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(3a. 66-72)

James J. Cunningham O.P.

Excerpt

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de baptismo et de confirmatione

DEINDE CONSIDERANDUM EST de singulis sacramentis in speciali. Et primo, de baptismo; secundo, de confirmatione; tertio, de Eucharistia; quarto, de pœnitentia; quinto, de extrema unctione; sexto, de ordine; septimo, de matrimonio.

Circa primum occurrit duplex consideratio: prima, de ipso baptismo; secunda, de præparatoriis baptismi.

Circa primum quatuor consideranda occurrunt:

- primo, de his quae pertinent ad sacramentum baptismi;
- secundo, de ministro hujus sacramenti;
- tertio, de recipientibus hoc sacramentum;
- quarto, de effectu hujus sacramenti.

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baptism and confirmation

AT THIS POINT we must treat each of the sacraments in detail. First of all, baptism; secondly, confirmation; thirdly, the Eucharist; fourthly, penance; fifthly, the last anointing; sixthly, orders; seventhly, matrimony.

With regard to the first point we have a twofold consideration: baptism itself and the preparations for baptism.

Regarding baptism itself, there are four topics:

- first, the matters pertaining to the sacrament of baptism;
- second, the minister of the sacrament (67);
- third, the recipients of the sacrament (68);
- fourth, the effect of the sacrament (69).

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 66, 1

Quaestio 66. de sacramento baptismi

Circa primum quærentur duodecim:

1. quid sit baptismus, utrum sit ablutio;
2. de institutione hujus sacramenti;
3. utrum aqua sit propria materia hujus sacramenti;
4. utrum requiratur aqua simplex;
5. utrum hæc sit conveniens forma hujus sacramenti, *Ego te baptizo in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti*;
6. utrum sub hac forma possit aliquis baptizari, *Ego te baptizo in nomine Christi*;
7. utrum immersio sit de necessitate baptismi;
8. utrum requiratur trina immersio;
9. utrum baptismus possit iterari.
10. de ritu baptismi;
11. de distinctione baptismatum;
12. de comparatione baptismatum.

articulus 1. utrum baptismus sit ipsa ablutio

AD PRIMUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod baptismus non sit ipsa ablutio. Ablutio enim corporalis transit. Baptismus autem permanet. Ergo baptismus non est ipsa ablutio: sed potius *regeneratio et sigillum et custodia et illuminatio*, ut Damascenus dicit.²

2. Præterea, Hugo de Sancto Victore dicit quod *baptismus est aqua diluendis criminibus sanctificata per verbum Dei*.³ Aqua autem non est ipsa ablutio, sed ablutio est quidam usus aquæ.

3. Præterea, Augustinus dicit, *Accedit verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*.⁴ Elementum autem est ipsa aqua. Ergo baptismus est ipsa aqua, non autem ablutio.

SED CONTRA est quod dicitur *Eccl.*, *Qui baptizatur a mortuo et iterum tangit mortuum, quid proficit lotio ejus?*⁵ Videtur ergo quod baptismus sit ipsa ablutio, sive lotio.

¹IV Sent. 3, 1

²De fide orthodoxa IV, 9. PG 94, 1121

³De Sacramentis II, 6, 2. PL 176, 443

⁴In Joann. LXXX, On 15, 2. PL 38, 1840

⁵Ecclesiasticus 34, 30 (25). The connection between this text and baptism is purely nominal and this is true only because the Vulgate happens to use the Latin *baptiza-*

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THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Question 66. the sacrament of baptism

Under this question there are twelve points of inquiry:

1. what is baptism? Is it a washing?
2. who instituted this sacrament?
3. is water the proper matter for this sacrament?
4. is plain water required?
5. is *I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit* a suitable form for this sacrament?
6. could a person be baptized with this form, *I baptize you in the name of Christ*?
7. is immersion necessary for baptism?
8. is triple immersion required?
9. can baptism be repeated?
10. what of the baptismal rite?
11. what of the different kinds of baptism?
12. what of a comparison of the various baptisms?

article 1. is baptism the act of washing?

THE FIRST POINT:¹ I. It seems that baptism is not the mere act of washing, since a washing of the body is something transitory. But baptism is permanent. Hence baptism is not the simple act of washing but rather *regeneration and the seal and the safeguarding and enlightenment*, as Damascene says.²

2. Moreover, Hugh of St Victor says *baptism is water sanctified by God's word for the washing away of sins*.³ But water is not itself washing, rather washing is a particular use of water.

3. Moreover, Augustine says, *The word approaches the element and the sacrament comes to be*.⁴ But the element is water. Therefore baptism is water and not the act of washing.

ON THE OTHER HAND, *If a man washes after touching a body, and touches it again, what has he gained by his washing?*^{5a} It seems then that baptism is the act of washing.

tur in the general sense of washing. In fact the author is referring to ritual purification after a man has come into contact with a dead body (cf *Numbers* 19, 11-13)

^aThe importance of the argumentation in this section of an article should not be exaggerated. Often, as is the case here with an Old Testament citation supposedly showing that baptism is effectively a washing, the purpose is solely to shift the discussion from the direction taken in the objections.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 66, 1

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod in sacramento baptismi est tria considerare: aliquid scilicet quod est *sacramentum tantum*; aliquid autem quod est *res et sacramentum*; aliquid autem quod est *res tantum*. Sacramentum autem tantum est aliquid visibile exterius existens, quod scilicet est signum interioris effectus: hoc enim pertinet ad rationem sacramenti. Exterius autem suppositum sensui est et ipsa aqua, et usus ejus, qui est ablutio. Quidam ergo existimaverunt quod ipsa aqua sit sacramentum. Quod quidem sonare videntur verba Hugonis de Sancto Victore. Nam ipse in communi definitione sacramenti dicit quod est *materiale elementum*:⁶ et in definitione baptismi dicit quod est *aqua*.⁷

Sed hoc non est verum. Cum enim sacramenta novæ legis sanctificationem quandam operentur, ibi perficitur sacramentum ubi perficitur sanctificatio. In aqua autem non perficitur sanctificatio: sed est ibi quædam sanctificationis virtus instrumentalis, non permanens, sed fluens in hominem, qui est veræ sanctificationis subjectum. Et ideo sacramentum non perficitur in ipsa aqua, sed in applicatione aquæ ad hominem, quæ est ablutio. Et ideo Magister dicit quod *baptismus est ablutio corporis exterior facta sub forma præscripta verborum*.⁸

Res autem et sacramentum est character baptismalis: qui est res significata per exteriorem ablutionem, et est signum sacramentale interioris justificationis. Quæ est res tantum hujus sacramenti: scilicet, significata et non significans.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod id quod est sacramentum et res, scilicet character, et id quod est res tantum, scilicet interior justificatio, permanent: sed character permanet indelebiter, ut supra dictum est;⁹ justificatio autem permanet, sed amissibiliter. Damascenus ergo baptismum definiit, non quantum ad id quod exterius agitur, quod est sacramentum tantum; sed quantum ad id quod est interius. Unde posuit duo pertinentia ad characterem, scilicet *sigillum* et *custodiam*: in quantum ipse character, qui sigillum dicitur, quantum est de se, custodit animam in bono. Duo etiam ponit pertinentia ad ultimam rem sacramenti: scilicet *regenerationem*, quæ ad hoc pertinet quod per baptismum homo inchoat novam vitam justitiæ; et *illuminationem*, quæ pertinet specialiter ad fidem, per quam homo spiritualem vitam accipit, secundum illud *Habacuc*, *Justus autem ex fide vivit*.¹⁰ Baptismus autem est quædam fidei protestatio. Unde dicitur *fidei sacramentum*.¹¹

⁶*De sacramentis* 1, 9, 2. PL 176, 317

⁷op cit 2, 6, 2. PL 176, 443

⁸*IV Sent.* 3, 1

⁹3a. 63, 5

¹⁰*Habakkuk* 2, 4

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REPLY: In the sacrament of baptism three things should be considered: that which is *sign only*, that which is *reality and sign*, and that which is *reality only*.^b The *sign only* is something visible and outwardly manifest which is the sign of the inward effect, for this pertains to the very nature of a sacrament. But the external thing sensibly manifest is the water itself and its use, viz. the act of washing. Some have therefore thought that water itself is a sacrament. Indeed, Hugh of St Victor seems to say this, for in giving a common definition of a sacrament he says that it is the *material element*;⁶ in the definition of baptism he says it is *the water*.^{7c}

But this is not true. Since the sacraments of the New Law work in us a certain sanctification, the perfection of a sacrament will be realized wherever the perfection of sanctification is had. Now the act of sanctification is not achieved in the water—the water has only a certain instrumental power of sanctification, non-permanent, a power which passes into man, the subject of true sanctification. Therefore the perfection of the sacrament is not in the water by itself but in the application of the water to man—the act of washing. Thus Peter Lombard describes baptism as the *external washing of the body with the prescribed form of words*.⁸

The *reality and sign* is the baptismal character, for the latter is the reality signified by the external washing and is itself the sacramental sign of interior justification. This justification is the *reality only*, i.e., it is signified but is not itself a sign.

Hence: 1. The *sign and reality*, namely the character, and the *reality only*, interior justification, remain. But the character remains permanently, as has been said;⁹ justification remains but with the possibility of being lost. So Damascene defined baptism not with respect to what is externally done—the sacramental sign—but with respect to the interior effect. Thus he spoke of two things, *seal* and *safeguarding*, which pertain to character inasmuch as the character, called also the seal, safeguards the soul in good. The two other things pertain to the reality ultimately signified, viz. *rebirth*, which is pertinent in so far as a man begins through baptism a new life of righteousness. *Illumination* pertains especially to faith through which man receives spiritual life: *The just man lives by faith*.¹⁰ Now baptism is a certain profession of faith and thus is called the *sacrament of faith*.¹¹

¹¹cf Augustine, *Epist.* 98. *Ad Bonifacium*. PL 33, 364. Ambrose, *De Spiritu Sancto* 1, 3. PL 16, 743

^bThe external rite is wholly sign (*sacramentum tantum*) of the realities (*res*) it causes; one of these (*res et sacramentum*) points further to the ultimate reality (*res tantum*), grace caused.

^cSt Thomas, following Peter Lombard (IV *Sent.* 3, 1), is here rejecting a traditional opinion reflected in the thought of Hugh of St Victor according to which there is a permanent power, a presence of the Holy Spirit, in the baptismal water itself.

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 66, 2

Et similiter Dionysius baptismum definivit per ordinem ad alia sacramenta, dicens quod est *quoddam principium sanctissimorum mandatorum sacrae actionis, ad eorum susceptivam opportunitatem formans nostros animales habitus*.¹² Et iterum in ordine ad caelestem gloriam, quae est universalis finis sacramentorum, cum subdit, *ad supercaelestis quietis anagogen nostrum iter faciens*.¹³ Et iterum quantum ad principium spiritualis vitae, per hoc quod subdit, *sacrae et divinissimae nostrae regenerationis traditio*.¹⁴

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod, sicut dictum est,¹⁵ opinionem Hugonis de Sancto Victore in hac parte sequi non oportet. Potest tamen verificari ut baptismus dicatur aqua esse, quia aqua est materiale baptismi principium. Et sic erit praedicatio per causam.

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod, accedente verbo ad elementum fit sacramentum, non quidem in ipso elemento, sed in homine, cui adhibetur elementum per usum ablutionis. Et hoc etiam significat ipsum verbum quod accedit ad elementum, cum dicitur, *Ego te baptizo*, etc.

articulus 2. utrum baptismus fuerit institutus post Christi passionem

AD SECUNDUM sic proceditur:¹ 1. Videtur quod baptismus fuerit institutus post Christi passionem. Causa enim praecedit effectum. Sed passio Christi operatur in sacramentis novae legis. Ergo passio Christi praecedit institutionem sacramentorum novae legis. Et praecipue institutionem baptismi: cum Apostolus dicat, *Quicumque baptizati sumus in Christo Jesu, in morte ipsius baptizati sumus*, etc.²

2. Praeterea, sacramenta novae legis efficaciam habent ex mandato Christi. Sed Christus mandatum baptizandi dedit discipulis post passionem et resurrectionem suam, dicens, *Euntes, docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris*, etc., ut habetur *Matt.*³ Ergo videtur quod post passionem Christi baptismus fuerit institutus.

3. Praeterea, baptismus est sacramentum necessitatis, ut supra dictum est:⁴ et ita videtur quod ex quo baptismus institutus fuit, homines obligantur ad baptismum. Sed ante passionem Christi homines non obligantur ad baptismum: quia adhuc circumcisio suam virtutem habebat, in cujus loco successit baptismus. Ergo videtur quod baptismus non fuerit institutus ante passionem Christi.

SED CONTRA est quod Augustinus dicit, in quodam sermone *Epiphaniae*, *Ex quo Christus in aquis immergitur, ex eo omnium peccata abluit*

¹²*De Ecclesiast. Hier.* 2. PG 3, 391. Dionysius (or Pseudo-Dionysius) was a late-5th or early-6th century author mistakenly identified with the Dionysius of *Acts* 17, 34

¹³*ibid*

¹⁴*ibid*

¹⁵Reply

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Likewise Dionysius defined baptism with reference to the other sacraments when he said that it is a *certain principle which disposes our soul for the opportune reception of sacred actions which have been prescribed for us*.¹² Again, with reference to heavenly glory, the end of all the sacraments, he adds that it *leads our way upwards to the rest of heaven*.¹³ And further, in reference to the principle of the spiritual life he calls it the *transmission of our sacred and most divine regeneration*.¹⁴

2. As has been said,¹⁵ the opinion of Hugh of St Victor should not be followed here. However, to say baptism is the water itself can be understood correctly inasmuch as water is the material principle. In this case it would be a causal denomination.

3. The union of the word and the element produces the sacrament, not indeed in the material element itself, but in the man who is washed by it. And this is the very meaning of the word which unites with the element, *I baptize you*, etc.

article 2. was baptism instituted after Christ's passion?

THE SECOND POINT:¹ I. It seems that baptism was instituted after Christ's passion, for the cause precedes the effect. But Christ's passion is at work in the sacraments of the New Law. Therefore, the passion of Christ preceded the institution of the sacraments of the New Law. This would be especially true for baptism, since St Paul says, *All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death*.²

2. Moreover, the sacraments of the New Law have their effectiveness from the command of Christ. But Christ gave the disciples a command to baptize after his passion and resurrection when he said, *Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father*, etc.³ Therefore, it seems that baptism was instituted after Christ's passion.

3. Moreover, baptism is a necessary sacrament, as was said above.⁴ So it seems that from the moment of its institution men were obliged to baptism. But before the passion of Christ men were not so obliged since up to this point circumcision, which eventually gave way to baptism, was still in force. Therefore, it seems that baptism was not instituted before Christ's passion.

ON THE OTHER HAND Augustine says, *From the moment that Christ was immersed in the waters, from this very moment water washes away the sins of*

¹cf 3a. 73, 5 ad 4. IV *Sent.* 3, 5, ii & iii²Romans 6, 3³Matthew 28, 19⁴3a. 65, 4

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SUMMA THEOLOGIAE, 3a. 66, 2

*aqua.*⁵ Sed hoc fuit ante Christi passionem. Ergo baptismus ante Christi passionem fuit institutus.

RESPONSIO: Dicendum quod, sicut dictum est supra,⁶ sacramenta ex sui institutione habent quod conferant gratiam. Unde tunc videtur aliquod sacramentum institui, quando accipit virtutem producendi suum effectum. Hanc autem virtutem accepit baptismus quando Christus est baptizatus. Unde tunc vere baptismus institutus fuit, quantum ad ipsum sacramentum.

Sed necessitas utendi hoc sacramento indicta fuit hominibus post passionem et resurrectionem. Tum quia in passione Christi terminata sunt figuralia sacramenta, quibus succedit baptismus et alia sacramenta novæ legis. Tum etiam quia per baptismum configuratur homo passioni et resurrectioni Christi, in quantum moritur peccato et incipit novam iustitiæ vitam. Et ideo oportuit Christum pati prius et resurgere quam hominibus indiceretur necessitas se configurandi morti et resurrectioni ejus.

1. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod etiam ante passionem Christi baptismus habebat efficaciam a Christi passione, in quantum eam præfigurabat: aliter tamen quam sacramenta veteris legis. Nam illa erant *figuræ* tantum: baptismus autem ab ipso Christo virtutem habebat justificandi, per cujus virtutem etiam ipsa passio salutifera fuit.

2. Ad secundum dicendum quod homines non debebant multiplicibus figuris arctari per Christum, qui venerat sua veritate figuras impletas auferre. Et ideo ante passionem suam baptismum institutum non posuit sub præcepto: sed voluit ad ejus exercitium homines assuefieri; et præcipue in populo Judæorum, apud quem omnia facta figuralia erant, ut Augustinus dicit.⁷ Post passionem vero et resurrectionem, non solum Judæis, sed etiam gentilibus suo præcepto necessitatem baptismi imposuit, dicens, *Euntes, docete omnes gentes.*⁸

3. Ad tertium dicendum quod sacramenta non sunt obligatoria nisi quando sub præcepto ponuntur. Quod quidem non fuit ante passionem, ut dictum est.⁹ Quod enim Dominus ante passionem Nicodemo dixit, *Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto, non potest introire in regnum Dei,*¹⁰ magis videtur ad futurum respicere quam ad præsens tempus.

⁵Pseudo-Augustine, *Serm. Suppos.* 135. PL 39, 2012

⁶3a. 62, 1

⁷*Contra Faustum* IV, 2. PL 42, 218

⁸*Matthew* 28, 19

⁹ad 2 above

¹⁰*John*, 3, 5

^{*}The viewpoint of the citation from a letter falsely attributed to Augustine is similar to that rejected in the previous article (see note *c*). The thought is as early as Ignatius of Antioch, who wrote that *Jesus Christ was baptized that by his passion he might cleanse the water* (*Ephesians* 18, 2). Ignatius, however, did not neglect the connection between the baptism of Christ and his passion and death.

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all.^{5a} But this was before Christ's passion. Therefore, baptism was instituted before the passion of Christ.

REPLY: As stated above,⁶ the sacraments by their very institution are ordered to the conferring of grace. It would seem then that a sacrament is instituted when it receives the power of producing its effect. But baptism received this power when Christ was baptized. At this moment, therefore, baptism was truly instituted as a sacrament.

But the necessity of using this sacrament was placed on man after the passion and resurrection. First of all, because in the passion of Christ the prefiguring sacraments or signs^b came to an end, and were succeeded by baptism and the other sacraments of the New Law. Secondly, because through baptism a man is configured to the passion and resurrection of Christ inasmuch as he dies to sin and begins a new life of righteousness. Therefore it was proper for Christ to suffer and rise before the necessity of being configured to his passion and death was imposed upon men.

Hence: 1. Even before the passion of Christ baptism had its effectiveness from Christ's passion inasmuch as it prefigured the passion, though differently than the sacraments of the Old Law. For these latter were *figures* only, while baptism had the power of justifying from Christ himself, through whose power even the passion itself was salvific.^c

2. Men ought not to be restricted by many figures by Christ who came to take away figures by fulfilling them in truth. Therefore, he did not make baptism, already instituted, obligatory before his passion, but rather wished that men should become accustomed to its use. This especially among the Jews to whom all things were figurative, as Augustine points out.⁷ But after his passion and resurrection he made baptism necessary for both Jew and Gentile when he said, *Go, teach all nations.*⁸

3. Sacraments are obligatory only when we are commanded to receive them. Such a command was not given before the passion, as has been said.⁹ The fact that the Lord said to Nicodemus before his passion, *Unless a man is born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God,*¹⁰ seems rather to look to the future than to any present situation.

^bThe *figuralia sacramenta* of Christian baptism, such as circumcision and the baptism of John, will be discussed further in 70, 1 below.

^cWhile St Thomas argues here that the sacrament of baptism was instituted at the baptism of Christ, he later (3a. 73, 5 ad 4) admits the possibility of its institution only after the passion and resurrection of Christ. In this latter place he connects the view that the sacrament was instituted at the baptism of Christ with the reference in *John* 3, 22 to baptizing by Jesus. Yet *John* 4, 2 seems to modify this and deny that Jesus himself baptized. In any case, the truth remains that there is no sacrament of baptism save in virtue of the passion and resurrection of Christ.