

## SACRAMENTS

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### Baptism

**Baptism: The Sacrament of Baptism is the foundation of Christian life, the entrance to the life in the Spirit and access to the other Sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from original sin, become heirs to the Kingdom of God, are incorporated into the Church and become sharers in the Mission of the Church. [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994 Reference: 1213]**

- Baptism of infants and young children are celebrated for families who are members of the parish, and parents must attend a preparation session before the baptism can be scheduled. Please contact the parish office for more information.
- Baptism of school age children may need to be arranged through our Faith Formation team. Please contact the parish office for more information.
- Baptism of adults are arranged through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Contact the parish office for more information.

### Confession

**The Sacrament of Confession was instituted by Jesus, the physician of our souls and bodies, who forgave the sins of the paralytic and willed that his Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, His work of healing and salvation. Jesus has willed that the life and actions of his Church be a sign and instrument of forgiveness and reconciliation. [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994 Reference: 1442]**

- Confessions are possible on any weekdays after Mass or by appointment. Please telephone the parish office to make an appointment.

### Holy Communion

**The Sacrament of Holy Communion has its origin at the Last Supper when on the night Jesus was betrayed, He instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of His Body and Blood. This He did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until He comes again. In this Sacrament, Jesus entrusts to his Church a memorial of His death and Resurrection, the Sacrament of Love, a Sign of Unity and a Bond of Charity, in which Christ is consumed, and our minds are filled with**

**grace and a pledge of future glory. The Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith through the actions of the Holy Spirit and the Real Presence of Jesus; His Body and Blood become present under the form of bread and wine. It is through the Eucharist that each of us are nourished by Jesus to seek God's Will. [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994 Reference: 1323,1327]**

- Catholics often make their First Holy Communion aged 7 / 8 having undertaken a sacramental preparation programme. They are prepared through a special program and must already be attending religious education classes. For further information, please contact us. Adults who wish to be initiated into the sacrament of Holy Communion should contact the parish office.

## **Confirmation**

**In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized person is "sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit" and is strengthened for service to the Body of Christ. Confirmation deepens our baptismal life that calls us to be missionary witnesses of Jesus Christ in our families, neighbourhoods, society, and the world. We receive the message of faith in a deeper and more intensive manner with great emphasis given to the person of Jesus Christ, who asked the Father to give the Holy Spirit to the Church for building up the community in loving service.**

Young people often celebrate their Confirmation from Years 7 (11 – 12 years old) or above having undertaken a sacramental preparation programme.

## **Matrimony**

**The Sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved His Church. The grace of the sacrament perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life. [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994, Reference: 1661]**

- Engaged couples must participate in marriage preparation programs where there will be opportunities to enter into conversations regarding important topics such as why marriage matters, why God created marriage, sexuality, and how to have a sacramental marriage. Please contact the parish office for more information.

## **Anointing of the Sick**

**The Sacrament of the Anointing the Sick has as its end the conferral of a special grace on people experiencing a grave illness or old age. The Church exhorts the Christian who is ill to unite with the Passion and Death of Christ. [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1994 Reference: 1511, 1499, 1513]**

- In the Church's Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, through the ministry of the priest, it is Jesus who touches the sick to heal them from sin – and sometimes even from physical

ailment. His cures were signs of the arrival of the Kingdom of God. The core message of His healing tells us of His plan to conquer sin and death by his dying and rising. When the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given, the hoped-for effect is that, if it be God's will, the person be physically healed of illness. But even if there is no physical healing, the primary effect of the Sacrament is a spiritual healing by which the sick person receives the Holy Spirit's gift of peace and courage to deal with the difficulties that accompany serious illness or the frailty of old age.

- There is no need to wait until a person is at the point of death to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing the Sick. Any Catholic who is facing a serious illness, is of advanced years or individuals who are planning to enter the hospital (before their admission) are particularly encouraged to receive the sacrament by calling the parish office at (410) 531-6040 to arrange for an appointment with a priest.

## Holy Orders

Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, Christ asks of some men the sacrifice of their lives by following Him as His more intimate companions in order to be a spiritual shepherd for the people given to His care. sThough it looks different today than it has in the past, the reality is that since the beginning of time, certain men have been called to the priesthood. It is a call which God has inscribed in their nature and because of this, priesthood is a call that will bring them lifelong fulfillment. Priests act in persona Christi capitis, which means "in the person of Christ, head of the Church." That is why the priest speaks in the first person at Mass, "This is my body, given up for you."

The mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time. The Sacrament of Holy Orders' has three degrees:

1. Deacons (Diaconate) are ordained into the ministry of service to the Church. Deacons do not receive the ministerial priesthood, but ordination confers on them the functions of the Ministry of the Word, Divine Worship, and Service of Charity under the pastoral authority of their bishop.
2. Priests (Presbyterate) are united with the bishop in sacerdotal dignity and called to be the bishop's prudent co-workers in the exercise of their pastoral functions. They gather around their bishop who bears responsibility with them for a particular church. They receive from the bishop the charge of a parish community or determinate ecclesial office.
3. Bishops (Episcopate) receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, which integrates them into the Episcopal college and makes them visible heads of the particular Church entrusted to them. As successors of the apostles and members of the college, the bishops share in the apostolic responsibility and mission of the whole Church under the authority of the Pope.

For men interested in following the Lord's call to serve Him as Priests, please contact the Diocese's Vocations Office:

<https://northamptondiocese.org/vocations/>