

## SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

In our world

In our Faith

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### *SIGN*

- **definition:** ANY object that represents something else. Often the connection between the sign and what it represents is arbitrary.
- **Examples:** “red” represents the color depicted above.
  - Stop sign / traffic signs
  - Math “symbols”

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### What is a “simple sign”?

- A direct, abstract object that only has one possible interpretation or meaning.
- “R-E-D” is a sign for the color, but we could USE RED to symbolize something else (like the blood of the martyrs or the fire of the Holy Spirit.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### *SYMBOLS*

- **Definition:** used to convey deeper meanings than simple signs. Symbols by nature can never be confined to narrow, one-dimensional meanings.
- They have the following three characteristics

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### *Qualities of symbols*

- 1. Symbols have more than one meaning
- 2. What symbols stand for is connected to what they are materially. (EX: Water can symbolize life because it is necessary to live. It can also symbolize death. Why?)
- 3. Symbols evoke more than one kind of response from us.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### What are our responses to symbols?

- We use our thought process, yes, but also
- memory,
- feelings,
- spirit ,
- senses

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Natural and Covenant Symbols

- The church uses both in our liturgies and churches.
- Covenant Symbols refer to Symbols used throughout the history of our faith.
- Examples include:
  - Consecrating with oil (King David was )
  - Immersion in water (Moses and the Israelites at the Red Sea)
  - Laying on of hands (Isaac gave his blessing to Jacob.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## *NATURE SYMBOLS*

- are know to all humans as symbols
- Are often found in nature:
  - water,
  - the ocean
  - the desert
  - trees
  - rocks
  - certain gestures (bowing, shaking hands)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## *CULTURAL SYMBOLS*

- these symbols only make sense in the context they are used in and lose their meaning in other places/ countries/ cultures
- flags
- uniforms
- music
- parades

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### *RITUALS*

- Definition: Symbolic **actions** that help us concretely, or physically, express our beliefs, values and deepest concerns.
- A RITUAL IS NOT A ROUTINE ACTIVITY. (like brushing teeth)
- Seven Characteristics of rituals:
  - 1. Rituals are repeated actions that have a symbolic or underlying meaning.
  - 2. Involve movement, gestures, and (sometimes) words that communicate a message

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### *Characteristics of Rituals*

- 3. Rituals require participation to be meaningful.
- 4. Rituals are part of a communal experience.
- 5. Rituals are often tied to important, key moments celebrated in our lives.
- 6. Rituals often link us to our past.
- 7. Rituals often use particular symbols with the gesture or movement.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---