

Class 15: Outline

Introduction to the Sacraments and the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation

1. What is a sacrament
 - a. "An efficacious sign of grace instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church by which divine life is dispensed to us
 - i. A sign
 1. a physical gesture, movement, action etc. that stands for something else
 - ii. An efficacious sign
 1. comes from the Latin word *efficere* = to accomplish
 2. The sign does what it signifies
 - a. The sacraments always accomplish their effect
 - iii. Of Grace
 1. the free and undeserved help that God gives us
 - a. Two basic types
 - i. Sanctifying Grace
 1. A stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul to enable it to live with God and to act by His love.
 - ii. Actual Grace
 1. God's intervention in the work of sanctification
 - b. While sanctifying grace continues in the soul actual grace comes from a particular moment for the performance of a particular action or work.
 - iv. Instituted by Christ
 1. Each of the 7 sacraments are sacraments because Jesus Himself gave them to the Church
 - v. Given to the Church
 1. The sacraments are gifts from God to man
 - vi. By which divine life is dispensed to us
 1. Sanctifying grace is a foretaste of the divine life inside us
 2. Each sacrament should give us hope in eternal life
2. The Sacraments in relation to our life
 - a. The 7 Sacraments
 - i. Baptism
 - ii. Confirmation
 - iii. Holy Eucharist
 - iv. Penance
 - v. Holy Orders
 - vi. Holy Matrimony
 - vii. Anointing of the Sick
 - b. Why 7
 - i. We don't know God's reason, but they do seem to correspond to our own physical development
 1. Birth = Baptism

2. Maturity = Confirmation
 3. Nourishment / Growth = Holy Eucharist
 4. Sickness = Reconciliation
 5. Headship and governance = Holy Orders
 6. Propagation of the Church = Holy Matrimony
 7. Sickness unto death = Anointing of the Sick
- c. Are they necessary
- i. They are necessary for our growth in holiness
 - ii. They are necessary for our salvation
 1. the Primary means of sanctification
 - iii. Draw us closer to God
 - iv. Call us to
 1. A life of personal holiness
 2. Worship God as His Church indicates and so grow in holiness
 3. Live in accord with God's moral teachings and according to the teachings of His Church
- d. Parts of Sacraments
- i. As we examine each Sacrament in particular we will look at a few things
 1. It's institution by Christ
 2. It's essential elements
 - a. Matter = the physical element
 - b. Form = the words that are said
 3. Effects
 4. Graces Received
3. Baptism
- a. Introduction
 - i. The basis of the Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the first of the sacraments
 - b. Institution
 - i. These three passage show that Christ very clearly speaks of baptism, gives a command for it to be performed and is baptized Himself
 1. Baptism of Jesus: Mt 3:13-17
 2. Conversation with Nicodemus: Jn 3:1-8
 3. The Great Commissioning: Mt 28: 16-20
 - c. The Rite of Baptism
 - i. Recipient
 1. Any unbaptized person who believes in Christ and the Sacraments and sincerely wants to enter the Church
 - ii. Matter
 1. Water that is poured over the head
 - iii. Form
 1. "N I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

- iv. Minister
 - 1. Ordinarily a bishop, priest or deacon
 - 2. In an emergency, anyone can baptize as long as they intend to do what the Church intends to happen and use the proper matter and form
- d. Effects of Baptism
 - i. Forgives and cleanses the soul from Original Sin and all other sins
 - ii. Prints an indelible character
 - iii. Incorporates the person into the Mystical Body of Christ
 - iv. Confers sanctifying grace
 - v. Confers actual grace
 - vi. Makes one a child of God
 - vii. Makes us a Temple of the Holy Spirit
 - viii. Initiates us into the common priesthood of the faithful
 - ix. Infuses us with the theological virtues
 - x. Infuses us with the supernatural moral virtues
 - xi. Makes it possible for us to enter eternal happiness in heaven
- e. In essence Baptism is a spiritual rebirth
 - i. Demands a response
 - 1. to pursue holiness
 - 2. to grow in our relationship with God
 - 3. To follow the teachings of the Church and the Lord's moral commands
 - 4. To witness to the love of God in our way of life
 - 5. To serve our neighbor
- 4. Confirmation
 - a. Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal graces. Through Confirmation the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are given a special strength of the Holy Spirit. They are true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed
 - b. Institution
 - i. Jesus promised to send the Spirit: Jn 14:15-17
 - ii. Jesus promises that his apostles will receive the Spirit: Acts 1:6-9
 - iii. The feast of Pentecost as the first Confirmation: Acts 2:1-4
 - c. The Rite of Confirmation
 - i. Recipient
 - 1. Every baptized person who has not received Confirmation and is above the age of reason
 - ii. Matter
 - 1. Sacred Chrism
 - a. Sign of the anointing of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Consecrated oil
 - 2. Laying on of hands
 - iii. Form
 - 1. "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

- a. a seal is a mark that claims someone for a particular purpose
 - iv. Minister
 - 1. Bishop
 - 2. Priest
 - d. Effects of the Sacrament
 - i. Increases and deepens the sanctifying and actual graces received at Baptism
 - ii. Imprints an indelible character n the soul
 - iii. Roots us more deeply as children of God
 - iv. Increases the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - v. Bestows sacramental graces
 - 1. enable those confirmed to spread and defend the faith by word and deed as true witnesses of Christ
 - vi. Deepens the effects of baptism and gives the individual the ability to witness to the faith in a public way
 - 1. To teach, proclaim, defend, and evangelize in a way that one formerly could not.
5. Summary
- a. The seven sacraments are efficacious signs of grace instituted by Christ and given to the Church
 - b. They are gifts that enable us to have a life with God and grow in that life
 - c. Baptism is the first Sacrament and makes us members of the Church, sons and daughters of God, and gives us the grace we need to enter heaven
 - d. Baptism brings not only tremendous blessings but also responsibilities as well insofar as the Baptized are called to live out their Baptism with the Church and their way of life.
 - e. Confirmation is the deepening of the grace received at baptism through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - f. Those confirmed more deeply receive the seal of God upon their souls and are given the grace to be public witnesses for God and the Faith in the world.