

The Sacraments



Signs and Channels of Grace

Sacraments

Visible and tangible signs instituted by Christ which impart divine grace.

Sacraments

- Sacraments of Initiation
 - Baptism
 - Confirmation
 - Eucharist
- Sacraments of Vocation
 - Matrimony
 - Holy Orders
- Sacraments of Healing
 - Reconciliation
 - Anointing of the Sick

The Sacramental Principle

- Christians believe that God the Son joined a human nature (the Incarnation). In other words, God, who is invisible, communicates Himself through the visible (matter, flesh).
- The Sacraments continue this principle. Divine grace, which is invisible, is communicated to us through visible, tangible matter (I.e., water, oil, etc).

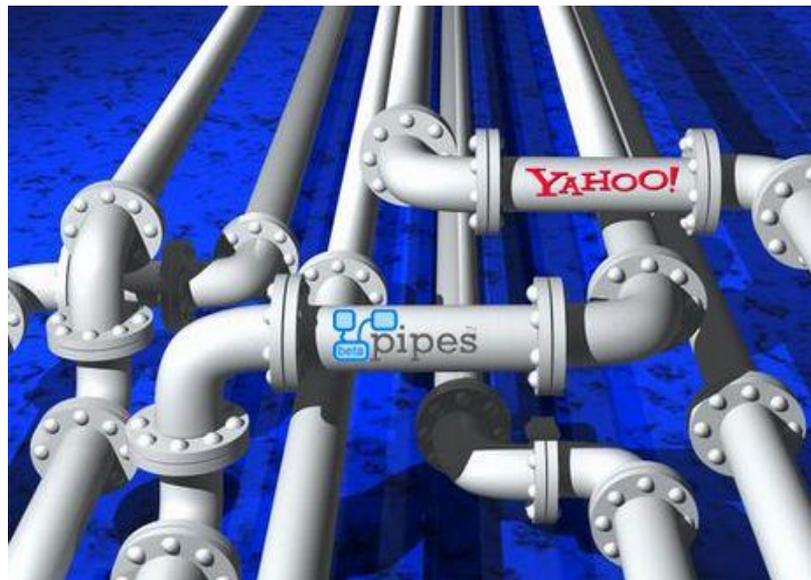
Divine Grace

Grace is a quality that is infused into the soul. It is a sharing in the divine life. Hence, it is not natural, but supernatural.

Grace is God's self-communication; His infused presence in the soul of a person.

Human persons are **not** born in a state of grace. And there is nothing we can do on our own to earn grace. Rather, divine grace is a freely bestowed quality. It is true that we can reject grace; and so we have to cooperate with it. But it is grace that renders the human person holy and favourable to God. Hence, the first effect of grace is that it *sanctifies (makes holy)*. No one can be truly holy unless he or she is in a state of grace.

The sacraments are channels of grace, just as pipes are channels of water



Every sacrament is composed of two parts:

Matter (or Sign)

Form (or Word)

Matter (Sign)

The matter of a sacrament is taken from nature. Each matter is a natural sign.

For example: what is the matter used in the sacrament of baptism?



Water

Because water is a natural sign of purity.

Water is also a natural sign of cleansing, for we use water to clean ourselves.





Water is also a natural sign of life – living things need water.



Too much water kills, and so water, which is the most powerful force in nature, is also a natural sign of death.

Water

- Purity
- Cleansing
- Life
- Death



Baptism

- Baptism elevates water in order to signify a spiritual cleansing, a spiritual purity, a spiritual dying, and the acquisition of a new life, the life of grace.

Baptism

Matter: Water

Form (Word): Name _____, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**** Anyone may baptize in emergency situations. In fact, one has a duty to baptize a child in an emergency situation. Be sure to know the formula above:



The Effects of Baptism

1. Cleanses from Original Sin and all personal sin (if one is an adult).
2. Incorporates one into the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.
3. Infuses the theological virtues into the soul (faith, hope, and charity) as sheer gifts.
4. Infuses the 7 personal gifts of the Holy Spirit (Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, fortitude, fear of God, counsel, piety).
5. Imparts the grace of regeneration: one is born again, one has become a new creation.

Confirmation

- The word ‘confirm’ means to strengthen.
- That is why the matter used in the sacrament of confirmation must be one that is a natural sign of strength.
- If one looks weak (I.e., from fasting), what can they apply to themselves in order to look stronger, healthier, more joyful?

Oil



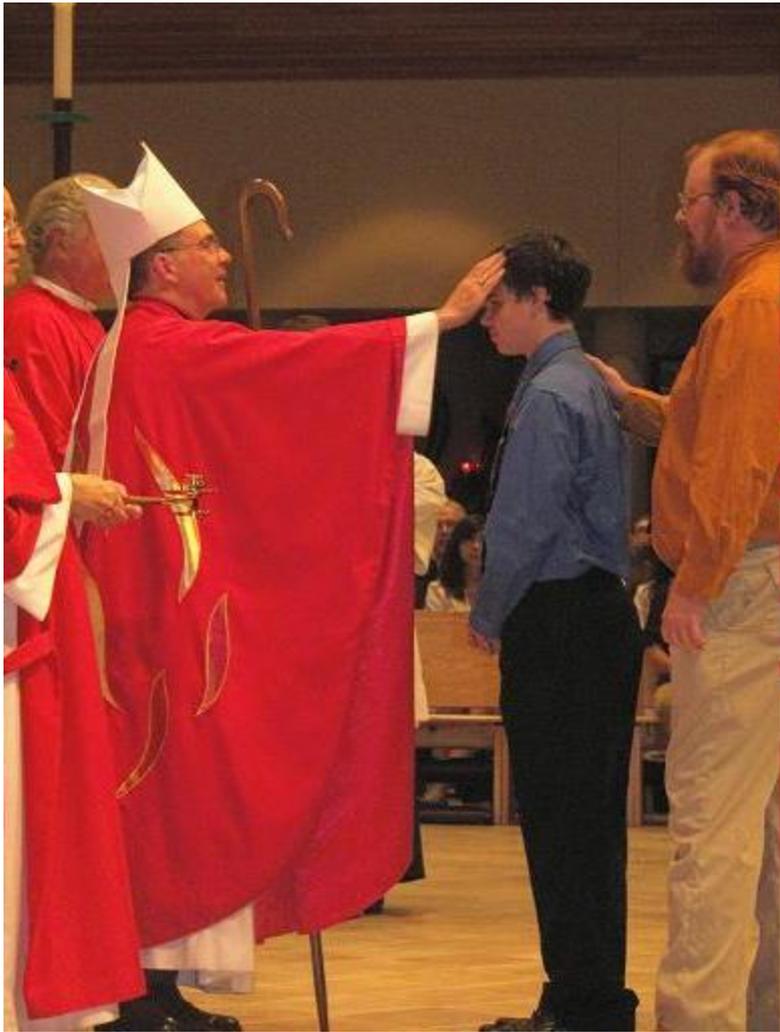


Samuel Anointing Saul as King

I Samuel 10:1

Olive oil comes from the Olive tree, a source of wealth.

Because oil is a sign of wealth or blessing, and because it is a sign of strength and joy, kings were anointed with oil as a token of benevolence, a sign of favor, sort of like the expression: “Long live the king”.



Matter: oil

Form: “(N), be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

The title “Christ” means anointed one. In Confirmation, one is made a little Christ, and so one is anointed “priest, prophet, and king”.

All the graces received in baptism are “strengthened” (I.e., faith, hope, charity, and the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit).

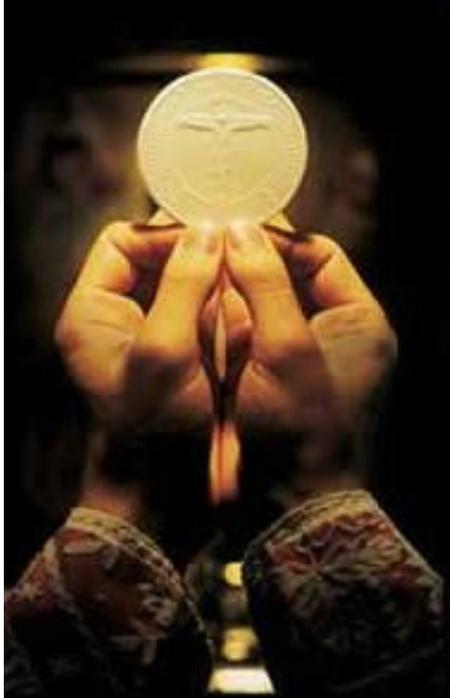
As priest: one is obligated to live a life of sacrifice, to live a religious life, to offer one’s life to God, to center it around Christ.

As prophet: one is obligated to witness to truth, to love it, search for it, find it and profess it.

As king: one is obligated to live the truth, and aspire after what is higher, namely the kingdom of God. To exercise kingship over oneself is to govern one’s passions and strive to conquer sin.

The Eucharist





Matter: Bread and wine –
universal signs of
nourishment.

Form: Words of
Consecration: ...take this
all of you and eat it, this is
my body which.... This is
my blood,

Transubstantiation

***This is very important to know

The changing of the substance of bread into the substance of Christ's body.

The changing of the substance of wine into the substance of Christ's blood.

The Real Presence

- Catholics believe (and the Church has always taught) that the whole Christ, his body, blood, soul and divinity, are really and truly present under the appearance of bread and wine (literally!). After consecration, it is no longer bread, and no longer wine, but the substance of Christ's body and blood. The attributes of the bread and wine remain the same (I.e., color, shape, size, taste, etc)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches:

1413 By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1640; 1651).

In other words, the Eucharist is not just a symbol of Christ's body. It is literally his body.

Holy Matrimony



Holy Matrimony

Matter: Bride and Groom

Form: The vows in the liturgy.

Marriage is the only sacrament that the couple actually administers to one another. The priest is only a witness.

The Impediments of Marriage

- 1) **Coercion: forcing someone to marry renders marriage invalid.**
- 2) **Fraud: The person you married isn't who you thought he/she was. Important information was withheld because had you known, you would not have married him/her.**
- 3) **Inability to consummate the marriage (unable to perform the sexual act, I.e., impotency, frigidity): Marriage is a joining of two into one flesh, one body. The couple must be able to physically join in a one flesh union.**
- 4) **Deliberate Intention not to have children (not to be confused with infertility, which is NOT an impediment to marriage): Marriage is a community of love and life. Openness to procreation is necessary for a marriage to be truly a marriage.**

Impediments **continued**

- 5) Leaving an opening for divorce: The couple must intend a permanent union. “Till love do us part” is not a marital vow. It must be a self-giving till death.
- 6) Psychological Immaturity (not morally mature enough to actually give oneself to another): Some people are too immature to understand what the marital commitment is, and they are too immature to achieve the commitment that marriage entails.

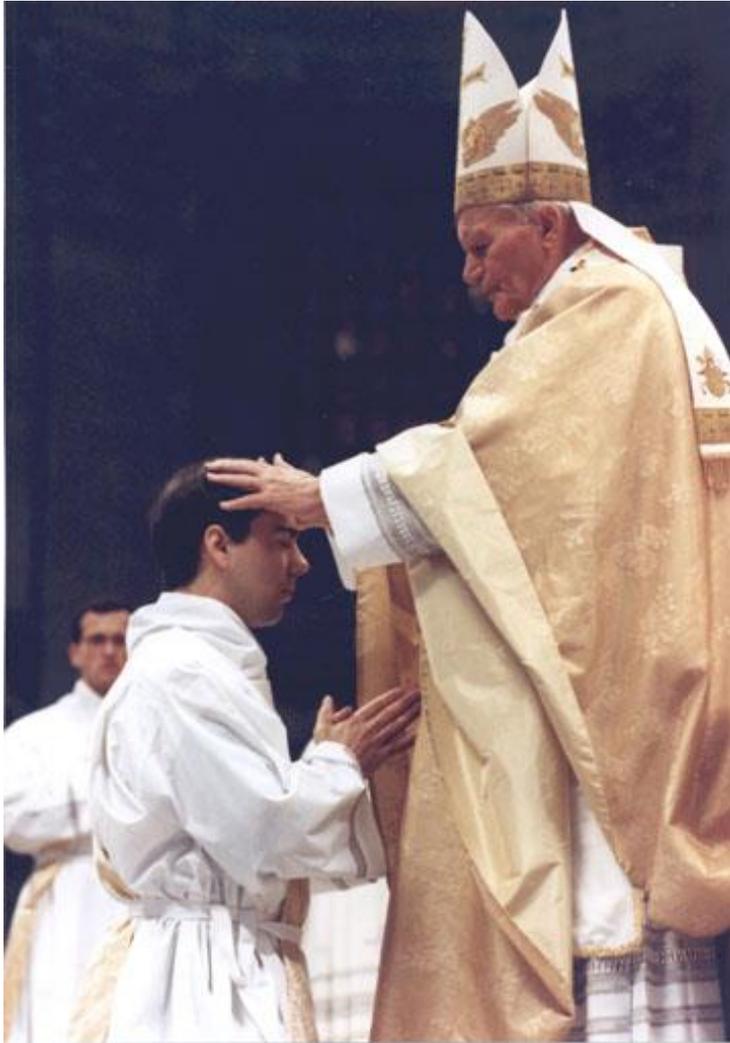
Holy Orders



Ordination to the diaconate (deacon), priesthood, or bishop.

The bishop alone enjoys the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders.

Holy Orders continued



Matter: Laying on of hands

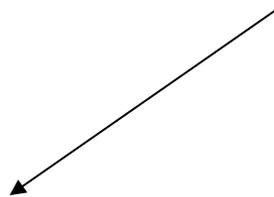
Form: the prayers of the ritual.

Sacrament of Reconciliation



Matter: the acts of the penitent.

Form: words of absolution (uttered by the priest)



"God the Father of mercies has reconciled the world to Himself through the death and resurrection of His Son, and has poured forth the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins. May He grant you pardon and peace through the ministry of the Church. And I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit."

Anointing of the Sick



Matter: Holy oil

Form: the prayers of the ritual.

Anointing of the Sick

Effects

- Unites the sick person to the passion of Christ
- Imparts the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure the sufferings of illness or old age.
- Imparts the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of penance
- Restores health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul
- Prepares the sick person for death and passing over to eternal life" (CCC 1532).



* One may receive this sacrament many times in one's life. One need not wait till the final moment of death. For any serious sickness, scheduled operation, etc., one may receive the sacrament of the anointing of the sick.

