

## 05. Sacraments of Initiation



# Sacraments

**Sacrament** : pertaining to the **sacred** (holy)

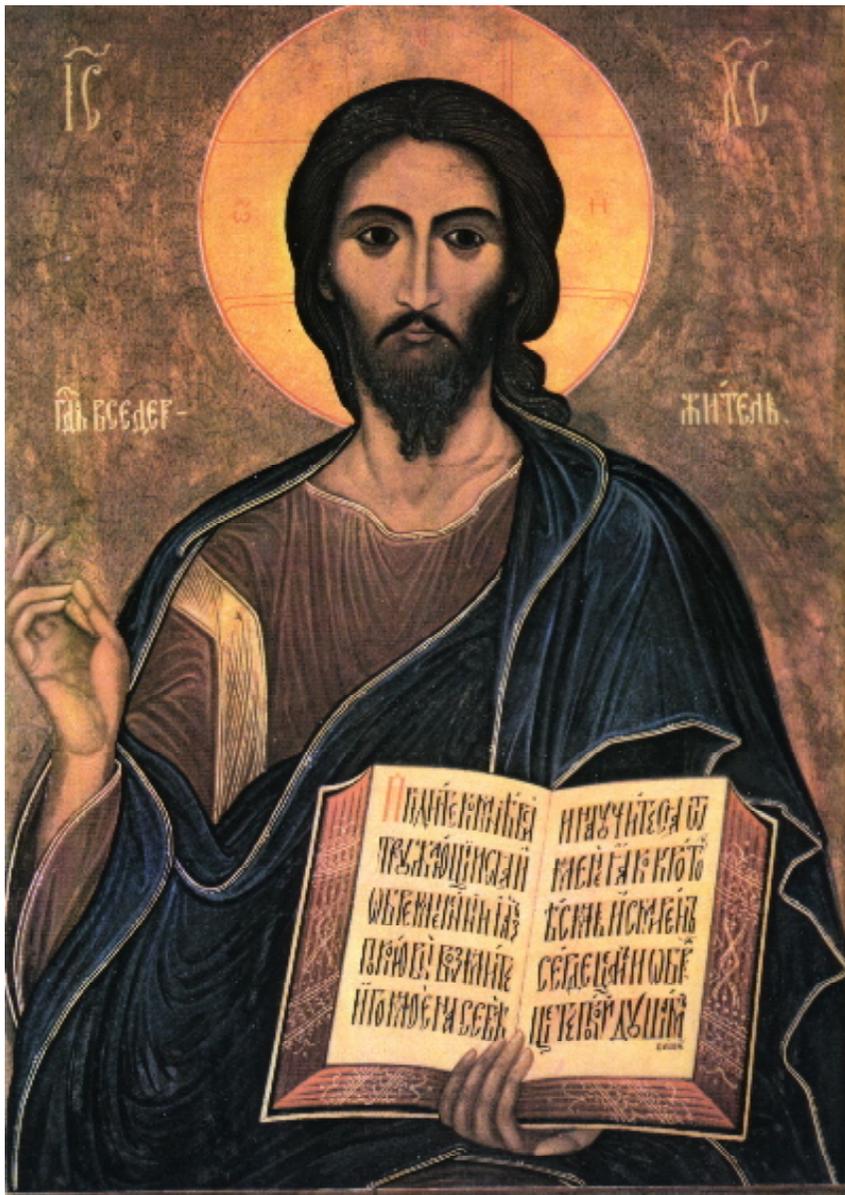
‘The sacraments sanctify (‘make holy’) people

build up the Body of Christ

give worship to God’(Vatican II SC 59)

**Mystery** : Something revealed by God in a way that is **veiled** perceptible only to faith

**Symbol** : brings together all the various aspects of reality and so ultimately reveals the divine.



Jesus is THE Sacrament,  
THE Mystery  
THE Symbol of God

‘The Word became flesh  
and lived among us,  
and we have seen his glory,  
the glory as of a father’s only  
son, full of grace and truth ...  
From his fullness we have all  
received, grace upon grace’ (John  
1:14,16).

‘To see me is to see the  
Father’ (John 14:8)

The Church is THE Sacrament

THE mystery

THE symbol of Jesus

As a community we are to be disciples of Jesus ‘the Way’  
to the Father (John 14:10).

The Church is his ‘body’ in the world,  
living the life given to us by his Spirit –  
the Spirit he shares with the Father.

## Catechism n.1088

‘Christ is present in the sacraments so that when anybody baptises it is really Christ himself who baptises.

He is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church.

He is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised “where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in their midst.” ’

# Sacraments of Initiation 1. Baptism



A voice came from heaven,  
“You are my Son, the Beloved;  
with you I am well pleased.”

Perugino

‘You are my Son, the Beloved;  
with you I am well pleased.’

## Intimate Communion + Mission

‘Here is my servant, whom I uphold, (Isaiah 42:1-7).  
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;

I have put my spirit upon him;  
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

He will not cry or lift up his voice,  
or make it heard in the street;

a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

Isaiah 42:1-7 (continued)

He will not grow faint or be crushed  
until he has established justice in the earth;  
and the coastlands wait for his teaching ...  
I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness,  
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.'

## We share in Jesus' Mission

‘You belong to Christ to bear fruit for God in the new life of the Spirit’(Romans 7:4-6).

‘We are the aroma of Christ to God’(2Corinthians 2:15).

## Anointed with Chrism

- Living the life of Jesus the **priest**: mediators of grace
- Living the life of Jesus the **prophet**: revealing God's word
- Living the life of Jesus the **king**:  
contributing to the reign of God

In Jesus we have found a meaning  
that awakens the energy of our soul.  
To follow him we have to embrace him on the cross,  
but we choose to do that  
and we go down into the tomb with him  
to renounce behaviour that does not lead to life.  
He raises us with him into communion with God.

## Sacraments of Initiation 2. Confirmation

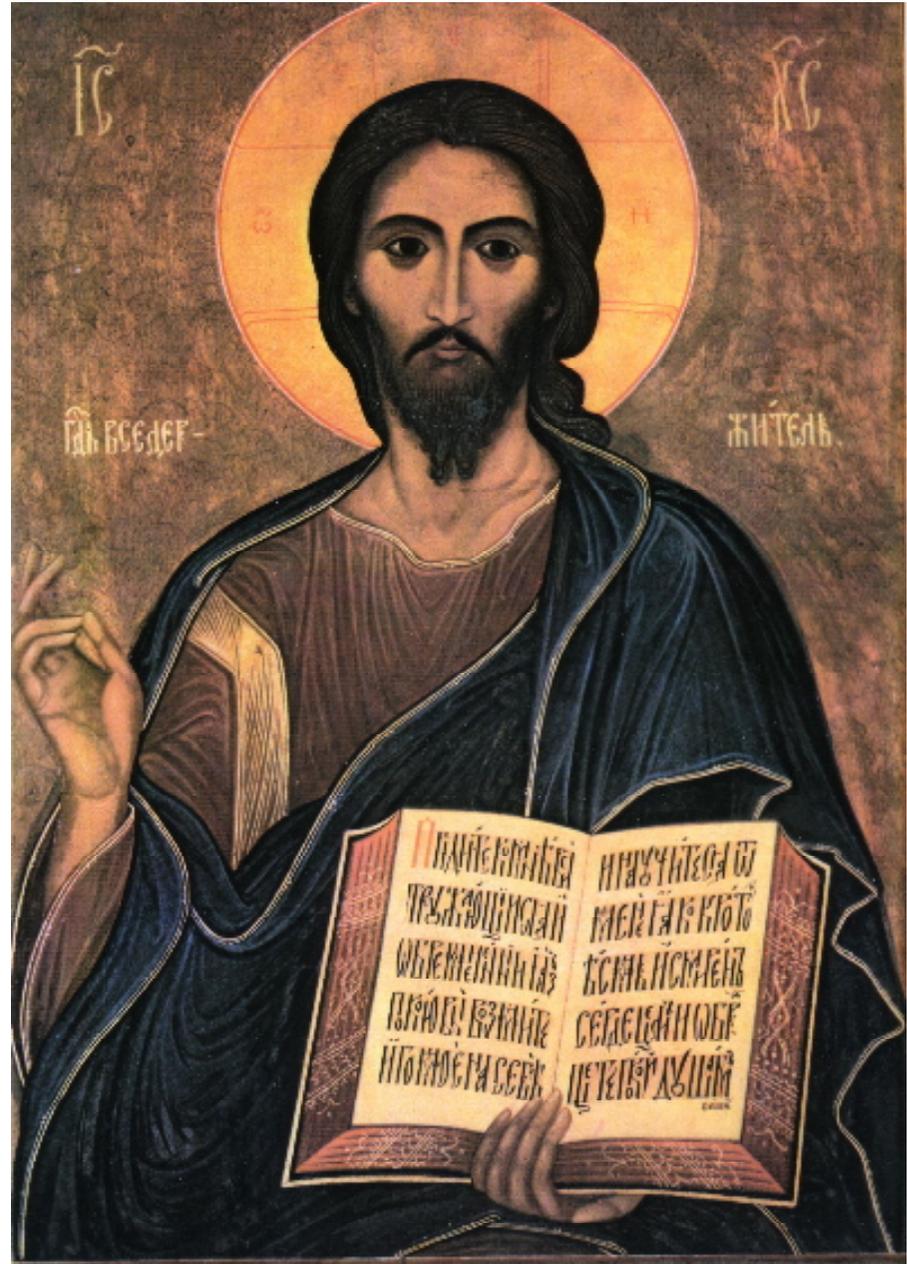
Closely linked with Baptism is the Sacrament of Confirmation, which completes and confirms the grace received at Baptism.

- The focus of baptism is on our dying and rising with Jesus. The focus of Confirmation is on Jesus giving us his Spirit, the Spirit who is the love binding Jesus to God.

## Nazareth

(Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19).

‘The spirit of the Lord  
God is upon me, because  
the Lord has anointed  
me; he has sent me to  
bring good news to the  
oppressed, to bind up  
the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to  
the captives, and release  
to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of  
the Lord’s favour.’





‘Jesus said: **“It is finished”**.  
Then he bowed his head  
and gave up his Spirit ...  
One of the soldiers pierced  
his side with a spear, and at  
once blood and water came  
out ... As Scripture says:  
“They will look on the one  
whom they have pierced.”

(John 19:30, 34, 37).



Jules Chevalier, 1901

‘From the heart of Jesus pierced on Calvary, I see a new world coming forth: a great and life-giving world, inspired by love and mercy; a world which the Church must perpetuate on the whole earth.’



It is the Spirit of God that fills all things.  
Now, raised to the fullness of life by his Father,  
it is the Spirit of God in Jesus -  
the Spirit of love which binds him to the Father -  
that fills all things, giving life wherever it is welcome.

Vat II, G&S, §38

‘The Risen Christ is now at work in human hearts through the power of his Spirit, animating, purifying and reinforcing the noble aspirations which drive the human family to make its life one that is more human and to direct the whole earth to this end.’

‘The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness and self-control’(Galatians 5:22-23).

‘The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. All things work together for good for those who love God’(Romans 8:26-28).

# Sacraments of Initiation 3. The sacrifice of the Mass



## The sacrifice of the cross

On the cross Jesus offered his life, his love, his very self to God and to us in order to draw us into communion with God.

To be in communion with God = to be made holy : **sacrum facere**

**sacrifice**



Tintoretto

1Corinthians 11:23-25 (see Luke 22:10-20)

‘The Lord Jesus on the night when he was handed over took a loaf of **bread**, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my **body** that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”



‘In the same way he took the **cup** also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my **blood**. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”



Jesus wants his disciples to ‘remember’ when his life is so brutally taken from him that he is not just a victim of his enemies. He has always given himself for them. On the cross this self-giving will reach its consummation.

(“He is loving me and giving himself for me”, Galatians 2:20).

## Revelation 1:10-16

The Book of the Apocalypse is set on ‘the Lord’s day’, and is to be read on that day to the assembly.

‘I saw seven golden lamp stands, and in the midst of the lamp stands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest.

His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters.

In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force.’

## Hebrews 12:22-24

‘You have come to Mount Zion  
and to the city of the living God,  
the heavenly Jerusalem,  
and to innumerable angels in festal gathering,  
and to the assembly of the firstborn who are  
enrolled in heaven,  
and to God the judge of all,  
and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,  
and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant.’

- Nourished by Jesus, those partaking in the Eucharist receive the grace to carry out their priestly mission as sacraments of Christ the **priest**, the one mediator between God and mankind.
- and so they are graced to live the life of a **prophet**, given them in Baptism, whereby they speak God's Word to others, in word and deed.
- In this way, sharing in the mission of Christ the **king**, they bring about the reign of God's love in the world, drawing everyone to a redemption that is eternal and to full communion with the living God.

## ‘Do this in remembrance of me’

- ‘I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done.’ (=wash one another’s feet) (John 13:14-15).
- to ‘love one another as I have loved you’(John 15:12).

## To ‘eat this bread’

- to unite oneself with the ‘flesh given for the life of the world’(John 6:51).
- to hunger for ‘every word that comes from the mouth of God’(Matthew 4:4).
- to welcome God’s gift of our ‘super-substantial bread’(Matthew 6:11).

# ‘Do this in remembrance of me’

## To ‘drink this wine’

- to drink the wine of Jesus, the bridegroom (Cana - John 2).
- to drink the wine of Jesus’ love ‘poured into our hearts”(Romans 5:5).
- to commit oneself to say ‘Yes’ to Jesus: ‘Can you drink the cup that I must drink, or be baptised with the baptism with which I am to be baptised?’(Mark 10:38)



It's no longer I