

Sacraments in the Orthodox Church

What is a Sacrament?

- 1) Salvation is the work of God's divine grace which is imparted to believers directly through the visible signs and actions of the sacraments
- 2) Instituted by God, not by man
- 3) Is there a limit to the sacraments?
 - No limit! Every act we do, every prayer we say, every conversation we have should be sacred and sacramental.
 - 13 century – monk named Job and Emperor Michael VIII Palaeologus in 1274 submitted to the synod of Lyons a confession in which he enumerated the seven sacraments

Who can receive sacraments?

- 1) One who confesses the Orthodox faith
- 2) One who is worthy
(St. Paul – I Corinthians 11:27-30)

Who can officiate at the administration of the sacrament?

Bishop or priest who is canonically ordained to the Holy Priesthood and recognized by the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

- 1) Matthew 13:11 “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom.”
- 2) Through laying on of hands, apostolic succession is given and passed from bishop to bishop and to the clergy we see in the church today
- 3) Bishop or priest is only a channel through which divine grace flows.
- 4) Who is the source?
Christ, the great High Priest (Romans 3:23-24)

Sacrament of Baptism

- What does the word baptism mean?
Greek word: 'baptizo' = to dip or immerse
- The Great Commission (Matthew 18:20)
- Our Lord Himself instituted this sacrament (Matthew 3:13-17)
- Through Baptism, we are given the privilege and opportunity to be in God's Kingdom, become part of Christ's body and be made new (St. John 3:3 and Acts 8:12).

Sacrament of Chrismation (Mooron)

- Through the sacrament of Chrismation, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit
- Peter and John went to Samaria to pray and lay hands on those who had been baptized (Acts 19:5-6)
- Mooron or holy oil is blessed by Catholicos and administered by the bishops or priests
- Through this act, the Holy Spirit descends and sanctifies the candidate
- The Holy Spirit also comes through the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17)

Sacrament of Holy Qurbana

■ St. John 6:5-6

“He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him.”

- 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 “Do this in remembrance of me”
- It is the new covenant between God and man for the forgiveness of sins
- Epiclesis (invocation or calling down from on high)

Sacrament of Confession

1) For the absolution of sins and reunion of man with God

- “Receive the Holy Spirit...” (St. John 20:23)
- “If you confess your sins...” (1 John 1:9, 1 John 4:15-17)

2) “Baptism of Tears”

- The effect of the absolution is the consequence of our sincere repentance
- Best example of confession – the story of the Prodigal Son

3) Bishop or priest hears confession (Matthew 18:18)

- In early church, confession was public (Acts 19:18)

Sacrament of Holy Orders

What are the levels of ordination?

- 1) Bishop
- 2) Priest
- 3) Deacon

Mark 3:14 - "He ordained twelve.."

John 20:21-22 - "Receive the Holy Spirit"

Seven Ordinations: Baptism, Chrismation, Singer,
Reader, Sub-Deacon, Deacon, Priest

Sacrament of Holy Matrimony

Instituted in Genesis 2:18-24

Ephesians 5 - St. Paul writes about the relationship of husband and wife which ought to be like Christ and His Church

Sacrament of Holy Unction

St. James 3:14

“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

-The Holy Spirit is called upon for the healing of body and soul (physical and spiritual healing)

Gospel of St. Mark 6:13 “They cast out many devils and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.”

This sacrament is for whoever feels they need to be anointed for the recovery from sickness and the remission of sins.