

Introduction

Roman Catholics have 7 Sacraments. A "sacrament," according to the Baltimore Catechism, is "an outward sign, instituted by Christ, to give grace." The Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ. Some of the Sacraments give sanctifying grace, and others increase it in our souls. Baptism and Reconciliation give sanctifying grace because they take away the stain of sin on our souls. Holy Communion, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Anointing of the Sick increase sanctifying grace because those who receive them worthily are already living the life of grace. The Sacraments always give grace, if we receive them with the right dispositions..

Source: <http://saintscatholic.blogspot.com/2014/02/the-7-sacraments-holy-mysteries.html>

1. Baptism :

Baptism is a Sacrament which cleanses us from original sin, makes us Christians, children of God, and heirs of heaven. Baptism is necessary to salvation, because without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. The priest is the ordinary minister of Baptism; but in case of necessity any one who has the use of reason may baptize. Whoever baptizes should pour water on the head of the person to be baptized, and say, while pouring the water: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. There are three kinds of Baptism: Baptism of water, of desire, and of blood. Baptism of water is that which is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and saying at the same time: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Baptism of desire is an ardent wish to receive Baptism, and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation. Baptism of blood is the shedding of one's blood for the faith of Christ, such as in the cases of martyrdom. Baptism of desire or of blood is sufficient to produce the effects of the Baptism of water, if it is impossible to receive the Baptism of water..

2. Reconciliation: (Confession & Penance)

Penance is a Sacrament in which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven. Penance remits sins and restores the friendship of God to the soul by means of the absolution of the priest. I know that the priest has the power of absolving from the sins committed after Baptism, because Jesus Christ granted that power to the priests of His Church when He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." To receive the Sacrament of Penance worthily we must do five things: We must examine our conscience. We must have sorrow for our sins.

We must make a firm resolution never more to offend God.

We must confess our sins to the priest.

We must accept the penance which the priest gives us.

The examination of conscience is an earnest effort to recall to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy confession.

Before beginning the examination of conscience we should pray to God to give us light to know our sins and grace to detest them. We can make a good examination of conscience by calling to memory the commandments of God, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the particular duties of our state in life, to find out the sins we have committed.

The Seven Sacraments



3. Holy Communion (Holy Eucharist)

The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament which contains the body and blood, soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine. Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died. When our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist the twelve Apostles were present. Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist by taking bread, blessing, breaking, and giving to His Apostles, saying: Take ye and eat. This is My body; and then by taking the cup of wine, blessing and giving it, saying to them: Drink ye all of this. This is My blood which shall be shed for the remission of Sins. Do this for a commemoration of Me. When our Lord said, This is My body, the substance of the bread was changed into the substance of His body; when He said, This is My blood, the substance of the wine was changed into the substance of His blood. Jesus Christ is whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine. After the substance of the bread and wine had been changed into the substance of the body and blood of our Lord there remained only the appearances of bread and wine, which means that visibly, and to all our senses, the bread and wine looked and tasted the same as before it was consecrated. The substance of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ by His almighty power. This change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continues to be made in the Church by Jesus Christ through the ministry of His priests. Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood when He said to the Apostles, Do this in commemoration of Me. The priests exercise this power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the words of consecration in the Mass, which are the words of Christ: This is My body; this is My blood..

4. Confirmation

Confirmation is a Sacrament through which we receive the Holy Ghost to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ. The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. The bishop extends his hands over those who are to be confirmed, prays that they may receive the Holy Ghost, and anoints the forehead of each with holy chrism in the form of a cross. Holy chrism is a mixture of olive-oil and balm, consecrated by the bishop. In anointing the person he confirms the bishop says: I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. By anointing the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross is meant, that the Christian who is confirmed must openly profess and practice his faith, never be ashamed of it, and rather die than deny it. Persons of an age to learn should know the chief mysteries of faith and the duties of a Christian, and be instructed in the nature and effects of this Sacrament..

5. Matrimony

The Sacrament of Matrimony is the Sacrament which unites a Christian man and woman in lawful marriage. A Christian man and woman cannot be united in lawful marriage in any other way than by the Sacrament of Matrimony, because Christ raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament. The bond of Christian marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power. The effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony are:

- To sanctify the love of husband and wife;
- To give them grace to bear with each other's weaknesses;
- To enable them to bring up their children in the fear and love of God.

To receive the Sacrament of Matrimony worthily it is necessary to be in the state of grace, and it is necessary also to comply with the laws of the Church. The Church alone has the right to make laws concerning the Sacrament of marriage, though the state also has the right to make laws concerning the civil effects of the marriage contract. Christians should prepare for a holy and happy marriage by receiving the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist; by begging God to grant them a pure intention and to direct their choice; and by seeking the advice of their parents and the blessing of their pastors..

6. Holy Orders

Holy Orders is a Sacrament by which bishops, priests, and other ministers of the Church are ordained and receive the power and grace to perform their sacred duties. To receive Holy Orders worthily it is necessary to be in the state of grace, to have the necessary knowledge and a divine call to this sacred office. Christians should look upon the priests of the Church as the messengers of God and the dispensers of His mysteries. Only bishops can confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

7. Anointing of the Sick (Last Rites)

(formerly known as Extreme Unction or Last Rites): Extreme Unction is the Sacrament which, through the anointing and prayer of the priest, gives health and strength to the soul, and sometimes to the body, when we are in danger of death from sickness. We should receive Extreme Unction when we are in danger of death from sickness, or from a wound or accident. We should not wait until we are in extreme danger before we receive Extreme Unction, but if possible we should receive it whilst we have the use of our senses. The effects of Extreme Unction are: To comfort us in the pains of sickness and to strengthen us against temptation; To remit venial sins and to cleanse our soul from the remains of sin; To restore us to health, when God sees fit. By the remains of sin I mean the inclination to evil and the weakness of the will which are the result of our sins, and which remain after our sins have been forgiven. We should receive the Sacrament of Extreme Unction in the state of grace, and with lively faith and resignation to the will of God.