



Thinking About the Sacraments of Initiation

Reflections on the Original Order #2

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“The (three) sacraments of Christian initiation lay the foundations of every Christian life” Catechism of the Catholic Church, no.1212. Indeed, the initiation sacraments can be compared to climbing up Diamond Head Crater. To do the climb, one needs to be prepared when starting out, primarily by being hydrated. Then one needs the strength to climb up the 3/4-mile path. Finally, one reaches the summit and can enjoy the magnificent view in every direction.

This corresponds to the sacraments of initiation. The hydration of Baptism starts a Christian on the path. The gift of the Holy Spirit received in Confirmation gives the strength needed to make the journey. Then finally, earth is joined to heaven at the summit when one receives first Holy Communion.

Notice that what completes our membership into the Body of Christ is not Confirmation. Rather, it is receiving First Communion. The truth is that the first two sacraments (Baptism and Confirmation) are what prepare us for Eucharist. From our own experience we know that Eucharist does not prepare us for Confirmation. It is the other way around.

The sacraments that initiate us into the Christian life are first of all Baptism, then Confirmation, and finally, First Holy Communion.

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