

Below is a transcription of the audio file of the Catechism Class given 07-17-11.

Today we will continue explaining from the Catechism of the Council of Trent, under the subject of the Sacraments in general. With the last class, we are now up to the section of the second effect, the sacramental character.

It is important to know that three of the seven Sacraments leave an indelible character on the soul. Those three Sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. This character has a two-fold effect. It qualifies us to receive or perform something sacred, and distinguishes us by some mark, one from another. In the character impressed by Baptism, both effects are exemplified by it where one is qualified to receive the other Sacraments, and the Christian is distinguished from those who have not professed the Faith.

The same illustration is afforded by the characters impressed by Confirmation and Holy Orders. By Confirmation, we are armed and arrayed as soldiers of Jesus Christ publicly to profess and defend His name, and to fight against our internal enemies and against the spiritual powers of wickedness in the high places. At the same time, we are distinguished from those who are recently baptized (or as it were, newborn infants). Holy Orders confers the power of consecrating and administering the Sacraments, and also it distinguishes those who are invested with this power from the rest of the faithful.

The important point to remember and teach others about these three Sacraments is that it imprints an indelible character; and the fact that with this indelible character, these three Sacraments are never to be repeated.

It is a big question then that should be every Catholic's mind is how Father Mary Benedict, CMRI, can get up before the whole congregation in the public gymnasium and say, "I have no doubts about the validity of my orders, none whatsoever," and then go on to state, "but tomorrow night we are going to be conditionally ordained again." Bishop George Musey, the bishop who conditionally ordained the CMRI priests in April 1985, received the microphone back from Father Mary Benedict and made another statement similar to the fact that he had no doubts about the validity of those orders the CMRI priests originally received from Bishop Francis Konrad Schuckardt. Bishop George Musey said publicly at that meeting in the gymnasium something like, "Every time these priests asked me for my blessing, I have asked them for theirs in return." Bishop George Musey had no doubts, but others did, and because other people doubted in a far away part of the country, they determined that it was best to have conditional ordinations. In other words, there was a double standard that they used, that has never been clarified to this day. Before the CMRI community, the priests always proclaimed (for many years at least) that the orders coming from Francis Schuckardt were valid, and they also proclaimed them to be licit (which they were not). Anyway, to the outside world, they say: "Well, even if they were not valid, that has all been taken care of because Bishop George Musey bestowed conditional ordinations upon us."

The point I am stressing here is the rule of the Catholic Church is therefore to be observed, which teaches that these three Sacraments impress an indelible character and are never to be repeated. In the CMRI camp, the sacraments received under Bishop Francis Konrad Schuckardt were for the most part, never repeated or questioned. Only those three priests and then, of course, some of the other clerics in major orders received conditional ordination, but they did not confer Confirmation again. In fact, they were not going to confer Confirmation on those about to be ordained who were confirmed by Bishop Francis until I spoke to Bishop George Musey in 1985 when he was going to ordain the one now known as Father Casimir Puskorius. I asked him: "Well, if you have doubts that Bishop Francis could confer ordination, what makes you think he can confer Confirmation?" I guess it never struck their mind, but Confirmation is necessary for those receiving Holy Orders to receive licitly ordination. So, it surprised them all that night when Bishop George Musey told them we cannot proceed with this ordination until we have conditional Confirmations. I guess it caused a ruckus but they never thought about it if I had not mentioned it -- that is another side point, but anyway.

We should also consider how to make the instruction on the Sacraments profitable. We should be inflamed with the desire of Christian perfection and deem it as a very great loss to be for any time deprived of the solitary use, particularly, of the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist (which when the Church was right, people could receive every day). You could actually go to Confession more than once a day to receive the

sacramental grace as well as an increase of sanctifying grace; but, we know the Church also teaches that we must have a moral certitude that those Sacraments are both valid and licit. That is where the problem arises today. Some of the Sacraments might be valid, but are they licit? In most cases, they certainly are not. Then the Church teaches we should not partake of those Sacraments. As Saint Thomas Aquinas explains it; the ministers (bishops and priests who have been cut off from the Church), and those who receive Sacraments from them, do not receive grace because they sin in so doing.

We obviously know that the Sacraments were instituted by Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, from Whom can proceed nothing but what is most perfect. Further, that when the Sacraments are administered, the most powerful influence of the Holy Ghost is present, pervading the inmost sanctuary of the soul; that is why these Sacraments are the chief channels that the Church has provided the faithful to receive grace. We should also point out that the whole edifice of Christian piety rests on the most firm foundation of the cornerstone. Yet, unless it be supported on every side by the preaching of the divine Word and the use of the Sacraments, it is greatly to be feared that it may be to a great extent totter and fall to the ground.

To point out the rest of the facts, though; Canon 1258 forbids us to take part in non-Catholic services. As stated above, some of the Traditionalist Movement clerics may be validly ordained or even consecrated (I will not go into that subject at this point), but even if they are valid, they are not licit. They do not have the four marks of the Church; as has been pointed out in these previous Catechism classes. Canon 1258 forbids Catholics from taking part in non-Catholic services.

For the benefit of those who want to understand more about the Sacraments in general, we could cover some of the questions that have been asked in other catechisms, such as what is a Sacrament? A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. Most Catholics at my age had to memorize all of these questions from the Catechism, specifically the Baltimore Catechism. It sad that that form of memory is not required in the schools anymore in many cases today. Hopefully, those who home school still require it; but, from this question, what is a Sacrament? A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace. We have many quotes from Scripture to prove these things:

- * And taking him from the multitude apart, He put his finger into his ears and spitting He touched his tongue. In other words, that was an outward sign. And then the man spoke rightly.

- * There are many other outward signs Jesus presented during His public life. For example, taking the blind man by the hand, he laid him out of the town, and spitting upon his eyes, laying His hands on him, He asked him if saw anything.

- * Another outward sign was the fact that the man that is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, go to the pool of Shiloh and wash.

- * Another outward sign was the fact of what the eunuch said: “See here is water, what does hinder me from being baptized?”

- * St. Paul wrote in his letter to the Hebrews of the doctrine of baptisms and imposition of hands.

- * St. Thomas Aquinas comments on this in the Summa, the doctrine of baptisms (using the plural). To show that only Baptism of water is a Sacrament, but Baptism of blood and desire produce the effects of the Sacrament, as has been very minutely and clearly explained by St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Alphonsus Maria Liguori.

- * Other things that back up the statement that a Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace is what is written in the book of Job: Who can make him clean; that is, conceived of unclean seed. Is it not thou who only art holy?

- * “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”; – is another outward sign, showing that these Sacraments do give grace.

The next chapter in the Catechism, the next part, of course, the first of the seven Sacraments, is Baptism. We have Jesus Christ speaking in St. Matthew’s Gospel (and also see St. Mark’s, Chapter 16):

- * Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

- * Also, Jesus said: Confirm thy brethren; and he, St. Paul went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches. By the imposition of the hands of the Apostles, the Holy Ghost was given. With the Holy Ghost, of

course, we receive sanctifying grace. These are outward signs. The imposition of the hands. These Sacraments were instituted by Jesus Christ to give grace.

- * Jesus spoke very specifically at the Last Supper: Do this for a commemoration of Me. He breathed on them and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.

For the Sacrament of Extreme Unction:

- * We have the epistle of St. James, the Apostle: Is any man sick among you; let him bring in the priests of the Church.

- * Ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee, wrote St. Paul to St. Titus, to again show us that the Sacrament of Holy Orders was part of the seven Sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ to give grace.

For the Sacrament of Matrimony:

- * We have St. Matthew (Chapter 19) and St. Mark (Chapter 10): What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

- * St. Paul also writing of Matrimony spoke: This is a great Sacrament.

So, we see that the seven Sacraments are not something that were just made up by the Church. The Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus Christ founded these seven Sacraments, and that is the next question in the Catechism. How many Sacraments are there? There are seven Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. Again, those who read the Bible will find many Scriptures to prove these truths.

- * Wisdom hath built Herself a house; she hath hewn out seven pillars – from the book of Proverbs.

- * St. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians: Now there are diversities of graces, but the same Spirit, and there are diversities of ministers, but the same Lord; there are diversities of operations, but the same God Who worketh all in all.

- * Again, we can read in St. John's Gospel, Chapter 3:5: Amen, Amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- * In St. Paul's letter to Titus, Chapter 3: He saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost.

- * We learn more about the truths of the Sacraments in the Acts of the Apostles: They laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. In Acts, Chapter 14: They (speaking of St. Paul to St. Barnabas) returned again confirming the souls of the disciples. St. Paul went to the country in order, confirming all the disciples; when Paul had imposed hands on them, the Holy Ghost came upon them (in Acts, Chapter 19:6).

- * Later, we read his letter to the Corinthians: The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ; and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord.

- * In St. Mark's Gospel, we read: They preached that men should do penance.

- * Besides the epistle of St. James, we have St. Mark's Gospel teaching: And anointed with oil, many that were sick and healed then.

- * Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with imposition of the hands of the priesthood (St. Paul, speaking of Holy Orders, to his disciple St. Timothy in his first epistle).

Then, another question we memorized as children: Whence hath the Sacraments the power of giving grace? The Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ:

- * He was wounded for our iniquities; he was bruised for our sins.

- * The chastisement of our peace was upon Him and by His bruises, we are healed.

- * Again, we read: What advantage then hath the Jew and what is the profit of circumcision? Much every way. First indeed, because the words of God were committed to them.

- * As St. Paul wrote in Romans: Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ.

We have many proofs that the Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ.

* As we read in St. John's first epistle: And He (meaning Jesus Christ) is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

* Again, we read in the Apocalypse and in St. Paul's letter to the Hebrews: Jesus Christ who has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

* Again, we learn: The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.

* Even in the time of the Old Testament, we read in the Psalms, Psalm 88: I have laid help upon one that is mighty.

* In Isaiah: You shall draw waters with joy out of the Savior's fountains.

Again, proving to us that the Scriptures clearly teach that the Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Jesus Christ.

Then we come to the other question we memorized from the Baltimore Catechism: What grace do the Sacraments give? Some of the Sacraments give sanctifying grace and others increase it in our souls.

* As we read in the book of Ezekiel: I will pour upon you clean water and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness.

* Again, in the Acts of the Apostles: Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

* In 1 Corinthians: The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man unto profit.

* Again, remember the parable in St. Luke's Gospel: Lord thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

In other words, some of the Sacraments give sanctifying grace and others increase it in our souls. We will cover that later, in more detail, but five of the seven Sacraments are known as the Sacraments of the living and they increase grace in our souls. Two of them, namely Baptism and Penance, are sometimes spoken of as the Sacraments of the dead because when we receive Baptism, our soul is not yet in the state of sanctifying grace; it is spiritually speaking, dead. If someone has the misfortune to commit mortal sin after being properly baptized, the soul again is dead in the state of mortal sin. Those two Sacraments, then, put them back into the state of the living; in the state of sanctifying grace. Of the five Sacraments of the living, you must be in the state of grace already to receive them, unless you receive them sacrilegiously.

Another question we were required to memorize as a youth in grade school even: Which are the Sacraments that give sanctifying grace? The Sacraments that give sanctifying grace are Baptism and Penance. They are called Sacraments of the dead.

* If someone questions you about it, you can refer them to Acts of the Apostles: Do penance and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins.

* In St. Peter's first epistle: Whereunto baptism being of the life form now saveth you also.

* St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians: You were dead in sins. Then, when they received the Sacrament of Penance, they are alive in the state of grace.

Another question regarding the Sacraments in general would be: Why are Baptism and Penance called Sacraments of the dead? Baptism and Penance are called Sacraments of the dead because they take away sin, which is the death of the soul, and give grace, which is its life.

* John was in the desert baptizing and preaching the baptism of penance unto remission of sins. It was fit that you should make merry and be glad for this thy brother was dead and is come to life again; he was lost and is found.

* Again, already quoted in St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians: We were dead in sin; it goes on to speak ... buried with him in baptism in whom also you are risen again by the faith of the operation of God.

* In the book of the Apocalypse we read: Be mindful, therefore, from whence thou art fallen and do penance and do the first works.

Then the question asked in the Baltimore Catechism is: Which are the Sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in our souls? The Sacraments that increase sanctifying grace in our souls are Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. They are called Sacraments of the living. I explained why we must be in a state of grace to receive these Sacraments worthily.

Another question we should review in studying our precious Catholic Faith is this: Why are Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony called Sacraments of the living? Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony are called Sacraments of the living because those who receive them worthily are already living the life of grace.

- * Everyone that beareth fruit, He will purge it that it may bring forth more fruit.

- * St Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians: But let a man prove himself for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself. In other words, you must be in the state of sanctifying grace to receive Holy Communion worthily, or you call upon yourself a greater damnation for eternity.

- * The parable Jesus Christ spoke in St. Matthew's Gospel: Friend, how camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment.

- * If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above.

Another question we should review is this: What sin does he commit who receives the Sacrament of the living in mortal sin? He who receives the Sacraments of the living in mortal sin commits a sacrilege, which is a great sin because it is an abuse of a sacred thing.

- * St. Paul wrote to Titus: To them that are defiled unto unbelievers, nothing is clean.

- * He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself.

- * Give not that which is holy to dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.

Besides sanctifying grace, do the Sacraments give any other grace? Besides sanctifying grace, the Sacraments give another grace, called sacramental.

- * To everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ.

- * As every man hath received grace, ministering the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

- * To me is given this grace to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

- * With great power did the Apostles give testimony of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, Our Lord, and great grace was in them all.

I might stress something we pointed out last week of the importance in being in the state of sanctifying grace to receive any of the Sacraments of the living. Take, for example, that of the holy priesthood. If a priest was ordained in the state of mortal sin (he, in other words, committed a great sacrilege), then he is deprived of those many sacramental graces that are so very, very necessary for him to carry on that exalted dignity and office of the holy priesthood; and that would give him more power to perform all the minor orders as well, such as that of exorcism.

If he has such contempt for the Sacraments that he would receive them in the state of mortal sin as a sacrilege, then most probably (if you follow his future life, even in the not too distant future), he will soon give up practicing as a priest or at least he will be a very scandalous priest. He will offer Mass very hurriedly and with no devotion (exterior piety, which helps everyone in the church to be able to receive more grace). He will be very negligent in performing his priestly duties, giving instructions and administering the Sacraments and so forth. He will be hiding away when he should be doing what the priesthood requires of him (administering the Sacraments, studying himself, and instructing the faithful properly).

Nowadays, so many people (it seems at least without being in any way their judge) seeming from external things, receive the Sacrament of Matrimony as a sacrilege instead of as a Sacrament. They are more concerned about the exterior things: what kind of a dress the bride will wear, all the external ceremonies in the reception, and they make very little concern about preparing their souls to receive this important Sacrament. Thereby, they neglect these sacramental graces which help the man and the woman to lead a very virtuous life as parents, to know how to raise their children properly (to know when to correct them and how to correct them and when to encourage them and when to rebuke them), and in their many other duties of the married state.

If you ever have anything to do with advising or instructing or encouraging (or whatever you do) with other people with regards to these Sacraments, stress very strongly the importance of putting the Sacraments (and the proper preparation for them) above all the external things, preparing for example for the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Let us continue on and ask what is sacramental grace? Sacramental grace is a special help which God gives to obtain the end for which He instituted each Sacrament. That is why we need to be properly disposed to receive these, because we certainly need those graces which help us to obtain the end for which Jesus instituted each of the Sacraments.

Do the Sacraments always give grace? The Sacraments always give grace if we receive them with the right dispositions.

- * The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man unto profit.
- * They laid their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost.
- * He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him.
- * Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.

In other words, remember that when properly received, the Sacraments always give grace, and what a horrible sacrilege it is to receive any of the Sacraments of the living in the state of mortal sin.

Another question that is asked: Can we receive the Sacraments more than once? We can receive the Sacraments more than once except Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

Why can we not receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once? We cannot receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once because they imprint a character in the soul.

What is the character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul? The character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul is a spiritual mark which remains forever. So, if someone has received Baptism, Confirmation, or Holy Orders during life, than after death (if they go to Heaven) that will shine on their soul as a great mark; but, if they should happen to die in a state of mortal sin (burn in the eternal fires), these indelible characters will be to their greater shame and suffering in the fires of damnation. That is one reason why the Church does not have us baptize children who we do not have a reasonable belief would be raised and practice the Catholic Faith. It is better not to receive the Sacrament of Baptism at all, than to receive it and never live as a Catholic and fall away into heresy or apostasy. That indelible character will make them suffer even more.

You probably heard the statement that some of the Fathers of the Church (I believe) have made; that some of the deepest pits in hell are reserved for bishops and priests. Why is that? Because they did not correspond with the grace of these Sacraments. They may have even received them sacrilegiously to begin with, and did not have the sacramental grace. Nevertheless, they received the indelible character, even if they received the Sacraments sacrilegiously; now, that indelible character will be to their greater punishment for all of eternity.

Does this character remain in the soul even after death? This character remains in the soul even after death for the honor and glory of those who are saved and for the shame and punishment of those who are lost.

- * As we read in the Psalms and the book of Hebrews: Thou art a priest forever.
- * In the book of the Apocalypse, we read: I heard the number of them that were signed.
- * Also, they shall see His face and His name shall be on their foreheads.

With that, we might move on to the Sacrament of Baptism itself. We remind ourselves of what the Catechism of the Council of Trent speaks about. Besides on the Vigils of Easter and Pentecost (days on which the Church used to celebrate the Sacraments of greatest devotion and special solemnity and on which particularly, according to ancient practice, its divine mysteries were to be explained), pastors should also take occasions at other times to make it the subject of their instructions, reminding us again of the many things we have learned (if we have studied our Faith); how in the early history of the Church, they used to have the catechumens wait almost a full year, so that they could be baptized on the Vigil of Easter or (if they missed that) on the Vigil of Pentecost.

If there was no such thing as Baptism of Desire, then the infallible Church that Jesus Christ founded is (so to speak, in my opinion) guilty of abortion and spiritual death of those who could have been baptized if it were not for this practice and custom and ceremony of the Church to make the catechumens wait until one of these two great solemnities in the Church occurred. All of this has been spoken about in quite great detail in those two letters I wrote regarding the Rejecters (which can be found at www.jmjsite.com. You are invited to read them if you have not read it yet).

The Sacrament of Baptism is sometimes called the Sacrament of faith because, by receiving it, we profess our faith in all the doctrines of Christianity. Some people would call the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of faith (which in a sense it is), but generally speaking, if someone says which is the Sacrament of faith, they are speaking of Baptism.

- * The reason is given by St. Augustine. Because by receiving it, we profess our Faith in all the doctrines of Christianity.

- * It is the gate by which we enter the Church and join/become known as part of the Faithful, although it is also called, in turn, illumination.

- * As St. Chrysostom spoke of it, he called it a purgation because through it, we purge away the old leaven that we may become a new paste. He also calls it a burial, a planting in the Cross of Christ.

- * St. Dennis calls it the beginning of the most holy commandments for this obvious reason -- that Baptism is, at it were, the gate through which we enter the fellowship of Christian life and begin henceforth to obey the commandments. It is obviously the gate to Heaven. Without being properly baptized with water, or by receiving the effects of Baptism through baptism of blood or baptism of desire, we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is important to point out what constitutes the elements of Baptism:

- * The word is joined to the element and it becomes a Sacrament.

- * The form and the matter are present, together with the proper intention, and then that person is properly baptized (they receive this first of the seven Sacraments).

- * The Sacrament of Baptism can be said to exist only when we actually apply the water to someone by way of ablution while using the words appointed by Our Lord. It was discussed in certain theology books (or whatever clerics or theologians discussed among themselves) whether you could baptize someone at a distance, for example, someone across an ocean or something that divided you, or a big lake at least where you could yell across). You cannot baptize someone unless they are physically present because you have to apply the water while pronouncing the words, and the one doing the baptism has to be the one who pronounces the words, and not someone else.

Every Sacrament consists of matter and form. So, let us point out what constitutes each of these in the Sacrament of Baptism. The matter, then (or element of this Sacrament) is any sort of natural water which is simply and without qualification, commonly called water (be it sea water, river water, water from the pond, well, or fountain). It is important to know that other liquids, such as milk or beer or liquor are not proper matter for the Sacrament of Baptism.

There is a story (I guess it was a true story) that was told that a priest who had just been ordained, and somehow or another people failed to check into his background properly. When questioned after the reception, I think it was his mother (maybe his aunt) who spoke up and said that I remember when this priest who was just ordained was a child, I baptized him with milk because no water was available. In other words, he did not receive the proper baptism, so he had to go through all of these again conditionally. I have heard some place that if you had really, really weak tea and nothing else, it might be better to use that than nothing at all, but that does not hold true for such things as milk or beer.

- * The Apostle also says that the Church was cleansed by the laver of water.

- * In the epistle of St. John, we read these words: There are three that give testimony on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood. In other words, there are three who give testimony under the desire (Baptism of desire), and the water (Baptism of water), and the blood (the Baptism of blood). It just goes on to say that these three are one, as you read in St. John's epistle, Chapter 5:8.

Upon the subject of who art fit for this Sacrament, we should learn in the first place that water, which is always at hand and within the reach of all, was the fit matter of a Sacrament which is necessary to all for salvation. In the next place, water is best adapted to signify the effect of baptism. It washes away uncleanness and is, therefore, strikingly illustrated with the virtue and efficacy of Baptism, which washes away the stains of sin.

I would point out again that for solemn Baptism, the baptismal water is blessed on Holy Saturday night (as you probably all recall from praying the prayers and so forth). During that solemn time, very important ceremonies take place. Among them is the fact that the bishop puts holy chrism into the baptismal water (the chrism he just consecrated a few days before on Holy Thursday). Besides this, he blesses the water and breathes upon it and does many other things. But, just because the bishop adds holy chrism to the water that is used for solemn baptism in the churches in the baptismal font, this certainly does not in any way, make the baptismal water invalid matter for the Sacrament. As said before, the only matter for which the Sacrament of Baptism can be formed is natural water.

Circumstances arise where Baptism requires the administration by the laity, and most frequently by women. Therefore, it becomes necessary to make all the Faithful indiscriminately well acquainted with whatever regards the substance of this Sacrament. Every one of us, and every Catholic should know, the proper matter and the proper form for this Sacrament in case there is necessity to baptize in danger of death, such as a car accident. With the new changes in the church of Vatican II, we know they changed the form of the Sacrament, which would invalidate this.

In other words, if you came upon an accident and someone was seriously injured and they made known that they wished to become a Catholic (they had already taken many Catechism instruction classes), how would you go about baptizing them? The one that baptizes them must be the same person who pours water over the forehead while pronouncing the words: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. These are the words of the form of the Sacrament, which every one of us certainly should memorize and know without any question. I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. If you did not know for certain if that person had been baptized, and if even a priest was going to give conditional baptism, you would preface that first sentence by saying: If you have already been baptized, I baptize thee not. If you have not yet been baptized, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Sometimes it becomes morally impossible to know with great certitude whether people have been properly baptized. In the past, for example, they might have been baptized in non-Catholic religions. In some of those religions, it becomes difficult to know what some of those ministers believed; whether they believed in original sin; whether they believed in what the Catholic Church teaches regarding Baptism. If one does not know, and the person who baptized is dead or cannot be contacted, and you cannot find out, then, as mentioned under some circumstances, conditional baptism is necessary because of the necessity of receiving Baptism to enter the kingdom of Heaven, and to be certain someone is baptized before they receive the other Sacraments in the Church. So, that is the form you use for the conditional baptism.

As mentioned, by the word baptizing, the Catholic Church, instructed from above, most justly understood that the form of the Sacrament should express the action of the minister. This takes place when he pronounces the words, I baptize thee and so forth. I want to point out that these words of the form of the Sacrament: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." – are to be pronounced by the very person who is baptizing, and they are to be pronounced at the same time that the water flows over the forehead of the person being baptized. You can read in the Catechism of the Council of Trent the rest of this section about the form of the Sacrament to understand how all this took place when people said they were just baptized in the name of Christ (or in the name of Jesus).

Let us point out, though, the essential and non-essential words of the form of the Sacrament. In the Greek church, they use a different form and they universally said the words: Let this servant of Christ be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. It appears, however, from the decision and definition of the Council of Florence, that those who use this form administer the Sacraments validly because the words sufficiently express what is essential to the validity of Baptism; that is, the ablution which then takes place.

Again, this Catechism points out how, apparently in the early history of the Church, people baptized in the name of Christ, but St. Ambrose and St. Basil, Holy Fathers imminent for sanctity and authority, also interpret Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ to mean the Baptism instituted by Christ Our Lord, as distinguished from

that of John, and who say that the Apostles did not depart from the ordinary and usual form which comprises the distinct names of the Three Persons. Then, there is more commentary of what St. Paul said, which you can all read on your own through your own Catechism of the Council of Trent.

I would just mention in passing, as the Catechism points out, Baptism may be administered in three ways: by immersion, infusion, or aspersion. Again, this explains about those different three ways and what takes place and why they are all three valid baptisms.

Some people may ask when was the Sacrament of Baptism instituted. A very strong argument to prove that Baptism was instituted by Our Lord might be afforded by the fact the most Holy Trinity, in whose name Baptism is conferred, manifested Its divine presence on that occasion. The voice of the Father was heard, the Person of the Son was present, the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove, and the Heavens into which we are enabled to enter by Baptism were thrown open.

Should anyone desire to know how Our Lord had empowered and endowed water with virtue so great, so divine; this indeed transcends the power of our human understanding. Yet this we can know, that when Our Lord was baptized, water, by contact with His most holy and pure body, was consecrated to the solitary use of Baptism, in such a way, however, that, although instituted before the Passion, we must believe that this Sacrament derives all its virtue and efficacy from the Passion, which is the consummation, as it were, of all the actions of Christ.

I would just mention something that I have never read in any other book that I recall, but a thought just came to my mind that when Jesus Christ was in the Jordan and baptized with St. John the Baptist, obviously much water came in contact with His body. We, of course, are all aware that water is made up of H₂O (two hydrogen and one oxygen) and they are very small atoms; the thought just came to my mind often many times ago that (maybe just a pious thought, but) Almighty God can do all things. We know that once God created the Heavens and the earth and all of the things in them; He did not create more water, although water takes those three general forms of being liquid, solid, and a vapor. Maybe some of the very same hydrogen and oxygen molecules that touched Our Lord's Body when he was baptized in the Jordan actually are in every amount of water that has been used throughout the centuries to baptize the Catholics. Part of those same hydrogen and oxygen molecules (maybe just one or whatever) circulated throughout the universe, and Almighty God arranged everything so that at least one of the same atoms of those hydrogen and oxygen molecules touch the forehead, for example, of the newborn baby who was just baptized a few hours (or at the most a few days) after his birth. This is just kind of a pious thought. There is certainly nothing theological about it, but to think that maybe the same water that Jesus had touch His Body in the Jordan, actually was used to purify each of us when we entered the Catholic Church through this first of the seven Sacraments, that of Baptism.

The next section in the Catechism goes on to speak about Baptism made obligatory after Christ's Resurrection, and this needs to have reference pages later on to a few pages later in this book when we speak about the Baptism of infants should not be delayed, while ordinarily Baptism of adults is not conferred at once. So, with God's grace and help, we can take that subject up in class next week.

Thank you for visiting <http://www.JMJsite.com>. Please tell others about this website and pray much more. Saint Alphonsus Maria (the great Doctor of prayer) reminds us that: "Those who pray will certainly save their souls, and those who do not pray will certainly lose them." Read the sermons and listen to the audio files. "Ignorance is the mother of all evils." *If truth gets in your way, you are on the wrong path.*