

"Any ordinance that is to be properly regarded as a sacrament of the New Testament must have the following requisites: (1) It must have an external, or corporeal and visible, element or sign, which may be handled, exhibited, and used in a certain external rite. (2) The element or sign, and the rite in which it is employed, must have an express divine command to authorize and sanction it. (3) It must be commanded and instituted in the New Testament. (4) That promise must not only simply and by itself have the testimony of God's Word, but it must by the divine ordinance be annexed to the sign of the Sacrament, and as it were, clothed with that sign or element. (7) That promise must not relate to the general gifts of God, whether corporeal or spiritual, but it must be a promise of grace or justification, i.e., of gratuitous reconciliation, the remission of sins, and, in a word, all the benefits of redemption. (8) And that promise, in the Sacraments, is either signified or announced, not in general only, but on the authority of God is offered, presented, applied, and sealed to the individuals who use the Sacraments in faith."

-- Martin Chemnitz, *Examen Concilii Tridentini*, II, 14, quoted by Heinrich Schmid, pp. 525-526.

d. Roman Catholic Definition

The following material is quoted from the *Baltimore Catechism No. 3*, issued under the auspices of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in 1949:

"304. What is a sacrament?

A sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

(a) Man, composed of body and soul, lives in the midst of visible things, deals with them constantly, and gains his knowledge from them. His knowledge of spiritual things depends on the use of his senses. It was fitting, therefore, that the sacraments, which were to bring man the supernatural, spiritual gifts of grace, be instituted by Christ as visible signs which could be perceived by man.

(b) In each of the sacraments there is an outward sign, that is, some external thing or action called the matter, and a set formula of words known as the form. The matter and the form together make up the sign of each sacrament. In the sacrament of Baptism, for example, the matter consists in the water and in its application to the person being baptized; the form is the sentence: 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,' which is said while the water is being poured.

(c) When the sign is applied to the one who receives the sacrament, it signifies inward grace and has the power of producing it in the soul. The external action performed by the minister of the sacrament is called a sign of the inward grace because it signifies and represents outwardly which is produced inwardly and visibly in the soul. The sacramental signs actually effect what they represent. In Baptism, for example, the application of the water and the pronouncing of the words are a sign which both represents the cleansing of the soul from sin and actually effects that cleansing.