

## **SECTION 11: ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

The following policies shall be followed in regard to the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

### **11.1 CELEBRATION OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

- The oil used in the anointing of the sick is to be the oil blessed by a bishop.
- In case of necessity, any priest may bless the oil, but only during the celebration of the sacrament.
- Priests are to make certain that the sick and infirm are supported and strengthened by this sacrament.
- Communal celebrations of this sacrament are allowed in churches, hospitals and nursing homes. Those who are to be anointed are to be duly prepared and rightly disposed.

### **11.2 MINISTER OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

Only a validly ordained priest may celebrate the anointing of the sick. Priests are allowed to carry the blessed oil of the sick so they can administer the sacrament in case of necessity.

### **11.3 THOSE WHO MAY RECEIVE THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

**11.3.1** The anointing of the sick may be administered to those who have reached the age of reason when one of the following conditions is met:

- They are seriously ill
- They are weakened due to advanced age, even if no serious illness is present
- They are preparing for surgery due to serious illness.

**11.3.2** The sacrament may be repeated whenever the person becomes sick again after recuperation, or whenever a more serious state of illness develops during the same illness.

**11.3.3** The sacrament may be administered even if there is doubt as to whether the person has attained the use of reason and to those who are unconscious.

**11.3.4** The sacrament may also be administered in cases where the priest is unsure whether the person is alive or dead.

## 11.4 ANOINTING OF THE SICK FOR THOSE WHO ARE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

Priests may celebrate the sacrament of anointing of the sick for Orthodox Christians if:

- The person asks for it on their own;
- They are properly disposed. (*c.f.*, Canon 844.3)

## 11.5 ANOINTING OF THE SICK FOR THOSE WHO ARE EPISCOPALIANS OR PROTESTANTS

Priests may celebrate the anointing of the sick for Episcopalians or Protestants who are in danger of death if:

- They cannot approach their own minister;
- They freely ask for the sacrament;
- They have Catholic faith in regard to the sacrament;
- They are properly disposed. (*c.f.*, Canon 844.4)

*In all other* cases, the prior permission of the Archbishop is to be obtained before the sacrament is celebrated for Protestants.

## 11.6 ANOINTING BEFORE HOSPITALIZATION

A number of medical treatments formerly conducted on an in-patient basis are now provided on an out-patient basis. Some of these treatments deal with illnesses which may be of a very serious nature. Since patients often arrive at the hospital the morning of the medical treatment, hospital chaplains are unable to celebrate the sacrament of the anointing of the sick with them prior to the medical treatment. It is advisable that, where possible, these persons should be anointed in their parishes prior to admission to the hospital.

**11.6.1** Parish clergy should periodically publicize the following announcement:

*"Is there anyone sick among you? He should ask for the presbyters of the church. They, in turn, are to pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord..."* (James

5:J.4-J.5)

*Parishioners who are seriously ill or anticipating hospitalization for a serious illness are requested to call the parish office if they wish to receive the sacrament. Some hospitals provide full time priest/chaplains. Patients are regularly visited and offered the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, as well as daily Communion. This, however, presumes inpatient admission. Those patients who are interested in receiving this sacrament, but are scheduled for outpatient or same day surgery, should call the parish office to ensure anointing before going to the hospital.*

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