

SACRAMENTALS



Sacraments are sanctifying rites that give us invisible divine life. In addition to the sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ, there are rites and actions in the church that sanctify our lives and our life situations.

Sacramentals are prayers, services and actions instituted by the Church to purify and strengthen her children.

Sacraments and sacramentals sanctify us. But the sacramentals sanctify us not in the same way as the sacraments do. While the sacraments sanctify us directly, the sacramentals prepare us to receive the graces and enable us to co-operate with grace.

Some of the sacramentals are, the Blessing of the holy myron, consecration of the Church, religious profession, funeral rites and blessings places, articles and persons. Since they have some similarity with sacraments they are called sacramentals.

Sacraments were instituted by Jesus, whereas sacramentals are instituted by the Church. Different sacramentals were instituted according to the needs of the church communities. Their purpose is to sanctify persons, places and articles. They also sanctify the celebrations in connections with the situations of the faithful. Through these we and our life situations are sanctified and we are empowered by God's grace.

Blessing of holy Myron

Among sacramentals, the most important one is the blessing of the holy Myron. It is the bishop who blesses it. In the Sacrament of Anointing, this holy oil is used. It is also used in blessing the water and oil of baptism and also in the anointing of bishops and priests, if the practice exists.



Consecration of the Church

Another sacramental is the consecration of the church. By this, a newly constructed church is dedicated to God and becomes His abode. We come together in church to pray and offer the Holy Mass because the church is holy by the presence of God. Hence, our behaviour in the church should be fitting to its holiness.



Religious Profession

Religious profession is another sacramental. Through this the Church sanctifies and dedicates all those who have received the call to live a life committed to Christ and the Church. In this sacramental, God gives them the grace to lead religious life, observing the vows of obedience, chastity and poverty.

Funeral rites

Funeral rite is also one among the sacramentals. Through this, the Church, shows respect and prays for the Christians at their death. It helps the faithful to remind them of the meaning of death, the end of this life in the world and also of life after death.



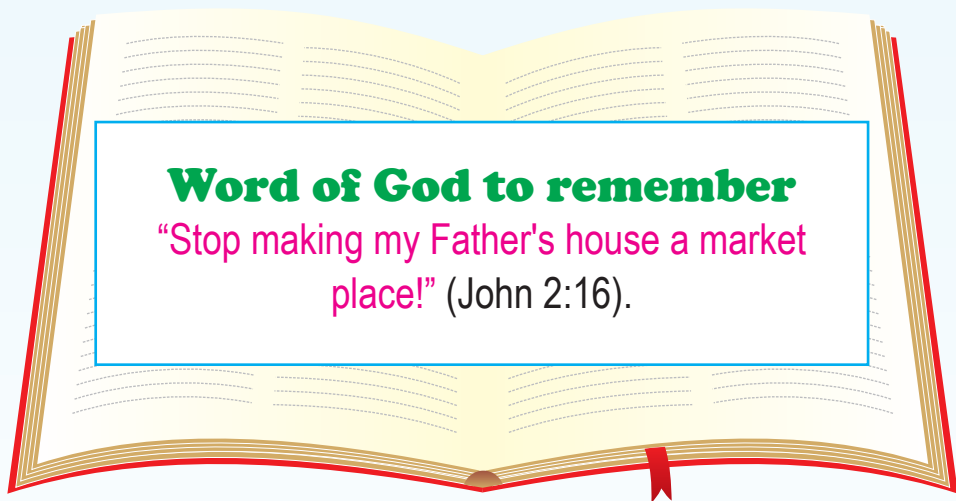
Blessings of Persons, Places and Articles

Through these, by God's grace, persons, places and articles are liberated from the power of evil. Again, they enable persons to conquer the power of evil and lead a holy life.

Sacramentals are a very good means to make life blessed. Let us try to receive the sacramentals with proper preparation and faith and be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray

O Jesus, you who gave us various sacramentals through the Church to sanctify and strengthen us, help us to participate in them with faith.



Let us read the word of God with devotion

John 2: 13-25

Activity

Differentiate the sacraments and sacramentals from the list given below.

Baptism, blessing of the house, church blessing, the Holy Eucharist, Anointing blessing, Healing, sacrament of reconciliation, religious profession, marriage, holy priesthood, funeral service.

Sacraments

Sacramentals

Let us find out the answers

1. What are the sacramentals?
2. What are the purposes of the sacramentals?
3. Which is the most important sacramental?
4. What should be our attitude to sacramentals?