

## Anointing of the Sick in the home

- *Anointing of the Sick is NOT NECESSARILY the same as the “Last Rites.”*
- *Seriously ill, those facing death or surgery, and chronically ill people may be anointed.*
- *Call the priest to come and give the anointing.*
- *Prepare the sick-room with two candles, crucifix and holy water or water to be blessed. (sick call items can be purchased through the parish if there is time).*
- *Gather the family*
- *Greet the priest*
- *Join fully in the liturgy*
- *Those who are not prohibited from the sacraments may avail themselves freely.*
- *Those who are under some sanction by the church may only do so in danger of their own death.*
- *Patients who are near death can receive all the sacraments in accord with their state in life.*

the Catholic Church of those who are already baptized, Confession (and optional Apostolic Pardon), Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick and First Eucharist. These can only be done when a person who desired to be Catholic is facing immanent death and is still conscious and wants to die a Catholic. The immediate celebration Sacrament of Marriage is also possible in these cases.



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Serving the People  
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## The Anointing of the Sick: What Happened To The Last Rites???



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## The Last Rites is not the same as the Anointing of the Sick

For centuries the only help available for the sick was when they were near death, unless there happened to be a Saint around who had the gift of Healing. Not so, since Vatican II renewed the Seven Sacraments, and restored the original intent of the Anointing of the Sick.

The Last Rites, (Latin: *Unction in Extremis*) was the last anointing and was indeed done only for those who were at the point of death, whereas the Anointing of the Sick, (Latin *Unction Infirmatis*) was intended to pray for healing for the sick who where not near death. The text of both rites was from the Epistle of St. James, but rang dull for the dying, and had to be worked around to apply to them. The Second Vatican Council constitution called for a re-examination and re-founding of the various Sacramental and consecrating and blessing rites contained in the Collection of Rites known as the *colleccio rituum*. They were broken out into a larger collection now entitled *The Rites I & II* and the *Book of Blessings*.

The collection of rites called the Pastoral Care of the Sick contains the rite for The Anointing of the Sick, but also includes other rites for caring for the sick such as communion of the sick, viaticum, initiation, and the commendation of the dying.

### The Anointing of the Sick

The Anointing of the Sick properly understood is the Sacrament which asks God for healing of body, mind and/or soul which is reserved to a priest to confer. It is intended for those who are seriously ill, chronically ill, or near death. For the healing of

the soul, the sacrament forgives sins and restores sanctifying grace. For healing of the Body and mind, the sacrament places the condition of the sick person in the hands of God for a cure. We believe that God will heal every person according to His divine will and wisdom. We participate in that divine will, through this sacrament. Many times healing is accelerated by the power of this sacrament, given to the Church for our good and the upbuilding of the Faithful.

### Who May Be Anointed?

Any baptized person who is chronically ill, or seriously ill, or soon to have surgery, or weakened by years can be anointed. From time to time the parish will have a special Mass with the Anointing of the Sick, commonly called a Mass for the Sick or a healing mass. Anyone who comes to that mass and is subject to one of those categories of illness listed here can come forward for the anointing of the sick.

Chronic illnesses include the physically, psychologically or psychiatrically ill are also encouraged to seek the anointing of the sick. However, those who are not near death **AND** who are attached to serious sin such as married but not being married in the church, in an unmarried sexual relationship, or living with a partner as spouse may not approach the sacrament. **Remember, IMMANENT DEATH TRUMPS ALL THESE RESTRICTIONS.**

### When and How Often May One Be Anointed?

Every time there is a healing Mass, or there is a mass in a nursing home, or when one is not near either surgery or death is an appropriate frequency. As one approaches death, usually when the patient enters hospice care are normal times to call the priest. Then, when the patient is actively dying they should be also anointed again. The priest may also elect to anoint the patient every time he visits them.

### How is the Sacrament Celebrated?

When the priest is called, and just before he

arrives, two candles, holy water, and a crucifix should be placed near the sick bed. When the priest comes to the door, and you answer it, the following dialog is begun by the one who invites the priest into the house:

**“May the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ be praised!”**

“Now and forever.”

Then the priest says, “Peace to this house.”

and those present say **“And with your spirit.”**

Then the priest is conducted in silence to the sickroom where he begins the rite. He will lead you through the liturgy, advising you of the responses necessary. The outline of the rite goes as follows:

Greeting

Sprinkling with Holy Water

Instruction

Penitential Rite (optional personal confession)

Reading of the Gospel

Intercessions for the sick

Laying on of Hands

Thanksgiving for the oil, or blessing of oil  
Anointing of the sick person with closing prayer

The Lord’s Prayer

(Optional communion rite with post communion rite)

Blessing and dismissal.

After the anointing, and after the priest leaves, the family may want to pray the Rosary or some other prayer to support their loved one.

In a hospital the rite is often abbreviated to facilitate the work of doctors and nurses. It can be pared down to the absolutely minimally necessary formula for anointing with oil in emergent situations. There are longer protracted rites that can be done, if the situation permits including even Christian Initiation with Baptism or reception into

Turn to back cover