Sacramental Life

At the basis of the Catholic faith is the belief in Christ; who not only saved us from sin by His passion, but also that Christ founded the Church whereby we are united in a “hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified.” [(Lumen Gentium, 7)](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://w2.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzpiMDM2OmI5ODdhNjZhOWFjZGZhZGI3NTUxYjFiMzQwZTc4ODdjOWEyMzMwY2I0YjkxNDVmOTdkNjA2NDU5ZjVmYTIzZTU6cDpUOkY)  In the Church, “Christ now lives and acts in and with His Church, in a new way, proper to all ages.  He acts through the sacraments in what is called ‘the sacramental economy;’ this is the communication of the fruits of Christ’s Paschal mystery in the celebration of the Church’s sacramental liturgy.” [(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1076)](https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_two/section_one.html)  The sacraments can be divided into three groups:

Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist – Lay the foundations of every Christian life.  “The sharing in the divine nature given to men through the grace of Christ bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishment of natural life. The faithful are born anew by Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian Initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of the divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity” [(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1212)](https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_two/section_two/chapter_one.html)

Without these “initial” sacraments as a bedrock for the forming of our interior love of Jesus Christ, one may find themselves in a life of complacency and sin. Therefore, once these sacraments are received, they must be nourished through weekly participation in the Holy Mass. This is to mean, receiving them without participation in weekly Mass, should be discourage and delayed until proper discernment has been achieved.

Sacraments of Healing: Penance and Anointing of the Sick – “Through the sacraments of Christian initiation, man receives the new life of Christ. Now we carry this life ‘in earthen vessels,’ and it remains ‘hidden with Christ in God.’ We are still in our ‘earthly tent,’ subject to suffering, illness, and death. This new life as a child of God can be weakened and even lost by sin. Without weekly attendance of the Holy Mass, a Catholic will be unable to enter into an intimate relationship with Jesus and may find themselves hearing these word of Jesus; “I never knew you - Not everyone who says ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” (MT 7:21-23). The Lord Jesus Christ, physician of our souls and bodies, has willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, his work of healing and salvation, even among her own members. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing.” [(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1420-1421)](https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_two/section_two/chapter_two.html)

Sacraments at the Service of Communion: Matrimony and Holy Orders – These sacraments are directed “towards the salvation of others; if they contribute as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that they do so. They confer a particular mission in the Church and serve to build up the People of God. Those who receive the sacrament of Holy Orders are consecrated in Christ’s name ‘to feed the Church by the word and grace of God.’ For those who receive Matrimony, ‘Christian spouses are fortified and, as it were, consecrated for the duties and dignity of their state by a special sacrament.’ [(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1534-1535)](https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_two/section_two/chapter_three.index.html)Both sacraments hold exceptional importance in the life of the Church.

A priest and all religious are our earthly connection to eternal salvation. Faithful religious, sacrifice and teach the faith to all God’s children and accompany the faithful on their journey to enteral life. By emptying themselves for the love of all God’s children, they lay an example of the sacrificial life, their own journey to Calvary, for the faithful to witness.

This life is, in a lot of ways, even more important in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony. A loving mother and father, living out a beautiful example of faith for their children, will be the first fruits for the foundation of their faith. Mothers, with their nurturing heart and tender teaching of the faith, will guide their children to see and understand our Lord Jesus more clearly. The father, living out his faith, is the anchor that will keep the children grounded in their desire to follow Jesus throughout their entire life. A father that follows Jesus, that practices his faith in the home, attends weekly Mass and brings his children frequently to the sacraments, has a 90% chance of preserving the faith of his children.

What are the Sacraments?

“Sacraments are outward signs of inward grace, instituted by Christ for our sanctification” (St. Augustine)

There are seven sacraments. They were instituted by Christ and given to the Church to administer. They are necessary for salvation. The sacraments are the vehicles of grace which they convey. They are validly administered by the carrying out of the sign with the proper intention. The purpose of the seven sacraments is to make people holy, to build up the body of Christ, and to give worship to God. Although they are signs, they actually impart the very thing they signify (I.E – Pouring water with the words “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” actually washes away sin and impart the Holy Spirit).  The sacraments impart grace, but, in addition, the very act of celebrating them disposes the faithful most effectively to receive this grace in a fruitful manner, to worship God rightly, and to practice charity. [[http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo1MjkyOjMyYjVkYTdhZDg2NTQxNDc0OWJmYTQ4N2Q2ZGJmMzU5MGEyYTVjMjBmMDBmN2NiZjY5MTk2NDRmMjE5YmM0NDg6cDpUOkY)]

The Sacrament of Baptism

“Indeed Baptism is ‘the sacrament of faith’ in a particular way, since it is the sacramental entry into the life of faith.” ([Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1257](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3M.HTM))

Although one receives faith initially in the sacrament of Baptism, faith “needs the community of believers. It is only within the faith of the Church that each of the faithful can believe. The faith required for Baptism is not a perfect and mature faith, but a beginning that is called to develop. For all the baptized, children or adults, faith must grow after Baptism.  For this reason the Church celebrates each year at the Easter Vigil the renewal of baptismal promises. Preparation for Baptism leads only to the threshold of new life.

Baptism is the source of that new life in Christ from which the entire Christian life springs forth.  For the grace of Baptism to unfold, the parents’ help is important.  So too is the role of the godfather and godmother, who must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptized – child or adult on the road of Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesial function.  The whole ecclesial community bears some responsibility for the development and safeguarding of the grace given at Baptism.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1253-1255)

[Who can receive the Sacrament of Baptism](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3K.HTM)

[Effects of Baptism](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3N.HTM):

* The two principal effects are purification from sins and new birth in the Holy Spirit
* Made a child of God (Partaker of the divine nature)
* Incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ
* Sacramental bond of all Christians
* Indelible spiritual mark (Seal of the Lord)
* >

The Sacrament of the Eucharist

The Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” ([Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324](https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3X.HTM))

There are a plentitude of titles for this sacrament each with its own emphasis upon this great and foundational sacrament which can be [explored more here](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P3Y.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo1NDNjOjYwZGExZWUwZmY2MmY4NDQyYWY4OWE1MGIzODAzYWIzMWZlZmVkYWM2Y2U0OTFlMTkzMTgyNTg0MjdmNzFmZGI6cDpUOkY).

Completing Christian initiation, the Eucharist is how Baptized and Confirmed Christians participate in the Lord’s own sacrifice.  There are two chief headings in which we understand the Eucharist: Memorial of Christ’s passion and intimately connected to Christ’s sacrifice which is perpetuated in the Eucharist.

Memorial – “If from the beginning Christians have celebrated the Eucharist and in a form whose substance has not changed despite the great diversity of times and liturgies, it is because we know ourselves to be bound by the command the Lord gave on the eve of his Passion: ‘Do this in remembrance of me.’ We carry out this command of the Lord by celebrating the memorial of his sacrifice. In so doing, we offer to the Father what he has himself given us: the gifts of his creation, bread and wine which, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the words of Christ, have become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made present. We must therefore consider the Eucharist as:

* Thanksgiving and praise to the Father;
* The sacrificial memorial of Christ and his Body;
* The presence of Christ by the power of his word and of his Spirit.” [(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1356-1358)](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P41.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzowNTk2Ojk5MjVjYzViZDExZjQwM2YxYTU1MzVlNjc1YjMyMTgxZGEwYjI2MDk0MzNkMDJhZDI2YzA2MThjMDJjZDhkY2U6cDpUOkY)

Sacrifice – The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord’s body and blood. But the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through communion. To receive communion is to receive Christ himself who has offered himself for us. The Lord addresses an invitation to us, urging us to receive him in the sacrament of the Eucharist: “Truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” To respond to this invitation we must prepare ourselves for so great and so holy a moment. Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to communion. [(Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1382; 1384-1385)](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P42.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzoyNGExOmU1ZDk5NjQ0N2JkNzJlN2JkOGQ4MjBkNDUxMzlhN2M5ZmRhNDZhNjRkNDlhNDcwNjQwM2NlYjU2M2JlMDc1ZWM6cDpUOkY)

[Who can receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/order-of-mass/liturgy-of-the-eucharist/guidelines-for-the-reception-of-communion.cfm___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo2ODk1OmJjODcyMmM5NThmODBkNTNlZjE1NDVkOWVkODQzNDdlMDA3Y2IwMjdjNTkxNjI0MDA1Y2RlMGZjNDdiNzJlOTA6cDpUOkY)

[Effects of the Sacrament of the Eucharist](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P42.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzoyNGExOmU1ZDk5NjQ0N2JkNzJlN2JkOGQ4MjBkNDUxMzlhN2M5ZmRhNDZhNjRkNDlhNDcwNjQwM2NlYjU2M2JlMDc1ZWM6cDpUOkY):

* Augments our union with Christ
* Separates us from sin even preserves us from future mortal sins
* In the unity of the Mystical Body: the Eucharist makes the Church
* Commits us to the poor
* Pledge of the Glory to come

Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

“Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God’s mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example, and by prayer labors for their conversion” ([Lumen Gentium, 11 §2](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://w2.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzpiMDM2OmI5ODdhNjZhOWFjZGZhZGI3NTUxYjFiMzQwZTc4ODdjOWEyMzMwY2I0YjkxNDVmOTdkNjA2NDU5ZjVmYTIzZTU6cDpUOkY))

An essential element in Christ’s proclamation of the kingdom is Christ’s call to conversion.  “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the Gospel” (Mark 1:16).  Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God who makes our hearts return to him.  By sin, we are separated from communion with God and the Church.  “For this reason, conversion entails both God’s forgiveness and reconciliation with the Church which is accomplished liturgically by the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.” ([Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1440](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4C.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzowYWMxOjQ0OTZlNWRiMDBhMDI1YzlkMTM3ODBjZTAwODRkM2I0ZDY0MTRiYzc5Y2ExMmMyYmRhNDZiNjI3NWRmZWEwZDU6cDpUOkY))

[Who can receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4D.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo0MzYxOmM1NzM4YjEyYWJhNTU4YjIzYWJkZDJiODE4NDhmZjBjOThmYTIyNjI4MDRlZTJiYjM5OTNiNTQ0ZWE1NWZkYmE6cDpUOkY)

[Effects of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4F.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo5MTliOmQyNDJkMmQzYTg1OGIyYjY0ZWQ1ZDJjYjkzNmE1Yzc0NzMxZTdlOGRlZTBlNDFhODJjYTlmMzE3NjA1MjJjNGM6cDpUOkY):

* Restoring us to God’s grace and joining us with Him in an intimate friendship
* Reconciliation with the Church
* Strengthens us by grace to resist sin

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

“Christ invites his disciples to follow Him by taking up their cross in their turn.  By following Him, they acquire a new outlook on illness and the sick. Jesus associates them with His own life of poverty and service.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1506)

“By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them. and indeed she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the People of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and death of Christ.”  (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1499)

[Who can receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4L.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo2YTc0OmIwOWMzMjYzM2JhMTYxOGZiYjE3MGJkNzU3ZmY3YzcyYzFlOWE1ZmI3N2M1YmRkMmE1NDJiYTkwZTk1ODY3YWQ6cDpUOkY)

[Effects of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4N.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo1NjAwOjdhZTM0MjVhNTg1ZDIyOGUzMGExNzVkZDQ2MmE5ZTg1YjEyNTUxZTY1ZDE2ZTAzODAzZWQyZjQwYzhmNGQwYzU6cDpUOkY):

* Particular gift of the Holy Spirit (Strengthening, peace, and courage)
* Union with the Passion of Christ
* Preparation for the final journey

The Sacrament of Matrimony

“The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1601)

“Sacred Scripture begins with the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God and concludes with a vision of ‘the wedding-feast of the Lamb.’ Scripture speaks throughout of marriage and its “mystery,” its institution and the meaning God has given it, its origin and its end, its various realizations throughout the history of salvation, the difficulties arising from sin and its renewal “in the Lord” in the New Covenant of Christ and the Church. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1602)

[Who can receive the Sacrament of Marriage](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P53.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzpiNDE0OjA5MzY0NzBkMDgxYTljM2M4ZTgyYmU3YjZkYjA2YjgyMjlhYjRkMDBlYzA3Y2FiM2RhMjczZWMzZjE1OTY2NDQ6cDpUOkY)

Particular topics:

Mixed Marriages ([Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1633-1637](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P53.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzpiNDE0OjA5MzY0NzBkMDgxYTljM2M4ZTgyYmU3YjZkYjA2YjgyMjlhYjRkMDBlYzA3Y2FiM2RhMjczZWMzZjE1OTY2NDQ6cDpUOkY))

[Essential goods and requirements of Marriage](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P55.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzphN2QwOmNmZjAzYjFmMTEwYmU0ZWRmODBmYjA2ODIzMmZlNTU5NzBmNmI3YmNlNjA0ODRlYWJlNjM2NmRlZTFiM2E2OTM6cDpUOkY)

[Effects of the Sacrament of Marriage](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P54.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo2MjViOmIwOGMwMzUwMDU0M2M4OTExYTY1ODg5NGIwZGFiYTYyOTIxNzMzYmVhMDA4ODA0OTQ3M2Y3ZmQ3NGI2NDIyYmE6cDpUOkY)

* A perpetual and exclusive bond
* Grace to strengthen the couple for the duties of their state
* Grace to perfect the love of the couple for the holiness of their spouse

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

“Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time: thus it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry. It includes three degrees: episcopate, presbyterate, and diaconate.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1536)

While all members of the Church have a priesthood given at baptism known as the universal priesthood, those who receive Holy Orders have a different priesthood which is centered on how Christ builds up and leads His Church.  Holy Orders is the sacrament of Christ’s presence to His Church as Priest and Mediator through the apostolic succession.  The universal priesthood of all baptized is ordered to a life of faith, hope, and charity, a life according to the Spirit. ([Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1547](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4T.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzoxODE1OjQ0Mjg2ODRmOGY2ZWRiZTljZTIxN2YwYzhiOThlNzFlZWZiYWI3NjU0MWExZmMwZmY0NjI1NTgzZjA2ZTNjODc6cDpUOkY))

[Who can receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4X.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6NzoxZDY0OjIzZTJjYmUyYWJiMjhlZTc1MGY4NTJjNDQwNDE0NjlmZThkMmE3MzFlOTk4MWQwYTM5OWZhZjQ5ZTgzZDE2ZDQ6cDpUOkY)

[Effects of the Sacrament of Holy Orders](https://url.avanan.click/v2/r01/___http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/__P4Y.HTM___.YXAzOmFyY2gzNjVwczphOm86YzNlYWZjZGViZWI1ZmZiZTU5NjViZjJmZGY3ODQyODU6Nzo1OWZjOjgyY2QyNTE0ZTM1ZjM0NTg0NTMzMTQ5NjkzY2E5YjM1ZWU4YWNmZmQ0MTcxZTI2M2YyMjM4NWM5YzFiMjk0NDY6cDpUOkY):

* Indelible Character
* Grace of the Holy Spirit
* Conformity to the Person of Christ as Priest and Mediator