Chapter 18 Review Questions Answer Key

Baptism

1. What are the Sacraments of Christian Initiation? What is the primary effect of each Sacrament?

The Sacraments of Christian Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. These three Sacraments are the foundation of every Christian life, and every Catholic should receive all three. All three connect us more closely with the parish community, and in all three we receive the Holy Spirit and his gifts. The primary effect of Baptism is the beginning of new life in Christ. The primary effect of Confirmation is to strengthen us to live more fully Christ’s call to serve. The primary effect of the Eucharist is to nourish us to live as Christ’s disciples.

2. What Scripture passages provide biblical evidence that Christ established the Sacrament of Baptism? What biblical event recorded in all four Gospels demonstrates the importance of Baptism?

Many Scripture passages provide biblical evidence that Christ established the Sacrament of Baptism. First, all four Gospels record Jesus’ Baptism by John the Baptist, which demonstrates the importance of Baptism. Second, the Gospel of Matthew reports that Jesus’ final words to his disciples commanded them to baptize all the nations. Third, in the Gospel of John, Jesus explains to the Pharisee Nicodemus that no one can enter the Kingdom of God without the rebirth in water and Spirit that Baptism brings.

3. Define catechumen, and describe the catechumenate process.

A catechumen is someone in the process of initiation and preparation before being baptized and joining the Church. The catechumenate process consists of study, prayer, fasting, and service to others, under the care of a sponsor, a mature Christian who acts as a model and guide. This was true of Christian initiation in the early Church and today informs our practice of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation.

4. List and describe four important effects of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Four important effects of the Sacrament of Baptism are as follows:

- Welcome into the Christian community—In Baptism, Christ himself initiates the new member and welcomes him or her into the Body of Christ, making us his brothers and sisters and calling us to share in Christ’s priesthood.
- Forgiveness of sins—Through the grace of Baptism, all our sins are forgiven (including Original Sin), and we are given the grace to fight future temptation and break sinful patterns.
- Born into a new life—Baptism brings a spiritual rebirth as a child of God.
• Receive the Holy Spirit—In Baptism we first receive the Holy Spirit into our lives, to be our comfort, our guide, and the source of our strength in living the Beatitude life to which Christ calls us.

5. What is “sacramental character,” and what does it do?

A sacramental character is an indelible (or permanent) mark on our soul that signifies our spiritual rebirth and marks us as belonging to Christ. Because this character is permanent, Baptism cannot be repeated.

6. Why is the Sacrament of Baptism necessary for our salvation?

Baptism is necessary for our salvation because it unites us with God and one another. Original Sin fractured our relationship with God, separating us from him and from one another, but through Baptism all our sins are forgiven, Original Sin as well as our personal sins, and our relationship with God and one another is fully restored.

7. Describe the essential actions and symbols used during the Rite of Baptism.

The essential symbol of Baptism is the blessed water that is poured over the person being baptized, while the minister says, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” The full ritual also includes anointing the person with Sacred Chrism as a sign of the gift of the Holy Spirit; dressing the person in a white garment, to symbolize putting on Christ and having one’s sins washed away; and the lighting of the baptismal candle from the Easter candle, which symbolizes that the baptized person has received the light of Christ to share with the world.

8. Who is the usual minister of the Sacrament of Baptism? Describe a situation in which someone else can baptize.

The usual minister of Baptism is a priest, deacon, or bishop. When someone is near death and wishes to be baptized, if a usual minister is not available, anyone can baptize by pouring water over the person’s head and saying, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”