

Praying On The Seven Sacraments

An Ignatian Method of Prayer

(St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises Nos. 238 to 243)

IT CONSISTS OF REFLECTING, PRAYING AND EXAMINING OURSELVES ON HOW WE RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS

Introduction:

St. Ignatius, anxious to help people to improve the quality of their Christian life, offered us in his Spiritual Exercises a prayer method of on how to devoutly and fruitfully to receive the Holy Sacraments.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

We shall reflect and pray both on

The PRIVILEGES granted to us by the Sacraments
and on THE DUTIES imposed on us by them.

Preparation:

- Before you begin praying, decide the length of time you want to pray and then stick to the allotted time.
- Before starting your prayer, quiet down and relax.
- Place yourself in the presence of God and remain in silence for a while.
- Call for the help of the Holy Spirit that you may pray with mind and heart.
- To reap the fruits of this method of prayer, kindly, strictly follow to the procedure laid down by Ignatius quoted below

Petition

Ask God our Lord for Three Graces.:

One; To be aware of the blessings and privileges granted to you through the Sacraments.

Two; To be sorry for your failings to correspond to God's privileges granted to you through the Sacraments..

Three; To be more faithful in future in keeping the duties demanded from you by the reception of the Sacraments

Personal Examination:

Take The First Sacrament: BAPTISM –.. (Cfr: Appendix Below)

- Reflect and meditate on the **graces and privileges** God has given you through Baptism **and thank Him** for them.
- Check whether in the past, you have lived up to your Baptismal Promises. If not, ask **God for pardon.**
- Ask from God to help you, henceforth, to be more faithful to the **duties** you accepted at your Baptism.
- When you finished meditating and praying on the first sacrament, pass on to the second Sacrament, and then to the next and follow the same procedure.

Closure:

- When the time fixed for prayer is over, stop and say “The Our Father” and sing an appropriate hymn.
- If in the time allotted to prayer you cannot cover seven Sacraments, later on, some time or other, following the same method, carry on mediating on them, starting at the point where you stopped previously.

APPENDIX; The Seven Sacraments.

1st. Sacrament: BAPTISM;

Privileges: We are forgiven all our sins, especially the original sin. We are given grace, namely, a share in God’s life. We are made God’s Children, members of God’s household. We are part of the universal Church - sign and sacrament of God’s love and salvation for all mankind. We share in Christ’s priesthood.

Duties: We are called to preach the Good News and establish on earth the Kingdom of God. By exemplary lives we are to be the salt and light of the world. We have to love others as Christ loved us even unto death. We are expected to rule our lives according to the values of Christ – the Beatitudes

2nd. Sacrament: CONFIRMATION;

Privileges: We are given full participation in the life of Christ. We are turned into grown-up children of God. We are strengthened by special graces to be images of Christ in our world.

Duties: We have to withstand temptations, trials, even persecution for Christ’s sake. We are expected to profess our faith and our allegiance to Christ in all circumstances of life. We are to rule our lives in faith hope and love. We are to be active members of the Church by letting others know Christ through our actions and words.

3rd. Sacrament EUCHARIST.

Privileges: Mysteriously, we are granted to sit at table with Jesus at his Last Supper. We are given the privilege of partaking in his flesh and blood. Every time we receive Holy Communion

we grow in divine life. We, along with Christ ‘sacrifice’, offer our lives in sacrifice for the salvation of the world.. Christ, as our best companion. He is ever present among us in the Blessed Sacrament

Duties: We have to partake in the Eucharistic Sacrifice attentively, devoutly and prayerfully. We are to receive Communion often with faith and love. We ought to venerate and worship Jesus really present in the Holy Eucharist. We have to make the Eucharist the center of our life

4th. Sacrament: PENANCE / RECONCILAITON;

Privileges: Whenever we approach Jesus with proper dispositions at the Sacrament of Reconciliation, our sins are forgiven, however many and serious. At Confession, Jesus frees us from the load of guilt and remorse. He stands as a Mediator between us and his Heavenly Father. He grants us peace and joy.

Duties: If we want to secure forgiveness from God, we have to forgive others. Non-forgiveness and hatred block God’s pardon. We should be sincerely sorry for our sins. We are to have a sincere will to improve ourselves and avoid sin. We have to keep away from all that lead us to sin (occasions of sin). Whenever we sinned seriously, we have to make an honest confession

5th. Sacrament: ANNOINTING OF THE SICK

Privileges: In serious sickness, often enough it restores us to good health. In the instance of death it cleanses us from sin and opens for us the gates of heaven.

Duties: Whenever seriously ill, we should ask for The Holy Anointing When any member of our family or any person close to us is at the point of dying, we should see to it that he is anointed,

6th. Sacrament: HOLY ORDERS:

Privileges: Priests are ordained to take care of our spiritual welfare. The Priests will confer on us the Sacraments whereby we become children of God. They help us to eternal salvation. Some of us may have the privilege of being called to be priests. Why not you or your children? .

Duties: To respect our priests and listen to them when they teach and guide us. If ever, we feel called by Jesus to be his priests, we have to say ‘Yes “to Him. Those of us who have been called to the priesthood, should devote our entire life to serve of God’s people. All of us have to pray for vocations

7th. Sacrament: MATRIMONY OR MARRIAGE;

Privileges: Human love between a man and a woman is sanctified by God. Marriage is an image of the Love Jesus has for his Church. Married partners, by loving each other, grow in the love of God. They are God’s instruments in the growth to the Family of God. Children are the greatest gift of God to married people.

Duties: Married people should love one another. Help each other to keep their marriage vows. Be faithful to each other until death separates them. Their homes should be replicas of the Home of Nazareth. They should bring up their children and educate them in the love of God. Christian Families should pray, help and assist one another.

