

From The Ultimate Catholic Quiz by Karl Keating (Ignatius Press; Ignatius.com)

Can you correctly answer this question?

Q. The Consecration of the Eucharist (a) can be performed by a Catholic priest or by a priest of an Eastern Orthodox Church; (b) can be performed by a Catholic priest only if he celebrates Mass with at least two witnesses; (c) can be performed by Catholic priests and Anglican priests if they have the proper intention and pronounce the correct words; (d) can be performed by deacons and specially commissioned laypersons in extraordinary circumstances; (e) none of the above.

The answer is (a). The Eastern Orthodox Churches have the seven sacraments and therefore a real priesthood; Anglican orders are not valid. It takes a real priest to consecrate the Real Presence; therefore, neither deacons nor laypersons nor Anglicans can consecrate the Eucharist. A priest may celebrate Mass by himself; the validity of Mass does not depend upon witnesses.