

The Sacraments

A sacrament is a ceremony of spiritual significance linked to the words and actions of Jesus. In the Catholic Church seven are celebrated:



- Baptism (aka Christening)
- Eucharist (aka Communion)
- Confirmation
- Reconciliation (aka Confession)
- Marriage
- Holy Orders
- Anointing of the Sick



The sacraments can be further divided into the categories of initiation, healing and vocation:

Sacraments of Initiation	Sacraments of Healing	Sacraments of Vocation
Baptism	Reconciliation	Holy Orders
Eucharist	Anointing of the Sick	Marriage
Confirmation		



Baptism

Jesus himself was baptised by his cousin John the Baptist (named for baptising people) in the River Jordan. While this was not the same as our sacrament, as it was not an initiation into the Jewish people, it bears some resemblances. We can read about this in Luke's Gospel (3:21-22). In Baptism we are cleansed and born in Jesus Christ. This is a sacrament of initiation because it marks our entry into the Catholic Church.



30. The word 'eucharist' comes from the Greek word 'eucharistia', which means 'thanksgiving'. Sharing a meal is an excellent way of showing thanks for something and Jesus often shared meals* with people during his ministry.

Confirmation

This ceremony marks our initiation into adulthood in the Catholic Church in a sense. During Confirmation we receive the Holy Spirit, as Jesus did during his baptism. Confirmation builds on what was begun in baptism and what was nourished in Eucharist. It completes the process of initiation into the Christian community and it matures the soul for the work ahead.



Eucharist

During the Sacrament of Eucharist, which we receive at our first Holy Communion, and then when we attend Mass, we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples which we can read about in Mt.26:26-

Reconciliation

This sacrament of healing repairs the relationship between us and God. During Jesus' lifetime, he

healed and forgave many people, including people who would have been considered sinners and hated for it. Jesus also told many stories of forgiveness, for example the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk.15:11-32). Read about how Jesus forgave the tax collector Zacchaeus in Luke's Gospel (Lk.19:1-10).



Marriage

Jesus chose people for special tasks or ministries during his lifetime. Being called to do God's work is called vocation and in marriage some people are brought together in a special way to form a family. Jesus performed one of his very first miracles at a wedding in Cana, which you can read about in John's Gospel (Jn.2:1-12).



Holy Orders

Some people are called to do God's work in another way and dedicate their lives to God's work through the Church.



These people are given the Sacrament of Holy Orders and are ordained as priests.

Jesus chose twelve disciples during his public ministry. You can read about when Jesus called Peter and Andrew in Matthew's Gospel (Mt.4:18-22).

People like these are ordained today as priests.



Sacrament of the Sick

Jesus had a very special relationship with people in need and those who were sick were no different.

Jesus performed many miracles, and helped many people, but my own favourite is when he cured the man with leprosy. Leprosy at the time was an incurable disease. It was so contagious that people who suffered from it were separated from everybody else and had to shout 'unclean!' when anybody came near them. You can read about how Jesus cured a man with leprosy in Matthew's Gospel (Mt.8:1-4). The priest, on behalf of the Church, prays for the sick person.



Pope Francis Link!



Pope Francis has performed many acts during his life which have reminded us of Jesus' ministry, including washing the feet of refugees. One story which really captured the media's attention, and the hearts of the family involved, was when the Pope embraced a man with leprosy.

NOTE: Leprosy is no longer incurable, but must be found in the early stages to prevent disability.

Orthodox Church members also celebrate seven sacraments, though some have slightly different names:

- Baptism
- Chrismation (Confirmation)
- Holy Communion
- Confession
- Marriage
- Ordination
- Holy Unction (Anointing of the Sick)

In the Anglican communion (Church of Ireland/Church of England) two sacraments are celebrated, these are: Baptism and Holy Communion. Although Anglicans also have confirmation, marriage, etc., they do not consider them to be sacraments.

World Religion Link!



Bar Mitzvah – Judaism

This is a special rite (not a sacrament), where a Jewish boy is welcomed into the synagogue as an adult. The female equivalent is called a Bat Mitzvah.

During a bar/bat mitzvah the boy/girl will wear special clothing and read an extract from the Torah, aloud and in Hebrew. This is a very special day for the young Jewish person and their family and will generally be followed by a meal or a party.

Curriculum Link

***Table Fellowship:** The way that Jesus shared meals with people to show that the Kingdom of God is open to everyone.

Reconciliation: Making an effort to heal/restore a broken relationship.

Parable: A short story told by Jesus to teach us about the Kingdom of God.

COMPETITION!

WRITE A SHORT ACCOUNT OF YOUR FAVOURITE MEMORY FROM YOUR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION.

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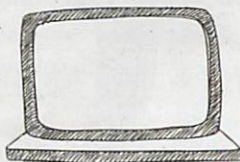
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THE SACRAMENTS

As Catholics, we will experience some of these sacraments during our life. Even though we may have attended some of these events before, or even taken part in them, many people still don't know how each sacrament connects to Jesus. In this month's **RE:LINK** we will take a closer look at the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church and also look at some sacraments in other churches.

All of the Bible references mentioned here can be read together at: relink.messenger.ie

In next month's issue we will look at the topic of 'New Beginnings' to help you make the most of the next chapter of school life.

Don't forget to enter our competition by 24 August!

Faith



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