

## **DIRECTIVE ON THE RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED AND CONSECRATED OILS IN THE PARISH CHURCH**

March 25, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

I have received a number of requests asking for a description of the oils blessed and consecrated at the Mass of Chrism.

While the "Presentation of the Oils" is not found in the Roman Missal, it is a long standing practice in the Diocese of London and elsewhere. This practice is optional and has been felt by many to be a helpful way of forming our assemblies and "building a bridge" between the Mass of Chrism and the Mass of the Lord's Supper.

The most commonly used practice when presenting the oils follows:

- 1) Sign of the Cross
- 2) Apostolic Greeting
- 3) Presentation of the Oils / processed and placed near but not on the altar
- 4) Kyrie
- 5) Gloria
- 6) Opening Collect

I would suggest that a parishioner with the ability to speak well, be invited to read the pieces below as each oil is processed.

Your community have the ability to sing some sort of festive refrain while the procession takes place.

### **Oil of the Sick**

This oil is used to anoint those who are sick so that the Lord who grants freedom from sin may save those who are sick and raise them up.

In blessing the Oil of the Sick the bishop prays that those anointed with this oil are freed from pain and illness and made well again in body, mind and soul.

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## **Oil of Catechumens**

This oil is used at the beginning of the celebration of baptism to anoint those who will be baptized. It may also be used during the period of the catechumenate whenever it seems beneficial or desirable. The meaning of this anointing is that those preparing for baptism be strengthened with the power of Christ.

## **Sacred Chrism**

The Sacred Chrism is used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and ordination. It is also used in the Dedication of a Church and Altar. Balsam or other perfume is added to the oil that is to be consecrated as Chrism.

The newly baptized are anointed with the Sacred Chrism after baptism so that they may always live as a member of Christ's body, sharing everlasting life. This anointing is omitted when adults are baptized.

In the celebration of confirmation the candidates are anointed with the Sacred Chrism and sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit they received in baptism.

In the celebration of ordination the hands of the priests are anointed with the Sacred Chrism that they may be preserved by Jesus to sanctify the Christian people and to offer sacrifice to God. In the ordination of a bishop the head of the bishop is anointed that Christ may pour out the oil of mystical anointing and enrich the bishop with spiritual blessings.

In the Dedication of a Church and Altar both the altar and the walls of the church are anointed with the Sacred Chrism that through the power of God the altar and the building may be made holy, visible signs of the mystery of Christ and his Church.

In the consecration of the Sacred Chrism the bishop prays that the Chrism will be a sign of life and salvation for those who have been reborn in the waters of baptism.

Yours,

Reverend Michael Bechard  
Director of Liturgy

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