

Seven Sacraments

“Sacraments are Christ’s gift to His Church. It is her duty to administer them and to protect them from misuse. Jesus entrusted His words and signs to specific men, namely, the apostles who were to hand them on... Sacraments exist for the Church and through the Church. They are for her, because the Body of Christ, which is the Church, is established, nourished, and perfected through the sacraments. They exist through her, because the sacraments are the power of Christ’s Body. Sacraments are not magic. A sacrament can be effective only if one understands and accepts it in faith. Sacraments not only presuppose faith, they also strengthen it and give expression to it.” YOU CAT 175, 177

Sacraments of Initiation

Baptism: Baptism frees man from original sin and from personal guilt. This is the first step for a lifetime journey of discipleship and commitment. Through this gift, we are cleansed of sin and adopted as children of God, receiving new birth in the Holy Spirit.

“Baptism is the way out of the kingdom of death into life, the gateway to the Church, and the beginning of a lasting communion with God.” YOU CAT 194

Eucharist/Communion: The Greek word *eucharistia* means thanksgiving. Through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus’ sacrifice on Calvary is re-presented to us and Jesus becomes fully present, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the species of bread and wine. When we receive Christ’s Body and Blood, in a state of grace, we are nourished spiritually and given graces to draw us closer to God.

“Holy Eucharist is the sacrament in which Jesus Christ give his Body and Blood-himself-for us, so that we too might give ourselves to him in love and be united with him in Holy Communion. In this way we are joined with the one Body of Christ, the Church.” YOU CAT 208

Confirmation:

“Confirmation is the Sacrament that completes Baptism; in it the gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon us. Anyone who freely decides to live life as God’s child and asks for God’s Spirit under the signs of the imposition of hands and anointing with Chrism receives the strength to witness God’s love and might in word and deed. He is now a full fledged, responsible member of the Catholic Church.” YOU CAT 203

Sacraments of Healing

“Christ’s love is shown in the fact that He seeks the lost and heals the sick. that is why He gave us the sacraments of healing and restoration, in which we are freed from sin and strengthened in our physical and spiritual weakness.” YOUCAT 224

Penance/Reconciliation: The sacrament in which Christ’s Divine Mercy is given freely to us. This sacrament has three components: conversion, confession and celebration. Reconciliation allows us to return to a state of grace by experiencing God’s unconditional forgiveness. We, in turn, are called to forgive others as we have been forgiven.

“Baptism does snatch us from the power of sin and death and brings us into the new life of the children of God, but it does not free us from human weakness and the inclination to sin. That is why we need a place where we can be reconciled with God again and again. That place is confession.” YOUCAT 226.

Extreme Unction or Anointing of the Sick:

“The Anointing of the Sick imparts consolation, peace, and strength and unites the sick person, in his precarious situation and his sufferings, with Christ in a profound way.” YOUCAT 245

Sacraments of Serving the Church and the Mission of the Faithful

“The two sacraments have something in common: they are directed to the good of others. No one is ordained for himself, and no one enters the married state merely for his own sake.” YOUCAT 248

Holy Orders:

“The man who is ordained receives a gift of the Holy Spirit that gives him a sacred authority that is conferred upon him by Christ through a Bishop. Through his ordination, the transforming, healing, saving power of Christ is grafted onto him.” YOUCAT 249-250

Matrimony:

“The sacrament of Matrimony comes about through a promise made by a man and a woman before God and the church, which is accepted and confirmed by God.” YOUCAT 261 (CCC 1625-1631)