



Do you have to explain the sacraments to your son or daughter? Are you lacking material for your church's catechesis program? Is it sometimes a bit complicated for you? Don't worry. Through this article, we'll help you use the right words for them to understand correctly. To start, we have to know what the Sacraments are.

The Sacraments are actions of God with which He shows us the love He has for his sons and daughters. All of them have been created (instituted) by Him, and that's why it's He who performs them through different means.

And why did He give them to us? To give us grace. That is to say, to give us, along with His love, the necessary strength to fight against and through the difficulties of life. Of course, that is, if we have a positive disposition and attitude towards wanting to please God.

What are the seven Sacraments?

1. Baptism

When we're born, we all have the first of all sins. It's called original sin and it was the one committed by our first parents, Adan and Eve. When baptized, we are washed of that sin and (in the case of non-infants baptized after the age of reason at ~7 years old) of all those committed before receiving it, we're made sons and daughters of God and we become a part of the Church. God gets very happy when the priest, while pouring holy water on the baptized one, says "I now baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost".

2. Confirmation

It's as simple as God (His Holy Spirit) increasing our faith so we have the certainty that He's with us until we arrive in Heaven, for which He also gives us hope. Finally, He strengthens our charity for us to love Him and others more deeply. In this case, it has to be a bishop who imposes his hands over the confirmandi and anoints him or her with oil (the Holy Chrism), while he 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 Spirit".

3. The Eucharist

Every day, Jesus turns bread and wine into His Body and Blood during the Holy Mass. This happens at the moment called the Consecration. This way we can eat and receive Him in our soul. Jesus instituted this Sacrament during the Last Supper with the twelve apostles. This has a plus: it forgives venial sins and fortifies us against committing mortal ones in the future. It's Jesus Himself who is within us.

4. Reconciliation

This Sacrament is a great gift from God! Through a priest who listens to our sins when we go and confess them in confidence with him, God forgives every action and omission of ours that has offended Him. Then again, we have to be truly remorseful for the bad we've done and the good we've left undone. Besides, it gives us a tremendous peace and increases our strength to be good Christians, good sons and daughters of God.

5. Anointing of the Sick

God loves the sick. When someone is very sick or very old and could die soon, he needs God's help for that moment. Anointing is an aid which brings strength, peace and encouragement, in addition to forgiving all the sins of the sick person and preparing him or her for the time of death. It's as if a union is created with the Passion suffered by Christ on Calvary. This way, the sick, with their pain and suffering, help Jesus to carry the Cross, and at the same time He helps them during the last moments of their lives.

6. Holy Orders

This one is only received by those who have the vocation to priesthood, who in turn

become the very men who can administer all of these sacraments. It's a bishop who imposes his hands and prays over the new priest, consecrating him. The Holy Order gives a special effusion of the Holy Spirit and has a special characteristic: he who receives this sacrament will be a priest forever; his soul permanently marked and called apart by God.

Permanent deacons and Bishops also "receive Holy Orders," distinct in rites and duties from those of the priest, although a consecrated bishop will himself already be an ordained priest, and most priests spend a year as a transitional deacon prior to their priestly ordinations.

7. Matrimony

This sacrament is the union between a man and a woman forever. When they marry within the Church, it is God who unites their bodies and souls. Those who get married shall not break their marriage bond: "What God has joined together let no one separate" (Mark 10:9). The model that men and women have to follow is that of the Holy Family: Jesus, the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, as well as being a mirror of Christ's nuptial bond to His bride, the Church.