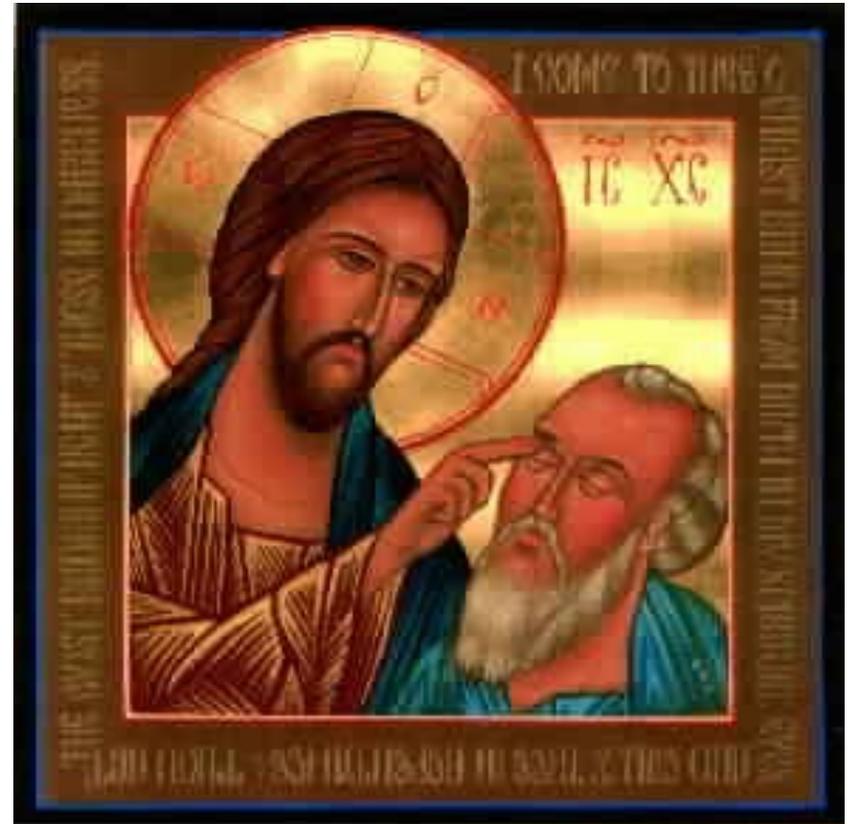


Link to Liturgy



23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time The Opening (Sacramental Life)

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Lessons and Discussions

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“...spitting, touched his tongue”

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Communion Antiphon – Daily Roman Missal

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. The chant leader could chant the first time and then all can join the second and third. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,
so my soul is yearning for you, my God;
my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Alternate options:

We are Hungry
Psalm 63 (Remnant)

Collect – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption,
look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,
that those who believe in Christ
may receive true freedom
and an everlasting inheritance.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Gospel Reading – Mark 7:31-37 –Roman Missal

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark
- Glory to you Lord

Again Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hands on him. He took him off by himself away and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, “Ephphatha!” – that is, “Be opened!” – And immediately the man’s ears were opened, his

speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished and they said, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

The Gospel of the Lord.
- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor. On Baptism; A Catechetical Instruction.

In which, treating of the sacraments, of which it was not fitting to speak to them before this (being catechumens), the Saint comes to the mystery of, The Opening, which, he teaches, was established by Christ in the healing of the man who was deaf and dumb.

I shall now begin to instruct you on the sacraments you have received; of whose nature it was not fitting to speak to you before this; for in the Christian what come first is faith. And at Rom for this reason those who have been baptized are called the faithful (fideles). And it was through faith that Abraham our faith was justified, and not by works (Rom. iv. 2). Therefore, it was because you believed that you received baptism. It would be wrong for me to think otherwise; you would not have been called to grace unless Christ had deemed you worthy of it.

What then did we perform on Saturday last? The mystery of The Opening. And the mystery of The Opening was commemorated when the priest touched your ears and nostrils. And this Our Lord Jesus Christ laid down for us in the Gospel, when they brought Him one who was deaf and dumb, and He touched his ears and his mouth: his ears because he was deaf; his mouth because he was dumb. And He said: Ephpheta. This is a Hebrew word, and means: Be thou opened. The priest therefore touched your ears, that they might be opened to the words and to the exhortation of the priest.

But you will say to me: Why does he touch the nostrils? Christ touched the mouth, for it was there that man was dumb: so that he who could not speak of the heavenly mysteries might receive a voice from Christ. He touched him there because he was a

man. Here however, since women also are to be baptized and since the purity of the servant is not the same as that of the Master – what comparison can there be between them; for the one yields to sin, the Other forgives it, - so, our of reverence for the sacred rite, and because of the sanctity of his office, the bishop does not touch the mouth, but the nostrils; that you may receive the good odour of eternal charity, and that you may say: We are the good odour of Christ unto God, as the holy Apostle said (II Cor. ii. 15); and that you may be filled with the fragrance of faith and devotion.

Responsory – Office of Readings – Psalm 31:20; 1 Corinthians 2:9

O Lord, how great is the goodness you have stored up for those who fear you.

– This goodness you lavish on all who hope in you.

No eye has seen, no ear heard, nor has the heart of man conceived.

– This goodness you lavish on all who hope in you.

The Mute and Deaf Man (Sacramental Life) – Lesson and Discussion

“He took him off by himself...”

How does the action and word of Jesus Christ and the reception and response of the deaf and mute man in the Gospel teach about the Sacramental Life? Each line of the Gospel teaches us an aspect of the Sacramental Life. The line, “And immediately the man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly” is discussed in the Lesson: The Effects of the Sacraments.

“He [Jesus] took him off by himself away”

In Divine Revelation God reveals Himself throughout history, this Revelation begins with a couple (Adam and Eve) and slowly expands to a family (Noah), a tribe (Abraham), a nation (Moses), a kingdom (David), and finally through Jesus Christ and the Church to all nations. “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit.”[1] God’s revelation expands throughout time, but what we see in the Sacraments is this love that has been given to every person is now directed and focused

thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of they womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

“The End” Notes

- [1] Matthew 28:19
- [2] Matthew 28:19-20
- [3] Matthew 28:16
- [4] Matthew 10:27
- [5] Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.; *Modern Catholic Dictionary*
- [6] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Effects of the Sacraments
- [7] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1121
- [8] 2 Corinthians 1:21-22
- [9] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1285
- [10] 1 Timothy 6:12
- [11] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Effects of the Sacraments
- [12] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Effects of the Sacraments
- [13] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Constituent Parts of the Sacraments
- [14] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1504
- [15] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Constituent Parts of the Sacraments
- [16] John 6:57
- [17] Catechism of the Catholic Church - 1151
- [18] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Constituent Parts of the Sacraments
- [19] Ephesians 5:25
- [20] Rite of Marriage
- [21] Code of Cannon Law 1055, §1
- [22] Code of Cannon Law 1061, §1; impotence c. 1084
- [23] Code of Cannon Law 1055, §1; 1136
- [24] Code of Cannon Law 1056; 1102, §1
- [25] Code of Cannon Law 1056
- [26] Code of Cannon Law 1057; 1103
- [27] <http://www.sanctamissa.org>
- [28] Rite of Ordinary [Ordinary Form]
- [29] Catechism of the Council of Trent – The Sacrament of Penance
- [30] St. Gregory Nazianzen
- [31] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Institution of Baptism
- [32] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Institution of Baptism
- [33] Catechism of the Council of Trent – Institution of the Eucharist
- [34] John 1:1-3
- [35] Catechism of the Catholic Church - Glossary
- [36] Catechism of the Council of Trent – The Sacrament of Holy Orders
- [37] Catechism of the Council of Trent – The Sacrament of Penance
- [38] John 20:21-23

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina – Simple Tone

IV. ANTIPHON SALVE REGINA, SIMPLE TONE
From First Vespers of the Feast of the Blessed Trinity to None on Saturday
before the First Sunday of Advent.

Ant.
5.

Salve, Re-gi-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ : Vi- ta, dulcé-do, et spes nostra,
salve. Ad te clamámus, éxsu-les, fí-li-i Hevæ Ad te suspi-rámus,
gemén-tes et flentes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advocá-ta
nostra, il-los tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ócu-los ad nos convér-te. Et Je-sum,
bene-díctum fructum ventris tu-i, nobis post hoc exsí-li-um osténde.
O clemens : O pi-a : O dulcis * Virgo Ma-rí-a.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.
R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi

Let us pray. O almighty and everlasting God, who, by the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become the worthy habitation of Thy Son: grant that we may be delivered from present evils, and from everlasting death, by her gracious intercession, in whose commemoration we rejoice. Through the same Christ our Lord, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

English Translation

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to

in on the individual person. Sacraments are not performed in groups; they are individual. Each person is taken “off by himself” and personally touched and spoken to. Just as twins, who share the same womb, come out of that womb individually and have their own birth, so to sacramentally twins would have their own spiritual birth. This is why in the Sacraments we are not called by “group” but rather called by “name”.

“spitting, touched his tongue”

A Sacrament is an outward sign. All Sacraments have matter or element. As the body is necessary to human life, so too is matter or element necessary for the Sacraments.

“then he looked up to heaven and groaned” – Jesus is showing us the source of the Sacrament. Sacraments give us grace, the divine life.

Sacraments are instituted by Christ, who is God, and entrusted to the Church, who is guided by the Holy Spirit. Sacraments are not the work of man, nor are they magic; the source of grace is God. The Sacraments have been criticized as being magic or the work of man, both are untrue and we must work hard to clarify these misconceptions. The word Hocus Pocus, which is a reference to magic, is directly making fun of the prayers of Consecration “Hoc est enim Corpus Meum”. Hocus Pocus comes from “Hoc est Corpus” which in translated “This is Body” To say that the words of Consecration is magic is sacrilege.

“and said to him, “Ephphatha!” – that is, “Be opened!”

A Sacrament is an outward sign of an inner grace. All Sacraments have word of form. As the soul is necessary to human life, so too is the word or form necessary for the Sacraments. It is the soul that animates the body, and so too it is the word or form that animates the matter and element making the Sacrament valid. Many religions use matter and elements but what makes the ritual null and void is the fact that the word or form does not have the power and authority of God. Magic for example uses matter and elements, but the word or form does not come from God. This is why in some examination of conscience guides it will ask if we have participated in horoscopes, fortune tellers, palm readings, tarot card readings, or have used Ouija boards. All of these things uses supposed false power not from God, but from magic and claim this “magic” to be true. In the case of

word or form we have if it comes from God, from an angel (Satan and his demons are fallen angels), or from man. We know that Jesus is true God and true man and that all Sacraments were instituted by Him, with His very words. Magic therefore is a mockery of the Sacraments and for this reason is the sin not only of sacrilege but also a sin against the first commandment, “Have no other gods beside me”.

“He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it.”

The Sacraments should spark within us zeal to proclaim the Gospel. The deaf and mute man told everyone about the grace he had received from Christ. This zeal gave glory to God, but also would draw others to Christ, so they too would receive healing. Our zeal and Sacramental Life should give glory to God and draw others to the Sacramental life, which is the Life of Christ.

I thought we are called to proclaim the Gospel, why did Jesus order them not to tell anyone? At the moment of the healing it was not yet time to “proclaim the Gospel”. Jesus had not yet given the command, “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”[2] When Jesus gave this order it was first to the apostles who “went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them.”[3] For it would be the bishops (successors of the apostles) who would be the primary caretakers of the deposit of Faith and the heralds of the Gospel. Unlike the deaf and mute man, we have been given the task to proclaim the Gospel. If the deaf and mute man who was told not to proclaim, proclaimed and with great success, how much more successful will the proclamation be from us, who have been given the permission and command to proclaim the Gospel. Many times we are told by society, friends, family, and even government to “not tell anyone”. We should follow the example of the deaf and mute man. The more we are ordered not to tell, the more we should proclaim it. The Church in every age has been commanded by the world to either not proclaim the Gospel or to mute the proclamation of the Gospel. As Christians we are not obliged to obey this command because it is contrary to the command of Christ, “What I say to you in darkness, speak in the light; what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops.”[4]

3. Character of a Soldier of Christ

Eucharist:

1. The Eucharist contains Christ and is the Food of the Soul
2. The Eucharist gives grace
3. The Grace of the Eucharist sustains
4. The Grace of the Eucharist invigorates and delights
5. The Eucharist remits venial sins
6. The Eucharist strengthens against temptation
7. The Eucharist facilitates the attainment of Eternal Life

Marriage:

1. Unity of Marriage (Marriage Bond) – Exclusivity
2. Indissolubility of Marriage
3. The blessing of offspring – Fruitfulness
4. Fidelity – Faithfulness
5. Grace and Strength, a union with Christ and His Church

Holy Orders:

1. Grace of sanctification fitting and qualifying him for the proper discharge of his functions and for the administration of the Sacraments.
2. The power to consecrate the Body and Blood of Our Lord

Penance:

1. We are restored to the Grace of God
2. We are united to God in the closest friendship
3. Contrition is pleasing and acceptable to God

Anointing of the Sick:

1. Remission of venial sins
2. Special grace of healing and comfort to the Christian who is suffering infirmities

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Act of Surrender

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Heavenly Father, I utterly and completely surrender myself to You, body, mind, soul, and spirit. Do with me whatever You Will. For the sake of Your unending Love for me and for all souls, whether here below or in Purgatory, in Jesus’ Name, and in Unity with the Holy Spirit, One God, Holy and Eternal, forever and ever.

[\[See Link to Liturgy Packet Feast Days - St. John Vianney\]](#)

Scripture: 1 Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:6, Hebrews 10:14, Acts 1:8, John 20:21-23

Penance – “Our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Penance, by means of which we are assured that our sins are pardoned by the absolution of the priest; and also to tranquilize our conscience by means of the trust we rightly repose in the virtue of the Sacraments. The words of the priest sacramentally and lawfully absolving us from our sins are to be accepted in the same sense as the words of Christ Our Lord when He said to the paralytic: ‘Son, be of good heart; thy sins are forgiven thee. (Matthew 9:2).’”[37] After the Resurrection Jesus appeared to the disciples. “Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.’”[38]

Scripture: Mk 1:15, Luke 15:18, Luke 24:47, John 20:21-23

Anointing of the Sick – In the Letter of Saint James, we are told that the presbyters [priests] of the Church should anoint with oil “in the name of the Lord”. Jesus healed the sick and so the healing ministry of Christ continues “in the name of the Lord”.

Scripture: James 5:14

What are the effects of each Sacrament?

Baptism:

1. Remission of sin
2. Remission of all punishment due to sin
3. Grace of regeneration
4. Infused Virtues and Incorporation with Christ
5. Character of Christian
6. Opening the Gates of Heaven

Confirmation:

1. The Grace of Strength
2. Increase of Grace (Completion of Baptismal Grace)

MUSIC – Michael James Mette “Live to Give” – POP CULTURE CONNECTION

There is not a video available for this song. Please see the MP3 link on the packet page. The lyrics say, “Live to give it all away every second every day all my life's a song of praise. Live to give it all away every single second of every day. All I have is Yours today. I give it all away. Shout it out scream it from the rooftops shout it out. shout it out scream it from the roof oh oh oh.” We have to shout it out. These lyrics also fit well with the prayer at the end of this packet, we can only shout it out, when we give it all away.

They were exceedingly astonished and they said, “He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

When we live out the Sacramental Life, the Life of Christ, people will be “exceedingly astonished” and we will give Glory to God. People will say of God, “He has done all things well.” When people witness a husband and wife living out a Sacramental Marriage, people will be astonished. They will say that God has done all things well in this couple. Those who see the marriage will be inspired also to have a Sacramental Marriage if marriage is their vocation. Those who see the contrition and penance of a sinner who repents and goes to confession will be astonished and will say that God has done all things well in this person, they too will be inspired and reconciled with God.

The Effects of the Sacraments – Lesson and Discussion

“And immediately the man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly.”

This lesson is part of the lesson “The Mute and Deaf Man (Sacramental Life)”

The Sacraments have effects. The impediment was removed and he spoke plainly. The Sacraments not only remove sin, but impart grace to help us think well, speak well, and do well. When we think well, speak well, and do well, it is a reflection on the one who enables us to think well, speak well, and do well. In the Gospel the people said, “He [Jesus] has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

What are the two major effects of the Sacraments?

Justifying Grace – Justifying Grace is “the grace by which a person is restored to God’s friendship, either for the first time, as in baptism, or after baptism, as in the sacrament of penance.”[5]

Sacramental Character – The Sacramental Character “is not common to all, but peculiar to three, Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders – it is the character which they impress on the soul.”[6] “The three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders confer, in addition to grace, a sacramental character or “seal” by which the Christian shares in Christ’s priesthood and is made a member of the Church according to different states and functions. This configuration to Christ and to the Church, brought about by the Spirit, is indelible; it remains for ever in the Christian as a positive disposition for grace, a promise and guarantee of divine protection, and as a vocation to divine worship and to the service of the Church. Therefore these sacraments can never be repeated.”[7]

Why is the Sacramental Character or indelible mark is called a “seal”? Saint Paul says, “But the one who gives us security with you in Christ and who anointed us in God; he has also put his seal upon us and given the Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.”[8] There are three Sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion. Baptism is the first installment or “down payment”. The reception of all three Sacraments therefore is payment in full. The Sacraments were originally received in the following order: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion. Baptism is the first installment. Confirmation is the second installment, which is “necessary for the completion of baptismal grace”[9]. The final payment, which was the payment of Christ on the Cross, is the Most Holy Eucharist, the crown of our Faith.

What do the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders do for us? They give us a positive disposition for grace. **What does disposition mean?** Disposition is similar to our attitude. Disposition is how open we are to something. Just said to the deaf and mute man in the Gospel, “Be opened”. The Sacraments are a grace that enable us to be opened to many other graces which God will offer. The Sacraments are a promise and guarantee of divine protection. Who doesn’t need protection? We pray in the Our Father, “deliver us from the evil one”. The Sacraments promise divine protection from the evil one. The Sacraments are a vocation [a call] to divine worship and to the service of the Church. The baptized Catholic is called to worship; this is

inexplicable wisdom that which surpasses all the order and condition of nature. For having kept the supper of the Paschal lamb with His disciples, that the figure might yield to the reality, the shadow to the substance, He took bread, and giving thanks unto God, He blessed, and brake, and gave to the disciples, and said: ‘Take ye and eat, this is my body which shall be delivered for you; this do for a commemoration of me.’ In like manner also, He took the chalice after he had supped, saying: ‘This chalice is the new testament in my blood; this do, as often as you shall drink it, in commemoration of me.’[33]

Scripture: Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24

Marriage – In John’s Gospel we read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was god. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.”[34] We believe in one God in three persons. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit instituted marriage in Genesis. Jesus Christ in the Gospel’s reminds us of this institution and the apostles pass on this institution.

Scripture: Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:9; Matthew 19:6; Eph 5: 21, 28, 32; Hebrews 13:4; Gal 6:2; 1 Cor. 7:7

Holy Orders – Saint Paul speaks of the “imposition of hands of the presbyterate” Holy Orders is “the Sacrament of Apostolic Ministry by which the mission entrusted by Christ to his Apostles continues to be exercised in the Church through the laying on of hands.”[35] **Where does the presbyterate get their authority?** Their authority comes from Jesus when He says, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” The priest have been given the command of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to continue the ministry of Jesus Christ. “In all ages, priests have been held in the highest honor; yet the priests of the New Testament far exceed all others. For the power of consecrating and offering the Body and Blood of Our Lord and of forgiving sins, which has been conferred on them, not only has nothing equal or like it on earth, but even surpasses human reason and understanding. And as our Saviour was sent by His Father (John 8:42), and as the Apostles and disciples were sent into the whole world by Christ Our Lord (Matt. 28:19), so priests are daily sent with the same powers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ. (Eph. 4:12).”[36]

Anointing of the Sick – “Through this holy anointing may the Lord pardon thee whatever sins or faults thou hast committed.” In the extraordinary form, “Through this Holy Unction or oil, and through the great goodness of His mercy, may God pardon thee whatever sins thou hast committed by evil use of sight (sight, hearing, smell, taste and speech, touch, ability to walk).”

Where is the proof that each Sacrament was instituted by Christ?

Baptism – “From the moment that Christ is immersed in water, water washes away all sins...The Lord is baptized, not because He had need to be cleansed, but in order that, by the contact of His pure flesh, He might purify the waters and impart to them the power of cleansing.”[30] “A very strong argument to prove that Baptism was then instituted by Our Lord might be afforded by the fact the most Holy Trinity, in whose name Baptism is conferred, manifested Its divine presences on that occasion. The voice of the Father was heard, the Person of the Son was present, the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove; and the heavens, into which we are enabled to enter by Baptism, were thrown open.”[31] “Holy writers are unanimous in saying that after the Resurrection of Our Lord, when He gave to His Apostles the command to go and teach all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19), the law of Baptism became obligatory on all who were to be saved.”[32]

Scripture: Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:19; John 3:5; Mark 1:10-11; Luke 3:21-22

Confirmation – Jesus promised to send the advocate, this promise was foretold in the Old Testament, instituted by Jesus and confirmed by the apostles in the New Testament.

Scripture: John 16:7; Isaiah 11:1-2; Romans 5:5; Ephesians 4:30;

Eucharist – “That its institution was as follows, is clearly inferred from the Evangelist. Our Lord, having loved his own, loved them to the end. (John 13:1). As a divine and admirable pledge of this love, knowing that the hour had now come that He should pass from the world to the Father, that He might not ever at any period be absent from His own, He accomplished with

why it is a precept of the Church to attend Mass on Sunday and on Holy Days. This is also why baptized Catholics, if they are called to marriage, are called to a Sacramental Marriage, in the Church, using the Rite of Marriage. It is also a precept of the Church to “help to provide for the needs of the Church.” This is a call to service, serving both the physically and spiritual needs of the souls that the Church serves.

If someone were to perform an autopsy on our soul, what would they find? For the confirmed Catholic, there would be two marks for sure upon the soul, one of Baptism, one of Confirmation. For the Priest or Deacon, there would be three, Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. We can think of the indelible marks or Sacramental character impressed upon our souls as marks of honor, similar to merit badges. The mark of Baptism, makes a person a citizen of heaven and of the Church. In the physical world it is like becoming a citizen of a country, having a social security number or passport. The mark of Confirmation makes a person a soldier, responsible for the protection and well-being of the baptized citizens. The mark of Holy Orders makes a person a general, responsible for leading the soldiers, who are the Church Militant. Together the generals and soldiers live out the words of Saint Paul to Saint Timothy “Fight the good fight for the faith. Lay hold of eternal life, to which you were called when you made the noble confession in the presence of many witnesses.”[10] Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders are all noble confessions in the presence of many witnesses, and all three enable us to lay hold of eternal life and give us the strength to fight the good fight. Saint Augustine says of the marks, “Shall the Christian Sacraments accomplish less than the bodily mark impressed on the soldier? That mark is not stamped on his person anew as often as he resumes the military service which he had relinquished, but the old one is recognized and approved.”[11]

VIDEO – Varsity Letterman Jacket – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:36

<http://youtu.be/fLH8-ZMEms>

We are very ready to show “our marks” for physical accomplishments. The Sacraments are the “marks” of the soul. We did not put on our take off the marks of the soul but rather they lie hidden from the eye, but manifested in our life.

This character [seal or mark] has a twofold effect: it qualifies us to receive or perform something sacred, and distinguishes us by some mark one from another. In the character impressed by

Baptism, both effects are exemplified. By it we are qualified to receive the other Sacraments, and the Christian is distinguished from those who do not profess the faith. The same illustration is afforded by the characters impressed by Confirmation and Holy Orders. By Confirmation we are armed and arrayed as soldiers of Christ, publicly to profess and defend His name, to fight against our internal enemy and against the spiritual powers of wickedness in the high places; and at the same time we are distinguished from those who, being recently baptized, are, as it were, newborn infants. Holy Orders confers the power of consecrating and administering the Sacraments, and also distinguishes those who are invested with this power from the rest of the faithful. The rule of the Catholic Church is, therefore, to be observed, which teaches that these three Sacraments impress a character and are never to be repeated.”[12]

Matter and Form Part I (The Sacraments) – Lesson and Discussion

“...spitting, touched his tongue”

[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - Sacraments: The Work Performed]

“Every Sacrament consists of two things: matter, which is called the element, and form, which is commonly called the word. This doctrine of the Fathers of the Church; and the testimony of St. Augustine on the subject is familiar to all. The word, he says is joined to the element, and it becomes a Sacrament. By the words sensible thing, therefore, the Fathers understand not only the matter or element, such as water in Baptism, chrism in Confirmation, and oil in Extreme Unction [anointing of the sick], all of which fall under the eye; but also the words which constitute the form, and are addressed to the ear.”[13]

The deaf and mute man’s “ears were opened” and then “he spoke plainly”. In the Sacraments our eyes see the matter or element and our ears hear the form or word. How many times do we see but not hear, when it comes to the Sacraments. We see the waters of baptism but do not hear the words spoken by the priest or deacon. The seeing and hearing of the Sacraments should remove from us any “speech impediment” thus enabling us to live out the Sacraments in our life and be a witness to the life and love of Jesus Christ.

To give your spouse the right to have children and see to their educational upbringing?[23]

To make an unconditional, permanent commitment, lasting until the death of your spouse?[24]

To be faithful to your spouse?[25]

To give your consent freely and without any force or pressure from any person or circumstance?[26]

If the answer is “no” to any of these questions there is an impediment.

The questions above show the dignity and nature of Marriage which is...

- Sacrificial, a total gift of self with the goal of making spouse holy
- Fruitful (Open to Life)
- Educational upbringing of children
- Permanence
- Faithful
- Free

Holy Orders - In the extraordinary form the bishop says, “Almighty Father, we pray that you bestow on these servants of yours the dignity of the priesthood. Renew in their hearts the spirit of holiness, so that they may be steadfast in this second degree of the priestly office [second after bishop] received from you, O God, and by their own lives suggest a rule of life to others.”[27] In the Ordinary form the bishop says, “Grant, we pray, Almighty Father, to these, your servants, the dignity of the priesthood; renew deep within them the Spirit of holiness; may they henceforth possess this office which comes from you, O God, and is next in rank to the office of Bishop; and by the example of their manner of life, may they instill right conduct.”[28] The words of the bishop stress holiness. It is essential that a priest is holy and that by their own lives they suggest holiness for others.

Penance – “I absolve thee” “Now the form is: I absolve thee, as may be inferred not only from the words, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven (Matt. 18:18) but also from the teaching of Christ Our Lord, handed down to us by the Apostles.”[29]

of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Eucharist – “This is My Body”

Marriage – The couple’s Statement of Intent includes three questions in regards to freedom, fidelity and fruitfulness. “N. and N., have you come here freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage? Will you love and honor each other as man and wife for the rest of your lives? Will you accept children lovingly from God, and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church?”[20]

After stating their intent, the couple consents to what the intend. The Priest or Deacon then says, “Since it is your intention to enter into marriage, join your right hands, and declare your consent before God and his Church.” They join hands. The bridegroom says: “I, N., take you, N., to be my wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.” The bride says: “I, N., take you, N., to be my husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.”

Receiving the couple’s consent, the priest says: “You have declared your consent before the Church. May the Lord in his goodness strengthen your consent and fill you both with his blessings. What God has joined, men must not divide.”

It is the intent and consent of the couple that is the form or word of the sacrament therefore it is the couple’s intent and consent that makes the marriage valid if there is any impediment to the intent and consent then the marriage is null and void.

It is the responsibility of the Church to prepare a couple so that a couple understands the dignity of the sacrament. A couple is asked the following:

Do you understand and agree without any reservations to the nature and obligation of marriage namely:

To give sacrificially of self for the total well being of each other and the marital partnership?[21]

To share in marital intercourse since marriage involves a sexual relationship?[22]

What is the importance of the matter or element? We are physical people and therefore signs and symbols are important. “Often Jesus asks the sick to believe (Mk 5:34, 36; 9:23). He makes use of signs to heal: spittle and the laying on of hands, (Mk 7:32-36; 8:22-25) mud and washing (Jn 9:6-7). The sick try to touch him, ‘for power came forth from him and healed them all.’ (Lk 6:19, Mk 1:41; 3:10; 6:56). And so in the sacraments Christ continues to ‘touch’ us in order to heal us.”[14] Signs also teach us, helping us understand that while there is an outward sign, there is a inner grace. We know “water, for instance, has the quality of cooling as well as cleansing, and may be symbolic of either.”[15] The matter or element helps us to physically understand that baptism is a “cooling” an ordering of our passions toward God. Baptism is a cleansing of the stain of sin. In the Eucharist the matter or element of bread and wine, help us make the connection that just as food and drink are necessary for physically life, the body and blood of Jesus is necessary for spiritual life. Thus Jesus says, “Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me.”[16] Jesus not only brings new meaning to the signs of creation but He also gives new meaning to the signs of the Old Testament as He is the fulfillment, that the Old Testament signs point to. “He performs healings and illustrates his preaching with physical signs or symbolic gestures (Jn 9:6; Mk 7:33; Mk 8:22). He gives new meaning to the deeds and signs of the Old Covenant, above all to the Exodus and the Passover (Lk 9:31; 22:7-20) for he himself is the meaning of all these signs.”[17]

What is the importance of the form or word? The form or word is of such importance, if form or word is not added to matter or element, the Sacrament is null. For example without the words of consecration, the bread and wine, remain bread and wine, without the prayers at baptism the waters of the baptismal font, have only a physical effect but no spiritual effect. “In our Sacraments, on the contrary, the form is so definite that any, even a casual deviation from it renders the Sacrament null.”[18] In the Gospel of the deaf and mute man Jesus adds the word, “Ephphatha!” to the matter “spit” and both spiritual and physical healing take place. If Jesus had not added the word “Ephphatha!”, there would have only been “spit”. The form or word is the command given. The form and word in the Sacraments is the word of God. The power and authority of the Sacraments lie in the form and word.

How do we know that the form and word of the Sacraments of the power and authority of God? In the Gospel Jesus “looked up to heaven” and then gave word (Ephphatha) to the matter (spit). The deaf and mute man as well as the others who witnessed this miracle did not yet know that Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus wanted them to know that the words He speaks and the power and authority that He has is from God. We know by faith, that Jesus is God, and we understand that the words of Christ to be the word of God. The sacraments are therefore not only a time of “looking up to heaven” but also heaven “looking down upon us”.

How do we know that both matter (element) and form (word) are necessary and used by Jesus? Saint Paul uses the analogy of Jesus as the groom and the Church as the bride. **What is necessary for any relationship but especially a marriage?** Words and works. “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.”[19] Jesus therefore cleansed the Church by the bath of water (matter) with the word (form). The Sacraments are the ordinary way or means in which Jesus Christ, loves us, hands himself over to us, sanctifies us, and cleanses us, so that we might be without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish. In the Gospel of the mute and deaf man his “speech impediment was removed and he spoke plainly”. Christ desires to do for His Bride the Church the same thing He did for the mute and deaf man. He wants our impediment (sin, blemish) to be removed, and He wants us to be able to “speak plainly”. He desires both our words and works to be holy and without blemish.

The Sacraments are the means to what end? The end, the goal is “that he [Jesus] might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.” So many seek the Sacraments, but have the means become the end? The Sacraments are the means of Salvation.

Do we seek Sacraments or salvation? If we desire Sacraments without Salvation we are missing the point of the mission of Christ, which is to love, sanctify, and cleanse our souls, “so that we might be without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish.” There are two extremes that can be taken. One, we cannot seek

a Sacrament but ignore salvation. Two, we cannot seek salvation but ignore the Sacraments. We must keep in mind both the means and end. The end of man is Life Eternal (Salvation), and the ordinary means that God uses to help man arrive at his end are the Sacraments. Non-Catholics have been accused of seeking salvation without Sacrament, Catholic have been accused of seeking Sacrament without salvation. Seeking a Sacrament but not salvation is like a parent buying a teenager a car, but then never allowing them to drive it. How many times do people seek the Sacrament of Baptism for their child, but then do not take their child to Mass or instruct them in the faith? How many times do parents prepare their child to receive First Holy Communion, but then never attend Mass again so that their child may receive second, third, and fourth Holy Communion?

[See also [Link to Liturgy Lesson - Seven Words \(Part I\)](#)
[See also [Link to Liturgy Lesson – Seven Words \(Part II\)](#)]

Matter and Form Part II (The Sacraments) – Lesson and Discussion

“...spitting, touched his tongue”

What is the matter or element for each Sacrament?

Baptism - Holy Water and Oil

Confirmation – Oil (Chrism)

Eucharist - Unleavened wheat bread, wine, holy hands of the priest.

Marriage - Body and Soul of Couple,

Holy Orders - Oil and Laying on of Hands

Penance - the penitent’s admission and sorrow for sin

Anointing of the Sick – Oil

[See also [Link to Liturgy Lesson - Holy Oils](#)]

What is the form or word for each Sacrament?

Baptism – “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”

Confirmation – “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” In the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite the word “confirm” is actually used: “I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father; and