

CONFIRMATION CLASS

SESSION TWELVE – THE SACRAMENTS (I)

1. In previous sessions, we have looked at the Apostles' Creed (what the Church believes), the Ten Commandments (how Christians are to behave), and the Lord's Prayer (how Christians pray). In this session, we begin looking at how the Church worships. The traditional way to teach this is through the Seven Sacraments.
2. The word Sacrament means “sign” or “pledge.” The Christian definition of a Sacrament is “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.”
3. Why do we need Sacraments? As human beings, we are both spiritual and material creatures. We have both a body and a soul. To express and communicate inward spiritual realities, we typically use outward and visible signs. (For example, a handshake or hug is an outward expression and sign of friendship.)
4. Similarly, God uses outward and visible signs to give inward and spiritual graces to his people. (The word grace means “gift.”) These Sacraments are signs of God’s love for us.
5. The Church has identified seven Sacraments—seven ways in which we can rely upon God to convey spiritual gifts to his people.
 - A. The two “major” Sacraments are Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist.
 - B. The five “minor” Sacraments are Confirmation, Confession, Unction, Matrimony, and Holy Orders.
6. In each Sacrament, the outward and visible sign generally consists of two parts: *something done* and *something said*.
 - A. For example, in Holy Baptism, the *thing done* is pouring water over someone, and the *thing said* is “I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”
 - B. The “thing done” is called the matter of the Sacrament, and the “thing said” is called the form of the Sacrament.
7. A Sacrament is *valid*—that is, it may be relied upon to convey the grace it signifies—when it is administered with the correct form and matter, by the proper minister, to the appropriate recipients, and with the right intention (namely, “to do what the Church does” when it administers this sacrament.)
8. Some Sacraments are repeatable (e.g., the Holy Eucharist), but others can be administered only once to any individual recipient (e.g., Holy Baptism).
9. This week, we look at the two Major Sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, and next week, at the five Minor Sacraments.

HOLY BAPTISM

1. What is the outward and visible sign of Baptism?
 - A. Matter (what is *done*)
 - Either immersion of the candidate in water
 - Or pouring water over the candidate
 - B. Form (what is *said*)
 - “I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”
2. What is the inward and spiritual grace of Baptism?
 - A. All our sins are forgiven (we are “washed clean”)
 - B. We are made members of Christ’s Body, the Church
 - C. We are made heirs (inheritors) of the Kingdom of God

(Note: Baptism does not guarantee going to heaven. It does make us heirs or inheritors of the Kingdom of God, but we can always repudiate or forfeit that inheritance by our own free choice.)
3. Who is the proper minister of Baptism?
 - A. Normally, a bishop, priest, or deacon
 - C. In emergencies, Baptism may be administered by anyone (e.g., a hospital nurse) and should be registered with the appropriate church afterward.
4. Who is an appropriate recipient of Baptism?
 - A. An unbaptized person, who may be:
 - Either an adult who desires to be baptized—Or—
 - A child whose parents and sponsors (godparents) make the baptismal vows on the child’s behalf and promise to raise the child in the Church’s faith and life
5. Is Baptism repeatable?
 - A. No. “Once baptized, always baptized.”
 - B. The Episcopal Church disagrees with churches that practice rebaptism of adults who were baptized as infants.
 - C. Adults who desire to reaffirm their baptismal vows publicly have other opportunities to do so.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

1. What is the outward and visible sign of the Eucharist?
 - A. Matter (what is *done*)
—Taking, blessing, (breaking,) and distributing bread and wine

(Note: for the Eucharist to be valid, no other food or drink items can be substituted for the bread and wine.)
 - B. Form (what is *said*)
—“This is my Body ... This is my Blood” (Christ’s “Words of Institution”)
2. What is the inward and spiritual grace (gift) of the Eucharist?
 - A. In a mysterious sense that is impossible to understand or explain, the bread and wine become the true Body and Blood of Christ.
 - B. Receiving them, we receive the Risen Christ’s own life and strength.
 - C. Just as earthly food and drink sustain our physical life, so this heavenly food and drink sustain our spiritual life for both this world and the world to come.
3. Who is the proper minister (celebrant or presider) of the Eucharist?
 - A. A bishop or
 - B. a priest.
4. Who are the appropriate recipients of the Eucharist?
 - A. Those who have been baptized, and
 - B. Who are spiritually prepared.

(Note: spiritual preparation involves prayer, faith, and repentance, and normally a fast of at least one hour before receiving Communion.)
5. Is the Eucharist repeatable?
 - A. Yes!
 - B. In the Episcopal Church, the Eucharist is the standard form of worship on all Sundays and major holy days.
 - C. In some (larger) parishes, the Eucharist is offered daily.
 - D. The Church’s traditional rule is that we should receive Communion no more than once a day.
 - E. To remain a member in good standing of the Episcopal Church, we need to receive Communion at least three times a year (traditionally at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost).

QUIZ

Fill in the blanks.

1. A Sacrament is an outward and visible _____ of an inward and spiritual _____.
2. Baptism and the Eucharist are the two _____ Sacraments.
3. In Baptism we are made _____ or _____ of the Kingdom of God.
4. In emergencies, baptisms may be administered by _____.
5. The Holy Eucharist must be administered with Christ's Words of _____.
6. The proper minister of the Eucharist is a _____ or _____.

Multiple choice.

1. How many "Minor Sacraments" has the Church identified?
 - a. Five
 - b. Two
 - c. Seven
2. Baptism is normally administered by:
 - a. Anyone
 - b. A bishop or priest only
 - c. A bishop, priest, or deacon
3. How often should Church members receive Holy Communion?
 - a. No more than once a day
 - b. At least three times a year
 - c. Both of the above

True or False.

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| 1. Human beings use visible signs to express invisible realities. | T | F |
| 2. Sacraments consist principally of thoughts and intentions. | T | F |
| 3. A valid Sacrament must have the right intention. | T | F |
| 4. A valid Sacrament must have the correct form and matter. | T | F |
| 5. The Episcopal Church allows infant baptism to be repeated later. | T | F |
| 6. Baptism is a prerequisite for receiving Holy Communion. | T | F |
| 7. A lay person can celebrate or preside at the Eucharist. | T | F |
| 8. The Episcopal Church's standard is a Eucharist once a month. | T | F |