

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. (James 5:14-15)

Those who are seriously ill need the special help of God's grace in this time of anxiety, lest they be broken in spirit and, under the pressure of temptation, perhaps weakened in their faith. This is why, through the sacrament of anointing, Christ strengthens the faithful who are afflicted by illness, providing them with the strongest means of support. (Pastoral Care of the Sick Introduction 5)

This sacrament gives the grace of the Holy Spirit to those who are sick; by this grace the whole person is helped and saved, sustained by trust in God, and strengthened against the temptations of the Evil One and against anxiety over death. Thus the sick person is able not only to bear suffering bravely, but also to fight against it. A return to physical health may follow the reception of this sacrament if it will be beneficial to the sick person's salvation. If necessary, the sacrament also provides the sick person with the forgiveness of sins and the completing of Christian penance. (ibid. 6)

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Formation of the Faithful

1. In public and private catechesis, the faithful should be educated to ask for the sacrament of anointing and, as soon as the right time comes, to receive it with full faith and devotion. They should not delay the reception of the sacrament. All who care for the sick should be taught the meaning of the sacrament. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 13)

Celebration of the Sacrament

1. The matter proper for the sacrament is olive oil or, according to circumstances, other oil derived from plants. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 20)
2. In addition to a bishop, any presbyter in case of necessity can bless the oil, but only in the actual celebration of the sacrament. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 21; c. 999)
3. The anointings, words, order and manner prescribed in the liturgical books are to be performed carefully. In case of necessity, however, a single anointing on the forehead or even on some other part of the body is sufficient, while the entire formula is said. (c. 1000)
4. The communal celebration of anointing of the sick for many of the sick at once can be performed for those who have been suitably prepared and are properly disposed... (c. 1002)

5. Adaptations by the Minister (from *Pastoral Care of the Sick* 40) The minister should take into account the particular circumstances, needs, and desires of the sick and of other members of the faithful and should willingly use the various opportunities the rites provide.
 - a. The minister should be especially aware that the sick tire easily and their physical condition may change from day to day and even from hour to hour. For this reason the celebration may be shortened if necessary.
 - b. When there is no group of the faithful present, the priest should remember that the Church is already present in his own person and in the one who is ill. For this reason he should try to offer the sick person the love and help of the Christian community both before and after the celebration of the sacrament.
 - c. Sick persons who regain their strength after being anointed should be encouraged to give thanks for the favor received by participating in a Mass of thanksgiving or by some other suitable means.

Minister of the Anointing of the Sick

1. A priest is the only proper minister of the anointing of the sick. This office is ordinarily exercised by bishops, pastors and their assistants, chaplains of health care facilities and superiors of clerical religious institutes. These ministers have the pastoral responsibility both of preparing and helping the sick and others who are present... of celebrating the sacrament. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 16, 17)
2. All priests to whom the care of souls has been entrusted have the duty and right of administering the anointing of the sick for the faithful entrusted to their pastoral office. For a just and reasonable cause, any other priest can administer this sacrament with at least the presumed consent of the priest mentioned above. (c. 1003, §2)
3. Any priest is permitted to carry blessed oil with him so that he is able to administer the sacrament of anointing of the sick in a case of necessity. (c. 1003, §3)
4. This sacrament is to be administered in a case of doubt whether the sick person has attained the use of reason, is dangerously ill, or is dead. (c. 1005)
5. When a priest has been called to attend those who are already dead, he should not administer the sacramental anointing. Instead, he should pray for them asking that God forgive their sins and graciously receive them into the kingdom. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 15)

Recipient of the Anointing of the Sick

1. The sacrament can be administered to a member of the faithful who, having reached the use of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age. (c. 1004, §1)
2. Sick children are to be anointed if they have sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by this sacrament. In case of doubt whether the sick child has reached the use of reason, the sacrament is to be conferred. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 12)
3. Elderly people may be anointed if they have become notably weakened even though no serious illness is present. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 11)
4. If the person has been anointed, but recovers and again becomes ill, or if the condition becomes more grave during the same illness, the person may be anointed again. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 9; c. 1004, §2)
5. The sacrament of anointing is to be on sick people who, although they have lost consciousness or the use of reason, would as Christian believers have at least implicitly

asked for it when they were in control of their faculties. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 14; c. 1006)

6. The anointing of the sick is not to be conferred upon those who persevere obstinately in manifest grave sin. (*Pastoral Care of the Sick* 15; c. 1007)