

PASTORAL LETTER ON SACRAMENTS – II

Dear Rev. Fathers, Brothers Sisters and my dear faithful,

Thy Kingdom Come!

The Sacraments in the Church for a believer is the source of divine life. They are consoling, comforting, healing and calls each one to communion. They are the means of sanctification and salvation. The Holy Mother Church teaches us that each sacrament is special and has different effects on our Christian life.

Baptism: Takes away our original sin, the sins of omission and commission, make us members of the mystical body of Christ, the Church and make us worthy to inherit the Kingdom of heaven (Gen 12:1-4, 15:1-6, Dt 30:15-20, Rom 6:3-11, Mt 16:24-27, Jn 3:1-6).

Confirmation: Confirm our call to Christian life by providing us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and strengthens us to be the soldiers of Christ to witness, profess and defend our faith. (Is 11:1-4, Acts 1: 3-8, Lk 4: 16-22, Jn 7: 37-39, 16: 5-13)

Holy Eucharist: is the sacrament of thanksgiving and communion. It nourishes our soul to grow in faith and it is the medicine for all our spiritual sicknesses. It is a sacrament of unity, by which it preserves the harmony of Christians particularly in parish level as a local Church (1 Cor 11:17-34, Mt 26:26-29, Mk 14:22-25, Lk 22:14-20).

Penance: The sacrament of penance condones all our actual sins and open the way for re-entry to the Church's spiritual communion and fill us with divine grace so as to receive the Holy Eucharist in a worthy manner. It engraces to saves us from the temptation of sin (2 Cor 5:17-20, James 5:13-15, 1Jn 2:2).

Anointing the Sick: is the sacrament that strengthens or prepare our soul to accept God's will in physical illness. The Church teaches us that the effect of this sacrament is either a physical healing in ailments or a good death as God wills (Ex 3: 7-8, Is 35:1-10, Acts 3:1-10, Gal 4: 12-19, James 5:13-16, Mt 8: 5-17, Lk 18: 9-14, Jn 9: 1-7).

Holy Orders: is the sacrament of ministry of service in the Church. Church by her very nature is missionary and every Christian by the sacrament of baptism partakes in the royal priesthood of Christ (1 Pet 2:9, Rev 1:6). By the Holy Orders a few are specially chosen and ordained to ministerial priesthood as functionaries for various services in the Church and to be the leaders (Num 3: 5-9, Lev 8: 1-12, Jer 1: 4-3, 1 Cor 12: 27-31, 1 Tim 4: 6-14, Mt 10:1-5, Lk 12: 35-44, Jn 15: 9-17).

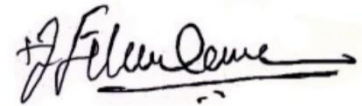
Holy Matrimony: is the sacrament of life. Christ came to give life and life in abundance (Jn 10:10). Source of life is God. The Father almighty avail the co-operation of the crown of creation, the man and woman to continue the human life. The primary end of Holy Matrimony is

spousal communion and as God wishes the spouses to become partners in procreation to continue life on earth (Gen 1:26-28, Prov 26: 1-4, 1Cor 6: 12-20, Mt 3: 3-6, Jn 2: 1-11)

Thus the sacraments are the will of God accomplished through the mission and ministry of Christ, his only begotten son. Every sacrament is instituted by Christ with the purpose as mentioned above. They are the means of sustenance of Christian life and add beauty to Christians' life in the world as social beings. The celebration of the sacraments also maintain some corporeal aspects of the Church as a human community. Thus our participation and reception of the sacraments is not only nutritious to our Christian life but also our community life and societal life as well.

As we all know in our Pastoral Plan we have declared the year 2023 as the year of the sacraments. This year we shall try to know the sacraments well and live by it effectively by their fruits to become genuine witnesses of Christ's values in personal, family, parish and social life. May God bless everyone.

Yours devotedly in Jesus,



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