

# SACRAMENTS IN SCRIPTURE

## The seven sacraments are rooted in the Bible

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There's no verse of the Bible that lists the seven sacraments. Yet, references to the sacraments are found all throughout sacred Scripture, according to Owen Vyner, chair of the theology department at Christendom College in Front Royal.

"We can trace every sacrament either explicitly to Christ or to the practice of the church (within) the first two decades after the resurrection," said Vyner.

"As the church moved from Jerusalem into Rome, Greece, Palestine, etc., she took these basic elements as given to her by Christ and developed them," he said. "In writings that we

have from the first two centuries of Christianity we see how, while the essential element of each sacrament never changes, rites began to emerge for each sacrament."

The seven sacraments — baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, confession, anointing of the sick, holy orders and marriage — are "material signs that bring

about a divine reality, namely, sanctification and healing," said Vyner.

In anticipation of the Diocesan Golden Jubilee, the diocese "is embarking on a spiritual and intellectual renewal in the foundational truths of the Catholic faith," according to its website. Read more about the biblical origins of the seven sacraments:



In baptism, an infant or unbaptized person has water poured over his or her head while the officiant invokes the Holy Trinity. Jesus led by example when he was baptized in the Jordan River by his cousin John the Baptist. "Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him." Matthew 3:13  
As he ascended into heaven, Jesus instructed the apostles to baptize others. "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." Matthew 28:19



**BAPTISM**



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In confirmation, a baptized Christian is anointed with sacred chrism on the forehead. After the laying on of hands, the minister says, "be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." In the Scriptures, baptism and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit often are linked, and the church teaches that confirmation completes the grace of baptism. "Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:14-17



**CONFIRMATION**

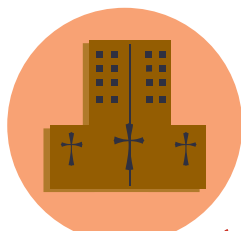
When the priest speaks the words of consecration — words Christ spoke at the Last Supper — Catholics believe that the bread and wine on the altar become Christ's body and blood. "And when he had taken some bread and given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is being given for you; do this in remembrance of me.' And in the same way he took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup, which is poured out for you, is the new covenant in my blood.'" Luke 22:19-20

When Jesus spoke to the crowds, he affirmed that the Eucharist — his own body and blood — is the path to heaven. "The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' Jesus said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day.'" John 6:52-54



**EUCHARIST**

During confession, penitents repent of their sins, tell their sins to the priest and then make reparation for their sins by performing a penance. With the authority of the church, the priest forgives sins in the name of Christ.



## CONFESSION

Only God can forgive sins, but Jesus entrusted the power to absolve sins to his apostles. "So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be to you; just as the Father has sent me, I also send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.'" John 20:21-23



ADOBESTOCK

In anointing of the sick, a priest anoints someone facing difficulties due to grave illness or old age and prayerfully asks for the grace of the sacrament to come over them. The church believes in healing the sick though physically caring for those who are ill, through intercessory prayer and through the anointing of the sick, a rite described by St. James.

"Is any among you sick? Let him call for the presbyters of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." James 5:14-15



## ANOINTING OF THE SICK



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In the Old Testament, God set aside the tribe of Levi for liturgical service. The New Testament links the priestly ministry of the new covenant with the old. "Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was." Hebrews 5:1, 4



## HOLY ORDERS

Through holy orders, the mission Christ entrusted to his apostles continues and this started in the earliest days of the church. "This is why I left you in Crete, that you amend what was defective, and appoint presbyters in every town, as I directed you." Titus 1:5

Holy Orders includes three degrees: episcopacy, presbyterate and diaconate, or bishops, priests and deacons. The sacrament is conferred by the laying on of hands followed by the solemn prayer of ordination. "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was conferred on you through the prophetic word with the imposition of hands of the presbyterate." 1 Timothy 4:14



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In marriage, a man and a woman freely give themselves to one another in a binding, lifelong partnership. Christ explicitly spoke about marriage as a lifelong union to his followers.

"But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate." Mark 10:6-9

Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding. "The Church attaches great importance to Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana," said the catechism. "She sees in it the confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that thenceforth marriage will be an efficacious sign of Christ's presence." Verses from throughout the Bible coalesce and form the basis of what the Catholic Church calls the seven sacraments.



## MATRIMONY