

The Sacraments

A brief introduction

The Seven Sacraments

Initiation

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation
3. Eucharist (Holy Communion)

Healing

4. Reconciliation (Confession, Penance)
5. Anointing of the Sick (Healing)

Vocation / Service

6. Marriage
7. Holy Orders

The Seven Sacraments

[Video](#)

Definitions of a Sacrament

- “An outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.”
Journey of Faith
- “The sacraments are perceptible signs (words and actions) accessible to our human nature” **CCC, 1084**
- “The sacraments, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the church, are efficacious signs of grace perceptible to the senses.” **Compendium, 224**

Simply put...

- A physical sign that Jesus uses to communicate his love and saving actions to us

Physical signs

- Involve our human senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell)
- Also called “outward” or “perceptible” signs
- Relate to our physical human nature, which Jesus shared
- A real, physical way that Christ can touch us
- Physical signs also include the specific **words** that are said in administering each sacrament

Sacraments & Physical Signs

Baptism: pouring of water or immersion into water

Confirmation: laying on of hands, anointing with oil

Eucharist: bread and wine

Reconciliation: contrition, confession, satisfaction

Anointing of the Sick: laying on of hands, anointing with oil

Marriage: mutual consent to live together as husband and wife

Holy Orders: laying on of hands

Instituted by Christ

Baptism: John 3:5

Confirmation: John 20:22; Acts 1:4-5

Eucharist: Luke 22:19

Reconciliation: John 20:23

Anointing of the Sick: James 5:14-15

Marriage: Mark 10:6-9

Holy Orders: Acts 14:23

Christ's Action

- As the water poured by the priest symbolizes the washing away of original sin, **Christ's action** really does wash away original sin.
- The bread and wine are a visible sign of the Body and Blood of Christ as **Christ acts** through the priest to transform them into the real Body and Blood of Christ.
- Sacraments are PHYSICAL SIGNS that really do what they symbolize.
- The effectiveness of the sacraments does not depend on the personal holiness of the minister but on the **action of Christ**.

The Minister

Baptism: priest or deacon (in emergency - anyone)

Confirmation: bishop or his delegate (priest or abbot)

Eucharist: bishop or priest

Reconciliation: bishop or priest

Anointing of the Sick: bishop or priest

Marriage: bride and groom

Holy Orders: bishop

Grace

- Sacramental grace is the grace of the Holy Spirit which is given by Christ ... It helps the faithful in their journey toward holiness and so assists the Church as well to grow in charity and in her witness to the world. **Compendium, 231**
- Grace is the free and undeserved favour of God.
- Grace helps us respond to God, to follow him, gives us the ability to be holy, strengthens us in faith.

Sacramental Character

- Some sacraments leave a **permanent** mark on the soul.
- Sacramental character is a seal bestowed by the sacraments of **Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders**. It is a promise and a guarantee of divine protection. We are sealed to participate in the priesthood of Christ and are set apart for divine worship and the service of the Church.
- One can only receive these 3 sacraments once.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

Holy Orders

There are 3 levels of Holy Order

1. Bishop

2. Priest

3. Deacon

- Transitional
- Permanent

Instituted by Christ

- First bishops were Jesus' Twelve Apostles
- Jesus called them specially to follow Him
- Jesus sent them out to preach and baptize **Matt 10**
- Jesus gave them the power to heal **Mark 6:1-3**
- Jesus gave them the power to forgive sins **John 20:23**
- Jesus gave them the power to preside at the Eucharist: "do this in memory of me."

Three Levels of Holy Orders

- **Bishops** are the successors to Jesus' Apostles.
- **Priests** help the Bishop exercise his authority and can administer most of the sacraments.
- **Transitional Deacons** are in the final stage before becoming an ordained Priest.
- **Permanent Deacons** assist the Priest in serving the people of God.

Priests

- Teaching: preaching the Gospel by word and action.
- Divine Worship: leading/presiding at the Eucharist. The priest *becomes one with Christ*, our True Priest each time he offers Mass
- Governance: taking the Good Shepherd as his example, he leads the community.

Hot-Button Topics!

Celibacy (remaining unmarried)

- The celibate priesthood is a discipline, a tradition in the Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church, but not in all Catholic rites. Ukrainian and Anglican rite priests may be married, as may Permanent Deacons.

Hot-Button Topics!

Male-only priesthood

- This is a doctrine of the Church and may not be changed. The male-only priesthood emphasises our belief that Jesus is both truly divine and truly human. All humans are male or female and Jesus' humanity cannot be separated from His maleness. The priest becomes one with Jesus during the Mass, becomes another Christ (*alter Christus*) and for a human to do this, he must be male.

Homework

Pray for our priests!

- Pope Benedict XVI
- Archbishop Richard Smith
- Fr. Andrew
- Fr. Roger
- Cody, German, James, Deacon Kai
- Vocations to the priesthood – that more young men will listen to and answer God's call to serve.

Prayer for Vocations

Heavenly Father, bless your Church in the Archdiocese of Edmonton with an abundance of holy and zealous priests, deacons, religious and seminarians. Give those You have called to the married state and those You have chosen to live as single persons in the world, the special graces that their lives require. Form us all in the likeness of Your Son so that in Him, with Him, and through Him we may love You more deeply and serve You more faithfully, always and everywhere. With the virgin mother Mary we ask this through Christ your Son. Amen.