



## The Sacraments

### **Sacraments and Sacramentals** **Signs of God's grace in our lives**

We recognize that the Sacraments have a visible and invisible reality, a reality open to all the human senses but grasped in its God-given depths with the eyes of faith. When parents hug their children, for example, the visible reality we see is the hug. The invisible reality the hug conveys is love. We cannot "see" the love the hug expresses, though sometimes we can see its nurturing effect in the child.

The visible reality we see in the Sacraments is their outward expression, the form they take, and the way in which they are administered and received. The invisible reality we cannot "see" is God's grace, his gracious initiative in redeeming us through the death and Resurrection of his Son. His initiative is called grace because it is the free and loving gift by which he offers people a share in his life, and shows us his favor and will for our salvation. Our response to the grace of God's initiative is itself a grace or gift from God by which we can imitate Christ in our daily lives.

The saving words and deeds of Jesus Christ are the foundation of what he would communicate in the Sacraments through the ministers of the Church. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church recognizes the existence of Seven Sacraments instituted by the Lord. They are the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist), the Sacraments of Healing (Penance and the Anointing of the Sick), and the Sacraments at the Service of Communion (Marriage and Holy Orders). Through the Sacraments, God shares his holiness with us so that we, in turn, can make the world holier.

**Sacraments and Social Mission: Living the Gospel, Being Disciples | en Español**  
This 28-page booklet and study guide highlights the connections between the celebration of the sacraments and our social mission as followers of Jesus and the Body of Christ.

**The Mystery of the Eucharist and the Call to Love and Transform: A reflection on section II of The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church | en Español**  
In November 2021, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved The



Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church. The document is divided into two sections, “I. The Gift,” and “II. Our Response,” followed by a brief concluding reflection (“Sent Forth”). Section I emphasizes the gift of Jesus’ real presence in the sacrament of the Eucharist, which we experience personally and communally as members of the Mystical Body of Christ. This reflection guide by the USCCB Dept. of Justice, Peace and Human Development focuses on the “Transformation in Christ” passages in Section II, which guide our response to the gift of the Eucharist.

## **Sacraments of the Church**

### **Sacraments of Christian Initiation**

Baptism Confirmation Eucharist

### **Sacraments of Healing**

Penance and Reconciliation Anointing of the Sick

### **Sacraments of Service**

Matrimony Holy Orders

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