

What's the Matter?

By better understanding the matter of each sacrament, we can better worship and understand what God is doing in the sacrament. Let's look at the matter of a few sacraments.

Refer to holy water. **Water is the matter for which sacrament?** (Baptism.)

- Specifically, Baptism requires it to be holy water under ordinary circumstances. However, in the case of an emergency, any water can be used to baptize someone in immediate danger of death. Why do you think water was chosen as the matter? (Answers may vary.)
- One reason is because water is used to cleanse, and so it points to our souls being cleansed of Original Sin.

Refer to the sacred chrism. This is sacred chrism, which is perfumed oil used in multiple sacraments.

- **Sacred chrism is the matter for which sacraments?** (Confirmation and Holy Orders.)
- Sacred chrism is the matter for such sacraments because it is a sign of being chosen and strengthened for a specific mission.

Refer to unconsecrated hosts. These hosts are unconsecrated. **What does unconsecrated mean?** (The hosts are still bread; they are not the Eucharist.)

- They are simply bread that can become the Eucharist at Mass.
- So the priest could not use cookies or cake because it is not the proper matter.

Refer to unconsecrated wine. This wine is also unconsecrated, so it is still wine; it is not the Blood of Christ.

- **Why is grape wine the matter for the sacrament?** (It's what Jesus used.)
- So, we could not use something like grape juice or soda. **Again, if wine was not used but the priest used the right form, would it become the Blood of Christ?** (No.) **Why not?** (It's not the correct matter.)
- The priest could use red as well as white grape wine for Mass. Both are correct matter.