

other shape.¹ In size they should be, at the very least, an inch in diameter, as a particle of less size can hardly be administered without bringing the fingers into contact with the tongue of the communicant.² There is a very convenient instrument by which they are cut at once to the proper form, and which no sacristy should be without. It is a useful precaution, after cutting them, to shake them gently on a piece of linen or white paper, so as to free them from the minute fragments that often adhere loosely to the edges. De Herdt³ recommends the use of a sieve or some other such instrument for the purpose.

649. The rubric here directs that there be prepared, in a convenient place, one or more vessels containing wine and water for the purification of the communicants. The rubric of the Missal also directs how the purification is to be administered to those who receive communion "intra missam:" "Minister autem dextra manu tenens vas cum vino et aqua, sinistra vero mappulam aliquanto post Sacerdotem eis "porrigit purificationem et mappulam ad os abstergendum."⁴

We have seen, above, the instructions of St. Charles regarding this purification.⁵ Baruffaldi,⁶ also, supposes that it takes place, and observes that there should be two vessels, one of water, the other of wine, so that the communicants may have a choice, as some of them might not wish to take wine. Benedict XIV supposes the same, and shows that it was introduced to enable the communicant more easily and more effectually to swallow the least fragment of the Sacred Host that might remain in the mouth, and not, as was maintained by De Vert, by way of substitute for the chalice when it was withdrawn.⁷

650. There are few places, however, in which it has not completely fallen into disuse. De Herdt testifies for Belgium. Citing Janssens, he says it has been given up for many just reasons—the danger of effusion, the poverty of the churches, the difficulty of presenting it to each when there is a crowd of communicants, the nausea some would feel, etc., etc.⁸ M. Caron testifies the same for France;⁹ and it is

¹ St. Lig., n. 205. De Herdt, pars iii. n. 4. i. Cfr. Synod. Thurl., *De Euch.* n. 32.

² Vid. infra, n. 687.

³ Pars ii. n. 30, iv. in fine.

⁴ *Rit. Cel. Miss.*, tit. x. n. 6, in fine.

⁵ *Supra*, n. 593.

⁶ Tit. xxiv. n. 13, et seq.

⁷ *De Sacrif. Miss.*, lib. ii. cap. xii. 4, 5.

⁸ Pars ii. n. 28, i. in fine

⁹ *Cérémonies de la Messe Basse*, art. xiv. n. 137.

entirely unknown in Ireland, England, and America. Merati, in his commentary on the rubric of the Missal above cited, states that the custom is observed only in some churches.¹ It would seem from a note in the "Cérémonial des Evêques" "Expliqué," that at present the custom is not observed even in Rome,² and the same may be inferred from the fact that Baldeschi, in his instructions on the ceremonies to be observed in administering communion,³ is entirely silent on the subject. In many places, however, the rubric is still observed at a mass of ordination—the purification being presented immediately after communion to those who have received orders.⁴

There is nothing, it must be confessed, in the wording of the rubric, to imply that it is not as binding as any other, nor can it be maintained that a contrary custom suffices of itself to remove the obligation of a rubric.⁵ Yet it seems as if an exception must be admitted in regard to the present rubric. It is hard to conceive that the contrary custom could have prevailed, as it has prevailed, without at least that constructive consent of the legislator, which would suffice to remove the obligation.⁶ In fact, this consent appears to be implied in a recent answer of the Sacred Congregation.⁷ Being asked whether it would be expedient to introduce into the diocese of Luçon the observance, at least at the communion of the clergy, of what is prescribed in the rubrics regarding the purification, the Sacred Congregation answered so as to allow the existing usage, according to which there was no purification, to be retained.⁸ At all events, the reasons above mentioned by De Herdt show that it would be inexpedient to revive its observance, where it has already fallen into disuse.⁹

651. The linen cloth which the rubric here directs to be extended before the communicants, is for the purpose of receiving any particle or fragment which might accidentally fall while the priest is administering the sacrament.¹⁰ It is usually attached to the altar rails, and is held by the communicant in both hands, while the priest puts the Sacred Host into his

¹ *Nov. Obs. et Addit.*, etc., n. xxxiv.

² *Lib. ii. cap. xxix. n. 3, note (3).*

³ *Esposizione delle Sacre Ceremonie, etc.*, parte 1^a, capo iii.

⁴ In Rome, according to present usage, there is no purification even at a mass of ordination.

⁵ *Vid. chap. i. n. 55, et seq.*

⁶ *Chap. i. n. 51, 52.*

⁷ 12 Aug., 1854, in *Lucionen.*, ad 20 et ad 24.

⁸ *Vid. Decr. in Appendice.*

⁹ *Vid. Mém. Théol.*, VI^{me} Série, 4^{me} Cahier, pp. 544, et seq.

¹⁰ *Baruff.*, tit. xxiv. n. 16. *Catal.*, cap. ii. § i. n. iii.