

Sacraments of Healing and Vocation
Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

Father Bob Knippenberg

Week 2

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 AM

Thursday, October 22, 2020 PM

The Holy Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

Let us pray...

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator, come
From thy bright heavenly throne!
Come take possession of our souls,
And make them all thine own!
Thou who art called the Paraclete,
Best gift of God above,
The living spring, the living fire,
Sweet Unction, and true love!...
All glory to the Father be,
And to the risen Son;
The same to thee, O Paraclete,
While endless ages run. Amen.

What is the Anointing of the Sick?

The sacrament by which God gives health to the soul—and sometimes the body—through prayer and an anointing with oil.

Oil in the Sacred Scriptures

- Used as a commodity of trade or personal income.
- Consumed daily as part of the daily Semitic diet.
- Used as fuel for lamps in the tabernacle (temple) or homes.
- Used as a soap/lubricant for one's hair and skin (sometimes with a special sense of honor, as an aromatic substance).
- Used as a medication or in healing contexts.
- Used for royal and religious ritual procedures and in figurative expressions (e.g., for fertility and prosperity [Deut 33:24 ; Job 29:6] "oil of joy" [Psalm 45:7 ; Isa 61:3 ; Heb 1:9]).

“Oil of Anointing”

- The “oil of anointing” (שמן המשחה *shemen ha-mishchah*) formed an integral part of the ordination of the priesthood and the High Priest as well as in the consecration of the articles of the Tabernacle (Exodus 30:26) and subsequent temples in Jerusalem.
- The primary purpose of anointing with the holy anointing oil was to sanctify, to set the anointed person or object apart as *qodesh*, or "holy" (Exodus 30:29).
- Originally, the oil was used exclusively for the priests and the Tabernacle articles, but its use was later extended to include kings.

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Christ Healing the Sick

- Christ used many physical signs to heal the sick.
 - Laying on of hands
 - Mud
 - Washing
 - Saliva
- So we are not the least bit surprised that he continues to do so today through the agency of his Church's ministers.

"Signs" of the Coming of the Kingdom

- The writers of the New Testament Gospels used three Greek words to describe miracles.
- One of these words is *dunamis* (plural *dunameis*), translated as "mighty deed" (see Matthew 11:20–21,23; 13:54,58; 14:2; Mark 6:2,5,14; 9:39; Luke 10:13, 19:37). It is the root of our English words dynamic and dynamite.
- Another Greek word used to describe miracles is *semeion* (see Luke 23:8; John 2:11,23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2,14,26; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18,37). Translated as "sign," *semeion* can mean "a token by which a person is distinguished from others" or "a wonder by which God authenticates a person sent by God."
- A third related term used to describe miracles in the New Testament is *teras* (pl. *terata*), translated as "wonder," as in the phrase "signs and wonders" (see Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22; John 4:48; Acts 2:19,22,43, 4:30).

God's Involvement in Human History

- Examining the many references to miracles (healings) in the New Testament Gospels, it is obvious that none of them involve scientific inquiries into the "how" of miracles.
- Instead, they relate to **God's involvement in human history**.
- Sometimes miracles (healings) are presented in Sacred Scripture as signs or portents of someone or something greater than the wondrous object or activity, but always the stories are told to demonstrate that **God is disposed to intervene on behalf of creation**.

So, When did Christ institute the sacrament?

- Simple answer: We don't know!
- But, it is intimated in the Gospel according to St. Mark:
 - "They [the Twelve] drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them." (Mark 6:13)
- And, certainly, St. James [A.D. 90-100] speaks of the sacrament:
 - "Is there anyone sick among you? Let them send for the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. The

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prayer of faith will save the sick man and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, they will be forgiven him.” (James 5:14-15)

Who May Receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

- It is for those who are baptized and are in danger of death and/or whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age.
- The sacrament may be repeated if the sick person recovers after being anointed and then again falls ill or if during the same illness the person’s condition becomes more serious.
- A sick person may be anointed before surgery whenever a serious illness is the reason for the surgery.
- Elderly people may be anointed if they have become notably weakened even though no serious illness is present.
- Sick children are to be anointed if they have sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by this sacrament. In case of doubt, the sacrament is to be conferred.

Matter, Form & Minister

- The matter of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is **Oil of the Sick** (blessed by the bishop at the Chrism Mass during Holy Week) and the action of anointing.
- The form of the sacrament is the prayer said while anointing.
- The minister is a bishop or priest.

Viaticum, Extreme Unction & the Apostolic Pardon

- Viaticum (Latin, *food for the journey*) is the name for the Holy Eucharist when it is given to those who are dying.
- Extreme Unction was the name for the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in the days when it was normally administered only to people on the verge of death.
- Today, when the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is administered to those on the verge of death, the sacramental rite includes the *Apostolic Pardon*:
 - “By the authority which the Apostolic See has given me, I grant you a full pardon and the remission of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, † and of the Holy Spirit.”

Effects of the Sacrament

- Unites the suffering person to the Passion of Christ
- Provides strength, peace & courage to endure the sufferings of illness or old age
- Forgives sins and reduces or removes temporal punishment due for sin
- Can restore health (if it is good for the salvation of the person’s soul)
- Prepares the recipient for death and entry into eternal life in heaven

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Homework!

- Answer Anointing of the Sick “Discussion Questions,” p. 84 (if you have not already done so).
- Read Chapter 9, The Sacrament of Holy Orders, pp. 85-96.