



St. Agnes Parish, Waterloo February 11, 2014 - 2pm.

Once referred to as Extreme Unction or The Last Rites, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick was previously most commonly administered to the dying, for the remission of sins and the provision of spiritual strength and health. Now, its

use is for all who are gravely ill, those about to undergo a serious operation, anyone who feels a need for healing physically, emotionally, spiritually, psychologically - illness of any sort - and the Church stresses a secondary effect of the sacrament: to help a person recover his health. Like Confession and Holy Communion, to which it is closely linked, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick can be repeated as often as is necessary.

Where does it come from?

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick goes back to biblical times. When Christ sent His disciples out to preach, "they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (Mark 6:13). James 5:14-15 ties physical healing to the forgiveness of sins:

Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.

I'm not dying - can I receive the anointing?

Following this biblical understanding, the Catechism of the Catholic Church notes that:

The Anointing of the Sick "is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. As soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for him to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived." When in doubt, priests should err on the side of caution and provide the sacrament to the faithful who request it.

How do I receive the Sacrament of the Sick?

When you call for the Sacrament of the Sick, whether a priest visits you, or you visit him, or whether you attend a Mass which includes the anointing, the essential rite of the sacrament consists in the priest laying hands on you, anointing you with blessed oil on the head and hands (usually olive oil blessed by a bishop, but in an emergency, any vegetable oil will suffice), and praying "Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up."

When circumstances permit, the Church recommends that the sacrament take place during Mass, or at least that it be preceded by Confession and followed by Holy Communion.

Who can give me the Sacrament of the Sick?

Only priests (including bishops) can administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, since, when the sacrament was instituted during Christ's sending out of His disciples, it was confined to the men who would become the original bishops of the Church. Therefore, neither Deacons nor lay people can confer the anointing.

What does it do for me?



And the God
of all grace ... will himself
restore you and make you
strong, firm and steadfast.
1 Peter 5:10, NIV

Received in faith and in a state of grace, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick provides you with a number of graces, including the strength to resist temptation in the face of death, when you are weakest; a union with the Passion of Christ, which makes your suffering holy; and the grace to prepare for death, so that you may meet God in hope rather than in fear. If you were not able to receive the Sacrament of Confession, Anointing also provides forgiveness of sins. And, if it will aid in the salvation of your soul, Anointing may restore your health.

Anyone in your family or among your friends who may need the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is invited to call the Parish Office to arrange to receive the Sacrament in your time of need.