

SACRAMENTS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church lists the sacraments as follows: "The whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments. There are seven sacraments in the Church: Baptism, Confirmation or Chrismation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony."^[2]
- These seven sacraments were codified in the documents of the Council of Trent (1545-1563), which stated:

CANON I

- If anyone says, that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ, our Lord; or that they are more, or less, than seven, to wit, Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Order, and

Matrimony; or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament; let him be anathema.

CANON IV

- If anyone says, that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, but superfluous; and that, without them, or without the desire thereof, men obtain of God, through faith alone, the grace of justification; - though all (the sacraments) are not necessary for every individual; let him be anathema.

Grace and faith

- The Catholic Church teaches that these are "efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions."

- While the Church itself is the universal sacrament of salvation, the sacraments of the Catholic Church in the strict sense are seven sacraments that "touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life: they give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's life of faith". "The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation", although not all are necessary for every individual.
- The Church further teaches that the effect of a sacrament comes *ex opere operato*, by the very fact of being administered, regardless of the personal holiness of the minister administering it.
- However, a recipient's own lack of proper disposition to receive the grace conveyed can block the effectiveness of the sacrament in that person. The sacraments presuppose faith and through their words and ritual elements, nourish, strengthen and give expression to faith.