

Who can receive this Sacrament?

The Church reminds us that this Sacrament is not only for those at the point of death, but should be administered to a baptized Catholic who has reached the age of reason and who:

- begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age
- or will be having a serious surgery, whenever it is due to a dangerous illness
- or when a person is weakened, though not dangerously ill, because of old age.

The Sacrament is not intended for everyday colds, aches and pains, and it is not to be administered indiscriminately. If in doubt as to whether the time for Anointing of the Sick has come, you may always seek the advice of your parish priest or priest chaplain.

Who can administer this Sacrament?

Only priests can administer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

Can it be received more than once?

The Anointing of the Sick can be repeated whenever the sick person again falls into a serious sickness after convalescing or when a more serious crisis develops during the same sickness.

What are the effects of this Sacrament?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church lists four effects of this Sacrament (CCC1520-1523):

#1. *A particular gift of the Holy Spirit* strengthening the person against the temptation to discouragement and anguish in the face of death through the power of the Holy Spirit the sick person is led to the healing of the soul and, God willing, also of the body. This Sacrament forgives the sins of the sick person who is rightly disposed, but unable of making a Sacramental Confession. *If it is possible, prior to the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the sick person should have the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

#2. *A closer union with the Passion of Christ* by which suffering “becomes a participation in the saving work of Jesus.”

#3. *An ecclesial grace* by which the Church intercedes for the benefit of the sick person and the sick person to the sanctification of the Church.

#4. *A preparation for the final journey.* The name previously given this Sacrament was ‘Extreme Unction’ – *the Last Anointing*. “It completes the holy anointings that mark the whole Christian life” which began with the anointing in Baptism and Confirmation. “This last anointing fortifies the end of our earthly life like a solid rampart for the final struggles before entering the Father’s house.”

How is this Sacrament celebrated?

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is not meant to be a private celebration, although in some cases that may be the only way possible. Many dioceses and parishes hold communal celebrations of Anointing of the Sick during the year and especially on February 11th, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, which Pope John Paul II has instituted as the World Day of the Sick.



Communal

It is encouraged to celebrate this Sacrament within the Mass with special prayers and readings.

After the homily, there is a litany of prayers for those who will be anointed and for those who care for them.

The priest then extends his hands over the sick and in silence prays over them for the power of the Holy Spirit to bring healing.

Those who are to be anointed are called forward.

The priest makes the sign of the cross with the blessed oil on the person’s forehead, saying: **“Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit”**. The person responds: **“Amen”**.

Then the priest anoints the palms of the hands and says: “**May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up**”. The person responds: “**Amen**”.

Individual

In the home or hospital the priest begins with the sign of the cross and the sprinkling with holy water recalling our baptism.

Depending on the condition of the sick person, the priest may read from the Scriptures and offer prayers.

The priest then imposes hands over the head of the one to be anointed and anoints the forehead and hands of the sick person.

The priest prays for the sick person, and invites those present to pray The Lord’s Prayer.

Holy Communion may be received at this time.

The priest then blesses the sick person and all those present.



Reflection on Suffering and Death from St. Theresa of Lisieux

Life passes. Eternity comes to meet us with great strides. Soon, we shall be living with the very life of Jesus. Having drunk deep at the source of all bitterness, we shall be deified in the very source of all joys, of all delights.

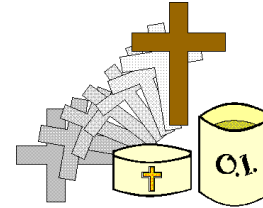
Life is only a dream: soon, we shall awaken. And what joy! The greater our sufferings, the more limitless our glory. Oh! Do not let us waste the trial Jesus sends.



Produced by the Pastoral Care Committee of the Catholic Health Association of BC in collaboration with the Bishops of BC and Yukon.

For additional copies of this leaflet please contact the office of the Catholic Health Association of BC at 604-524-3427 or e-mail: smhouse@shawlink.ca

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick



Scriptural Foundation

“Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him and anoint him in the name of the Lord. This prayer, made in faith, will save the sick man. The Lord will restore his health, and if he has committed any sins, they will be forgiven.” (James 5:14-15)

This passage from the Letter of James is the scriptural basis for the Anointing of the Sick, the Sacrament through which the Church continues to carry out the healing ministry of Jesus. All baptized Catholics, whether practising or not, are welcome, worthy and encouraged to receive this holy anointing.

Jesus instituted seven sacraments, among them the Anointing of the Sick. During His public life Jesus identified Himself with the sick and suffering, and much of His ministry was dedicated to miracles of healing and forgiveness. His compassion for the sick continues in the life and ministry of the Church, particularly in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.