



FOLLOW THE RECIPE

THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE REALITY OF THE SACRAMENTS

LIFE NIGHT OUTLINE

CATECHISM

1123

1125

1127 - 1129

1131

1997

1999

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:19

1 Corinthians 11:26

2 Peter 1:3 -4

KEY CONCEPTS

The seven sacraments each have defined matter and form that make the sacrament valid.

Matter and form in the sacraments are what help the invisible realities of grace become visible realities.

Matter is the physical element of a sacrament.

The Form of a sacrament is the words spoken within the rite.

GOAL OF THIS NIGHT

The goal of this night is to explain that the seven sacraments are not only spiritual but also very physical. These physical elements are called matter and form. The teens will have the opportunity to explore the matter and form of each sacrament and what the significance is for each sacrament.

ABOUT THIS NIGHT

This Life Night will start out by gathering the teens and showing them how certain forms of prayer are appropriate or not appropriate depending on the situation. The Core Team will then present a skit, which demonstrates that God had a very specific “recipe” in mind when he established the sacraments in Scripture. After the skit is further explained the teens will break into groups to learn the specific visible signs that are necessary for each sacrament to be official in the eyes of God and His Church. The Life Night will close with a reflection on the “Our Father” and its relationship to the matter and form of the sacraments.

PARENTAL NOTICE

This night will highlight the very visible signs that are present with all of the sacraments. The teens will see the matter and form, which are necessary for each sacrament to be valid in the eyes of the Church. Help your teen(s) prepare for this night by making a list and see if, as a family, you can list the matter and form (spoken word) necessary for each sacrament. Follow up after the Life Night by comparing the list to what is learned and see how well you do! Here are some discussion questions for this week:

1. Why do you think Jesus uses matter in the sacraments instead of letting us just simply pray words?
2. Why do you think the form (spoken word) cannot be changed in a sacrament?
3. What are the invisible realities that are made visible to us in each sacrament?

ENVIRONMENT

The environment for this night should convey the Core Team’s favorite cooking show whether it is a show hosted by Rachel Ray, the Iron Chefs or the Swedish Chef. There should be a main cooking table at the front of the room as would be seen on a cooking TV show. Have pots, pans, appliances and utensils. Have certain obvious sacramental items in the kitchen like oil, water, bread and wine.

Gospel Characters

As the teens enter the room have the Core Team dressed as people that encountered Jesus in the Gospels walking around and welcoming them. Each of the Gospel “characters” should have matter (physical element) and form (verbal) tied into their encounter with Jesus but their matter and form should be misguided for this night (Example: the Core Member acting as the blind man from John 9 should have pudding over/around his eyes instead of mud and should be talking about washing in the YMCA pool). Get as creative with the Gospel characters as you can. These Gospel characters should

be very obviously miss-telling the stories of how Jesus encountered them and should seem ridiculous. Be sure to use at least the five characters from the skit because these characters will be sitting in the crowd when the skit begins.

GATHER

WELCOME & LET US PRAY

(10 min)

The youth minister will welcome the teens and recognize any new teens that may be there for the first time. The youth minister will lead the teens in an opening prayer. The opening prayer will be read off of a piece of paper but the youth minister will use a prayer that is not a typical opening prayer for the youth group. The youth minister should seem very serious when leading this prayer even if the teens snicker and laugh. A suggested prayer would be the blessing prayer before meals or the act of contrition (try to use a prayer everyone knows but doesn't expect for this time).

"SEVEN MINUTE MIRACLES" SKIT

(10 min)

This skit is meant to show that Jesus established very specific form and matter for the sacraments. The skit does not show where the specific seven sacraments were established in Scripture but rather points out how ridiculous it would be to change the way Jesus healed people in the Gospels. We should not try to change the way He established that we would receive sacramental grace.

PROCLAIM

"FOLLOW THE RECIPE" TEACHING

(10 min)

If we wouldn't change Jesus' miracles and parables then why would we try to change the sacraments He established in Scripture? The Proclaim for this night should drive home the idea that Jesus clearly established the sacraments in Sacred Scripture, and Sacred Tradition has helped to maintain these sacred rites. The teaching will also break open the different elements of matter and form for each sacrament. This teaching can be used and broken up for the Break as well.

THE VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE REALITY OF THE SACRAMENTS

Sometimes there are parts of our Church that seem confusing or that seem like we'll never be able to understand them. Sometimes it's because something is controversial. Other times it may be because we may misunderstand something. This may be the case when it comes to the sacraments, but it doesn't have to be. Every sacrament has the same components for it to be a sacrament, sort of like how every car has to have the same components for it to be considered a car. If it has four wheels, an engine and a steering wheel, there's a good chance it's a car. If it has wings and a propeller, it's probably not.

Every sacrament has distinctly different effects and symbols, but they have the same basic parts. Every sacrament confers sanctifying grace in some way, by some means. In other words, every sacrament we receive helps to make us holier. Every sacrament also has matter—something tangible that is instrumental in bringing about the sacrament. Every sacrament also has a form—a ritual or formula that must happen for the sacramental effects to take place.

Let's take a look at how these are present in the seven sacraments we know.

SACRAMENTAL GRACE

Sacramental grace is the underlying element of every sacrament. You don't receive Confirmation because it's fun to have the bishop smudge oil on your forehead: You get confirmed because you need the grace of Confirmation! Sacraments give us the graces they promise for our lives. "Celebrated worthily in faith, the sacraments confer the grace that they signify...As fire transforms into itself everything it touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms into the divine life whatever is subjected to his power." This is why we are made holier through the sacraments. It is the grace of God that is present in each one.

Grace is God's free gift to us. We can do nothing to earn grace. It is "the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to His call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the

CCC 1127

CCC 1129

CCC 1996 - 2005

divine nature and of eternal life.” In other words, grace sanctifies us—it makes us holy. God in no way owes us grace, but He gives it to us regardless. Grace makes us able to know God. In fact, our ability to even be able to receive grace is an act of grace!

Sanctifying grace is the grace that makes us holy. God freely gives this grace to us, but it requires that a person freely intend to receive it. Salvation can't be forced upon us, or God would be treating us as His slaves. Opening our lives to the grace of God is what opens our hearts to conversion, virtue and an increase in holiness.

The Church teaches that in each sacrament, there lies a particular grace of the Holy Spirit, given to us by Christ and necessary for the salvation of a Christian. This is what we call sacramental grace. It is necessary for the Christian believer because “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.” Simply, sacraments make us closer to Christ—close enough for Him to save us!

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

For the most part, the component of the sacrament that we can experience through our senses is what we call the “matter” of the sacrament. It is the physical element of the sacrament. Let's look at them each to identify what they are. Without these things, the sacrament is not valid.

In Baptism, the matter is the water. The water is what baptizes us—what washes away our Original Sin. This water must be pure water. It cannot be another liquid. It also does not have to be blessed, but it usually is. In Confirmation, the holy oil, the chrism, is what anoints us. Chrism is one of the three holy oils in the Church and is blessed by the local bishop every year on Holy Thursday. In the Holy Eucharist, bread and wine is the matter of the sacrament. The bread must be made from wheat flour and water only. The wine must be made from the juice of grapes and have suitable alcohol content to be considered wine. Store-bought bread and ordinary grape juice may not be used. They are not the prescribed physical elements for the sacrament, and more importantly, they are not what Jesus used when He told us to “do this in remembrance of Him.”

In Reconciliation, the important material component is the penitent's own actions of repentance, namely his contrition, which means true sorrow, his actual confession to a priest, and the amending of ones

Joshua 6:55

1 Corinthians 11:24

life to avoid future sins. These three things together are the matter of the sacrament. When a person receives Anointing of the Sick, a priest anoints them on the forehead with one of the Church's three holy oils. The oil is what anoints the recipient.

In Holy Orders, the imposition of the bishop's hands upon the head of the man being ordained constitutes the matter of the sacrament. Lastly, in Holy Matrimony, it is the consummation of the marriage through their union formed from sexual intercourse that unites the couple in their bond of marriage. In this action, they fully and equally give themselves to each other, fulfilling their vows.

The matter is 100 percent necessary. Remove or replace any one of these and what happens? Without bread, how can you have the Eucharist? What the material elements of the sacraments do physically, they also do spiritually—sacramentally. The water of baptism really does wash away our sin; the Eucharist is “true food” and “true drink.” In this way, God makes the reality of the sacraments very easy to comprehend. Look at how many ways the Mass involves our five senses (incense, music, art, architecture, receiving the Eucharist in food and drink).

THE FORM

matter as to what its purpose is. The form is the rule that a particular thing must follow or else it will cease to be what it is. It's not as confusing as it sounds. For example, a block of marble is matter. The sculptor's hammer, chisel and technique form the matter into what it is, a statue. The paint and canvas are just things; they are the matter. The brushes dragging paint across the canvas forms the image.

CCC 1128

Sacraments also have a form—something to take the elements of matter and elevates them to become treasures of the Lord's grace. For every sacrament, there is a different form. The sacraments' forms are typically the prayers said while administering them. You can probably figure out what this is by observing, but there might be some we aren't so familiar with. Let's quickly go through what they are.

Baptism is performed when the person baptizing, usually an ordained minister, says the words, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” while pouring the water over them or submerging them in the water. Confirmation is conferred when the bishop says, “Receive the Holy Spirit,” while anointing the recipient with chrism. During the most solemn moment of the Mass,

the priest will say the words, “This is my body...this is my blood,” while consecrating the Eucharist. At this exact moment, the body and blood of our Lord are made present in the appearance of bread and wine.

In the sacrament of Reconciliation, after the penitent’s confession the priest administers the words of absolution, literally he must say, “I absolve you,” and your sins are forgiven—you are reconciled with the Lord. A common misconception is that a person is forgiven after completing their penance. Actually, the sacrament is effective by it taking place, as is the case in all sacraments. The penance we are given is a way in which we can make up for our offenses against God our Father, but His forgiveness is bestowed unto us by our contrition, repentance and absolution from the priest. In the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the priest’s words of anointing are what form the sacrament. The priest will anoint the person’s forehead with holy oil and say, “Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.” This prayer also absolves any sins a person is unable to confess due to illness.

When the bishop administers Holy Orders, as he imposes his hands upon the candidate, he also says a prayer, invoking the Holy Spirit upon the man so that he may be ordained to a particular ministerial order (e.g. diaconate, priesthood, episcopate). This prayer is the form. It’s what makes the imposition of hands meaningful. In the sacrament of Holy Matrimony, the nuptial vows of the bride and groom signify the sacrament taking place. These vows made make clear what is happening through the marital act; that the two are entering into a “one flesh” relationship of complete fidelity and love.

FORM + MATTER = SACRAMENTAL GRACE

It’s very simple once we understand the components. Sacraments have necessary elements that must be followed in order to make them what they are. Each sacrament also has a specific minister who is able to confer or administer the sacraments. This is why only bishops can perform certain sacraments, why only lay people can perform certain sacraments and why some sacraments can be performed by anybody. Later, we’ll talk more about this in depth.

BREAK

COOKING CLASS

(40 min)

The teens will split up into seven rotation groups. At each station one of the seven sacraments will be presented. This will not just be a general presentation of the sacrament but will specifically cover the matter and form of each sacrament. Each station will only be five minutes so be sure to have a Core Member or the youth minister who is keeping time. The Core Members who present the stations should follow the cooking class theme if possible. They can have recipe books, pots, pans, and whatever else will help them teach the teens the “recipe” God gave us to receive grace. Try to have the matter of each sacrament present at that station.

Station 1: Baptism

Matter – Water (flowing)

Form – “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son & of the Holy Spirit.”

Station 2: Confirmation

Matter – Oil (Chrism)

Form – “Be Sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Station 3: Eucharist

Matter – Bread (wheat-based) and Wine (pure grape)

Form – “This is my body...This is my Blood...”

Station 4: Reconciliation

Matter – Acts of the Penitent (Contrition, Confession of Sins, Amending One’s Life and Reparation)

Form – “I absolve you of your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

Station 5: Anointing of the Sick

Matter – Oil (Oil of the Sick)

Form – “Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.”

Station 6: Holy Orders

Matter – Laying on of Hands

Forms – The prayer of ordination according to the particular order.

Station 7: Matrimony

Matter – Bride and Groom/Intercourse

Form – Marital Vows which includes mutual consent from both parties and mutual reception by a minister of the Church.

SEND

HOOK CLIP

(7 min)

Show a clip from the movie Hook (see Media Suggestions) but ask the teens to replace the word “imagination” in the clip with the word “faith” and the word “playing” to “praying.” Explain how easily sacramental grace can become visible when we have faith in the invisible realities.

IN THE WORDS OUR SAVIOR TAUGHT US

(8 min)

If possible, have a priest or deacon explain how the “Our Father” is the prayer that Jesus taught us and so its form cannot be changed. Point out that the form or the words of the “Our Father” specifically call us to live a sacramental life full of grace. Highlight that the prayer calls us literally to the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church (Eucharist = the daily bread; Reconciliation/Anointing of the Sick = forgive us; Matrimony/Holy Orders = thy kingdom come, thy will be done; Baptism/Confirmation = deliver us from evil). Close the night by singing the Our Father, Hail Mary and Ave Maria.

CONCLUSION

ADAPTING THIS NIGHT

If rotations are not possible then type out the matter and form of each sacrament for a small group discussions instead.

To keep things simple use kitchen supplies from your fellowship hall kitchen at the parish.

GOING DEEPER

With the direction of your sacramental prep coordinator, see if an infant baptism could be scheduled for the Life Teen Mass leading up to this Life Night.