

14

Sacrament of the Anointing of the sick



14.1 Picture - The Anointing of the Sick

Since Lord Jesus is the divine healer, He can not only heal the sick but also forgive the sins. He gave that power to the apostles: “Cure the sick,” (Matthew 10:8). His apostles practiced that power later on. The following passage testifies to that:

Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.

(James 5:14-15)

According to the teachings of the apostles, the anointing of the sick is done by the priests. With regard to the Anointing of the sick, “Catholic Family Catechism” says:

The Sacrament which confers spiritual strength and physical strength to a person who is seriously sick is the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

This Sacrament of the Anointing of the sick was earlier more commonly called the Sacrament of the Extreme Unction because it was conferred on persons who were critically sick and often happened to be the last anointing in person's life.

However, it is wrong to believe that this Sacrament is conferred only when a person is in danger of death. This Sacrament has also healing power and causes the recovery of the sick.

(Catholic Family Catechism 267)

Those who are eligible to receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

- ★ Those who are in danger of death due to their old age or sicknesses
- ★ Those who are to undergo critical surgery
- ★ Those who are not in danger of death but can die in a short time

Each time a Christian falls seriously ill, he may receive the Anointing of the Sick, and also when, after he has received it, the illness worsens.

(CCC1529)

The Special Graces and Effects of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (CCC 1532)

- The uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church;
- The strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age;
- The forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the Sacrament of Penance;
- The restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul;
- The preparation for passing over to eternal life.

This Sacrament has to be conferred to the person in need so that he may have these graces. For that the priest has to be called. Before the priest comes, the place and the person have to be prepared.

Things that are to be prepared, before the priest arrives

- ★ Having laid a cloth on a table, cross and a lamp have to be kept on it
- ★ A serviette / towel, a basin of water, cake of soap, etc. have to be ready
- ★ Clean the sick person and the place as much as possible

Having made the sick person understand that the anointing of the Sick is not for the dying but for the sick, he is to prepare physically and spiritually to receive the Sacrament. This should not alarm the sick person and therefore, his fear has to be eliminated.

Do not wait till a patient is critically ill to confer the Sacrament

Let us look after the sick. Do not think that it is a burden. We know that the Anointing of the Sick grants many graces. As children of God, let us prepare the sick in advance to receive the Sacrament without waiting till the last moment. Let us recognize those in need of this Sacrament and make it known to the parish priest.

Activity



1. Name three graces of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
2. Write one of your duties towards the sick.
3. Write a prayer that can be said when a sick person is visited.



For Life

Let us pray for the sick at the daily prayers.