

## Session 1: The Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation

- John 15- Christ is the vine and we are the branches
  - “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing.” John 15:1-5
- Our salvation is dependent upon contact with Christ
- The Church is the instrument of bringing others into contact with him
- John stated “What we have seen, touched etc.” which shows us that Christ is meant to be encountered
- Need physical and spiritual contact to be transformed
- Get spiritual contact through Faith and Sacraments of Faith
- Transformation happens when one thing encounters another
- Need contact with Christ to be transformed
- Jesus became flesh to gain contact with the whole world
- He comes to us by way of extension and intension
  - o Extension- is throughout the whole world
  - o Intension- is through the depths of our being
- The Gospel of Luke that we are reading this year speaks a lot about healing, which comes through contact with Christ
  - o Christ is seen as the Divine Healer
    - Heals Simon Peter’s mother-in-law, lepers, man with a withered hand, hemorrhaging woman, blind man, widow’s son, Jarius’ daughter
    - There is contact with the person, typically through touch sometimes through sound
- Those who receive are given Grace to be more like Jesus Christ
  - o Closing prayer for Mass on Tuesday after Epiphany: “O God, **who touch us through our partaking of your Sacrament**, work, we pray, the effects of its power in our hearts, that we may be made fit to receive your gift through this very gift itself. Through Christ our Lord.”
- Sacraments of Initiation
- Baptism
  - 3 Effects of Baptism
    1. Washes away the guilt of original sin
    2. Leaves an indelible mark on the soul that conforms us more closely to Jesus Christ
    3. Divine Presence is in Holy Communion with our souls
  - Water is a symbol of God’s Cleansing power
  - Used at the beginning of Creation, used to nourish, used to clean, used to purify the world of sin, used to deliver us out of slavery, flows forth from Jesus’ side on the cross along with blood
  - Oil is a used when someone called by God for a noble task
  - In Baptism, one is called to be a priest, prophet and king
    - Priest- called to live a life of prayer and worship the Lord
    - Prophet-called to share the good news with all we meet
    - King-called to serve as a servant King and use what God has given us to build up his kingdom
  - White garment represents the purity and innocence of the soul after Baptism

- This is hard to understand because we see the baby as innocent from the beginning
  - However, we cannot see the stain of Original Sin but it is there as we know from the scriptures
  - Need faith to trust in God in this, of course we do not want to think ill of a brand new baby!
- The candle represents the light of Christ which is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly
- The rite itself has much movement from the doors of the Church to the pulpit, to the font to the altar, which represents the call to grow as a result of Baptism

- Confirmation

- “ Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who went down and prayed for them, that they might receive the holy Spirit, for it had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.\* Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts of the Apostles 8:14-16
- We are sealed with the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit
  - **Wisdom** is both the knowledge of and judgment about "divine things" and the ability to judge and direct human affairs according to divine truth.
  - **Understanding** is penetrating insight into the very heart of things, especially those higher truths that are necessary for our eternal salvation—in effect, the ability to "see".
  - **Counsel** allows a man to be directed by God in matters necessary for his salvation.
  - **Fortitude** denotes a firmness of mind in doing good and in avoiding evil, particularly when it is difficult or dangerous to do so, and the confidence to overcome all obstacles, even deadly ones, by virtue of the assurance of everlasting life.
  - **Knowledge** is the ability to judge correctly about matters of faith and right action, so as to never wander from the straight path of justice.
  - **Piety** is, principally, revering God with filial affection, paying worship and duty to God, paying due duty to all men on account of their relationship to God, and honoring the saints and not contradicting Scripture. The Latin word *pietas* denotes the reverence that we give to our father and to our country; since God is the Father of all, the worship of God is also called piety.
  - **Fear of God** is, in this context, "filial" or chaste fear whereby we revere God and avoid separating ourselves from him—as opposed to "servile" fear, whereby we fear punishment.
- Those to be Confirmed are asked to come forward or stand to show they are present
- The Bishop is to lay hands on them
- The Bishop anoints the forehead of the candidate and then shakes their hand
- The Contact of Christ is emphasized
- The connection with the Bishop is emphasized as well as he represents Christ more fully than the priest
- The prayer at Confirmation-
  - All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
  - by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin
  - and gave them new life.
  - Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide.
  - Give them** the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
  - the spirit of right judgment and courage,
  - the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
  - Fill them** with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.
  - We ask this through Christ our Lord.
  - All: Amen.
- Holy Communion is the continual sign of us living in contact with Jesus Christ as we receive him into our bodies and are transformed by him

Questions for discussion

1. What was something that stuck out to you from the presentation?
2. How have you seen God's contact transform you?