

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

269. What do we mean by a Sacrament?

A sacred act ordained by God, wherein He by certain external means, connected with His word, offers, conveys, and seals unto men the grace which Christ has merited.

270. How many Sacraments are there?

Two, Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

First, What Baptism Is.

271. What is Baptism?

Baptism is not simple water only, hut it is the water comprehended in God's command and connected with God's word.

272. Which Is that word of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Matthew: Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

273. Why is Baptism not simple water only?

Because it is instituted by God and thus comprehended in God's command, and because it is to be performed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and is thus connected with God's word.

274. Who, then, instituted Holy Baptism?

God Himself; for Christ, our Lord, in the last chapter of Matthew, charged His Church to baptize all nations.

478) Matt. 28:19-20. All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.

Luke 3, 2. 3. John 1,33. John's baptism.

275. Who is to administer Baptism?

Ordinarily the called ministers of Christ, but in cases of necessity, every Christian.

479) 1 Cor. 4, 1. Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

276. What is the meaning of the word "baptize"?

Applying water by washing, pouring, "sprinkling, or immersing.

480) Mark 7, 4. And when they (the, Pharisees) come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be which they have- received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brazen. vessels, and of tables.

481) Acts 22, 16. Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.

482) Matt. 3, 11. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. (Comp. Acts 2, 16. 17. Note the word "pour out.")

277. What is baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?

It is receiving into communion with the Triune God by Baptism according to Christ's command.

278. Who Is to be baptized?

All nations, that is, all human beings, young and old.

279. Are, then, all men to be baptized without distinction?

No; those who can be instructed are to be baptized after they have been previously instructed. in the principal doctrines of the Christian religion; but little children should be baptized when they have been born within the Christian Church, or are brought to Baptism by those who have authority over them.

483) Mark 16, 15. 16. Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

280. How do you prove that infants also are to be baptized?

1. They, too, are included in "all nations."
2. They are flesh born of the flesh, and are, therefore, in need of regeneration.
3. In little children regeneration can ordinarily be wrought by Baptism only.
4. Little children also can believe.

484) Mark 10, 13-15. And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them; and His disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased and said unto] them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

485) John 3, 5. 6. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh.

486) Matt. 18, 6. Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

B. H. Acts 16, 15. Lydia and her household.-Acts 16, 33. The keeper of the prison at Philippi and all his.

281. For what purpose have sponsors been Introduced?

They are to testify that the children have been properly baptized, and also to assist in caring for their Christian education, and to pray for them.

487) Matt. 18, 16. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

Secondly, What Baptism Gives or Profits.

282. What does Baptism give or profit?

It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

283. Which are such words and promises of God?

Christ, our Lord, says in the last chapter of Mark: He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,

284. What three great things, then, does Baptism give or work?

1. It works forgiveness of sins;
2. it delivers from death and the devil; and
3. it gives eternal salvation.

488) Gal. 3,26.27. Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

489) Acts 2, 38. Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

490) I Cor. 15,55-57. O death, where is thy sting O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

491) Col. 1, 12-14. Give thanks, unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

492) I Pet. 3, 20. 21. The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

285. But has not Christ by His suffering and death redeemed us from all sins. from death, and from the power of the devil, and merited eternal salvation for us?

Certainly; but Holy Baptism is the means whereby the Holy Ghost makes all these great things our own.

493) I Cor. 6, 11. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

286. To whom does Baptism give all this?

To all who believe it, as the words and promises of God declare: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

287. But why does not Christ, our Lord, say: "He that believeth not *and is not baptized* shall be damned"?

Because it is unbelief only that damns; and though saving faith cannot exist with the contempt of Baptism, it can exist with the lack of Baptism.

494) Luke 7, 30 The Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of Him.

Thirdly, What the Power of Baptism Is.

288. How can water do such great things?

It is not the water indeed that does them but the word of God which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts such word of God in the water. For without the word of God the water is simple water, and no baptism. But with the word of God it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter third:

By the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.

289. Has water by itself the power to do such great things?

No; it is not mere water indeed that does them.

290. How Is It, then, that by the water of Baptism forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and eternal salvation are obtained?

The word of God which is in and with the water conveys these great things into Baptism; for without the word of God the water is simple water, and no baptism; but faith, which trusts such word of God in the water, takes them out of Baptism and appropriates them unto itself.

495) Eph. 5, 25. 26. Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

291. Why do the Scriptures call Baptism the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost?

Because the Holy Ghost in Baptism works faith and, therewith, new spiritual life.

Fourthly, What Baptism Signifies.

292. What does such baptizing with water signify?

It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

293. Where Is this written?

St. Paul says, Romans, chapter sixth: We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that, like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

294. What is the old Adam?

Our entire sinful depravity, which has come upon us by the fall of Adam and is ours by birth.

496) Eph. 4, 22. Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

295. How Is this old Adam to be drowned In us?

By daily contrition and repentance, whereby we withstand the evil desires and suppress them.

497) Gal. 5, 24. They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

296. What is the new man?

The new spiritual being and life created in us by the washing of regeneration.

498) 2 Cor. 5, 17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

297. How Is this new man to come forth and arise?

As we from day to day walk and grow before God in true faith and good works.

499) Eph. 4, 24. Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

298. How does Baptism signify the dally drowning of the old man and coming forth of the new man?

By Baptism we are made partakers of Christ.

Even as He has buried our sins, so we, too, may and should daily bury and shun them; and as He is risen from the dead and lives, even so we, too, may and should daily walk in newness of life.

299. What else should especially induce us to live and walk In true holiness?

Our baptismal vow, since in Baptism we have renounced the devil and all his works and all his pomp, and promised to serve the Triune God, and Him only.