

Sacraments and Their Ministers

Confession exists in two forms. Sacramental confession, which conveys the full authority given by Christ to His Apostles, belongs only to male priests who possess valid Apostolic succession. Lay confession is granted to all believers who approach God with perfect contrition, and any person may pray for the forgiveness of sins in this manner.

The Sacramental Eucharist is the offering of Christ our High Priest. For this cause, only male priests who bear Apostolic succession may consecrate the sacramental Eucharist. Women may prepare the bread and the wine, but they may not consecrate or bless them. The spiritual Eucharist conveys the true presence of Christ in a spiritual manner, yet even here the act belongs to the male priestly order, for it signifies the High Priestly office of Christ.

Confirmation does not enact priestly functions and may therefore be given by any trusted believer, including women, when circumstances require it.

Marriage is ordained by God as the union of one man and one woman. Any other union has no sacramental standing and cannot be blessed.

Holy Orders are reserved for men and for hermaphrodites who possess male genitalia. Women may serve the Church in many ways, but they cannot bear apostolic ministry.

Anointing of the Sick belongs to male clergy alone, for it is joined to the authority Christ bestowed on His Apostles. Yet any believer may pray for the sick in faith.

Sacramental modes convey the full grace of Christ through a valid priest who stands within Apostolic succession. Spiritual modes convey grace without the succession, but they do not replace the sacramental priesthood ordained by God.

Spiritual Sacraments

Baptism

Requirements: Apostolic succession not required; universal.

Mechanism: Any believer may baptize; sacrament functions through proper invocation of the Trinity.

Effect: Initiates a person into the Church and conveys grace.

Baptism washes away sin and brings the believer into the New Covenant. Because it does not signify the priestly ministry of Christ, it may be performed by any believer, including women, whenever necessity or circumstance requires it. Baptism has no spiritual mode, for it already conveys grace as the Lord instituted it.

Confirmation

Requirements: Depends on Church Canon; Apostolic succession not required. Mechanism: Authority derives from canonical recognition rather than Persona Christi.

Effect: Strengthens the baptized in faith and formally marks them as a member of the church community.

Eucharist (Real Presence)

Requirements: Only men may preside; Apostolic succession not required. Mechanism: Christ is truly present in the bread and wine; the elements remain bread and wine, but His presence is infused within them.

Effect: Obedience to Christ's command to eat His flesh and drink His blood; conveys grace and nourishment to the believer.

Clarification: Maintains an objective sacramental reality without relying on transubstantiation or symbolic interpretation.

Reconciliation

Requirements: Apostolic succession and Persona Christi bypassed. Mechanism: Forgiveness granted through perfect contrition and confession to a minister.

Effect: Spiritual forgiveness and reconciliation with God.

Holy Orders

Requirements: Men may be ordained as deacons, priests, and bishops; women may be ordained as deacons; does not confer apostolic succession.

Mechanism: Confers office and authority, establishing church hierarchy. Effect: Organizes church governance and

enables administration of other sacraments.

Anointing of the Sick

Requirements: Any believer may perform; Apostolic succession and Persona Christi bypassed.

Mechanism: Olive oil blessed by any male; hands laid on the sick while invoking the Holy Spirit; sins confessed with perfect contrition.

Effect: Provides strengthening, comfort, and forgiveness of sins.

Women and the Spiritual sacraments

Baptism and Confirmation have no spiritual forms; they simply are what the Lord established. Because they do not enact priestly symbolism, they may be administered by women. Spiritual confession is also open to all, for it depends upon contrition and prayer, not apostolic authority.

Any sacrament that symbolizes or represents the priestly office of Christ whether sacramental or spiritual is reserved for men.

Matrimony

Requirements: Legal qualification to perform marriage; Apostolic succession and Persona Christi bypassed.

Mechanism: Civil/legal recognition substitutes for sacramental mediation. Effect: Validates marital union; sacrament only functions if legally performed. Implication: Many churches will effectively operate with six sacraments, as matrimony requires legal authority.

Hierarchy Consideration

High Church structure preferred:

While technically any believer may perform these sacraments, priests and bishops are generally the primary ministers.

Purpose of hierarchy:

Ensures liturgical propriety and sacramental consistency. Provides communal oversight and recognition.

Maintains order while allowing sacraments to function without apostolic succession.