



Anointing of the Sick: Celebrating the Sacrament

The sacrament of the anointing of the sick is a celebration in which those who are seriously ill or infirm are surrounded and supported by other members of the Christian community, whether at home or in the house of the church (for those who can leave their beds and come here). In song and in silence, with scriptures and prayers, we strengthen the bonds of love and faith that are stronger than the most lethal disease and more powerful even than death. The sacrament may be celebrated in the context of a Mass, or on its own, depending on the needs of the person who is sick.

The celebration opens with brief introductory rites that help us remember that God is with us and that we are the body of Christ. Then follows a liturgy of the word, in which we hear scriptures that shed light on the meaning of sickness and suffering and the compassion of

our God, who suffers with us. Depending on the needs of the person who is sick, one brief passage or two or three readings and a psalm may be used. A homily may be preached, too.

Then the rite continues. The gathered church surrounds the person who is sick with the prayer of faith. In response to God's word, a litany is prayed. Then, the priest does the laying on of hands, an ancient sign of the moving of the Holy Spirit to heal and save. This is done in silence. Then a prayer is said over the oil of the sick. Finally, the priest anoints the head and the hands, and sometimes other parts of the body (the feet, for example, or the part of the body that is in pain) of the one who is sick. While anointing the sick person's head, the priest says "Through this holy anointing, may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit." And all answer "Amen!" While anointing the hands, the priest says, "May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up." And again, all answer "Amen!" If other parts of the body are anointed, no words are said. A final prayer is then said.

The liturgy of the eucharist, or simply the giving of communion, may follow. Or the rite ends with a blessing. If you or someone you know is in need of the anointing, please call the parish office.

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**Through the gift of your Spirit, you bless us,
even now, with comfort and healing,
strength and hope, forgiveness and peace.**

Preface, Anointing Within Mass

Blessed Trinity Catholic Community + Spirit of Christ Mission