

The Seven Sacraments: An Introduction and Overview

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While many Protestant Churches regard only **Baptism**/Initiation and **Eucharist**/Communion as the two core Sacraments (directly instituted by Christ), the Roman Catholic Church (and most Eastern Orthodox Churches) officially recognizes the following seven sacraments (CCC §§1113, [1210-1666](#)), listed below with brief comments about their biblical backgrounds, the words and actions involved, their effects, and who can administer each of them:

Sacrament	Biblical Basis
BAPTISM	<p>Matt 28:19 - Jesus commissions the apostles: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"</p> <p>John 3:22; 4:1-2 - Jesus' first disciples baptize other disciples</p> <p>Acts 2:38-41; 10:47-48 - new believers are baptized "in the name of Jesus" by Peter & others (<i>not just</i> Jesus' own baptism: Mark 1:9-11 & par.)</p>
EUCCHARIST	<p>Mark 14:22-25; Matt 26:26-30; Luke 22:14-23; 1 Cor 11:23-25 - Jesus' "Last Supper" with his disciples</p> <p>John 6: 48-58 - the end of the Bread of Life discourse: "eat my flesh; drink my blood"</p> <p>Luke 24:35; Acts 2:42 - Christians gather for the "Breaking of the Bread"</p>
Confirmation	<p>John 20:22 - "(the risen Jesus) breathed on them (his disciples) and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit' "</p> <p>Acts 8:14-17; 19:1-6 - believers receive the Spirit through laying on of the apostles' hands</p> <p>Acts 10:44-48 - the coming of the Spirit is closely associated with the Baptism of new believers</p>
Penance/ Reconciliation	<p>John 20:23 - "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained"</p> <p>Matt 16:19; 18:18 - more sayings on "binding and loosing"</p> <p>James 5:16 - "confess your sins to one another"</p>
Anointing of the Sick	<p>Mark 6:7-13 - Jesus' disciples "anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them"</p> <p>James 5:14-16 - "call for the elders of the church and have them pray over (the sick), anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord."</p>
Matrimony/ Marriage	<p>Gen 2:24 - "a man leaves his parents and clings to his wife and they become one flesh."</p> <p>Mark 10:2-12; Matt 19:1-9 - Jesus teaches against divorce; "What God has joined together, let no one separate."</p> <p>Eph 5:22-33; 1Cor 7:10-16 - Paul stresses the unity of husbands and wives (<i>not simply</i> Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana, John 2:1-11)</p>
Holy Orders (Ordination of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons)	<p>Mark 3:13-19 & par. - Jesus "calls" and "appoints" the 12 apostles</p> <p>Acts 6:6; 1 Tim 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim 1:6 - "laying on of hands" as the "ordaining" or commissioning rite of local Christian leaders</p>
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