

Lesson taken from the Baltimore Catechism

THE SACRAMENTS



A Sign represents something other than itself.

Smoke is a sign of a fire.

A red light is a sign of danger.

Dark clouds are a sign of rain.

A siren is a sign of some emergency, fire, accident, etc.

A flag is a sign of one's country.

A sign is something we can see or hear which tells us of something else which we cannot see or hear at the moment.

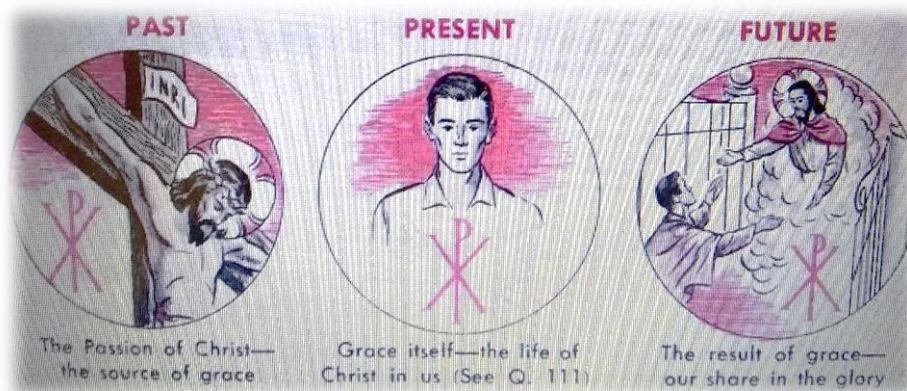
A SACRAMENT is a sign of CHRIST.

It indicates that Christ is in action, working in our souls to produce grace.

A Sacrament is an outward sign given by Christ to give us grace.

A sacrament is a sign of grace and a sign of Christ in three ways:

1. Past – The Passion of Christ as the source of grace
2. Present – Grace itself as God's life in my soul.
3. Future – The result of grace which is our share in the glory of the risen Christ.



The Holy Catholic Church teaches that there are 7 Sacraments that are signs of Christ and sources of God's grace:

1. Baptism
2. Holy Eucharist
3. Reconciliation/Penance
4. Confirmation
5. Matrimony
6. Holy Orders
7. Anointing of the Sick








The sacraments receive their power to give grace from God, through the merits of Jesus Christ.

A Sacrament is a channel of GRACE

Since grace is God's life in our soul, we can better understand the sacraments by comparing them with the functions of our human life:

I. INDIVIDUAL LIFE

II LIFE OF THE CHURCH

	Begins with BIRTH	BAPTISM is birth in the life of grace.
	Grows to strong ADULTHOOD	CONFIRMATION gives us power to become adults in the life of grace.
	Needs the nourishment of FOOD	HOLY EUCHARIST is the Flesh and Blood of Christ as the food and drink of our soul.
	When sick or wounded is healed by MEDICINE	The sacrament of PENANCE is the medicine of the soul to heal sins.
	Is restored to full health by CONVALESCENCE	If the body is dying, EXTREME UNCTION gives the power for the full restoration of the health of the soul, lost by sin.



HOLY ORDERS provides new priests to teach, rule, and sanctify the Mystical Body.



MATRIMONY provides new members for the Mystical Body.

Each Sacrament gives a special grace, called sacramental grace, which helps one to carry out a certain purpose of that sacraments

1. The Sacramental grace of **BAPTISM** helps us to live as children of God, makes it easier to believe in God and to follow His laws and avoid doing evil.
2. The Sacramental grace of **RECONCILIATION** helps us to cure the desires to do evil that actual sin has put on our soul and makes it easier for us to not sin in the future.
3. The Sacramental grace of **HOLY EUCHARIST** nourishes our love of God and one another and helps us to overcome our natural selfishness.
4. The Sacramental grace of **CONFIRMATION** gives us the strength to profess our faith even in difficulties and to give good example to others.
5. The Sacramental grace of **MATRIMONY** helps married people to bear with each other's defects and to fulfill the duties of their state, mainly that of bringing children into the world and teaching them to love God.
6. The Sacramental grace of **HOLY ORDERS** helps a priest to fulfill his sacred duties and to be a good priest.
7. The Sacramental grace of **ANNOINTING OF THE SICK** helps us to accept sickness as a purifying cross sent by God and even to accept death willingly from His hands whenever He chooses to send it.

