

Consecration

When something is consecrated it is declared to be sacred or holy. Catholics, believe that bread and wine are consecrated, becoming the body and blood of Christ.

The word consecrated is made up of the Latin suffix con-, which expresses intensive force and sacrare, meaning "dedicate." Something that is consecrated is intensely dedicated to the point of being declared holy.

Consecration, in general, is an act by which a thing is separated from a common and profane to a sacred use, or by which a person or thing is dedicated to the service and worship of God by prayers, rites, and ceremonies.

The Church distinguishes consecration from blessing, both in regard to persons and to things. Hence the Roman Pontifical treats of the consecration of a bishop and of the blessing of an abbot, of the blessing of a corner-stone and the consecration of a church or altar. In both, the persons or things pass from a common, or profane, order to a new state, and become the subjects or the instruments of Divine protection. At a consecration the ceremonies are more solemn and elaborate than at a blessing. The ordinary minister of a consecration is a bishop, whilst the ordinary minister of a blessing is a priest. At every consecration the holy oils are used; at a blessing customarily only holy water. The new state to which consecration elevates persons or things is permanent, and the rite can never be repeated, which is not the case at a blessing; the graces attached to consecration are more numerous and efficacious than those attached to a blessing; the profanation of a consecrated person or thing carries with it a new species of sin, namely sacrilege, which the profanation of a blessed person or thing does not always do.

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