

Grace and the Sacraments

1

Grace

Participation in the life of God
(CCC 1997)

2

Grace

- Definition from Catechism (2nd edition)
 - The free and undeserved **gift** that God gives us to respond to our vocation to become his adopted children. As **sanctifying grace**, God shares his divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As **actual grace**, God gives us the help to conform our lives to his will. **Sacramental grace and special graces** (charisms, the grace of one's state of life) are **gifts** of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation. (CCC 1996, 2000, 654)

3

Grace

- Creation narratives and the Fall
 - First Story of Creation (Gen 1:1-2:4a)
 - Second Story of Creation (Gen 2:4b-25)
 - The Fall (Gen 3:1-24)

4

Compendium of the Catechism

- **72. What was the original condition of the human person according to the plan of God?**
 - In creating man and woman God had given them a special participation in his own divine life in holiness and justice. In the plan of God they would not have had to suffer or die. Furthermore, a perfect harmony held sway within the human person, a harmony between creature and Creator, between man and woman, as well as between the first human couple and all of creation. (CCC 374-379; 384)

5

Compendium of the Catechism

- **73. How should we understand the reality of sin?**
 - Sin is present in human history. This reality of sin can be understood clearly only in the light of divine revelation and above all in the light of Christ the Savior of all. Where sin abounded, he made grace to abound all the more. (CCC 385-389)

6

Compendium of the Catechism

- **75. What was the first human sin?**
 - When tempted by the devil, the first man and woman allowed trust in their Creator to die in their hearts. In their disobedience they wished to become “like God” but without God and not in accordance with God (Genesis 3:5). Thus, Adam and Eve immediately lost for themselves and for all their descendants the original grace of holiness and justice. (CCC 396-403; 415-417)

7

Compendium of the Catechism

- **76. What is original sin?**
 - Original sin, in which all human beings are born, is the state of deprivation of original holiness and justice. It is a sin “contracted” by us not “committed”; it is a state of birth and not a personal act. Because of the original unity of all human beings, it is transmitted to the descendants of Adam “not by imitation, but by propagation”. This transmission remains a mystery which we cannot fully understand. (CCC 404; 419)

8

Compendium of the Catechism

- **77. What other consequences derive from original sin?**
 - In consequence of original sin human nature, without being totally corrupted, is wounded in its natural powers. It is subject to ignorance, to suffering, and to the dominion of death and is inclined toward sin. This inclination is called concupiscence. (CCC 405-409; 418)

9

Compendium of the Catechism

- **78. After the first sin, what did God do?**
 - After the first sin the world was inundated with sin but God did not abandon man to the power of death. Rather, he foretold in a mysterious way in the “Protoevangelium” (Genesis 3:15) that evil would be conquered and that man would be lifted up from his fall. This was the first proclamation of the Messiah and Redeemer. Therefore, the fall would be called in the future a “happy fault” because it “gained for us so great a Redeemer” (Liturgy of the Easter Vigil). (CCC 410-412; 420)

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Compendium of the Catechism

- **131. What is the saving meaning of the Resurrection?**
 - The Resurrection is the climax of the Incarnation. It confirms the divinity of Christ and all the things which he did and taught. It fulfills all the divine promises made for us. Furthermore the risen Christ, the conqueror of sin and death, is the principle of our justification and our Resurrection. *It procures for us now the grace of filial adoption which is a real share in the life of the only begotten Son.* At the end of time he will raise up our bodies. (CCC 651-655; 658)

11

Compendium of the Catechism

GRACE AND JUSTIFICATION

- **422. What is justification?**
 - Justification is the most excellent work of God's love. It is the merciful and *freely-given act of God which takes away our sins and makes us just and holy* in our whole being. It is brought about by means of the grace of the Holy Spirit which has been merited for us by the passion of Christ and is given to us in **Baptism**. Justification is the beginning of the free response of man, that is, faith in Christ and of cooperation with the grace of the Holy Spirit. (CCC 1987-1995; 2017-2020)

12

Compendium of the Catechism

- **423. What is the grace that justifies?**
 - That grace is the gratuitous gift that God gives us to make us participants in his trinitarian life and able to act by his love. It is called *habitual, sanctifying or deifying grace* because it *sanctifies and divinizes us*. It is supernatural because it depends entirely on God's gratuitous initiative and surpasses the abilities of the intellect and the powers of human beings. It therefore escapes our experience. (CCC1996-1998; 2005; 2021)

13

Compendium of the Catechism

- **424. What other kinds of grace are there?**
 - Besides habitual grace, there are actual graces (gifts for specific circumstances), sacramental graces (gifts proper to each sacrament), special graces or charisms (gifts that are intended for the common good of the Church) among which are the graces of state that accompany the exercise of ecclesial ministries and the responsibilities of life. (CCC 1999-2000; 2003-2004; 2023-2024)

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Compendium of the Catechism

- **231. What is sacramental grace?**
 - Sacramental grace is the grace of the Holy Spirit which is given by Christ and is proper to each sacrament. This grace helps the faithful in their journey toward holiness and so assists the Church as well to grow in charity and in her witness to the world. (CCC 1129, 1131; 1134, 2003)

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The Sacraments

Communicating
the grace of Christ

16

Sacraments

- Definition from Catechism (2nd edition)
 - An efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ and *entrusted to the Church*, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit. The sacraments (called "mysteries" in the Eastern Churches) are seven in number: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance or Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

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Sacraments

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (1076):
 - The Church was made manifest to the world on the day of Pentecost by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Spirit ushers in a new era in the dispensation of the mystery - the age of the Church, during which *Christ manifests, makes present, and communicates his work of salvation through the liturgy of the Church, until He comes.*

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Sacraments

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (1076 cont'd):
 - In this age of the Church Christ now lives and acts in and with His Church, in a new way appropriate to this new age. *He acts through the sacraments* in what the common Tradition of the East and the West calls the “sacramental economy”; this is the communication or dispensation of the fruits of Christ’s Paschal Mystery in the celebration of the Church’s sacramental liturgy.

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Sacraments

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (1084):
 - Seated at the right hand of the Father and pouring out His Holy Spirit on His Body, which is the Church, *Christ now acts through the sacraments he instituted to communicate His grace.*

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Sacraments

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (1129):
 - The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation. Sacramental grace is the grace of the Holy Spirit, given by Christ and proper to each sacrament . . . The fruit of the sacramental life is that the Spirit of adoption makes the faithful partakers in the divine nature by uniting them in a living union with the only Son, the Savior.

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Sacraments

- 2 Peter 1:3-4
 - His divine power has bestowed on us everything that makes for life and devotion, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and power. Through these, he has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, so that through them you may come to share in the divine nature, after escaping from the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire.

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US Catholic Catechism

- The Sacraments (pages 168-170)
 - 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
 - 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.

23

US Catholic Catechism

- The Sacraments (pages 168-170):
 - 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:
 - *Sacraments of Initiation:* Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist
 - *Sacraments of Healing:* Penance and Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick
 - *Sacraments at the Service of Communion:* Holy Orders, Matrimony

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US Catholic Catechism

- The sacraments are **efficacious signs of grace**, **instituted by Christ** and **entrusted to the Church**, by which **divine life is dispensed** to us through the work of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1131)
 - When these sacramental signs are celebrated, they reveal and make present the reality they signify. They are efficacious, that is, effective, because Jesus Christ is at work in them. "It is he who baptizes, he who acts in the sacraments in order to communicate the grace that each sacrament signifies." (CCC 1127)

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US Catholic Catechism

- The sacraments are **efficacious signs of grace**, **instituted by Christ** and **entrusted to the Church**, by which **divine life is dispensed** to us through the work of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1131)
 - Christ instituted the Sacraments. "Adhering to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, to the apostolic traditions, and to the consensus of the Fathers," we profess that "the sacraments of the new law were instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord" (CCC 1114)

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US Catholic Catechism

- The sacraments are **efficacious signs of grace**, **instituted by Christ** and **entrusted to the Church**, by which **divine life is dispensed** to us through the work of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1131)
 - By Christ's will, the Church oversees and celebrates the Sacraments. Sacraments confer the grace that comes forth from Jesus Christ and that appears in the life of the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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US Catholic Catechism

- The sacraments are **efficacious signs of grace**, **instituted by Christ** and **entrusted to the Church**, by which **divine life is dispensed** to us through the work of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1131)
 - Sacraments transmit divine life
 - The Spirit heals us and draws us closer to Christ
 - We grow in holiness, which is both personal and communal - a matter of personal sanctity and of unity with the mission and holiness of the Church
 - Jesus gave us the Sacraments to call us to worship God, to build up the Church, to deepen our faith, to show us how to pray, to connect us with the living Tradition of the Church, and to sanctify us
 - While God works primarily through the Sacraments, he also touches us through the community of the Church, through the lives of holy people, through prayer, spirituality, and acts of love
 - But "for believers, the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation The fruit of the sacramental life is that the Spirit of adoption makes the faithful partakers of the divine nature" (CCC 1129)

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Christian Initiation

- General Introduction (Rite of Baptism)
 - Through the sacraments of Christian initiation men and women are freed from the power of darkness. With Christ they die, are buried and rise again. They receive the Spirit of adoption which makes them God's sons and daughters and, with the entire people of God, they celebrate the memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection.

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Christian Initiation

- General Introduction (Rite of Baptism)
 - Through baptism men and women are incorporated into Christ. They are formed into God's people, and they obtain forgiveness of all their sins. They are raised from their natural human condition to the dignity of adopted children. They become a new creation through water and the Holy Spirit.
 - Signed with the gift of the Spirit in confirmation, Christians more perfectly become the image of their Lord and are filled with the Holy Spirit. They bear witness to him before all the world and eagerly work for the building up of the body of Christ.
 - Finally they come to the table of the eucharist, to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man so that they may have eternal life and show forth the unity of God's people. By offering themselves with Christ, they share in his universal sacrifice: the entire community of the redeemed is offered to God by their high priest. They pray for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that the whole human race may be brought into the unity of God's family.

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Christian Initiation

- General Introduction (Rite of Baptism)
 - The three sacraments of Christian initiation closely combine to bring the faithful to the full stature of Christ and to enable them to carry out the mission of the entire people of God in the Church and in the world.

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Grace and Sacraments

- Saint John Chrysostom
 - “The Power of Christ’s Blood” - From Office of Readings, Good Friday
 - There flowed from his side water and blood . . . water and blood symbolized Baptism and the holy Eucharist. From these two sacraments the Church is born.
 - As a woman nourishes her child with her own blood and milk, so does Christ unceasingly nourish with his own blood those to whom he himself has given life.

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Grace and Sacraments

- John 14:12
 - “Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father.”
 - Gospel, 5th Sunday of Easter (A)

33

Grace and Sacraments

- Prayer after Communion, 3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, receiving the grace
by which you bring us to new life,
we may always glory in your gift.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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