

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS ARE:

1. BAPTISM
2. CONFIRMATION
3. HOLY EUCHARIST
4. RECONCILIATION
5. ANNOINTING THE SICK
6. HOLY ORDERS
7. MATRIMONY

Sacraments are special sacred rituals of the Roman Catholic Church.

Their purpose is to make those who receive them eager to worship God, become holy, nourish, and strengthen their faith.

Sacraments use a physical action such as the pouring of water, anointing with Holy Oils, laying on of hands, saying special prayers that are associated with the sacrament in question.

ALL ARE INSTITUTED OR APPROVED OF BY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

These actions provide us with God's grace. The church defines it as:

“An outward sign of inward grace instituted by Christ to give grace”.

Christ entrusted these rites to be administered by His church to people who are members of it. It all infers that:

- The Outward Sign of a sacrament has two parts. One is the thing itself that is used such as water in Baptism or oils in Confirmation, and the other is the words and gestures giving meaning to what is being done.
- Christ instituted five of the sacraments and approved of two.
- When anyone takes part in a sacrament, they are given Sanctifying

Grace, which can only reside in the soul. It is this that makes the soul acceptable to God for all eternity when we die. It's the 'Inward grace' part of the church's definition.

- The sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation are the only ones that restore Sanctifying grace in the soul when it's been lost due to a soul being stained with mortal sin. The other five sacraments increase the Sanctifying grace in our souls and also help us resist temptation.

As well as Sanctifying Grace, sacraments also provide what is called. SACRAMENTAL GRACE. This is a special grace relating specifically to the sacrament in question to help and guide the people to achieve the aims of the sacrament

As an example. **When we are confirmed**, we're told that one of the blessings we receive is that we become 'soldiers of Christ'. It's the special sacramental grace that gives us the ability and the will to do this.

The following are:

VERY SIMPLE DEFINITIONS OF EACH SACRAMENT.

Some have more than one physical part, but we will only mention one to give the reader an impression of what's intended.

BAPTISM (received once.)

Jesus Christ approved this sacrament. It is so important that if we do not receive it we cannot receive other Sacraments. It forgives all our sins, especially 'Original Sin' and welcomes us as a new member of the Catholic Church

A physical part of this sacrament is the pouring of water on the head of the person being baptised.

The Spiritual part is the forgiveness of any sin staining the person's soul. This sacrament leaves a soul in favour with God that is free from mortal sins, and therefore acceptable to God. This means that if a person dies in this state, that person's soul will enjoy life for all eternity with God in heaven.

CONFIRMATION (received once.)

Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament. A physical part of this sacrament is the Oil of Chrism the bishop uses to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the person being confirmed. It aims to make us strong in our beliefs of Christ, what God wants from us and the Catholic Church.

The Spiritual part is the receiving of the Holy Spirit who fortifies the person in many ways to refrain from sinning, keeping our souls in favour with God.

HOLY EUCHARIST (Received many times.)

This sacrament was instituted by Jesus Christ. A physical part of this sacrament is the use of bread and wine which become the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The spiritual part is having the living body of Christ within us, bringing us spiritual and emotional nourishment. It helps us enormously to refrain from sinning and keeping our soul in favour with God.

FORGIVENESS (Received many times.).

Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament. The physical part is the Absolution is

given by the priest to people who want their sins forgiven.

The spiritual part is having all our sins forgiven by God, thus putting our souls in favour of God.

ANOINTING THE SICK (Usually administered when were sick or dying)

Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament. The physical part is the priest making the sign of the cross on the recipient's forehead with Holy

Oils.

The Spiritual part is the calling down of the Holy Spirit to help a people recover if it's God's will, and for that person's soul to be in

favour with God if the sacrament of Forgiveness has also been administered at the same time.

HOLY ORDERS (Usually administered once.)

Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament. The physical part is the bishop ordaining men into deacons, or priests or bishops by the placing

on of hands.

The spiritual part is the receiving of the Holy Spirit who gives the new

priests and bishops, the powers to change bread and wine into the body

and blood of Christ and to absolve people from their sins.

MATRIMONY (usually administered once.)

Jesus Christ approved this sacrament. The physical part is the exchange of vows between the man and woman being married promising to live together for as long as they live.

The spiritual part is the grace of God given to the couple to grow into a union of heart and soul.

NOTE:

These simple explanations of the seven sacraments should be seen

as an introduction to them. As sacred rituals, they provide so much, and the ceremonies involved are always very special.