

The Sacraments

Warm-Up Questions:

- When were you baptized? When did you first receive communion? Can you remember what you thought and felt about the experience?

Read Mark 9:24

I. Help My Unbelief: Is This Really Real? (2 Cor. 5:7; Jn. 20:24-29)

- All Christians at times ask the question, "is this really real?" When you find yourself doubting, do you feel the freedom to admit this doubt to other Christians, or do you feel ashamed? Why do you think that is?
- How do the Sacraments help us believe that this is really real? Reflect on the quote by Leonard Vander Zee on the right.

II. Help My Unbelief: Am I Really Welcome? (Is. 55:1; 1 Cor. 11:27-29)

- The WCF 27.1 says that the sacraments are "signs and seals of the covenant of grace."
 - How are they signs? What do they point to?
 - How are they seals? What is it they guarantee?
- Do you ever struggle to believe that you are really forgiven and welcomed by the Father? How do the Lord's Supper and Baptism combat this lie?

III. Help My Unbelief: Can I Really Hope? (Heb. 11:1)

- Read Isaiah 25:6-9 and Revelation 19:7-10. In light of these passages, how does the Lord's Supper give us a foretaste of the future?
- How have you seen the Sacraments bolster your own faith? How have they helped you hope? To believe that this is really real? To know that you are welcome?

"What my mind doubts, my mouth tastes as the Lord's goodness. When my faith falters, my fingers can touch the truth...The sacraments do not merely make the word visible; they make it tasty, aromatic, tactile. They appeal to all the senses...Both word and sacrament bring Christ to our souls by faith through the Holy Spirit. But in the sacraments we get Christ in a way that is particularly suited to our humanity."

Leonard Vander Zee

