

PART I

Apostolic Constitution INDULGENCED WORKS

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+ Joseph Cardinal Ferretto,
Titular Bishop of the Suburban Church
of Sabina and Poggio Mirteto,

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This is a digest of the works and prayers listed in the Enchiridion of Indulgences. The Enchiridion recites each indulgenced prayer in full. Because most are recognizable they will only be listed by name. The untranslated Enchiridion lists each work and prayer in alphabetical order by their Latin names. The order shall remain the same in this listing. The descriptions of the works and details regarding obtaining the indulgence will be edited and abbreviated in this listing. The following is not represented to be an exact reprint of the Enchiridion but an accurate digest of what constitutes an approved indulgenced work by the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary.

In all but the plenary indulgence of In Articulo Mortis, at the moment of death, a plenary indulgence mentioned below **MUST** be accompanied by the three prerequisites of a plenary indulgence.

1. Sacramental Confession,
2. Communion, and
3. Prayer for the intention of the Holy Father, all to be performed within days of each other if not at the same time.

Thus the formula for obtaining a plenary indulgence are the three constants mentioned above plus any one of the variable works mentioned below as being worthy of a plenary indulgence.

1. Direct, we beg you, O Lord. (Prayer from Roman Ritual) Partial indulgence.
2. Acts of the Theological Virtues and of Contrition. A partial indulgence is granted to those who devoutly recite, according to any legitimate formula, the acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition.
3. ADORATION OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who visit the Most Blessed Sacrament for at least one half hour (together with the three prerequisites (constants) of a plenary indulgence. A partial indulgence is granted to those who visit and adore the Most Blessed Sacrament without the three constants or for any period less than one half hour.
4. Hidden God (Adoro te devote) -- hymn, partial indulgence.
5. We have come (Adsumus) -- prayer, partial indulgence.
6. To you, O blessed Joseph (Ad te, beate Ioseph) --- prayer, partial indulgence.
7. We Give You Thanks ---- prayer from Roman Breviary, partial indulgence
8. Angel Of God --- prayer, partial indulgence.
9. The Angel Of The Lord --- prayer, partial indulgence.
10. Soul of Christ (Anima Christi) --- prayer, partial indulgence.
11. Visit to the Patriarchal Basilicas in Rome. A PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who devoutly visit one of the Patriarchal Basilicas in Rome and recite one Our Father and the Creed,
 - A. On the titular feast of the Basilica;
 - B. On any Holy Day of Obligation;
 - C. Once a year on any other day of one's choice. (Remember the three constants are also required to obtain ANY plenary indulgence.)
12. PAPAL BLESSING. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who "piously and devoutly" receive, even by radio, the Blessing of the Pope when imparted to Rome and the world (Urbi et Orbi). (3 constants.)
13. Visit to a Cemetery. Only applicable to the souls in Purgatory when one devoutly visits and prays for the departed. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is bestowed for this work each day between November 1 and November 8.
14. Visit to a "Catacomb" (early Christian cemetery.) Partial indulgence.
15. Act of spiritual Communion according to any pious formula -- partial indulgence.
16. Recitation of the Apostles Creed or the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed -- partial indulgence.

17. ADORATION OF THE CROSS. A PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who in solemn liturgical action of Good Friday devoutly assist in at the adoration of the Cross and kiss it.
18. Office of the dead. A partial indulgence to those who devoutly recite Lauds or Vespers of the Office of the Dead.
19. "Out of the Depths" (De profundis). Psalm 129. Partial indulgence to those who recite.
20. Christian Doctrine. Partial indulgence to those who take part in teaching or learning christian doctrine.
21. "Lord God Almighty." (Roman Breviary.) Partial indulgence.
22. "Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus." "Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before your face I humbly kneel, and with burning soul pray and beseech you to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment, while I contemplate with great love and tender pity your five wounds, pondering over them within me, calling to mind the words which David, your prophet, said of you, my good Jesus: "They have pierced my hands and my feet; they have numbered all my bones." PLENARY INDULGENCE when recited on a Friday in Lent and Passiontide, when recited after Communion before an image of Christ crucified. On any other day the indulgence is partial.
23. Eucharistic Congress. PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who devoutly participate in the customary solemn eucharistic rite at the close of a Eucharistic Congress.
24. "Hear Us" (Roman Ritual) -- partial indulgence.
25. RETREAT. (Exercitia spiritualia). PLENARY INDULGENCE to those who spend at least three (3) whole days in the spiritual exercises of a retreat.
26. "Most sweet Jesus --Act of Reparation" PLENARY INDULGENCE when this prayer is publicly recited on the feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Otherwise the indulgence is partial.
27. "Most sweet Jesus, Redeemer -- Act of Dedication of the Human Race to Jesus Christ King." PLENARY INDULGENCE when this prayer is publicly recited on the feast of our Lord Jesus Christ King. Otherwise the indulgence is partial.
28. The Moment of Death (In articulo mortis). PLENARY INDULGENCE. EXCEPTION TO THE THREE CONSTANTS. (Verbatim recitation of the grant follows:) "To the faithful in danger of death, who cannot be assisted by a priest to bring them the sacraments and impart the Apostolic Blessing with its plenary indulgence (see can. 468, Sec.2 of Code of Canon Law), Holy Mother Church nevertheless grants a plenary indulgence to be acquired at the point of death, provided they are properly disposed and have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime. The use of a crucifix or a cross to gain this indulgence is praiseworthy." The condition: 'provided they have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime' supplies in such cases for the three usual conditions required for the gaining of a plenary indulgence." The plenary indulgence at the point of death can be acquired by the faithful, even if they have already obtained another plenary indulgence on the same day."
29. Litanies. Partial indulgence to those who recite the following litanies: the litany of the Most Holy Name of Jesus; The litany of The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; The litany of the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ; The litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary; The litany of St. Joseph; and the litany of All Saints.
30. "The Magnificat". Partial indulgence.
31. "Mary, Mother of Grace." (Roman Ritual) Partial indulgence.
32. "The Memorare." (Remember, O Most gracious Virgin Mary.) Partial Indulgence.
33. "The Miserere" (Have mercy of me.) Psalm 50. Partial indulgence.
34. Novena Devotions. Partial indulgence to those who participate in a public novena before the feast of Christmas or Pentecost, or the Immaculate Conception.
35. Use of Articles of Devotion. (Verbatim follows:) "The faithful, who devoutly use an article of devotion (crucifix or cross, rosary, scapular or medal) properly blessed by any priest, obtain a partial indulgence. "But if the article of devotion has been blessed by the Sovereign Pontiff or by any Bishop, the faithful, using it, can also gain a PLENARY INDULGENCE on the feast of the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, provided they also make a profession of faith according to any legitimate formula."
36. Little Offices. The following Little Offices are each enriched with a partial indulgence: the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph.
37. Prayer for Sacerdotal or Religious Vocations. Partial indulgence is granted to those who recite a prayer approved by ecclesiastical Authority for the above intention.
38. Mental Prayer. Partial indulgence to those who spend some time in pious mental prayer.
39. "Let us pray for our Sovereign Pontiff" (Roman Breviary) Partial Indulgence.
40. "O Sacred Banquet" (Roman Breviary) Partial indulgence.

41. Assistance as Sacred Preaching. PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who attend a Mission, hear some of the sermons and are present for the solemn close of the Mission. A partial indulgence is granted to those who assist with devotion and attention at the sacred preaching of the Word of God.
42. FIRST COMMUNION. PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who receive Communion for the first time or to those who ASSIST at the sacred ceremonies of a First Communion.
43. First Mass of a Newly Ordained Priest. PLENARY INDULGENCE granted to the priest and to the faithful who devoutly assist at the same Mass.
44. "Prayer for Unity of the Church." Partial indulgence.
45. Monthly Recollection. Partial indulgence to those who take part in a monthly retreat.
46. "Eternal Rest." A partial indulgence only to the souls in purgatory. "Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord, and let the perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace."
47. "May it Please you, O Lord." Partial indulgence. "May it please you, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all those who do good to us for your Name's sake. Amen."
48. RECITATION OF THE MARIAN ROSARY. (The following is verbatim.) "A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted, if the Rosary is recited IN A CHURCH OR PUBLIC ORATORY OR IN A FAMILY GROUP, A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY OR PIOUS ASSOCIATION; a partial indulgence is granted in other circumstances. "Now the Rosary is a certain formula of prayer, which is made up of fifteen decades of 'Hail Marys' with an 'Our Father' before each decade, and in which the recitation of each decade is accompanied by pious meditation on a particular mystery of our Redemption. "The name 'Rosary,' however, is commonly used in reference to only a third of the fifteen decades. "The gaining of the plenary indulgence is regulated by the following norms: "
 - A. The recitation of a third part only of the Rosary suffices; but the five decades must be recited continuously. "
 - B. The vocal recitation MUST be accompanied by pious meditation on the mysteries. "
 - C. In public recitation the mysteries must be announced in the manner customary in the place; for private recitation, however, it suffices if the vocal recitation is accompanied by meditation on the mysteries. "
 - D. For those belonging to the Oriental rites, amongst whom this devotion is not practiced, the Patriarchs can determine some other prayers in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary (for those of the Byzantine rite, for example, the Hymn 'Akathistos' or the Office 'Paraclisis'); to the prayers thus determined are accorded the same indulgences as for the Rosary."
49. Jubilees of Sacerdotal Ordination. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to a priest on the 25th, 50th and 60th anniversaries of his ordination when he renews before God his resolve to faithfully fulfill the duties of his vocation. If the priest celebrates a jubilee Mass, the faithful who assist at it can acquire a Plenary Indulgence.
50. READING OF SACRED SCRIPTURE. While a partial indulgence is granted to those who read from Sacred Scripture with the veneration which the divine word is due, a PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who read for at least one half an hour.
51. "Hail Holy Queen." (Roman Breviary.) Partial indulgence.
52. "Holy Mary, help the helpless." (Roman Breviary.) Partial indulgence.
53. "Holy Apostles Peter and Paul." (Roman Missal.) Partial indulgence.
54. Veneration of the Saints. Partial indulgence granted to those who on the feast of any Saint recite in his honor the oration of the Missal or any other approved by legitimate Authority.
55. Sign of the Cross. Partial indulgence.
56. A Visit to the Stational Churches of Rome. A partial indulgence is granted to those who on the day indicated in the Roman Missal devoutly visit the stational church in Rome named for that day' but if they also assist at the sacred functions celebrated in the morning or evening, a PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted.
57. "We fly to your Patronage." Partial indulgence.
58. Diocesan Synod. PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who during the time of a diocesan Synod, devoutly visit the church in which it is being held and there recite one Our Father and the Creed.
59. "Down in Adoration Falling" (Tantum ergo) (Roman Breviary) PLENARY INDULGENCE when recited on Holy Thursday and the feast of Corpus Christi. Otherwise a partial indulgence is granted for recitation.
60. The Te Deum. PLENARY INDULGENCE when recited publicly on the last day of the year. Otherwise a partial indulgence is granted to those who recite the Te Deum in thanksgiving.
61. "Come, Holy Spirit, Creator Blest." PLENARY INDULGENCE if recited on the first of January or on the feast of the Pentecost. Otherwise, a partial indulgence is granted to those who recite it.

62. "Come, Holy Spirit" Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. (Roman Missal) Partial indulgence.
63. EXERCISE OF THE WAY OF THE CROSS. PLENARY INDULGENCE. A Plenary indulgence is granted to those who piously make the Way of the Cross. The gaining of the indulgence is regulated by the following rules:
 - A. Must be done before stations of the cross legitimately erected.
 - B. 14 stations are required. Although it is customary for the icons to represent pictures or images, 14 simple crosses will suffice.
 - C. The common practice consists of fourteen pious readings to which some vocal prayers are added.. However, nothing more is required than a pious meditation on the Passion and Death of the Lord, which need not be a particular consideration of the individual mysteries of the stations.
 - D. A movement from one station to the next is required. But if the stations are made publicly and it is not possible for everyone taking part to go from station to station, it suffices if at least the one conducting the exercise goes from station to station, the others remaining in their places.
 - E. Those who are "impeded" can gain the same indulgence if they spend at least one half and hour in pious reading and meditation on the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - F. For those belonging to the Oriental rites, amongst whom this pious exercise is not practiced, the respective Patriarchs can determine some other pious exercise in memory of the Passion and Death for the gaining of this indulgence.
64. "Visit, we beg you, O Lord." (Roman Breviary) Partial Indulgence.
65. Visit to the Parochial Church. PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who devoutly visit the parochial church either on its titular feast or on the 2nd of August when the indulgence of the "Portiuncula" occurs. In visiting the church IT IS REQUIRED that one Our Father and the Creed be recited. Both indulgences can be acquired either on the day designated above or on some other day designated by the Ordinary (bishop) for the benefit of the faithful. The same indulgences apply to the Cathedral church and, where there is one, to a Co-Cathedral church, even if they are not parochial churches; they apply to quasi-parochial churches also.
66. Visit to a Church or an Altar on the day of its consecration. PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who visit a church or an altar on the day itself of its consecration, and there recite on Our Father and the Creed.
67. Visit to a Church or Oratory on All Souls Day. PLENARY INDULGENCE. A plenary indulgence, applicable ONLY to the souls in purgatory, may be obtained by those who, on All Souls Day, piously visit a church, public oratory, or -for those entitled to use it, a semi public oratory. It may be acquired either on the day designated as All Souls Day or, with the consent of the bishop, on the preceding or following Sunday or the feast of All Saints. On visiting the church or oratory it is required that one Our Father and the Creed be recited.
68. Visit to a Church or Oratory of Religious on the Feast of the Holy Founder. A PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted to those who piously visit a church or oratory of a religious order on the feastday of its canonized founder, and there recite one Our Father and the Creed.
69. Pastoral Visitation. Partial indulgence to those who visit a church during the time that a pastoral visitation is being held. But a PLENARY INDULGENCE, to be gained only once during the visitation, is granted if during the time of the visitation they assist at a sacred function at which the Visitor presides.
70. Renewal of Baptismal Promises. A partial indulgence is granted to those who renew their baptismal promises according to any formula in use; but a PLENARY INDULGENCE is granted if this is done in celebration of the Paschal Vigil or on the anniversary of one's baptism.

PART II

The Doctrine of Indulgences

Paul Bishop

Servant of the Servants of God

For Everlasting Remembrance

I.

1. The doctrine and practice of indulgences which have been in force for many centuries in the Catholic Church have a solid foundation in divine revelation which comes from the Apostles and "develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit," while "as the centuries succeed one another the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her."

For an exact understanding of this doctrine and of its beneficial use it is necessary, however, to remember truths which the entire Church illumined by the Word of God has always believed and which the bishops, the successors of the Apostles, and first and foremost among them the Roman Pontiffs, the successors of Peter, have taught by means of pastoral practice as well as doctrinal documents throughout the course of centuries to this day.

2. It is a divinely revealed truth that sins bring punishments inflicted by God's sanctity and justice. These must be expiated either on this earth through the sorrows, miseries and calamities of this life and above all through death, or else in the life beyond through fire and torments or "purifying" punishments. Therefore it has always been the conviction of the faithful that the paths of evil are fraught with many stumbling blocks and bring adversities, bitterness and harm to those who follow them.

These punishments are imposed by the just and merciful judgment of God for the purification of souls, the defense of the sanctity of the moral order and the restoration of the glory of God to its full majesty. Every sin in fact causes a perturbation in the universal order established by God in his ineffable wisdom and infinite charity, and the destruction of immense values with respect to the sinner himself and to the human community.

Christians throughout history have always regarded sin not only as a transgression of divine law but also--though not always in a direct and evident way -- as contempt for or disregard of the friendship between God and man, just as they have regarded it as a real and unfathomable offense against God and indeed an ungrateful rejection of the love of God shown us through Jesus Christ, who called his disciples friends and not servants.

3. It is therefore necessary for the full remission and--as it is called--reparation of sins not only that friendship with God be reestablished by a sincere conversion of the mind and amends made for the offense against his wisdom and goodness, but also that all the personal as well as social values and those of universal order itself, which have been diminished or destroyed by sin, be fully reintegrated whether through voluntary reparation which will involve punishment or through acceptance of the punishments established by the just and most holy wisdom of God, from which there will shine forth throughout the world the sanctity and the splendor of his glory. The very existence of the gravity of the punishment enables us to understand the foolishness and malice of sin and its harmful consequences.

That punishment or the vestiges of sin may remain to be expiated or cleansed and that they in fact frequently do even after the remission of guilt is clearly demonstrated by the doctrine on purgatory. In purgatory, in fact, the souls of those "who died in the charity of God and truly repentant, but before satisfying with worthy fruits of penance for sins committed and for omissions" are cleansed after death with purgatorial punishments. This is also clearly evidenced in the liturgical prayers with which the Christian community admitted to Holy Communion has addressed God since most ancient times: "We are being justly punished for our sins, but be merciful and free us for the glory of your name."

For all men who walk this earth daily commit at least venial sins; thus all need the mercy of God to be set free from the penal consequences of sin.

II.

4. There reigns among men, by the hidden and benign mystery of the divine will, a supernatural solidarity whereby the sin of one harms the others just as the holiness of one also benefits the others. Thus the Christian faithful give each other mutual aid to attain their supernatural aim. A testimony of this solidarity is manifested in Adam himself, whose sin passed on through propagation to all men. But of this supernatural solidarity the greatest and most perfect principle, foundation and example is Christ himself to communion with whom God has called us.

5. Indeed Christ, "who committed no sin," "suffered for us," "was wounded for our iniquities, bruised for our sins ... by his bruises we are healed." Following in the footsteps of Christ, the Christian faithful have always endeavored to help one another on the path leading to the heavenly Father through prayer, the exchange of spiritual goods and penitential expiation. The more they have been immersed in the fervor of charity, the more they have imitated Christ in his sufferings, carrying their crosses in expiation for their own sins and those of others, certain that they could help their brothers to obtain salvation from God the Father of mercies.

This is the very ancient dogma of the Communion of Saints, whereby the life of each individual son of God in Christ and through Christ is joined by a wonderful link to the life of all his other Christian brothers in the supernatural unity of the Mystical Body of Christ till, as it were, a single mystical person is formed.

Thus is explained the "treasury of the Church" which should certainly not be imagined as the sum total of material goods accumulated in the course of the centuries, but the infinite and inexhaustible value the expiation and the merits of Christ our Lord have before God, offered as they were so that all mankind could be set free from sin and attain communion with the Father. It is Christ the Redeemer himself in whom the satisfactions and merits of his redemption exist and find their force. This treasury also includes the truly immense, unfathomable and ever pristine value before God of the prayers and good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, who following the footsteps of Christ the Lord and by his grace have sanctified their lives and fulfilled the mission entrusted to them by the Father. Thus while attaining their own salvation, they have also cooperated in the salvation of their brothers in the unity of the Mystical Body.

"For all who are in Christ, having his spirit, form one Church and cleave together in him." Therefore the union of the wayfarers with the brethren who have gone to sleep in the peace of Christ is not in the least weakened or interrupted, but on the contrary, according to the perpetual faith of the Church, is strengthened by a communication of spiritual goods. For by reason of the fact that those in heaven are more closely united with Christ, they establish the whole Church more firmly in holiness, lend nobility to the worship which the Church offers to God here on earth and in many ways contribute to building it up evermore.

For after they have been received into their heavenly home and are present to the Lord, through him and with him and in him they do not cease to intervene with the Father for us, showing forth the merits which they have won on earth through the one Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, by serving God in all things and filling up in their flesh those things which are lacking of the sufferings of Christ for his Body which is the Church. Thus by their brotherly interest our weakness is greatly strengthened. For this reason there certainly exists between the faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth a perennial link of charity and an abundant exchange of all the goods by which, with the expiation of all the sins of the entire Mystical Body, divine justice is placated.

God's mercy is thus led to forgiveness, so that sincerely repentant sinners may participate as soon as possible in the full enjoyment of the benefits of the family of God.

III.

6. The Church, aware of these truths ever since its origins, formulated and undertook various ways of applying the fruits of the Lord's redemption to the individual faithful and of leading them to cooperate in the salvation of their brothers, so that the entire body of the Church might be prepared in justice and sanctity for the complete realization of the kingdom of God, when he will be all things to all men.

The Apostles themselves, in fact, exhorted their disciples to pray for the salvation of sinners. This very ancient usage of the Church has blessedly persevered, particularly in the practice of penitents invoking the intercession of the entire community, and when the dead are assisted with suffrages, particularly through the offering of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Good works, particularly those which human frailty finds difficult, were also offered to God for the salvation of sinners from the Church's most ancient times. And since the sufferings of the martyrs for the faith and for the law of God were considered of great value, penitents used to turn to the martyrs, to be helped by their merits to obtain from the bishops a more speedy reconciliation.

Indeed the prayer and good works of the upright were considered to be of so great value that it could be asserted the penitent was washed, cleansed and redeemed with the help of the entire Christian people. It was not believed, however, that the individual faithful by their own merits alone worked for the remission of sins of their brothers, but that the entire Church as a single body united to Christ its Head was bringing about satisfaction.

The Church of the Fathers was fully convinced that it was pursuing the work of salvation in community, and under the authority of the pastors established by the Holy Spirit as bishops to govern the Church of God. The bishops, therefore, prudently assessing these matters, established the manner and the measure of the satisfaction to be made and indeed permitted canonical penances to be replaced by other possibly easier works, which would be useful to the common good and suitable for fostering piety, to be performed by the penitents themselves and sometimes by others among the faithful.

IV.

7. The conviction existing in the Church that the pastors of the flock of the Lord could set the individual free from the vestiges of sins by applying the merits of Christ and of the saints led gradually, in the course of the centuries and under the influence of the Holy Spirit's continuous inspiration of the people of God, to the usage of indulgences which represented a progression in the doctrine and discipline of the Church rather than a change.

From the roots of revelation a new advantage grew in benefit to the faithful and the entire Church. The use of indulgences, which spread gradually, became a very evident fact in the history of the Church when the Roman Pontiffs decreed that certain works useful to the common good of the Church "could replace all penitential practices" and that the faithful who were "truly repentant and had confessed their sins" and performed such works were granted "by the mercy of Almighty God and . . . trusting in the merits and the authority of his Apostles" and "by virtue of the fullness of the apostolic power," not only full and abundant forgiveness, but the most complete forgiveness for their sins possible."

For "the only-begotten son of God . . . has won a treasure for the militant Church . . . and has entrusted it to blessed Peter, the keybearer of heaven, and to his successors, Christ's vicars on earth, that they may distribute it to the faithful for their salvation, applying it mercifully for reasonable causes to all who are repentant and have confessed their sins, at times remitting completely and at times partially the temporal punishment due sin in a general as well as in special ways insofar as they judge it to be fitting in the eyes of the Lord. It is known that the merits of the Blessed Mother of God and of all the elect . . . add further to this treasure."

8. The remission of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven insofar as their guilt is concerned has been called specifically "indulgence."

It has something in common with other ways or means of eliminating the vestiges of sin but at the same time it is clearly distinct from them. In an indulgence in fact, the Church, making use of its power as minister of the Redemption of Christ, not only prays but by an authoritative intervention dispenses to the faithful suitably disposed the treasury of satisfaction which Christ and the saints won for the remission of temporal punishment.

The aim pursued by ecclesiastical authority in granting indulgences is not only that of helping the faithful to expiate the punishment due sin but also that of urging them to perform works of piety, penitence and charity--particularly those which lead to growth in faith and which favor the common good.

And if the faithful offer indulgences in suffrage for the dead, they cultivate charity in an excellent way and while raising their minds to heaven, they bring a wiser order into the things of this world. The Magisterium of the Church has defended and illustrated this doctrine in various documents. Unfortunately, the practice of indulgences has at times been improperly used either through "untimely and superfluous indulgences" by which the power of the keys was humiliated and penitential satisfaction weakened, or through the collection of "illicit profits" by which indulgences were blasphemously defamed.

But the Church, in deploring and correcting these improper uses "teaches and establishes that the use of indulgences must be preserved because it is extremely salutary for the Christian people and authoritatively approved by the sacred councils; and it condemns with anathema those who maintain the uselessness of indulgences or deny the power of the Church to grant them."

9. The Church also in our days then invites all its sons to ponder and meditate well on how the use of indulgences benefits their lives and indeed all Christian society.

To recall briefly the most important considerations, this salutary practice teaches us in the first place how it is "sad and bitter to have abandoned . . . the Lord God." Indeed the faithful when they acquire indulgences understand that by their own powers they could not remedy the harm they have done to themselves and to the entire community by their sin, and they are therefore stirred to a salutary humility.

Furthermore, the use of indulgences shows us how closely we are united to each other in Christ, and how the supernatural life of each can benefit others so that these also may be more easily and more closely united with the Father. Therefore the use of indulgences effectively influences charity in us and demonstrates that charity in an outstanding manner when we offer indulgences as assistance to our brothers who rest in Christ.

10. Likewise, the religious practice of indulgences reawakens trust and hope in a full reconciliation with God the Father, but in such a way as will not justify any negligence nor in any way diminish the effort to acquire the dispositions required for full communion with God. Although indulgences are in fact free gifts, nevertheless they are granted for the living as well as for the dead only on determined conditions. To acquire them, it is indeed required on the one hand that prescribed works be performed, and on the other that the faithful have the necessary dispositions, that is to say, that they love God, detest sin, place their trust in the merits of Christ and believe firmly in the great assistance they derive from the Communion of Saints.

In addition, it should not be forgotten that by acquiring indulgences the faithful submit docilely to the legitimate pastors of the Church and above all to the successor of Blessed Peter, the keybearer of heaven, to whom the Savior himself entrusted the task of feeding his flock and governing his Church.

The salutary institution of indulgences therefore contributes in its own way to bringing it about that the Church appear before Christ without blemish or defect, but holy and immaculate, admirably united with Christ in the supernatural bond of charity. Since in fact by means of indulgences members of the Church who are undergoing purification are united more speedily to those of the Church in heaven, the kingdom of Christ is, through these same indulgences, established more extensively and more speedily "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ."

11. Therefore Holy Mother Church, supported by these truths, while again recommending to the faithful the practice of indulgences as something very dear to the Christian people during the course of many centuries and in our days as well--this is proven by experience--does not in any way intend to diminish the value of other means of sanctification and purification, first and foremost among which are the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments, particularly the Sacrament of Penance. Nor does it diminish the importance of those abundant aids which are called sacramentals or of the works of piety, penitence and charity.

All these aids have this in common that they bring about sanctification and purification all the more efficaciously, the more closely the faithful are united with Christ the Head and the Body of the Church by charity. The preeminence of charity in the Christian life is confirmed also by indulgences. For indulgences cannot be acquired without a sincere conversion of mentality (metanoia) and unity with God, to which the performance of the prescribed works is added. Thus the order of charity is preserved, into which is incorporated the remission of punishment by distribution from the Church's treasury.

While recommending that its faithful not abandon or neglect the holy traditions of their forebears but welcome them religiously as a precious treasure of the Catholic family and duly esteem them, the Church nevertheless leaves it to each to use these means of purification and sanctification with the holy and free liberty of the sons of God.

It constantly reminds them, though, of those things which are to be given preference because they are necessary or at least better and more efficacious for the attainment of salvation.

Holy Mother Church has then deemed it fitting, in order to give greater dignity and esteem to the use of indulgences, to introduce some innovations into its discipline of indulgences and has accordingly ordered the issuance of new norms.

V.

12. The following norms introduce appropriate variations in the discipline of indulgences, taking into consideration the proposals advanced by the episcopal conferences. The rulings of the Code of Canon Law and of the decrees of the Holy See concerning indulgences which do not go counter to the new norms remain unchanged. In drawing up the new norms these three considerations have been particularly observed: To establish a new measurement for partial indulgences; to reduce considerably the number of plenary indulgences; and, as for the so-called "real" and "local" indulgences, to reduce them and give them a simpler and more dignified formulation. Regarding partial indulgences, with the abolishment of the former determination of days and years, a new norm or measurement has been established which takes into consideration the action itself of the faithful Christian who performs a work to which an indulgence is attached.

Since by their acts the faithful can obtain, in addition to the merit which is the principal fruit of the act, a further remission of temporal punishment in proportion to the degree that the charity of the one performing the act is greater, and in proportion to the degree that the act itself is performed in a more perfect way, it has been considered fitting that this remission of temporal punishment which the Christian faithful acquires through an action should serve as the measurement for the remission of punishment which the ecclesiastical authority bountifully adds by way of partial indulgence.

It has also been considered fitting to reduce appropriately the number of plenary indulgences in order that the faithful may hold them in greater esteem and may in fact acquire them with the proper dispositions. For indeed the greater the proliferation (of indulgences) the less is the attention given them; what is offered in abundance is not greatly appreciated. Besides, many of the faithful need considerable time to prepare themselves properly for acquisition of a plenary indulgence.

As regards the "real" and "local" indulgences, not only has their number been reduced considerably, but the designations themselves have been abolished to make it clearer that indulgences are attached to the actions performed by the faithful and not to objects or places which are but the occasion for the acquisition of the indulgences.

In fact, members of pious associations can acquire the indulgences proper to their associations without the requirement of the use of distinctive objects.

N.1. An indulgence is the remission before God of the temporal punishment due sins already forgiven as far as their guilt is concerned, which the follower of Christ with the proper dispositions and under certain determined

conditions acquires through the intervention of the Church which, as minister of the Redemption, authoritatively dispenses and applies the treasury of the satisfaction won by Christ and the saints.

N.2. And indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due sin.

N.3. Partial as well as plenary indulgences can always be applied to the dead by way of suffrage.

N.4. A partial indulgence will henceforth be designated only with the words "partial indulgence" without any determination of days or years.

N.5. The faithful who at least with a contrite heart perform an action to which a partial indulgence is attached obtain, in addition to the remission of temporal punishment acquired by the action itself, an equal remission of punishment through the intervention of the Church.

N.6. A plenary indulgence can be acquired only once a day, except for the provisions contained in No. 18 for those who are on the point of death. A partial indulgence can be acquired more than once a day, unless there is an explicit indication to the contrary.

N.7. To acquire a plenary indulgence it is necessary to perform the work to which the indulgence is attached and to fulfill three conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion and prayer for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff. It is further required that all attachment to sin, even to venial sin, be absent. If this disposition is in any way less than complete, or if the prescribed three conditions are not fulfilled, the indulgence will be only partial, except for the provisions contained in No. 11 for those who are "impeded."

N.8. The three conditions may be fulfilled several days before or after the performance of the prescribed work; nevertheless it is fitting that Communion be received and the prayers for the intentions of the Supreme Pontiff be said the same day the work is performed.

N.9. A single sacramental confession suffices for gaining several plenary indulgences, but Communion must be received and prayers for the Supreme Pontiff's intentions recited for the gaining of each plenary indulgence.

N.10. The condition of praying for the Supreme Pontiff's intentions is fully satisfied by reciting one Our Father and one Hail Mary; nevertheless the individual faithful are free to recite any other prayer according to their own piety and devotion toward the Supreme Pontiff.

N.11. While there is no change in the faculty granted by canon 935 of the Code of Canon Law to confessors to commute for those who are "impeded" either the prescribed work itself or the required conditions [for the acquisition of indulgences], local Ordinaries can grant to the faithful over whom they exercise authority in accordance with the law, and who live in places where it is impossible or at least very difficult for them to receive the sacraments of confession and Communion, permission to acquire a plenary indulgence without confession and Communion provided they are sorry for their sins and have the intention of receiving these sacraments as soon as possible.

N.12. The division of indulgences into "personal," "real" and "local" is abolished so as to make it clearer that indulgences are attached to the actions of the faithful even though at times they may be linked with some object or place.

N.13. The "Enchiridion of Indulgences" is to be revised with a view to attaching indulgences only to the most important prayers and works of piety, charity and penance.

N.14. The list and summaries of indulgences special to religious orders, congregations, societies of those living in community without vows, secular institutes and the pious associations of faithful are to be revised as soon as possible in such a way that plenary indulgences may be acquired only on particular days established by the Holy

See acting on the recommendation of the Superior General, or in the case of pious associations, of the local Ordinary.

N.15. A plenary indulgence applicable only to the dead can be acquired in all churches and public oratories -- and in semipublic oratories by those who have the right to use them --on November 2. In addition, a plenary indulgence can be acquired twice a year in parish churches; on the feast of the church's titular saint and on August 2, when the "Portiuncula" occurs, or on some other more opportune day determined by the Ordinary. All the indulgences mentioned above can be acquired either on the days established or--with the consent of the Ordinary--on the preceding or the following Sunday. Other indulgences attached to churches and oratories are to be revised as soon as possible.

N.16. The work prescribed for acquiring a plenary indulgence connected with a church or oratory consists in a devout visit and the recitation of one Our Father and the Creed.

N.17. The faithful who use with devotion an "object of piety" (crucifix, cross, rosary, scapular or medal) properly blessed by any priest, can acquire a partial indulgence. But if this "object of piety" is blessed by the Supreme Pontiff or any bishop, the faithful who use it devoutly can also acquire a plenary indulgence on the feast of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, provided they also make a profession of faith using any legitimate formula.

N.18. To the faithful in danger of death who cannot be assisted by a priest to bring them the sacraments and impart the apostolic blessing with its attendant plenary indulgence (according to canon 468, sec.2 of the Code of Canon Law) Holy Mother Church nevertheless grants a plenary indulgence to be acquired at the point of death (in articulo mortis), provided they are properly disposed and have been in the habit of reciting some prayers during their lifetime. To use a crucifix or cross in connection with the acquisition of this plenary indulgence is a laudable practice. This plenary indulgence at the point of death can be acquired by the faithful even if they have already obtained another plenary indulgence on the same day.

N.19. The norms established regarding plenary indulgences, particularly those referred to in N.6, apply also to what up to now have been known as the "toties quoties" ["as often as"] plenary indulgences.

N.20. Holy Mother Church, extremely solicitous for the faithful departed, has decided that suffrages be applied to them to the widest possible extent at any Sacrifice of the Mass whatsoever, abolishing all special privileges in this regard.

Transitional Norms

These new norms regulating the acquisition of indulgences will become valid three months from the date of publication of this constitution in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.

Indulgences attached to the use of "objects of piety" which are not mentioned above cease three months after the date of publication of this constitution in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.

The revisions mentioned in N.14 and N.15 must be submitted to the Sacred Apostolic Penitentiary within a year. Two years after the date of this constitution, indulgences which have not been confirmed will become null and void.

We will that these statutes and prescriptions of ours be established now and remain in force for the future notwithstanding, if it is necessary so to state, the Apostolic Constitutions and Directives published by our Predecessors or any other prescriptions even if they might be worthy of special mention or should required particular repeal.

PART III

INTRODUCTION TO INDULGENCES

(Article on Indulgences)

You don't hear about indulgences anymore, at least not in Catholic circles. If it could be said that at one time they were over emphasized, it's surely true that today they're under-emphasized. Many Catholics simply don't know what indulgences are, and they're at a loss to explain the Church's position on indulgences when challenged by fundamentalists.

And fundamentalists do bring up indulgences, perhaps because they know even less about them than the average, poorly-informed Catholic.

There is surely no better place to turn than to the Enchiridion of Indulgences. "Enchiridion" means "handbook," and the Enchiridion of Indulgences is the Church's official handbook on what acts and prayers carry indulgences and what indulgences actually are.

An indulgence is defined as "the remission before God of the temporal punishment due for sins already forgiven as far as their guilt is concerned." The first thing to note is that forgiveness of a sin is separate from punishment for the sin. Through sacramental confession we obtain forgiveness, but we aren't let off the hook as far as punishment goes.

Indulgences are two kinds: partial and plenary. A partial indulgence removes part of the temporal punishment due for sins. A plenary indulgence removes all of it. This punishment may come either in this life, in the form of various sufferings, or in the next life, in purgatory. What we don't get rid of here we suffer there.

TIME OFF FOR GOOD BEHAVIOR?

If you uncover a holy card or prayer book, you'll notice pious acts or recitation of prayers might carry an indication of time, such as "300 days" or "two years." Most fundamentalists, and even many Catholics, think such phrases refer to how much "time off for good behavior" you'd get in purgatory. If you perform a pious act labeled as "300 days' partial indulgence," then you'd spend 300 fewer days in purgatory.

It's easy to see how misinformed Catholics might scurry around for years, toting up indulgences, keeping a little register in which they add up the days. "Let's see, last year's tally comes to one thousand three hundred twelve years, give or take a week or so, and my lifetime tally is now past the twenty thousand mark. I can cancel out a lot of sinning with this!"

Or so some people might think. Well, there are no days or years in purgatory-- or in heaven or hell, for that matter -- and the indication of days or years attached to partial indulgences never meant you'd get that much time off in purgatory.

AS GOD SEES FIT

What it means was that you'd get a partial indulgence commensurate with what the early Christians got for doing penances for a certain length of time. But there has never been any way for us to measure how much "good time" that represents. All the Church could say, and all it ever did say, was that your temporal punishment would be reduced -- as God saw fit.

Since some Catholics were confused by the designation of days and years attached to partial indulgences, and since nearly all Protestants got a wrong idea of what those numbers meant, the rules for indulgences were modified in 1967, and now "the grant of a partial indulgence is designated only with the words "partial indulgence," without any determination of days or years," according to the Enchiridion.

To receive a partial indulgence, you have to recite the prayer or do the act of charity assigned. You have to be in the state of grace at least by the completion of the prescribed work. The rule says "at the completion" because often part of the prescribed work is going to confession, and you might not be in the state of grace before you do that. The other thing required is having a general intention to gain the indulgence. If you perform the required act but don't want to gain the indulgence, obviously you won't gain it.

The requirements for a plenary indulgence are tougher than for a partial. After all, a plenary indulgence remove all the temporal punishment due for the sins committed up to that time.

(If you sin later, of course, the temporal punishment connected with the new sins isn't covered by the earlier plenary indulgence, but, at least the punishment for the old sins isn't revived.)

"To acquire a plenary indulgence," says the Enchiridion, "it is necessary to perform the work to which the indulgence is attached and to fulfill the following three conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff. It is further required that all attachment to sin, even venial sin, be absent."

THE TOUGHEST REQUIREMENT

The greatest hurdle is the last. Making a good confession is not particularly difficult, and going to Communion and praying for the Pope's intentions are easier still. It's being free from all attachment to sin that's hard and it's quite possible that even evidently good people, who seek plenary indulgences regularly, never, in their whole lives, obtain one, because they are unwilling to relinquish their favorite little sins.

There is an account of St. Philip Neri, who died in 1595, preaching a jubilee indulgence in a crowded church. A revelation was given to him that only two people in the church were actually getting it, an old char-woman and the saint himself. Not exactly encouraging, huh? But don't worry. If you aren't perfectly disposed and can't get the plenary indulgence, you'll at least come away with a partial.

It should be pointed out that the first three conditions may be fulfilled several days before or after doing the prescribed work, through receiving Communion and praying for the Pope are usually done the same day the work is performed.

By the way, the standard prayers for the Pope are one Our Father and one Creed, though you're at liberty to substitute other prayers.

VARIOUS GRANTS

The bulk of the Enchiridion is a listing of indulgenced prayers and acts. First come three "general grants."

The first says "a partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, in the performance of their duties and in bearing the trials of life, raise their mind with humble confidence to God, adding -- even if only mentally-- some pious invocation." It is noted that this grant "is intended to serve as an incentive to the faithful to practice the commandment of Christ that 'they must always pray and not lose heart'" (Luke 18:1)

The second general grant is this: "A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, in a spirit of faith and mercy, give of themselves or of their goods to serve their brothers in need." This grant "is intended to serve as an incentive to the faithful to perform more frequent acts of charity and mercy," as Christ commanded (John 13:15, Acts 10:38).

The third general grant provides that "a partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, in a spirit of penance, voluntarily deprive them-selves of what is licit and pleasing to them." This provision is meant "to move the faithful to bridle their passions and thus to bring to their bodies into subjection and to conform themselves to Christ in his poverty and suffering" (Matt 8:20, Matt 16:24).

PROVISIONS

After the discussion of the general grants comes a listing of miscellaneous prayers and acts to which indulgences are attached. This list is much shorter than in former years, the Church having decided to limit indulgences to the most important works.

There is no room or need to mention all the pious acts which are indulgenced, but it's worth noting that a plenary indulgence is given for the recitation of the rosary in a church or family group (and not just the recitation, of course, but the fulfilling of the usual conditions for a plenary indulgence).

Likewise, first communicants and those who "assist at the sacred ceremonies of a First Communion -- for example, the parents -- can receive a plenary indulgence. And the same reward is given to those who, "with the veneration due the divine word, make a spiritual reading from Sacred Scripture" for at least half an hour. Even making the Sign of the Cross has a partial indulgence attached to it.