What’s in a name?

Μυστήριον
Sacramentum
The term ‘Sacrament’:

Tertullian of Carthage (155-212), father of Latin Theology, sought a term to translate *mysterion* and chose *sacramentum*:

“In a discussion on the meaning of baptism, Tertullian explained that it was similar to the *sacramentum* which was administered to Roman recruits when they entered the army. The *sacramentum* was a religious initiation: so was baptism. It marked the beginning of a new way of life: so did baptism. It was an oath of allegiance to the emperor: baptism was a promise of fidelity to Christ.”

(Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 3)
Defining to naming Sacraments:

- St. Peter Damian (1007-72) believed sacraments to be concrete signs of a holy thing. Lists of sacraments ranged from 12 upwards.

- Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1142) returned to St. Augustine’s definition of a sign as something sacred, but found it too broad. The sign needed to be of divine institution to be a sacrament.

- Peter Lombard (1100-1160) wrote:
  “Something is properly called a sacrament because it is a sign of God’s grace, and is such an image of invisible grace that it bears likeness and exists as its cause”
Lombard also ‘spoke of the institution and efficacy of the sacraments, coming to the conclusion that there can only be seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, penance, Eucharist, marriage, extreme unction and ordination.

He distinguished these from what have been come to know as ‘sacramentals’ (such as holy water, statues, prayers, religious objects, etc.) because the latter were signs and not causes of grace. A sacrament must be both.’

Kelly,7.
“Even in his humanity, Christ is the Son of God. The second person of the Most Holy Trinity is personally man; and this man is personally God. Therefore, Christ is God in a human way and man in a divine way.”

(Edward Schillebeeckx, O.P. *Christ the Sacrament*, 13-14)
“The basic sacramental principal is quite simply a belief that we can meet God through ritual events and symbols, and that the Church is a sacramental community that celebrates in concrete and symbolic ways the presence of Jesus Christ.”

Jesus as Baptist

Mt 3:14

Jn 3:22 and 26

John 4

Mark 10: 38

John 3:5

Mt 28:19

Acts 3: 38, 41

Acts 8: 14-17; Acts 10: 44-48

1 Cor 12:13
Jesus as dinner guest

**Luke 5: 29** Jesus calls Levi who threw a great banquet “and there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others sitting at the table with him.”

**Luke 10:40** at the home of Martha and Mary

**Luke 19** story of Zacchaeus.

**Luke 22:14-20** The Last Supper

**Luke 24: 30-31** after the resurrection, supper with the disciples at Emmaus.

**Luke 24: 41-43** Eating with the disciples in the upper room.
Jesus as healer

Mt 4: 23-25 Jesus goes throughout Galilee “proclaiming the Kingdom of God and curing every kind of disease and sickness among the people”.

Mt 9:2 “Take heart, your sins are forgiven you.”

Luke 7: 48-50 story of the sinful woman who weeps at the feet of Jesus and wipes his feet with her hair: “Your sins are forgiven you”.

John 20: 22-23. After his resurrection, Jesus appears to the disciples, shows them his hands and his side: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them. If you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”
Jesus as sender

“As the Father has sent me, so am I sending you”. (20:21)

“Go therefore, make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Mt 28: 16-20).

(Romans 16: 1-12)

“ There are a variety of gifts, but always the same spirit…” (1 Cor 12: 4-7)
“Rising form the dead, Jesus sent his life-giving Spirit upon his disciples and through him set up his body which is the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation”

*Lumen Gentium* 48
“By virtue of an analogy which is not without value, the Church may be compared to the mystery of the Incarnate Word. Just as the nature taken by the Word is at his service as a living organ of salvation...so the social entity formed by the Church is at the service of the Spirit of Christ who gives it life with a view to the growth of the body”.

(LG8)
• The Church as the presence of Christ

• The Church as witness to Jesus

• The Church as servant of the World
St. Thomas Aquinas

• **Form & matter (Aristotle)**
  (matter is what something is made of; form is the unchanging nature)

In baptism, the matter of the sacrament is the water, the Trinitarian formula is the form: “I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”
Using Aristotle’s ideas, Aquinas concluded that sacraments were made up of a number of elements:

- **sacramentum tantum**
  *(the sign itself. For example, taking bread and wine and saying the words of consecration)*

- **res et sacramentum**
  *(the sign and reality signified)*

  What the sacrament ultimately aimed at was:

- **res tantum**
  *(the reality alone. In other words, the final effect of the sacrament (res) is grace which is conferred through an immediate effect (res et sacramentum)).*
“The Sacrament of the Eucharist is, in an absolute sense, the greatest of all the sacraments... in this sacrament, Christ himself is present substantially. All the other sacraments are ordered to this one as its end”.

(*Summa Theologica* III, question 65, article 3).
The Reformation
The Council of Trent

“If anyone says that sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord; or that there are more or fewer than seven, that is: baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, Order and matrimony; or that any one of these is not truly and properly a sacrament, anathema sit.’

‘If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation, but that they are superfluous; and that without the sacraments or the desire of them men obtain from God the grace of justification through faith alone, although it is true that not all sacraments are necessary for each person, anathema sit.

‘If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify or that they do not confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle in the way, as if they were only external signs of the grace or justice received through faith and a kind of mark of the Christian profession by which among men the faithful are distinguished from the unbelievers, anathema sit.”
“With the passage of time… certain features have crept into the rites of the sacraments and sacramentals which have made their nature and purpose less clear to the people of today. Hence, some changes are necessary to adapt them to present day needs.” (SC62)

“The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify people, to build up the body of Christ, and finally, to worship God. Because they are signs they also belong to the realm of instruction. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects, they also nourish, strengthen and express it. That is why they called sacraments of faith. They do indeed confer grace, but, in addition, the very act of celebrating them is most effective in making people ready to receive this grace to their profit, to worship God duly, and to practice charity. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that the faithful should easily understand the symbolism of the sacraments and should eagerly frequent those sacraments which were instituted to nourish the Christian life.” (SC59)
“He is present in the Sacrifice of the Mass not only in the person of the minister…but especially in the eucharistic species. By his power he is present in the sacraments so that when anybody baptises it is really Christ himself who baptises. He is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the Church. Lastly, he is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised “where two or three are together in my name there I am in the midst of them (Mt 18:20)” (SC7)
‘In Christian tradition, it means the participation of the People of God in the “work of God”. Through the liturgy, Christ, our redeemer and High Priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with and through his Church’. (1069)
“It is the whole community, the body of Christ united with its Head, that celebrates. ‘Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church which is ‘the sacrament of unity’.” (1140)
“Liturical services are not private functions but are celebrations of the Church which is the ‘sacrament of unity’, namely, the holy people united and arranged under their bishops. Therefore, liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church. They manifest it and have effects upon it. But they also touch individual members of the Church in different ways, depending on their orders, their role in the liturgical services, and their actual participation in them.” (SC 26)
“Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations, which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, ‘a Chosen Race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart’ (1Peter 2:9) have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism.

In the restoration and promotion of the Sacred Liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.” (SC 14: 6 &7)
1. Preference for a communal celebration
2. The active participation of the assembly
3. A reappraisal of liturgical ministries.