

CASES AND QUERIES

ON THE WORSHIP OF THE EUCHARISTIC MYSTERY *

• FRANCISCO CORONEL MENDOZA, O.P.

Re: n 32

Can holy Communion under both species be given to a priest who has said mass?

According to the Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, (n. 32.7) the deacon and subdeacon acting their office in a Pontifical or Solemn Mass "can receive holy Communion under both species. What is spoken of here are deacons and subdeacon *in re* (not stand-ins). Hence a priest who acts as deacon or subdeacon in a mass, cannot enjoy the above privilege before or after his mass.

It is different with a concelebrated mass. This is the directive: "to all...who exercise a real liturgical function" (n. 37, 8). Consequently all who fulfill a liturgical role can receive Communion under both species, inclusive of priests before or after their respective masses.

Re: 62

Can prayers honoring Our Lady or the Saints be said during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament?

Up to the present it has been customary among religious communities and particular aggrupations of the faithful to recite before the

*Based on the "Documentatum explanatio" of *Notitiae*, n. 39 April 1968, pp. 133-136. These answers do not have any official value but merely of a directive nature. Editor's Note.

Blessed Sacrament exposed, prayers honoring Our Lady, as, the praying of the Rosary, or the Saints, as, the Litany of the Saints, novena prayers preparatory to the feast of a Saint, etc.

The question is: Are the foregoing practices in line with the letter and spirit of the Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery?

On one hand it must be noted that the Instruction does not explicitly prohibit these practices.

On the other, the words (n. 62) of the said Instruction: "During the exposition all should be arranged in such wise that the faithful prayerfully attentive may occupy themselves with Christ the Lord", are understood to mean "...occupy themselves with Christ the Lord 'SOLELY'". This is rather a restrictive interpretation.

The adverb SOLELY oftentimes found among commentators though not contained in the text of the Instruction, squarely renders the intention of the law. Because the aim of this communal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in exposition is achieved when the prayerful attention of the faithful is fixed upon the eucharistic mystery through the pauses, readings (specifically from the Sacred Scriptures), the songs, and prayers.

Other pious exercises although good in themselves—hence worthy of praise—are better set aside for other periods either before or after the adoration and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The reason being that these practices tend to distract from the main and true objective.

The Rosary of Our Lady should be considered a Marian devotion, i.e., not expressly directed to Christ. It cannot be argued in this connection that the mysteries of the life of Christ are meditated upon while the vocal prayers are being recited. For the repetition of a prayer meant for Our Lady constitute an essential element of this devotion. And if the prayers and the meditation are to be in unison an added reflexion is demanded of the devotee.

Can Vespers be chanted before the Blessed Sacrament in exposition?

In some places, particularly on Sundays, right after the Vesper services the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is held. After

the Instruction was issued at times services were arranged thus: the exposition, then Vespers chanted, and the Benediction. This scheduling seems to deviate from the ideal presented in the previous answer. The services could otherwise be better arranged.

The Benediction should not be made to appear as the *finis* of Vespers. Indeed Benediction could be held on a Sunday, but as a liturgical service, independent by itself, through which the faithful are invited anew to worship God. Hence after Vespers the exposition may follow. And after some moments of silence the Benediction may be given. If Scriptural reading with its homily was done at Vespers, obviously there is no need of repeating it.

A better schedule would be if there be some interval of time between services—depending circumstances of place and persons concerned.

Re. no. 65.

Should the monstrance be veiled during sermons?

Sermons before the Blessed Sacrament in exposition are banned. "The homily, or the brief exhortations" spoken of in the Instruction are not sermons, but short explanations of passages read "which induce a loftier appreciation of the Eucharistic Mystery". During these acts there is no need for the monstrance to be veiled as when Bible lessons are read.

In a prolonged exposition is it permissible to return the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle more than twice during the day?

The difficulty arises from the fact that nowadays large groups are hard to get throughout the hours of the day, but only at certain periods, like early morning, at noon, and early evenings.

The aim of the law is to prevent that in a given solemn exposition, many a time with the attendant 'extra' decoration, there be one or two persons in adoration. Accordingly the hours of adoration could be scheduled where the greatest number of worshipers is available rather than try to divide the same worshipers into small groups spread out for all hours of the day. In this case, the Blessed Sacrament could be turned in for the night hours, and during the daytime it can be exposed twice

when the congregation of adorers is biggest. More expositions of the Blessed Sacrament should be avoided.

Religious communities which by Constitution daily have a daytime adoration do not seem to go against the norm when between the periods set for the adoration of the whole community, small groups of their members take turns to cover the other hours of adoration.

Re: Miscellanea

When the Canon of the Mass is recited aloud can the faithful answer: Amen?

The Canon should be said by the priest celebrant only, because it is a priestly prayer. To him alone belongs the concluding phrase — Through Christ Our Lord with the corresponding Amen.

However to prevent a spontaneous Amen from the faithful seems difficult. For if they are cautioned against answering Amen within the Canon, what may happen is they will stop answering Amen for the final doxology. Wherefore the faithful should not be disturbed about their spontaneous Amen within the Canon.

Should certain rites proper for Missae, defunctorum and Feriae be still observed?

The second Instruction, May 4, 1967, directed that the ending of the mass be the same even for the Missae pro defunctis. In the latter these special rites are still to be kept: the kissing of the gospel, the blessing of the water are omitted, and at the 'orationes' there is genuflection.

In the final analysis it does not seem to go against the spirit of the law if there be uniformity and the same norms apply for both masses for the dead as for the living.

The same reflexion is valid regarding genuflection at the 'orationes' of masses on penitential days, as for the dead. Indeed it may prove helpful for the faithful toward a fuller participation and attention if these particular rites be dropped. Wherefore it appears more expedient not to kneel at the 'oratione' except in the days and cases where the congregation is invited to do so: *Flectamus genua* (Let us kneel).