




What are Sacramentals?

- ✚ Sacramentals are connected to the sacraments.
- ✚ A sacramental can be defined *as an outward sign instituted by the church to prepare our souls to receive the graces of the sacraments.*
- ✚ There is no change to the soul, but a sacramental can open up the soul, so to speak, to receive sanctifying grace and the other graces of the sacraments.
- ✚ Sacramentals, also, remind us of our call to holiness.



Sacrament

<p>Outward Sign</p>	
<p>Instituted by Christ</p>	
<p>To give us (our soul) grace</p>	

Sacramental

<p>Outward Sign</p>	
<p>Instituted by the Church</p>	
<p>To prepare us (our soul) to receive grace</p>	

What are some examples of sacramentals?

- ✚ A blessing is a sacramental.
- ✚ The sign of the cross made by the priest and / or the sprinkling of holy water are outward signs used to bestow the blessing.
- ✚ The intent of a blessing is to place the person or thing under the protection of God.



Objects that are blessed by a priest become a sacramental:

- ✚ water [blessed water (holy water) is related to Baptism],
- ✚ palms [are connected to passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus, which is related to the Eucharist],
- ✚ candles [represent the light of the world, Jesus; they are used in liturgical celebrations of the sacraments],
- ✚ medals [worn or displayed out of devotion to Jesus, Mary, saints; they are reminders of our call to holiness; and it is sanctifying grace from the sacraments that makes us holy],
- ✚ ashes [are used as a sign of repentance, which connects us to the Sacrament of Reconciliation],
- ✚ wedding rings [are connected to marriage],
- ✚ religious pictures [reminders of our call to holiness],
- ✚ oils [blessed by the bishop are used in the sacraments]



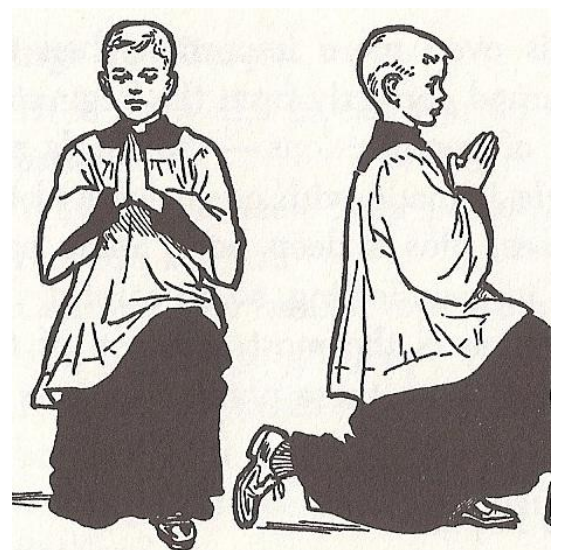
Other objects connected with (or used in) liturgical rites (or in devotions) are sacramentals:

- # crucifixes, rosaries, and votive candles used in the church.
- # incense [used to venerate (to honor) something – represents prayers rising to God; it is used in liturgical celebrations of the sacraments].
- # Some things that are blessed would not become a sacramental.
- # As I mentioned a blessing is intended to place the person or thing under the protection of the God, but people, animals, houses, cars – would not (strictly speaking) become a sacramental.



The ceremonies (actions) performed in the various sacraments are also sacramentals, like the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday, washing of the priest's hands at Mass, washing of feet on Holy Thursday.

- ✚ Sacred Signs – sign of the cross, genuflection, bowing would fall into the category of a sacramental.



Many ask, “How do I dispose of blessed items, like palms?”

- ✚ Since they are a blessed object, we don't want to throw them in the garbage.
- ✚ The best thing to do with palms is to burn them.
- ✚ Ashes can then be buried or placed in a garden or raked into the ground.
- ✚ Some people bring old palms to the Church which are burned and ashes used on Ash Wednesday
- ✚ Other blessed items should be buried or burned (if they can be) and buried in the ground.

The use of sacramentals is an important part of our faith; because they can help us get closer to God.

- ✚ They can bring comfort to us during hard times in life.
- ✚ They are something to hold on to or to look upon when praying for help or guidance.
- ✚ Sacramentals can drive away evil spirits, and prepare the soul for grace.
- ✚ They don't replace the sacraments; they are not more important than the sacraments, but they can be a means that help us prepare our soul for grace.