

# Lesson 36 – The Sacramentals

Grades 6-8

## Lesson Preparation:

Read Lesson 36 in the Baltimore Catechism. You will need to have a Bible for this session. Also, if you will be doing the craft at the end, you will need to pick up materials or have them sent with the students.

## Opening Prayer:

Scripture: “Then the Levitical priests rose and blessed the people; their voice was heard and their prayer reached heaven, God’s holy dwelling.” 2Chronicles 30:27

Leader: As Catholics, we have so many wonderful religious items and blessings to help us grow in our faith. In this session, help us understand how they can deepen our devotion to You, Lord. Amen.

Together: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Opening:

This lesson is about sacramentals, religious objects or actions that can be used to inspire prayer or obtain blessings. The lesson will begin with the story of one of the most popular sacramentals, the Miraculous Medal:

*In 1830, the Virgin Mary appeared to a French nun, Catherine Laboure. She appeared, standing on a globe, with her arms outstretched, and from the rings on her fingers rays of light shone over the globe. Surrounding Mary were the words, “Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.” She asked Catherine to have a medal made and distributed with that image, and promised that many graces would come to those who piously wore it.*

*After a period of investigation, the Church gave permission for the medal to be struck. The medal was originally called the Medal of the Immaculate Conception, but so many miracles were recounted by those who wore it, that it*

came to be called the *Miraculous Medal*, and it has been one of the most popular sacramentals the past 200 years.

Sacramentals are **not** magic, and they are **not** lucky charms. Every sacramental has a meaning, and it is an item of devotion that points to God and assists us to pray. If used with devotion, a sacramental becomes a tool for us to ask God for His grace and blessings, and it becomes a channel of His grace and blessings. Sacramentals can be of great use in our devotional life, but they are not ends in themselves. Used properly, they always point us to God.

*Note: You can share with the students an image of the Miraculous Medal. If you have one on hand, you can pass it around.*

### **Watch the Lesson 36 Video on Catholic Brain**

**Comprehension Questions:** *Note: These questions are asked after the video, just to check student comprehension. They are not discussion questions, but be sure students understand the answers to these questions before moving on*

1) What are sacramentals?

*They are religious items of devotion that can be used to aid us in prayer, and deepen our devotion to God. He can use sacramentals as channels of His grace.*

2) What are the three main types of sacramentals?

*Blessings, Exorcisms, Blessed Items*

3) How do sacramentals help us to pray?

*They call our minds and hearts to God.*

4) How should we use sacramentals?

*As an aid to prayer, to help deepen our devotion to God – never superstitiously*

**Discussion Questions:** *Note: These questions are for student discussion. The students should consider these questions and comment on them. There are some key points included in this lesson, after each question, that you can use to help guide their discussion toward truth. It's important that the students think about and discuss these things, but that they don't leave the discussion with false impressions about what is true.*

1) Compare and contrast sacraments and sacramentals.

*Both sacraments and sacramentals are signs that point us to spiritual realities. However, although God can use sacramentals as sources of grace, indirectly; the sacraments do what they symbolize, Jesus instituted them to produce grace directly*

2) Allow the students to share some of their favorite sacramentals and how they use them. Guide them to use sacramentals to deepen their devotion to and faith in God.

### **Go Deeper:**

There are mentions in Scripture, in both the Old and New Testaments, of people using sacramentals. There are countless blessings to be found in Scripture, as well as exorcisms, but look at and discuss the following Scripture passages in which items are used:

Numbers 21:8 – “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Make a seraph and mount it on a pole, and if anyone who has been bitten looks at it, he will recover.’”

*Note: God used the bronze serpent as a source of healing grace. In 2Kings 18:4, we see the people begin to worship the serpent, though, not the God who gave it to them, so it was destroyed.*

Matthew 9:20-22 – “A woman suffering hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind [Jesus] and touched the tassel on his cloak. She said to herself, ‘If only I can touch his cloak, I shall be cured.’ Jesus turned around and saw her, and said, ‘Courage, daughter! Your faith has saved you. And from that hour the woman was cured.’”

Acts 5:15 – “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.”

### **Activity:**

Make a sacramental! This is a craft activity. The rosary is an important sacramental. Bring string and some beads and have students make a one-decade rosary. They can apply an Our Father bead, separated from the ten Hail Mary beads by knots on either side. Maybe even add a small cross. If you can't make a rosary, bring finger rosaries, or have students bring rosaries, and pray as much of the rosary as time allows.

## **Closing Prayer:**

Leader: God, we thank You for taking even ordinary things and making them holy, for making your grace available to us in so many different ways. May our use of sacramentals always bring us closer to You. Amen.

Together: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.