

Week 10 - December 2, 2020

Today's reflection looks at some of the sacraments in Scripture. Sacraments are visible signs of invisible graces. That's a easy way of saying that the sacraments do two main things: 1) they are gifts from God that allow us to participate as part of God's divine life, which is called grace. 2) they symbolize the invisible grace we receive through them.

The Gospel of John, Chapter 20, Verses 21 - 22

[Jesus] said to [his Disciples] again, **“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”** And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, **“Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”**

The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 26, Verses 26 - 29

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, **“Take and eat; this is my body.”** Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, **“Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father.”** Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

The Gospel of John, Chapter 14, Verses 15 - 19

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you. I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me, because I live and you will live.”

The Gospel of Mark, Chapter 1, Verses 4 - 8

John [the] Baptist appeared in the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. People of the whole Judean countryside and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins. John was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey. And this is what he proclaimed: *“One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the holy Spirit.”*

Reflection

There are a total of 7 sacraments. The first 3 are **Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist**. They make up the 3 sacraments of initiation, which welcome us into the Church and God's divine life as his adopted sons and daughters. There are 4 other sacraments: **Reconciliation, the Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders**. Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are called sacraments of healing. Matrimony and Holy Orders are vocations, which means they are life long callings from God to serve others in love. The four gospel passages you have read relate to four of the sacraments. Can you match each gospel passage to the sacrament it is talking about?

Of the four gospels above, which speaks to you the most? Why?

God promises many things in these short passages. "**I will not leave you orphans.**" and "**Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them.**" What promises stand out to you in these passages? Why?

Which sacrament is your favorite? Why?

Each person should pick 1 of the passages today to re-read and reflect on it. What does it mean to have this gift from God? Finally, pray the prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.