333 Sacrilege (*Sacrilegium*)

Sacrilege is the violation of a consecrated thing or the usurpation of it. Therefore, sacrilege is said to be as if *sacriledium*, that is, breaking consecrated things (*sacra ledens*) or the harm of a consecrated thing (*sacre rei lesio*).

However, it is committed in three ways, either by usurping the sacred from someone consecrated, or the sacred from someone not consecrated, or what is not sacred from someone consecrated. And according to Raymond,[[1]](#endnote-1) sometimes it is committed by reason of the person, as when a cleric or a protected religious person is beaten, Causa 17, quest. 4, [c. 21], *Quisquis*.[[2]](#endnote-2) Sometimes by reason of place, as when the immunity of the church or the cemetery is violated. Sometimes by reason of the thing, as when a consecrated thing is violated. And it is to be noted that sacrilege is more severe as that on whom it is committed is greater. For the sanctity of the person outweighs the sanctity of the place.

Concerning sins of sacrilege see Causa 17, quest. 4, [c. 21], *Quisquis*.[[3]](#endnote-3)

1. Raymond of Penafort, *Summa de paenitentia* 1.13.1-2 (Ochoa & Diez B:401-402): 1. Sacrilegium est sacrae rei violatio, vel eiusdem usurpacio. Dicitur autem sacrilegium, quasi sacrilaedium, quia sacrum laedit.

2. Committitur autem sacrilegium, quandoque ratione personae, quandoque ratione loci, quandoque ratione rei. Ratione personae cum quis verberat, clericum vel personam religiosam. Ratione loci, cum ecclesiae vel coemeterii immunitas violatur. Ratione rei, cum res consecrata vel sacro usui deputata usurpatur. Unde, circa hoc membrum ultimum, distinguitur sic: sacrilegium committitur auferendo sacrum de sacro, vel non sacrum de sacro, vel sacrum de non sacro. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Decretum, C. 17, q. 4, c. 21: Quisquis inuentus fuerit reus sacrilegii, episcopis uel abbatibus, siue personis, ad quas querimonia sacrilegii iuste pertinuerit, triginta libras examinati argenti purissimi conponat. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Decretum, C. 17, q. 4, c. 21. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)