

QUESTION 75

The Conversion of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ

Next we have to consider the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. And on this topic there are eight questions: (1) Does the body of Christ exist in this sacrament in reality (*secundum veritatem*) or only figuratively (*secundum figuram*), i.e., as in a sign? (2) Does the substance of the bread and wine remain in this sacrament after the consecration? (3) Are they annihilated? (4) Are they converted into the body and blood of Christ? (5) Do their accidents remain there after the conversion? (6) Does their substantial form remain there? (7) Is this conversion effected all at once? (8) Is this true: 'The body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread'?

Article 1

Does the body of Christ exist in this sacrament in reality (*secundum veritatem*) or only figuratively (*secundum figuram*), i.e., as in a sign?

It seems that the body of Christ exists in this sacrament not in reality, but only figuratively, i.e., as in a sign (*in hoc sacramento non sit corpus Christi secundum veritatem, sed solum secundum figuram, vel sicut in signo*):

Objection 1: John 6:54, 61 and 64 relate that after our Lord had said, "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood," etc., "many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, 'This is a hard saying.'" And to them He replied, "It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing"—as if to say, in accord with Augustine's exposition of Psalm 98*, "Understand what I have said in a spiritual sense. It is not this body which you see that you are to eat, nor are you to drink the blood which those who will crucify me are about to spill. It is a mystery that I have commended to you; understood spiritually, it will give you life, but the flesh profits nothing."

Objection 2: In Matthew 28:20 our Lord says, "Behold, I am with you all days until the consummation of the world"—and Augustine, in explaining this, says, "The Lord is on high until the world ends, but His truth is nonetheless here with us. For the body in which He rose again must be in one place, but His truth has been diffused everywhere." Therefore, the body of Christ exists in this sacrament not in reality, but only as in a sign.

Objection 3: A body cannot be in many places at the same time; this does not belong even to an angel, since by the same line of reasoning he would be able to exist everywhere. But Christ's body is a real body and it is in heaven. Therefore, it seems that Christ's body exists in the sacrament of the altar not in reality, but only as in a sign.

Objection 4: The sacraments of the Church are ordered toward the benefit of the faithful. But according to Gregory in one of his homilies, an official is rebuked because "he sought Christ's bodily presence." Again, the apostles were kept from receiving the Holy Spirit because they were attached to Christ's bodily presence, as Augustine explains in commenting on John 16:7 ("If I do not go away, the Paraclete will not come to you"). Therefore, it is not the case that Christ exists in the sacrament of the altar with His bodily presence.

But contrary to this: In *De Trinitate* 8 Hilary says, "No room is left for ambiguity concerning the reality of Christ's body and blood. At this point, by our Lord's own profession and by our Faith, His flesh is truly food and His blood is truly drink." And in *De Sacramentis* 6 Ambrose says, "Just as our Lord Jesus Christ is the real Son of God, so it is the real flesh of Christ that we receive and it is His real blood that is drunk."

I respond: It can be discerned only by faith, which is based on divine authority, and not by the senses, that the real body and blood of Christ exist in this sacrament. Hence, in commenting on Luke

22:19 (“This is my body, which is being given for you”), Cyril says, “Do not doubt that this is true, but instead accept the words of our savior on faith; for since He is the Truth, He does not lie.”

And this befits, first of all, *the completeness of the New Law*. For the sacrifices of the Old Law contained the sacrifice of Christ’s passion only figuratively (*solum in figura*)—this according to Hebrews 10:1 (“... the Law, having a shadow of the good things to come and not the exact image of the objects ...”). And so it was necessary for the New Law’s sacrifice, instituted by Christ, to have something more, so that, more specifically, it would contain Him as having suffered not only in signification or in figure, but also in reality (*in rei veritate*). And so this sacrament, which contains Christ Himself in reality, is, as Dionysius puts it in *Ecclesiastica Hierarchia*, chap. 3, “perfective of all the other sacraments” through which Christ’s power is participated in.

Second, it befits the *charity of Christ*, out of which He assumed a real body belonging to our nature for the sake of our salvation. And since, as the Philosopher says in *Ethics* 9, it is especially proper to friendship “to live with one’s friends,” He promised His bodily presence to us as a reward in Matthew 24:28 (“Wherever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together”). Yet, in the meantime, during our pilgrimage, He did not deprive us of His bodily presence, but instead joins us to Himself in this sacrament through the reality of His body and blood. Thus, in John 6:57 He says, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.” Hence, this sacrament is a sign of the greatest charity and raises our hopes because of so intimate a union between Christ and us.

Third, it befits the *completeness of our faith*, which, just as it has to do with Christ’s divinity, likewise has to do with *His humanity*—this according to John 14:1 (“You believe in God, so, too, believe in me”). And since faith has to do with what is invisible, it follows that in the same way that Christ shows us His divinity invisibly, so too in this sacrament He shows us His flesh invisibly.

Some individuals, not taking these points into account, have claimed that in this sacrament Christ’s body and blood exist only as in a sign. This claim has to be rejected as heretical, since it is contrary to Christ’s words. Hence, even Berengarius, who had been the first to invent this heresy, was afterwards forced to revoke his error and to confess the truth of the Faith.

Reply to objection 1: The aforementioned heretics took an occasion for going wrong from this passage [from Augustine]. For when Augustine says, “It is not this body which you see that you are to eat,” he does not intend to exclude the reality of Christ’s body, but instead he means that Christ’s body was not going to be eaten under the appearance with which it was then being seen by them. And by adding, “It is a mystery that I have commended to you; understood spiritually, it will give you life,” he does not mean that Christ’s body exists in this sacrament only with a mystical signification. Instead, it is said to exist ‘spiritually’, i.e., invisibly and by the power of the Spirit. Hence, in *Super Ioannem*, when expounding the words, “The flesh profits nothing,” Augustine says, “But that is how they understood it. For they took it that the flesh was to be eaten as if it were butchered in a carcass or sold in a meat market—and not in the way in which it is enlivened by a spirit. Let the spirit draw near to the flesh, and then the flesh will profit very much; for if the flesh were going to profit nothing, the Word would not have become flesh in order to dwell among us.”

Reply to objection 2: This passage, and all similar ones from Augustine, should be understood to be talking about Christ’s body as seen in its proper appearance—in accord with the way that our Lord Himself said in Matthew 26:11, “... you will not always have me.” However, He does indeed exist invisibly under the appearances of this sacrament wherever this sacrament is brought to completion.

Reply to objection 3: Christ’s body does not exist in the sacrament in the same way that a body exists in a place, where the body is by its dimensions commensurate with the place; instead, Christ’s body exists in a certain special manner which is proper to this sacrament. Hence, we say that Christ’s body exists on different altars, not in the sense of existing in different places, but in the sense of existing in the sacrament. We do not thereby mean that Christ exists there only as in a sign, even though the

sacrament falls under the genus of a sign; instead, as has been said, we mean that Christ's body exists there in the way that is proper to this sacrament.

Reply to objection 4: This argument goes through concerning Christ's body insofar as it is present *in the manner of a body*, i.e., insofar as it is visible in its appearance, but not insofar as it is present *spiritually*, i.e., invisibly, in the manner and power of a spirit. That is why in *Super Ioannem* Augustine says, "If you have understood Christ's words about His flesh *spiritually*, then they are 'spirit and life' to you; if you have understood those words *carnally*, then they are indeed 'spirit and life', but not to you."

Article 2

Does the substance of bread and wine remain in this sacrament after the consecration?

It seems that the substance of bread and wine remains in this sacrament after the consecration (*in hoc sacramento remaneat substantia panis et vini post consecrationem*):

Objection 1: In *De Fide Orthodoxa* 4 Damascene says, "Because it is a custom for men to consume bread and wine, He has united His divinity to the bread and wine and made them His body and blood." And later, "The bread of communion (*panis communicationis*) is not simple bread, but is united to His divinity." But *being united* is an act that belongs to existing things. Therefore, the bread and wine exist in this sacrament along with the body and blood of Christ.

Objection 2: There ought to be conformity among the sacraments of the Church. But the substance of the matter remains in the other sacraments, e.g., the substance of the water in baptism, and the substance of the chrism in confirmation. Therefore, the substance of bread and wine likewise remains in this sacrament.

Objection 3: Bread and wine are taken up in this sacrament insofar as they signify ecclesiastical unity, since, as Augustine puts it in *De Symbolo*, "one bread is made from many grains and one wine is made from many grape clusters." But this pertains to the very substance of bread and wine. Therefore, the substance of bread and wine remains in this sacrament.

But contrary to this: In *De Sacramentis* Ambrose says, "Even though the figure of bread and wine is seen, nonetheless, after the consecration, nothing other than the flesh and blood of Christ should be believed in."

I respond: Some have claimed that after the consecration the substance of bread and wine remains in this sacrament. But this position cannot stand:

First of all, because this position undermines the reality of this sacrament, which involves the real body of Christ existing in this sacrament. To be sure, Christ's body is not there before the consecration. But a thing cannot now exist where it did not previously exist except either (a) by a change of place or (b) by the conversion of something else into it; for instance, a fire begins to exist anew in a house either because it is conveyed there or because it starts there. Now it is clear that the body of Christ does not begin to exist in this sacrament through a local motion (*per motum localem*). First of all, because it would follow that it ceased to exist in heaven, since that which moves locally arrives anew at a place only if it leaves its previous place. Second, because all bodies that move locally pass through all the intermediary places—something that cannot be said in this instance. Third, because it is impossible for a single local motion by the same body to end up in diverse places simultaneously—and yet Christ's body can begin to exist under this sacrament simultaneously in many places. And for this reason it follows that the only way in which Christ's body can begin to exist anew in this sacrament is through a conversion of the substance of the bread into it. But what is converted into something does not remain, once the conversion

has been effected. Hence, it follows that, if the reality of this sacrament is to be preserved, the substance of the bread cannot remain after the consecration.

Second, because this position is contrary to the form or formula for this sacrament, in which it is said, “*This is my body.*” This formula would not be true if the substance of the bread remained there, since the substance of the bread is never the body of Christ. Instead, it would have to be said, “*Here is my body.*”

Third, because it would be contrary to the veneration of this sacrament if there were some substance there which could not be adored with the adoration of *latria*.

Fourth, because it would be contrary to the Church’s rite, according to which, after one has consumed bodily food, he is not permitted to consume the body of Christ—and yet one is permitted, after having consumed one consecrated host, to consume another.

Hence, the position in question should be avoided as heretical.

Reply to objection 1: God has joined His divinity, i.e., His divine power, to the bread and wine not in order that they might remain in this sacrament, but in order that He might make His body and blood from them.

Reply to objection 2: Christ Himself does not exist in the other sacraments in reality, in the way in which He exists in this sacrament. And that is why the substance of the matter remains in the other sacraments, but not in this one.

Reply to objection 3: As will be explained below (a. 3), the appearances (*species*) which remain in this sacrament are sufficient for the sacrament’s signification. For it is through the accident that cognition is had of the nature of the substance (*per accidens cognoscitur ratio substantiae*).

Article 3

After the consecration has taken place in this sacrament, is the substance of the bread either annihilated or else resolved into its original matter?

It seems that after the consecration has taken place in this sacrament, the substance of the bread is either annihilated or else resolved into its original matter (*substantia panis, post consecrationem huius sacramenti, annihilatur, aut in pristinam materiam resolvatur*):

Objection 1: If something is corporeal, it has to exist somewhere. But, as has been explained (a. 2), the substance of the bread, which is something corporeal, does not remain in this sacrament, and neither is it possible to designate a place where it might be. Therefore, it is not anything after the consecration. Therefore, either it has been annihilated or else it has been resolved into its preexistent matter.

Objection 2: That which is a *terminus a quo* in a change does not remain [after the change]—except perhaps in the potentiality of the matter, in the way that, when fire comes to be from air, the form of air does not remain except in the potentiality of the matter, and, similarly, when what is black comes to be from what was white. But in this sacrament the substance of the bread and wine stands as the *terminus a quo*, whereas the body or blood of Christ stands as the *terminus ad quem*; for in *De Officio* Ambrose says, “Before the blessing other species are named; after the blessing the body is signified.” Therefore, after the consecration the substance of bread and wine do not remain, except perhaps as resolved into their matter.

Objection 3: One of two contradictories has to be true. But this is false: ‘Once the consecration has taken place, the substance of the bread or wine is something’. Therefore, this is true: ‘The substance of the bread or wine is nothing’.

But contrary to this: In 83 *Quaestiones* Augustine says, “God is not a cause of tending toward non-being (*in non-esse*).” But this sacrament is brought to completion by God’s power. Therefore, the substance of bread and wine is not annihilated.

I respond: Since the substance of the bread or wine does not remain in this sacrament, some, thinking it impossible for the substance of the bread or wine to be converted into Christ’s body or blood, have claimed that by means of the consecration the substance of the bread or wine is either (a) *resolved into its preexistent matter* or else (b) *annihilated*.

(a) Now the preexistent matter into which mixed bodies can be resolved consists of the four elements; for a resolution cannot be effected into primary matter in such a way that it exists without form, since matter cannot exist without a form. However, since after the consecration nothing remains under the appearances except Christ’s body and blood, one will have to claim that the elements into which the substance of the bread and wine is resolved leave that place through local motion—and this would be perceived by the senses. Similarly, the substance of the bread or wine remains right up to the last instant of the consecration. But at the last instant of the consecration the substance of the body or blood of Christ is there, in the same way that at the last instant of a generation the form is already inhering. Hence, it will not be possible to designate any instant at which the preexistent matter is there. For one cannot claim that the substance of the bread or wine is resolved little by little (*paulatim*) into its preexistent matter, or that it leaves the place of the appearances one part after another (*successive*). For if this began to occur at the last instant of its consecration, then the body of Christ would exist simultaneously with the substance of bread under some part of the host. But this is contrary to what was shown above (a. 2). If, on the other hand, the preexistent matter begins to exist before the consecration, then it will be possible to designate a time at which there will be some part of the host under which neither the substance of the bread nor the body of Christ exists. But this is absurd.

(b) And they themselves seem to have taken all of this into account. That is why they endorsed the other part of the disjunction, viz., that [the substance of the bread and wine] is annihilated. But neither can this be the case. For it will be impossible to designate any manner in which the real body of Christ begins to exist in this sacrament other than through the conversion of the substance of the bread into it. But this conversion is ruled out by the bread’s being annihilated or by its being resolved into its preexisting matter. Similarly, it is impossible to designate how such a resolution or annihilation might be caused in this sacrament, since the sacrament’s effect is signified by its form or formula; but neither a resolution nor an annihilation is signified by the words of the form, ‘This is my body’.

Hence, it is clear that the position we have been discussing here is false.

Reply to objection 1: Once the consecration has taken place, the substance of the bread and wine does not remain under the appearances of the sacrament or anywhere else. Yet it does not follow that their substance is annihilated, since it is *converted into* the body of Christ. In the same way, it does not follow that if the air from which a fire has been generated is not here or anywhere else, then it has been annihilated.

Reply to objection 2: A form which is a *terminus a quo* is not converted into the other form; instead, the one form succeeds the other in the subject, and so the first form exists only in the potentiality of the matter. By contrast, in the case under discussion the substance of the bread is converted into the body of Christ, as has been said. Hence, the objection does not go through.

Reply to objection 3: Even though, after the consecration has taken place, ‘The substance of the bread is something’ is false, nevertheless, that into which the substance of the bread has been converted is something. And so the substance of the bread has not been annihilated.

Article 4

Can the bread be converted into the body of Christ?

It seems that the bread cannot be converted into the body of Christ (*panis non possit converti in corpus Christi*):

Objection 1: Conversion is a certain sort of change (*conversio est quaedam mutatio*). But in every change there has to be some subject that was first [such-and-such] in potentiality and afterwards is [such-and-such] in actuality; for as *Physics* 3 says, “A movement (*motus*) is the actualization (*actus*) of what exists in potentiality.” But it is impossible to designate any subject for the substance of the bread and the substance of the body of Christ, since, as is said in the *Categories*, it is of nature of a substance “that it does not exist in a subject.” Therefore, it cannot be the case that the whole substance of the bread is converted into the body of Christ.

Objection 2: The form of that into which something is converted begins to exist *de novo* in the matter of that which is converted into it; for instance, when air is converted into a fire that did not previously exist, the form of the fire begins to exist *de novo* in the matter of the air, and, similarly, when food is converted into a man*, the form of the man begins to exist *de novo* in the matter of the food. Therefore, if the bread is converted into the body of Christ, it must be the case that the form of Christ’s body begins to exist *de novo* in the matter of the bread—which is false. Therefore, it is not the case that the bread is converted into the substance of Christ’s body.

Objection 3: If things are divided [from one another] in their own right (*secundum se*), the one of them never becomes the other. For instance, whiteness never becomes blackness; instead, as *Physics* 1 explains, the subject of whiteness becomes the subject of blackness. But just as two contrary forms are divided in their own right, since they are principles of a formal difference, so, also, two instances of designated matter are divided [from one another] in their own right, since they are the principle of a material division. Therefore, it cannot be the case that *this* matter of the bread becomes *this* matter by which the body of Christ is individuated. And so it cannot be the case that the substance of this bread is converted into the substance of the body of Christ.

But contrary to this: Eusebius of Emesa says, “It should not be novel to you and impossible that earthly and mortal things are converted into the substance of Christ.”

I respond: As was explained above (a. 2), since (a) Christ’s real body exists in this sacrament, and, again, since (b) it does not exist there *de novo* through a local motion, and, again, since (c) as is clear from what has been said (a. 1, ad 3), Christ’s body does not exist there as in place, one must claim that it begins to exist there through a conversion of the substance of the bread into itself.

However, this conversion is not like natural conversions, but is altogether supernatural and effected by God’s power alone. Hence, in *De Sacramentis* Ambrose says, “It is clear that a virgin gave birth beyond the order of nature, and what we conclude is: ‘The body is from a virgin’. Why, then, do you seek after the order of nature in the case of Christ’s body, given that our Lord Jesus Himself was born of a virgin beyond the order of nature?” And commenting on John 6:64 (“The words that I have spoken to you”—viz., about this sacrament—“are spirit and life”), Chrysostom says, “That is, those words are spiritual, not having any carnal or natural consequence; instead, they are ripped away from every sort of necessity that exists on earth and from the laws which are posited here.”

Now it is obvious that every agent acts to the extent that it is actual. But every created agent is determinate in its act, since it belongs to a determinate genus and species. And so the action of any created agent is carried over some determinate actuality (*fertur super aliquem determinatum actum*). But the determination of any entity in actual existence is due to its form. Hence, no natural or created agent can effect anything other than a *change of form*. And, because of this, every conversion that is effected

according to the laws of nature is *with respect to a form (formalis)*. By contrast, as was established in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 7, a. 1 and q. 25, a. 2), God is unlimited actuality (*infinitus actus*). Hence, His action extends to the *whole nature* of an entity. Therefore, He can bring to completion not only (a) a *formal* conversion—in the sense, namely, that diverse forms succeed one another in the same subject—but also the conversion of a *whole substance*—in the sense, namely, that the whole substance of *this* entity is converted into the whole substance of *that* entity.

And that is what is done by the divine power in this sacrament. For the whole substance of the bread is converted into the whole substance of the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine is converted into the whole substance of the blood of Christ. Hence, this conversion is not a *formal* conversion, but is instead a *substantial* conversion. And it is not contained among the species of natural change, but can instead be called, by its own special name, a *transubstantiation*.

Reply to objection 1: This objection goes through with respect to a formal change, since it is proper to a form to exist in matter or in a subject. However, it has no place in the case of the conversion of a whole substance. Hence, since this substantial conversion involves a certain ordering of substances, one of which is converted into the other, it exists as in a subject in *both* substances, just like an ordering or a number.

Reply to objection 2: This objection likewise goes through with respect to a formal conversion or change, since, as has been said, a form has to exist in matter or in a subject. However, the objection has no place in the case of the conversion of a whole substance, for which it is impossible to assign any subject.

Reply to objection 3: A form cannot be changed into another form, or one [designated] matter into another [designated] matter, by the power of a *finite* agent. However, such a conversion can be effected by the power of an *infinite* agent, which has an action on the *whole entity*. For the *common nature of being* belongs to each form and to each [designated] matter, and the author of being (*auctor entis*) is able to convert what there is of being in the one (*id quod entitatis est una*) into what there is of being in the other (*id quod est entitatis in altera*), by removing that by which it was distinguished from the latter.

Article 5

Do the accidents of the bread and wine remain in this sacrament?

It seems that the accidents of the bread and wine do not remain in this sacrament (*in hoc sacramento non remaneant accidentia panis et vini*):

Objection 1: When what is prior is removed, what is posterior is removed. But as *Metaphysics* 7 proves, a substance is naturally prior to its accident. Since, therefore, once the consecration has taken place, the substance of the bread does not remain in this sacrament, it seems that its accidents cannot remain.

Objection 2: There should not be any deception in the sacrament of truth. But it is through the accidents that we make judgments about the substance. Therefore, it seems that human judgment is deceived if, with the accidents remaining, the substance of the bread does not remain.

Objection 3: Even though faith is not subject to reason, it is nonetheless not contrary to reason, but instead lies beyond reason; this was explained at the beginning of this work (*ST* 1, q. 1, a. 6, ad 2, and a. 8). But our reason takes its source from the senses. Therefore, our faith should not be contrary to our senses, as when our senses judge that it is bread and our faith believes that it is the body of Christ. Therefore, it does not befit this sacrament that the accidents of the bread should remain subject to the sensory powers and the substance of the bread not remain.

Objection 4: That which remains after the consecration seems to be the subject of the change. Therefore, if the accidents of the bread remain after the consecration, it seems that the accidents themselves are the subject of the conversion. But this is impossible, since an accident does not belong to an accident. Therefore, it ought not to be the case that the accidents of the bread and wine remain in this sacrament.

But contrary to this: In his book on the *Sentences* of Prosperus Augustine says, “In the appearances of bread and wine, which we see, we honor the flesh and blood.”

I respond: It is apparent to the senses that all the accidents of bread and wine remain after the consecration. It makes sense for this to be done by divine providence:

First of all, given that it is not customary for men—indeed, it is horrific—to eat the flesh of a man and drink his blood, the flesh and blood of Christ are to be consumed under the appearances of things that are very frequently made use of by men, viz., bread and wine.

Second, because this sacrament would be subject to ridicule by non-believers if we were to eat our Lord under His proper appearance.

Third, in order that when we consume the body and blood of our Lord, this might contribute to the merit of our faith.

Reply to objection 1: As is explained in the *Liber De Causis*, the effect depends more on the first cause than on a secondary cause. And so by the power of God, who is the first cause of all things, it can be brought about that what is posterior remains even while what is prior is taken away.

Reply to objection 2: There is no deception in this sacrament, since the accidents, which are judged by the senses, exist with the truth of their reality. On the other hand, the intellect, which, as *De Anima* 3 explains, has the substance as its proper object, is preserved from deception by the Faith.

Reply to objection 3: From this the reply to the third objection is clear. For faith is not contrary to the senses, but instead has to do which something that the senses do not attain to.

Reply to objection 4: As has been explained (a. 4, ad 1), this conversion does not properly speaking have a subject. Still, the accidents that remain bear some similarity to a subject.

Article 6

Does the substantial form of the bread remain in this sacrament after the consecration has taken place?

It seems that the substantial form of the bread remains in this sacrament after the consecration has taken place (*facta consecratione, remaneat in hoc sacramento forma substantialis panis*):

Objection 1: It has been explained that the accidents remain after the consecration has taken place. But since bread is a sort of artefact (*sit quiddam artificiale*), its form is likewise an accident. Therefore, it remains after the consecration has taken place.

Objection 2: As is explained in *De Anima* 3, the soul is the actuality of a physical body that has life in potentiality. But it cannot be claimed that the substantial form of the bread is converted into the soul. Therefore, it seems that it remains after the consecration has taken place.

Objection 3: The proper operation of an entity follows upon its substantial form. But that which remains in this sacrament gives nourishment and effects every operation that existent bread would effect. Therefore, the substantial form of bread the remains in this sacrament after the consecration takes place.

But contrary to this: The substantial form of the bread belongs to the substance of the bread. But as has been explained (aa. 2-4), the substance of the bread is converted into the body of Christ. Therefore, the substantial form of the bread does not remain.

I respond: Some have claimed that after the consecration has taken place, it is not only the accidents of the bread that remain, but its substantial form as well. But this cannot be the case:

First of all, because if the substantial form were to remain, then nothing of the bread, except for its matter alone, would be converted into the body of Christ. And so it would follow that the bread is converted not into the *whole* body of Christ, but only into its *matter*. This is incompatible with the form or formula for the sacrament, by which it is said, ‘This is my body’.

Second, because if the substantial form of the bread were to remain, it would either remain in the matter of the bread or be separated from the matter of the bread. The first alternative cannot be the case, since if it remained in the matter of the bread, then the whole substance of bread would remain, and this is contrary to what was argued above (a. 2). Nor could it remain in another matter since it is not a proper form unless it exists in its proper matter. On the other hand, if the substantial form remained as separated from the matter, then it would now be an intelligible form in actuality—or even an intellect, since that is what all forms separated from matter are like.

Third, because it would not be fitting for this sacrament. For the accidents of the bread remain in this sacrament in order that the body of Christ might be seen under them—though not, as was explained above (a. 5), with its proper appearance.

And so one should reply that the substantial form of the bread does not remain.

Reply to objection 1: Nothing prevents a thing from being made by art and yet having a form that is not an accident, but a substantial form; for instance, frogs and serpents can be produced by art. For the art in question produces the form not by its own power, but by the power of natural principles. And this is the way art produces the substantial form of bread, viz., by the power of a fire cooking the matter made up of flour and water.

Reply to objection 2: The soul is the form of a body that gives the body an ordering of completed *esse*, viz., *esse*, and *corporeal esse*, and *animated esse*, and so on for the others. Therefore, the form of bread is converted into the form of Christ’s body insofar as it gives *corporeal esse*, but not insofar as it gives *animated esse* with such-and-such a soul.

Reply to objection 3: Some of the operations of bread follow upon it by reason of its accidents, e.g., affecting the sensory powers, and such operations are found in the appearances of the bread after the consecration because of the very accidents that remain. By contrast, some operations follow upon bread either (a) by reason of its matter—as, for instance, when it is converted into something—or (b) by reason of its substantial form, like an operation that follows upon its species—as, for instance, that it “strengthens a man’s heart” (Psalm 103:15). Operations of this sort are found in this sacrament not because of the form or the matter that remain, but because they are conferred miraculously on the accidents themselves. This will be explained below (q. 77, a. 3, ad 2-3, and aa. 5-6).

Article 7

Is the conversion in question effected in an instant or is it effected successively?

It seems that the conversion in question is not effected in an instant, but is instead effected successively (*ista conversio non fiat in instanti, sed fiat successive*):

Objection 1: In this conversion there is first the substance of the bread and afterwards the substance of the body of Christ. Therefore, it is not the case that the two of them exist at the same instant; instead, they exist at two instants. But between any two instants there is a temporal interval (*tempus medium*). Therefore, it must be the case that this conversion is effected during the temporal interval (*secundum successionem temporis*) that lies between the last instant at which the bread exists in that

place and the first instant at which the body of Christ exists in that place.

Objection 2: In every conversion there is a being-effected (*feri*) and a having-been-effected (*factum esse*). But these two are not simultaneous, since what is being effected does not yet exist, whereas what has been effected already exists. Therefore, in this conversion there is something prior and something posterior. And so it must be the case that the conversion is successive and not instantaneous.

Objection 3: In *De Sacramentis* Ambrose says that this sacrament “is conected by means of Christ’s words.” But Christ’s words are successive and not instantaneous. Therefore, this conversion is effected successively.

But contrary to this: This conversion is brought to completion by an infinite power, and it belongs to an infinite power to act all at once (*subito*).

I respond: There are three ways in which a given change is instantaneous:

In one way, *on the part of the form*, which is the terminus of the change. For if the form is such that it admits of *more* and *less*, e.g., health, then it is acquired successively by the subject. And so, because a substantial form does not admit of *more* and *less*, its introduction into the matter is effected all at once (*subito*).

In a second way, *on the part of the subject*, which is sometimes prepared successively for the reception of a form, and so water becomes hot successively. By contrast, when a subject is itself in its final disposition for a form, it receives that form all at once, in the way that a transparent subject is illuminated all at once.

In a third way, *on the part of an agent that has infinite power* and can thus dispose the matter immediately for the form. For instance, as Mark 7:34-35 relates, when “Christ said, ‘Ephpheta’, that is, ‘Be opened’, the man’s ears were at once opened and the bond of his tongue was loosed.”

The conversion under discussion is instantaneous in these three ways. First of all, because the substance of Christ’s body, which is the terminus of this conversion, does not admit of *more* and *less*. Second, because in this conversion there is no subject to be prepared successively. Third, because the conversion is effected by God’s infinite power.

Reply to objection 1: Some do not concede absolutely speaking that between any two instants there lies a temporal interval (*sit tempus medium*). For they claim that this has a place in the case of two instants that are involved in the same movement, but not in the case of two instants that are involved in different movements. Hence, there is no temporal interval between an instant that marks the end of a state of rest and another instant that marks the beginning of a movement.

However, they are deceived in this matter. For the oneness of temporal intervals and of instants, as well as their plurality, are taken in accord with not just any movements, but with the first celestial movement, which is the measure of every movement and of every state of rest.

And so others concede the thesis in question in the case of the time which measures a movement that is dependent on the movement of the heavens. But there are certain movements that are not dependent on, or measured by, the movement of the heavens, as was explained in the First Part (*ST* 1, q. 53, a. 3) with respect to the movements of the angels. Hence, there is no temporal interval between two instants that correspond to those movements.

However, this consideration does not apply to the proposed case. For even though the conversion in question does not in its own right (*secundum se*) have an ordering with respect to the movement of the heavens, nonetheless, this conversion follows upon the act of pronouncing words, and the act of pronouncing words is indeed necessarily measured by the movement of the heavens. And so it is necessary for there to be a temporal interval between any two designated instants surrounding the conversion in question.

Therefore, some claim that the instant at which the bread last exists and the instant at which the body of Christ first exists are, to be sure, two instants in relation to the things being measured, but one

instant in relation to what is measuring the time—just as, when two lines intersect (*cum duae lineae se contingunt*), there are two points on the part of the two lines, but just one point on the part of the place of intersection (*ex parte loci continentis*). But this is not similar to the case at hand. For an instant and a temporal interval are not *intrinsic* measures of particular movements, in the way that a line and a point are intrinsic measures of bodies. Rather, they are only *extrinsic* measures of movements, in the way that a place is an extrinsic measure of a body.

Hence, others claim that they are the same instant *in reality* (*idem instans re*), but different *conceptually* (*aliud ratione*). But on this view it would follow that opposites exist in reality at the same time.

And so one should reply that the conversion in question is, as has been said, brought to completion through the words of Christ that are pronounced by the priest, with the result that the last instant of pronouncing the words is the first instant at which the body of Christ exists in the sacrament, whereas in the whole preceding time the substance of the bread exists there. And it is impossible to designate any proximately preceding instant as the last instant, since, as is proved in *Physics* 6, time is not composed of instants arranged in a sequence. And so it is indeed possible to designate a *first* instant* at which the body of Christ exists, but it is not possible to designate a *last instant* at which the substance of the bread exists—though it is possible to designate a *last temporal interval* during which it exists. And as is clear from the Philosopher in *Physics* 8, the same thing holds for the case of natural changes.

Reply to objection 2: In the case of instantaneous changes, the being-effected (*fieri*) and the having-been-effected (*factum esse*) are simultaneous; for instance, the being-illuminated is simultaneous with the having-been-illuminated. For in such cases it is called a *having-been-effected* insofar as it already exists, whereas it is called a *being-effected* insofar as it did not exist beforehand.

Reply to objection 3: As has been explained (ad 1), the conversion in question is effected at the last instant of the pronouncing of the words. For it is at that point that the signification of the words, which is what is efficacious in the forms of the sacraments, is brought to completion. And so it does not follow that the conversion itself is successive.

Article 8

Is ‘The body of Christ comes to be from the bread’ true?

It seems that ‘The body of Christ comes to be from the bread’ is false (*haec sit falsa, ex pane fit corpus Christi*):

Objection 1: Each thing from which (*ex quo*) something comes to be is that which comes to be that thing, but not vice versa. For instance, we say that the black thing comes to be from (*ex*) the white thing, and that the white thing comes to be black. And even though we say that the man comes to be black, we nonetheless do not say that the black thing comes to be from (*ex*) the man. Therefore, if it is true that the body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread, it will be true to say that the bread comes to be the body of Christ. But this seems to be false, since the bread is not the subject of the coming-to-be; instead, it is the terminus [*a quo*]. Therefore, it is not true to say that the body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread.

Objection 2: Coming-to-be terminates in being (*fieri terminatur ad esse*). But none of the following is ever true: ‘The bread is the body of Christ’ (*Panis est corpus Christi*), or ‘The bread has come to be the body of Christ’ (*Panis est factus corpus Christi*), or ‘The bread will be the body of Christ’ (*Panis erit corpus Christi*). Therefore, it seems that this is never true, either: ‘The body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread’.

Objection 3: Each thing from which (*ex quo*) something comes to be is converted into that which comes to be from it. But this seems to be false: ‘The bread is converted into the body of Christ’. For this conversion seems to be more miraculous than creation, and yet in creation it is not said that non-being is converted into being. Therefore, it seems that ‘The body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread’ is likewise false.

Objection 4: That from which something comes to be is able to be that thing. But this is false: ‘The bread is able to be the body of Christ’. Therefore, this is likewise false: ‘The body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread’.

But contrary to this: In *De Sacramentis* Ambrose says, “When the consecration takes place, the body of Christ comes to be out of (*de*) the bread.”

I respond: In some respects this *conversion of bread into the body of Christ* agrees with *creation* (*creatio*) and with *natural transmutation* (*transmutatio naturalis*), and in some respects it differs from both of them.

For instance, one thing that is common to all three of them is the *ordering of the termini* [or *extremes*] (*ordo terminorum*), viz., that there is *this* after *this*. For in *creation* there is being after non-being (*esse post non-esse*); in *this sacrament* there is the body of Christ after the substance of the bread (*corpus Christ post substantiam panis*); and in a *natural transmutation* there is the white thing after the black thing (*album post nigrum*), or the fire after the air (*ignis post aerem*). And it is common to all three that the termini do not exist simultaneously with one another.

Again, the *conversion* that we are now talking about agrees with *creation* because in neither of them is there any [underlying] subject common to the two extremes (*commune utrique extremorum*), whereas the contrary of this is apparent in every *natural transmutation*.

On the other hand, this *conversion* agrees with a *natural transmutation* in two respects, though not in similar ways. First of all, because in both cases one of the extremes *passes into the other* (*transit in aliud*), viz., the bread into the body of Christ, and the air into the fire, whereas it is not the case [in *creation*] that non-being (*non-ens*) passes into being (*ens*). However, this ‘passing into’ happens in different ways in the two cases. For in *this sacrament* the whole substance of the bread passes into the whole body of Christ, whereas in a *natural transmutation* the matter of the one extreme receives the form of the other extreme, once its prior form has been deposed. Second, they agree because in both cases something remains the same—which does not occur in the case of *creation*. Yet this happens in different ways. For in a *natural transmutation* what remains is the same matter or [underlying] subject, whereas in *this sacrament* it is the same accidents that remain.

From these considerations we can grasp how we need to talk differently in different cases. For instance, since the extremes are not simultaneous in any of the three cases, it follows that in none of them can the one extreme be predicated of the other by means of a present-tense substantival verb; for we do not say ‘Non-being is being’, or ‘The bread is the body of Christ’, or ‘The air is the fire’ (or ‘The white thing is the black thing’). By contrast, because of the ordering of the extremes, we can use the preposition ‘from’ (*ex*), which *designates an ordering*, in all three cases. For instance, we can say properly and truly ‘A being comes to be from (*ex*) non-being’, and ‘The body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread’, and ‘The fire comes to be from (*ex*) the air’ (or ‘The black thing comes to be from (*ex*) the white thing’).

However, since in *creation* the one extreme *does not pass into* the other (*non transit in alterum*), we cannot use the word ‘conversion’ in the case of creation, as we would by saying, ‘Non-being is converted into being’. Nonetheless, we can use that word in the case of *this sacrament*, as well as in the case of a *natural transmutation*. But because in this sacrament a *whole substance* is changed into a *whole substance*, the conversion is properly called a *transubstantiation*.

Again, since it is impossible to designate any [underlying] subject of the conversion under discussion, [the following] things are not to be conceded in the case of this conversion which are deemed

true because of the [underlying] subject in the case of a natural conversion:

First of all, it is clear that a potentiality for the opposite follows upon being a subject, and it is by reason of this potentiality that we claim that a white thing is able to be black, or that air is able to be fire—though the latter is not as proper as the former. For the subject of the white thing, in which lies the potentiality for blackness, is the whole substance of the white thing, since it is not the case that the whiteness is a part [of the substance], whereas the subject of the form of air is a part of the substance, [viz., the primary matter]. Hence, when one says, ‘Air is able to be fire’, this is deemed true by reason of that part, via synecdoche. But since there is no subject in the case of conversion under discussion, or likewise in the case of creation, it is not said that the one extreme is able to be the other, i.e., that non-being is able to be a being, or that the bread is able to be the body of Christ.

Again, for the same reason, it cannot properly be said that being comes to be out of (*de*) non-being or that the body of Christ comes to be from (*de*) the bread, since the preposition ‘out of’ (*de*) signifies a consubstantial cause, and the consubstantiality of the extremes in natural transmutations is attendant upon agreement in the [underlying] subject.

Again, for a similar reason, it is not conceded that the bread will be the body of Christ, or that the bread becomes (*fiat*) the body of Christ, just as it is not conceded, in the case of creation, that non-being will be a being, or that non-being becomes a being. For this way of speaking is made true in natural transmutations by reason of the [underlying] subject, e.g., when we say that the white thing becomes black, or that the white thing will be black.

Nevertheless, since, as was explained above, after the conversion has taken place in the sacrament under discussion, something remains the same, viz., the accidents of the bread, some of the locutions just mentioned can be conceded because of a certain similarity, viz., that the bread is the body of Christ, or that the bread will be the body of Christ, or that the body of Christ comes to be out of (*de*) the bread—so that the name ‘bread’ is being taken not for the substance of the bread, but, in general, for whatever is contained under the appearances of the bread. And it was the substance of the bread that was at first contained under those appearances, and afterwards it was the body of Christ.

Reply to objection 1: ‘That from which something comes to be’ sometimes, to be sure, implies a subject together with one of the extremes of a transmutation, as when it is said, ‘The black thing comes to be from the white thing’.

However, sometimes it implies only the opposite or the extreme, as when it is said, ‘The day comes to be from the morning’. And in this case it is not conceded that *this* comes to be *that*, i.e., that the morning becomes the day. And so, too, in the case under discussion. Even though it is properly said that body of Christ comes to be from (*ex*) the bread, it is nonetheless not properly said that the bread comes to be the body of Christ—except, as has been explained, because of a certain similarity.

Reply to objection 2: That from which something comes to be will sometimes be that thing because of the subject that is implied. And so since there is no [underlying] subject in the case of the conversion under discussion, the lines of reasoning are not similar.

Reply to objection 3: In the case of the conversion under discussion there are more difficulties than in the case of creation, in which the only difficulty is that something comes to be from nothing (*ex nihilo*), even though this belongs to the mode of production that is proper to the first cause, which presupposes no other thing.

By contrast, in the case of this conversion, not only (a) is it a difficulty that *this whole* is converted in *that whole* in such a way that nothing of the first whole remains—something that does not belong to any cause’s common mode of production, but also (b) there is the difficulty that the accidents remain after the substance has been corrupted—along with many other difficulties that we will talk about in what follows (q. 77). Yet, as has been explained, the word ‘conversion’ is accepted in the case of this sacrament, but not in the case of creation.

Reply to objection 4: As has been explained, potentiality belongs to the subject, and it is impossible to designate a subject in the conversion under discussion. And that is why it is not conceded that the bread is able to be the body of Christ. For it is not the case that this conversion is effected through the passive potentiality of a creature; instead, it is effected solely by the active power of the creator.