

The Seven Sacraments

Sacraments of Initiation

In these sacraments, we meet Christ in profound ways and are initiated into the Christian life.

BAPTISM offers forgiveness of original sin and gives graces to begin a new life with Christ and the Church. It is the first sacrament.

CONFIRMATION strengthens and deepens life in Christ and equips Christians with graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses for Christ.

EUCCHARIST is supernatural nourishment in receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, to strengthen the Christian to follow Christ more closely.

About the Symbols Shown Here The stained-glass images of the sacraments are the artistry of Carl G. Fougousse of Red Fern Fine Arts Studio (RedFernFineArtStudio.com). They were made for St. Andrew's Catholic Mission in Reidsville, Georgia.



Baptism: The water drops dispersed by the shells represent the cleansing waters of baptism. The shell has long alluded to baptism, as a vessel to pour water over a person's head at Baptism. The shell also symbolizes a pilgrimage. Finally, in the center is an eight-sided baptismal font. In the Bible the number eight denotes a new creation or new order. It also is symbolic of resurrection and regeneration.



Confirmation: The dove represents the coming of the Holy Spirit. Note the tongues of fire, also reminiscent of the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. The three sections of golden rays suggest the Holy Trinity's power and presence.



Eucharist: Central is the host and chalice, representative of the Body and Blood of Christ. The wheat symbolizes the grain for the bread of the host. The grapes symbolize the fruit that becomes the wine used in the chalice. The "IHS" on the chalice is the abbreviation of the name of Jesus in Greek. It is also an acronym for the Latin phrase: Iesus Hominum Salvator, or "Jesus Savior of Mankind."



Sacraments of Healing

PENANCE/RECONCILIATION & ANOINTING OF THE SICK are sacraments through which Christians experience God's mercy and forgiveness of sins, as well as graces to help heal persons who may be suffering physically and/or spiritually.

Penance/Reconciliation:

Prominent are the symbols of the "keys of the kingdom" that Jesus gave to Peter and the Apostles to "bind" and "loose" (See Matthew 16:19). This is power to forgive sins and offer absolution. The image of the sun's rays shining from above symbolizes Jesus — the Sun of Justice — as found in Malachi 3:20: "the sun of justice will arise with healing in its wings."

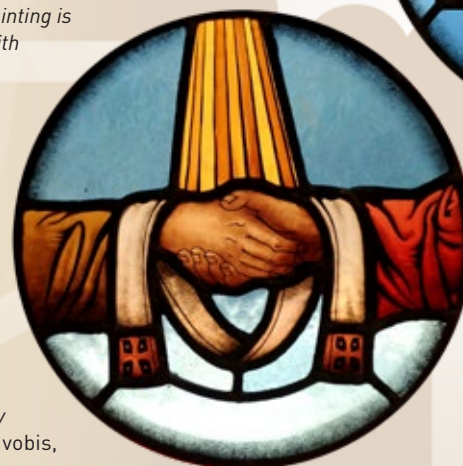


Anointing of the Sick: Olive branches symbolize the common use of olive oil for the Oil of the Sick. The hour glass nearly run out symbolizes the end of life. Traditionally, this anointing is given near death, along with Viaticum, or final holy Communion. But it is also administered to the very sick in mind or body, or to persons infirm or elderly. It is both a healing and strengthening by Christ for what is to come. Regarding the wings, recall the "healing wings" noted in Malachi 3:20.

The grace of peace is symbolized by the oil jar's words spelling the Latin: Pax vobis, or "Peace be with you."

Sacraments at the Service of Communion

MATRIMONY & HOLY ORDERS are sometimes called sacraments of vocation. They call Christians to dedicate their lives both in communion with God and by loving service to others in specific ways.



Matrimony: This is the only sacrament whereby the ministers of the sacrament are the couple themselves, symbolized by the joining of the hands. Also present is the witness of the Church's minister, as shown by the stole, and God who blessed the union, as represented by the rays coming from heaven.