple profession of faith.” But this would not be so if faith were necessarily required for the reception of baptism.

**I respond:** As is clear from what has been said (q. 63, a. 6 and q. 66, a. 9), there are two things effected in the soul by baptism, viz., the character and the grace. Therefore, there are two ways in which something is necessarily required for baptism:

In one way, as something without which *the grace* cannot be had, where grace is the *ultimate* effect

of the sacrament. And it is in this way that correct faith is necessarily required for baptism; for as Romans 3:22 says, “The righteousness of God is through faith in Jesus Christ.”

In the second way, what is necessarily required for baptism is something without which *the character* of baptism cannot be imprinted. And in this sense the correct faith of the one being baptized is not necessarily required for baptism, in the same way that the correct faith of the one who confers the baptism is not necessarily required, as long as the other things necessary for the sacrament are present. For the sacrament is not brought to completion either by the righteousness of the individual conferring baptism or by the righteousness of the individual receiving baptism; instead, the sacrament is brought to completion by the power of God.

**Reply to objection 1:** Our Lord is here talking about baptism insofar as it leads men to salvation with respect to justifying grace—something that cannot occur without correct faith. And that is why He expressly says, “Whoever *believes* and is baptized will be saved.”

**Reply to objection 2:** The Church intends to baptize men in order that they might be cleansed of sin—this according to Isaiah 27:9 (“This is all the fruit, that the sin should be taken away”). And so, as regards herself, she does not intend to give baptism to anyone except those who have correct faith, without which there is no remission of sins. And that is why she asks those coming forth for baptism whether they have faith.

However, if an individual without correct faith receives baptism outside the Church, he does not receive it unto his salvation (*non percipit illud ad suam salutem*). Hence, Augustine says, “A comparison of the Church to Paradise indicates to us that while it is, to be sure, possible for men to receive the Church’s baptism outside her fold, nonetheless, no one can receive, or hold on to, the salvation of beatitude outside of her.”

**Reply to objection 3:** Even an individual who does not have correct faith with respect to the other articles [of the Faith] can have correct faith with respect to the sacrament of baptism, and in such a case there is no impediment to his being able to have the intention to receive the sacrament.

However, even if an individual does not think correctly about this sacrament, it is sufficient for the reception of the sacrament that he have a general intention by which he intends to receive baptism as Christ instituted it and as the Church hands it on.

**Reply to objection 4:** Just as the sacrament of baptism should not be conferred on an individual who does not will to withdraw from his other sins, so neither should it be conferred on an individual who does not will to give up his unbelief. Still, in both cases he receives the sacrament if it is conferred on him, even though he does not receive it unto his salvation.

## Article 9

### Should children be baptized?

It seems that children should not be baptized (*pueri non sint baptizandi*):

**Objection 1:** As was explained above (a. 7), the intention to receive the sacrament is required in the one who is baptized. But children cannot have an intention of this sort, since they do not have the use of free choice. Therefore, it seems that they cannot receive the sacrament of baptism.

**Objection 2:** As was explained above (a. 4, ad 3 and q. 39, a. 5, and q. 66, a. 1, ad 1), baptism is the sacrament of faith. But children cannot have faith, which, as Augustine explains in *Super Ioannem*, consists in an act of the will on the part of the believers (*consistit in voluntate credentium*). Nor can it be claimed that they are saved in the faith of their parents, since sometimes the parents are non-believers, and so the children would instead be damned through their parents’ unbelief. Therefore, it seems that

children cannot be baptized.

**Objection 3:** 1 Peter 3:21 says, “Baptism saves men (not the putting off of the filth of the flesh, but the inquiry of a good conscience after God).” But children have neither a good nor a bad conscience, since they do not have the use of reason; nor, again, are they appropriately interrogated, since they do not understand. Therefore, children should not be baptized.

**But contrary to this:** In *Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, chap. 7 Dionysius says, “Our divine leaders”—viz., the apostles—“approved of infants being admitted to baptism.”

**I respond:** As the Apostle says in Romans 5:17, “If by reason of the one man’s offense death reigned through the one man, much more will they who receive the abundance of the grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one Jesus Christ.” But children contract original sin from the sin of Adam—something that is clear from the fact that they are subject to mortality, which has passed to all through the sin of the first man, as the Apostle says in the same place (Romans 5:12). Hence, *a fortiori*, children can receive the grace of Christ in order to reign in eternal life. But in John 3:5 our Lord Himself says, “Unless a man is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he will not enter into the kingdom of God.” Hence, it was necessary to baptize children, in order that just as they incur damnation through Adam, so they might attain salvation by being born again through Christ.

In addition, it was appropriate for children to be baptized in order that, nourished from childhood in those things that belong to the Christian life, they might more firmly persevere in that life—this according Proverbs 22:6 (“One who grows up in accord with this way, even when he is old, will not depart from it”). And it is this line of reasoning that Dionysius appeals to in *Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, chap. 7.

**Reply to objection 1:** Spiritual rebirth, which is effected by baptism, is in a certain way similar to carnal birth with respect to the fact that just as children implanted in their mother’s womb do not receive nutrition through themselves but are instead sustained by their mother’s nutrition, so, too, children who do not have the use of reason implanted, as it were, in the womb of mother Church, receive salvation not through themselves, but through an act of the Church. Hence, in *De Peccatorum Meritis et Remissione* Augustine says, “Our Mother the Church offers her maternal mouth to her little ones in order that they might that they might be imbued with the sacred mysteries; for they cannot as yet with their own hearts believe unto righteousness, nor with their own mouths confess unto salvation. And if they are correctly called the faithful because they in some way profess their faith through the words of those who bring them forth, why should they not also be held to be penitents, since through the words of those same sponsors they demonstrate their renunciation of the devil and of this world?” And for the same reason they can be called ‘those who intend’—not through an act of intending of their own, even though they themselves sometimes struggle and cry, but through an act on the part of those by whom they are brought forth.

**Reply to objection 2:** As Augustine says in writing to Boniface, “In the Church of our savior the little ones have faith through others, just as they contracted from others the sins that are remitted in baptism.” Nor is their salvation impeded if their parents are non-believers. For as Augustine says in writing to the selfsame Boniface, “The little ones are brought forth in order that they might receive spiritual grace, not so much from those by whose hands they are brought forth (though from these, too, if they themselves are good believers) as from the whole company of the saints and the faithful. For they are rightly understood to be brought forth by those who are pleased at their being offered and by whose charity they are united in communion with the Holy Spirit.” By contrast, the unbelief of their own parents—even if, after baptism, they try to infect their children with their sacrifices to demons—does not harm them. For as Augustine says in the same place, “Once the child has been regenerated through the will of others, he cannot subsequently be held by the bonds of the iniquity of others when he does not consent by his own will—this according to Ezekiel 18:4 (‘As the soul of the father is mine, so also the

soul of the child; the soul which sins, that soul will die'). And the reason why he contracted from Adam what is taken away by the grace of that sacrament is that he was not yet a separate living soul." The faith of the one—indeed, the faith of the whole Church—profits the little one through the operation of the Holy Spirit, who unites the Church and communicates the good of the one to the other.

**Reply to objection 3:** Just as, when a child is baptized, he has faith not in his own right but through others, so he is not interrogated in his own right but through others, and those who are interrogated confess the Faith of the Church in the person of the child, who is added to this Faith through the sacrament of faith. By contrast, the child acquires a good conscience in his own right—not, to be sure, by an *act*, but instead by a *habit*—through justifying grace.

### Article 10

#### Should the younger children of Jews or of other non-believers be baptized even against the will of their parents?

It seems that the younger children of Jews or of other non-believers should be baptized even against the will of their parents (*pueri Iudaeorum vel aliorum infidelium sint baptizandi, etiam invitis parentibus*):

**Objection 1:** More should be done to help a man against the danger of eternal death than against the danger of temporal death. But a child who is in danger of temporal death should be helped even if his parents oppose this because of their malice. Therefore, *a fortiori*, the younger children of non-believers should be assisted against the danger of eternal death even against the will of their parents.

**Objection 2:** The children of servants are servants and in the power of their lords. But Jews are the servants of kings and rulers, along with all other non-believers. Therefore, without any injury those who rule the Jews can bring it about that their children, or the children of other non-believing servants, are baptized.

**Objection 3:** Each man belongs more to God, from whom he has his soul, than to his carnal father, from whom he has his body. Therefore, it is not unjust for the younger children (*pueri*) of non-believers to be taken away from their carnal parents and consecrated to God through baptism.

**But contrary to this:** In *Decretals*, dist. 45, from the Council of Toledo, it says, "As regards the Jews, the holy synod commands that, from this time on, none of them be forced to believe. For such individuals are to be saved willingly and not saved against their will, in order that the form of their righteousness might be uncorrupted (*ut integra sit forma iustitiae*)."

**I respond:** The younger children of non-believers either have the use of reason or do not have the use of reason.

If they have the use of reason, then those things that belong to divine law or natural law already begin to be within their power. And so by their own volition, even if their parents are unwilling, they can receive baptism, just as they can contract matrimony. And so individuals of this sort can licitly be advised and induced to receive baptism.

By contrast, if they do not yet have the use of free choice, then under natural law they are still under the care of their parents, as long as they cannot provide for themselves. Hence, it is also said of the children of the ancients that they were saved in the faith of their parents. And so it would be contrary to natural justice for such children to be baptized against the will of their parents, just as it would be if someone having the use of reason were baptized against his own will. It would even be dangerous for the children of non-believers to be baptized under such circumstances, since they would easily fall back into unbelief because of their natural affection for their parents. And that is why the Church does not have a

custom according to which the younger children of non-believers are baptized against the will of their parents.

**Reply to objection 1:** An individual is not to be snatched away from corporeal death in a way contrary to the order of civil law; for instance, if someone has been condemned to death by his judge, then no one is allowed to violently snatch him from death. Hence, neither is anyone allowed to break the order of the natural law, by which a younger child is under the care of his father, in order to liberate him from the danger of eternal death.

**Reply to objection 2:** The Jews are the servants of rulers by civil servitude, which does not exclude the order of natural or divine law.

**Reply to objection 3:** A man is ordered toward God by reason, through which he is able to have cognition of God. Hence, before a child has the use of reason, he is ordered toward God through the reason of his parents, to whose care he is naturally subject, and it is according to their disposition that divine matters are carried out with respect to him.

## Article 11

### Can those who are in their mother's womb be baptized?

It seems that those who are in their mother's womb can be baptized (*in maternis uteris existentes possint baptizari*):

**Objection 1:** As the Apostle explains in Romans 5:15, Christ's gift is more efficacious with respect to salvation than Adam's sin is with respect to damnation. But children who are in their mothers' wombs are damned because of Adam's sin. Therefore, *a fortiori*, they can be saved through Christ's gift—and this is effected through baptism. Therefore, children who are in their mothers' wombs can be baptized.

**Objection 2:** A child that is in his mother's womb seems to be something of the mother. But if the mother is baptized, then whatever of her exists within her is baptized. Therefore, it seems that if the mother is baptized, then a child that exists in her womb is baptized.

**Objection 3:** Eternal death is worse than corporeal death. But of two evils, the lesser evil should be chosen. Therefore, if the child existing in his mother's womb cannot be baptized, then it would be better for the mother to be opened up and for the child, taken out by force, to be baptized than for the child to be eternally damned by dying without baptism.

**Objection 4:** It sometimes happens that a part of a child emerges first [from the womb]; for instance, in Genesis 38:27 we read that when Tamar was in labor, "in the very coming forth of the [two] infants, one thrust out his hand and the midwife tied a scarlet thread on it, saying, 'This one will come out first'. But when he retracted his hand, the other one came out." Now sometimes in such a case there is an imminent danger of death. Therefore, it seems that the part in question should be baptized, while the child is still in his mother's womb.

**But contrary to this:** In *Epistola ad Dardanum* Augustine says, "No one is reborn unless he is born for the first time." But baptism is a sort of spiritual rebirth. Therefore, an individual should not be baptized before he comes out of the womb.

**I respond:** It is necessary for baptism that the body of the one to be baptized be washed with water, since, as was explained above (q. 66, a. 1), baptism is a sort of washing. But before the body of an infant comes out of the womb (*antequam nascatur ex utero*), it cannot in any way be washed with water—unless, perhaps, one claims that a baptismal washing by which the mother's body is washed penetrates to the child who is inside her belly (*in ventre existentem*). But this cannot be the case, both

because (a) the soul of the child, toward whose sanctification the baptism is ordered, is distinct from the soul of the mother, and because (b) the body of the animated infant (*corpus puerperii animati*) is already formed and, as a result, is distinct from the body of the mother. And so a baptism by which the mother is baptized does not flow over into the offspring that is in her womb. Hence, in *Contra Iulianum* Augustine says, “If what is conceived within the mother belongs to her body in such a way that it is counted as a part of her body, then the infant who is gestating in the womb is not baptized when his mother is baptized because of an urgent danger of death. By contrast, when he himself”—viz., the infant—“is now baptized, it is absolutely clear that he did not belong to his mother’s body when he was in the womb.” And so what remains is that there is no way in which a child can be baptized when he exists in his mother’s womb.

**Reply to objection 1:** Children who exist in their mothers’ wombs have not yet come into the light so as to lead their lives with other men. Hence, they cannot be subject to human action in order to receive the sacraments for salvation through the ministry of those other men.

However, they are still the subject of the operation of God, in whose presence they live, so that by a certain privilege of grace they might receive sanctification; this is clear in the case of those who have been sanctified in the womb.

**Reply to objection 2:** An internal member of the mother is something of hers by *the continuity and union of a material part with respect to a whole*. By contrast, a child who exists in his mother’s womb is something of hers through a sort of *binding together of distinct bodies*.

**Reply to objection 3:** As Romans 3:8 says, “Evils are not to be done in order that goods might come from them.” And that is why a man must not kill the mother in order to baptize the child.

However, if the mother is dead with a living infant in her womb, then she should be opened up and the child baptized.

**Reply to objection 4:** For baptism, one should wait for the child’s full exit from the womb, unless [the child’s] death is imminent. However, if what emerges first is the head, in which sensation is seated, it should be baptized if there is an imminent danger, and in such a case the child is not to be rebaptized later on if it turns out that he is born completely.

It likewise seems that the same thing should be done, no matter which other part might emerge. However, since bodily integrity is seated in none of the [other] exterior parts to such an extent as it is in the head, it seems to some that, because of the doubt that arises if any other part of the body is washed, the child should, after his complete birth, be baptized under the form, “If you have not been baptized, I baptize you, etc.”

## Article 12

### Should the insane or the mentally impaired be baptized?

It seems that the insane and the mentally impaired should not be baptized (*furiosi et amentes non debeant baptizari*):

**Objection 1:** As was explained above (a. 7), an intention in the one who is being baptized is required for receiving baptism. But since the insane and the mentally impaired lack the use of reason, the only intentions they can have are disordered. Therefore, they should not be baptized.

**Objection 2:** Man surpasses the non-rational animals by the fact that he has reason. But the insane and the mentally impaired do not have the use of reason, and in some cases the use of reason is not even expected at some future time in them in the way that it is expected at some future time in children. Therefore, it seems that just as non-rational animals are not baptized, so neither should such insane and mentally impaired individuals be baptized.

**Objection 3:** The use of reason is more constricted in the case of the insane and the mentally impaired more than it is in those who are sleeping. But baptism is not usually given to those who are sleeping. Therefore, it should not be given to the insane or to the mentally impaired.

**But contrary to this:** In *Confessiones* 4 Augustine talks about his friend who “who was in a high fever and when he had for a long time lain unconscious ... so that his life was despaired of, he was baptized.” And yet the baptism had its effect on him. Hence, baptism should sometimes be given to those who lack the use of reason.

**I respond:** A distinction has to be made with respect to the mentally impaired and the insane;

For there are certain individuals who are like this from birth, who have no lucid intervals, and in whom no use of reason is apparent. And in such cases, as regards the reception of baptism, the judgment seems to be the same as in the case of children, who, as was explained above (a. 9, ad 2), are baptized in the faith of the Church.

By contrast, there are other mentally impaired individuals who have fallen into mental impairment from the sound mind which they previously had. And such individuals are to be judged by the volitions that they had while they were of sound mind. And so if the desire (*voluntas*) to receive baptism was then apparent in them, baptism should be given to them in their insane or mentally impaired state, even if at that time they object. On the other hand, if no desire to receive baptism had appeared in them while they were of sound mind, then they should not be baptized.

Now there are some who, even if they have been insane or mentally impaired from birth, nonetheless have some lucid intervals in which they are able to exercise right reason. Hence, if they willed to be baptized at such a time, they can be baptized even when in a mentally impaired state. And the sacrament should be conferred on them if danger is feared; otherwise, it would better to wait for a time at which they are of sound mind in order that they might receive the sacrament with more devotion. However, if at the time of a lucid interval the desire to receive baptism is not apparent in them, then they should not be baptized in their mentally impaired state.

Again, there are some who, even if they are not of altogether sound mind, nonetheless have the use of reason to the extent that they are able to think about their salvation and to understand the power of the sacrament. And the judgment in such cases is the same as in the case of those who are of sound mind and who are baptized willingly and not against their will.

**Reply to objection 1:** The mentally impaired who do not have and have never had the use of reason are baptized with the Church’s intention, so that they believe and repent by the Church’s rite—just as was explained above for the case of children (a. 9).

By contrast, those who either have the use of reason or have had it at some time are baptized in accord with their own intention, which they have now or have had at a time when they were of sound mind.

**Reply to objection 2:** The insane and mentally impaired lack the use of reason incidentally (*per accidens*), i.e., because of some impediment in a corporeal organ, and not because they lack a rational soul in the way that non-rational animals do. Hence, the lines of reasoning about this are not parallel.

**Reply to objection 3:** Those who are sleeping should not be baptized unless there is an imminent danger of death. And in that case they should be baptized if a prior desire to receive baptism was apparent in them—just as has been said about the mentally impaired. And this is what Augustine narrates in *Confessiones* 4 about his friend, who “was baptized without knowing of it” because of the danger of death.