

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

The seven sacraments are “visible signs and invisible grace” showing God’s love to the world, touching all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life.

The sacraments are not just services that are done one day and finished. They are the beginnings of new phases in our relationship with God. God is present in Church when we receive the sacraments and he remains present in our lives after the sacraments. The sacraments mark new beginnings and our lives should continue to be sacred as individuals and as members of the Church.

There are seven Sacraments. The seven Sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Holy Communion, Marriage, Holy Orders and Unction.

BAPTISM is the first Sacrament that a Christian receives. It is the basis of the whole Christian life. Unless we are baptized, we cannot receive any other sacraments. By Baptism we are made Christians and this gives new life to our souls. Through Baptism we become children of God.

The reading is from: **Matthew 28: 19-20**
Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

The reading is from: **Mark 1: 9-11**
In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “Thou art my beloved son; with thee I am well pleased.”

The reading is from: **John 3:5**
Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

CONFIRMATION (or Chrismation) is the completion of the Sacrament of Baptism and that is why confirmation immediately follows Baptism in the Armenian Church. It is the sacrament, which gives the Holy Spirit. It offers the same gift of the Holy Spirit as was given to the apostles on the first Pentecost. By Confirmation we seal our lives as belonging to God.

The reading is from: **Acts 8: 14-17**
Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

PENANCE is the Sacrament by which sins committed after Baptism are forgiven through absolution by the Priest. With Penance we confess our sins and ask God to forgive us. The act of being sorry for one's sins is called Contrition. God will not forgive us our sins unless we make a true and sincere contrition.

The reading is from: John 20:21-23

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father who sent me, even so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.

The reading is from: Corinthian 5:18

And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation.

HOLY COMMUNION is the Sacrament through which we receive the Body and the Blood of Christ, under the forms of consecrated bread and wine, for the remission and forgiveness of sins.

The reading is from: Luke 22:19-20

Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you."

The reading is from: John 6:51

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.

MARRIAGE is a contract to form a family. With marriage two people join together to form a new family with God's blessings.

The reading is from: Genesis 2:24

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

HOLY ORDERS is when one can become a special servant of God by doing special jobs in and for the Church, such as becoming an acolyte, deacon or priest.

The reading is from: Acts 20:28

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

UNCTION is a Sacrament administered to seriously ill people. With unction special prayers are offered asking for God's healing power to help those who are ill.

The reading is from: James 5:14

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

These are the seven sacraments.