

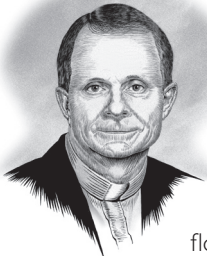
FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Do Sacramentals Differ From Sacraments?

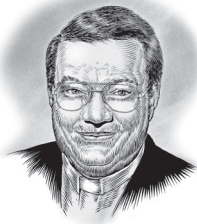
Know This...

Sacraments and sacramentals are from God because God is the source of every good gift. Sacraments are outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace. They directly affect our growth in holiness, for through the sacraments themselves our souls are showered with grace. Sacramentals are objects or actions instituted by the Church to deepen our faith. They indirectly affect our growth in holiness, for through the intercession of the Church they arouse within us the desire to commit acts of faith and charity that dispose us to receive grace.



John: Sacramentals are pious traditions that, unlike Sacraments, are not essential to Catholic practice and belief. They are not instituted by Christ Himself, but flow from His Church.

James: There are seven Sacraments, but it's difficult to count sacramentals. Many have a long history. Others quickly disappeared.



John: Sacramentals can be prayers and blessings, words and actions, objects and gestures, times and places, devotions and ceremonies.

James: The 'Our Father' is a sacramental. Holy water, blessed palms, ashes, incense, rosaries, crucifixes, medals, relics, and candles are sacramental objects.

John: The consecration and dedication of a church and blessings by bishops, priests, and deacons are sacramental actions.

James: The proper use of sacramentals awaken our senses and deepen our faith in Christ and His Church.

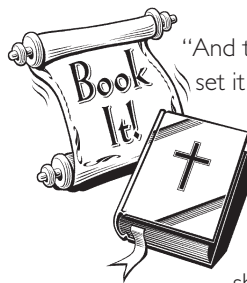
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"Everyone in the crowd sought to touch [Jesus] because power came forth from him and healed them all." ^{Lk 6:19} "There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years. She had heard about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak. She said, 'If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured.' Immediately her flow of blood dried up. She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction. Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him, turned around in the crowd and asked, 'Who has touched my clothes?' The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth. He said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.'" ^{Mk 5:25, 27-30, 33-34}

"Sacramentals are instituted for the sanctification of certain ministries of the Church, certain states of life, a great variety of circumstances in Christian life, and the use of many things helpful to man." ^{ccc 1668} "Sacramentals do not confer the grace of the Holy Spirit in the way that the sacraments do, but by the Church's prayer; they prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it." ^{ccc 1670} "Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church. They prepare men to receive the fruit of the sacraments and sanctify different circumstances of life." ^{ccc 1677}



"And the Lord said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and every one who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.'" ^{Num 21:8-9} "Many signs and wonders were done among the people at the hands of the apostles. Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and mats so that when Peter came by, at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them. A large number of people from the towns in the vicinity of Jerusalem also gathered, bringing the sick and those disturbed by unclean spirits, and they were all cured." ^{Acts 5:12, 15-16} "And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them." ^{Acts 19:11-12}

Gracious Father, great is Your mercy and endless is Your love. Through the grace of the Sacraments You help me grow in holiness. Through the proper use of Your material goods You awaken my senses and point me to Your Son. I pray that You will protect me and all Your children from the temptation of the flesh, the lure of the world, and the wickedness of the devil. I ask this in Your most precious Name and through Your infinite power. Amen.

