

# THE SACRAMENTS

7 meeting points with God

## What are the sacraments?

The sacraments are 7 meeting points where God himself is present, waits for you, blesses you and leads you deeper into the community of the Church. A Sacrament is a special moment when we are close to God and we receive his grace (God's love and strength). We know that God always loves us but when we receive a Sacrament it is like God gives us a big hug we know we are especially close to Him. Some sacraments are unique and have a lasting effect on your life, other encounters happen repeatedly.

**Initiation:** three celebrations which mark a person's entry into the Church.  
Baptism --- Confirmation --- Communion

**Healing:** two celebrations which mark our need for re-building friendships with ourselves, others and God and which strengthen us when we are physically sick.

Reconciliation --- Anointing of the Sick

**Commitment:** two celebrations during which individuals make lifelong commitments

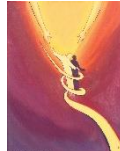
Marriage --- Becoming a Priest (Ordination)

Saint Augustine defines a sacrament as an outward sign of an inward grace.

**Baptism** is where Christ frees us from original sin and incorporates you for your whole life into communion with Him and the whole Church. Put simply, it is when you become a Christian.



**Reconciliation** is when we turn to God, our all-loving father, for forgiveness. As human, we make mistakes. We do things, say things and act in ways which do not please God. But God knows we are only human and He is always ready and willing to forgive us if we truly seek forgiveness and ask Him.



**First Holy Communion**, sometimes referred to as The Eucharist, is considered one of the holiest and most important occasions in a Roman Catholic's life. It is when you receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the body and blood of Jesus Christ. This is God giving Himself to us as food: the spiritual food of life.



**Confirmation** is the meeting point with God from which He makes your strong through His Holy Spirit to serve the Kingdom of God. It is where you choose to reaffirm your faith and promise your life to God. Instead of your parents making promises to God, like at Baptism, now, as a young adult, you make the promises directly to God. It builds on what was begun in Baptism and what was nourished in Holy Eucharist. It completes the process of initiation into the Christian community, and it matures the soul for the work ahead.



**Marriage** is the sacrament where God unites the love of a man and woman with His love. The loving union of a couple is an example of family values and God's values.



The **Anointing of the sick** is where God comes to the aid of those who are sick and have lost their strength. This sacrament brings spiritual, and even physical strength, during an illness, especially near the time of death. It is most likely one of the last sacraments you will receive.



The sacrament of Holy Orders (**Ordination**) is the sacrament by which men are ordained as priests or deacons. Taking holy orders is a commitment for life both to God and to the Catholic Church. It is the sacrament at which God equips men, like the apostles, with authority, including passing on God's forgiveness of sins, and sends them to carry out His work.

