

# Anointing of the Sick

## I. Compare its Development in History

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	Early Church	Middle Ages	Vatican II Reform
<i>What</i>	Custom of anointing sick	Extreme Unction	Anointing of the Sick
<i>For whom</i>	For Sick	For Dying	For Sick
<i>Purpose</i>	To heal whole person --physical, mental, emotional, spiritual --restore to community life	To forgive sins --spiritual healing only --to go to heaven	To heal whole person --physical, mental, emotional, spiritual --restore to community life
<i>Who anoints</i>	By clergy or lay persons	By priest only	By priest only
<i>Where anoint</i>	On body, painful area (to heal)	On senses (to forgive sins)	On forehead & hands, painful area
<i>With anointing</i>	Anoint, Prayer, Laying on Hands	Confession, Viaticum, Extreme Unction --“Last Rites”	Anoint, Prayer, Laying on Hands --term “Last Rites” no longer used --May do with confession & viaticum only in emergency.

## II. Current Rite in Pastoral Care of the Sick

### Blessing of the Oil of the Sick

“God of all consolation,  
you chose and sent your Son to **heal** the world.  
Graciously listen to our prayer of faith:  
send the power of your Holy Spirit, the **Consoler**,  
into this precious oil,  
this soothing ointment,  
this rich gift,  
this fruit of the earth.

“Bless this oil + and sanctify it for our use.

“Make this oil a **remedy**  
for all who are anointed with it;  
**heal them in body in soul, and in spirit,**  
and deliver them from every affliction. ...”

### Anointing Outside Mass

#### Outline of the Rite

#### INTRODUCTORY RITES

Greeting  
Sprinkling with Holy Water  
Instruction  
Penitential Rite

#### LITURGY OF THE WORD

Reading  
Response

#### LITURGY OF ANOINTING

Litany  
Laying on of Hands  
Prayer over the Oil  
Anointing  
Prayer after Anointing  
The Lord's Prayer

#### [LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION]

Communion  
Silent Prayer  
Prayer after Communion

#### CONCLUDING RITE

Blessing

*Here is what the official ritual book says about the **three key aspects of anointing the sick**: prayer, laying on hands, anointing with oil. Pastoral Care of the Sick, nos 104-107, emphasis added.*

#### CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING

104 “There are **three distinct and integral aspects** to the celebration of this sacrament: the **prayer of faith**, the **laying on of hands**, and the **anointing with oil**.

105 “*Prayer of faith*: The community, asking God's help for the sick, makes its prayer of faith in **response to God's word** and in a spirit of trust (see James 5:14-15). In the rites for the sick, it is the **people of God who pray** in faith. The **entire Church is made present** in this community --represented by at least the priest, family, friends, and others assembled to pray for those to be anointed. If they are able, the **sick persons should also join in this prayer**.

106 “*Laying on of hands*: The gospels contain a number of instances in which **Jesus healed the sick** by the laying on of hands or even by the simple gesture of touch. The ritual has **restored** to major significance the gesture of the laying on of hands with its several meanings.

“With this gesture the priest indicates that **this particular person** is the object of the Church's prayer of faith. The laying on of hands is clearly **a sign of blessing**, as we pray that by the power of God's healing grace the sick person may be **restored to health or at least strengthened** in time of illness. The laying on of hands is also an invocation: the Church prays for the **coming of the Holy Spirit** upon the sick person. Above all, it is the **biblical** gesture of healing and indeed **Jesus' own usual manner of healing**: ‘They brought the sick with various diseases to him; and he laid hands on every one of them and healed them’ (Luke 4:40).

107 “*Anointing with oil*: The practice of anointing the sick with oil **signifies healing, strengthening, and the presence of the Spirit**. In the gospel of Mark the disciples were sent out by the Lord to continue his healing ministry: ‘They anointed many sick people with oil and cured them’ (Mark 6:13). And Saint James witnesses to the fact that the Church continued to anoint the sick with oil as both a means and a sign of healing (James 5:14). The Church's use of oil for healing is closely related to its **remedial use in soothing and comforting** the sick and in restoring the tired and the weak. Thus the sick person is strengthened to fight against the physically and spiritually debilitating effects of illness. The prayer for blessing the oil of the sick reminds us, furthermore, that the oil of anointing is the sacramental sign of the presence, power, and grace of the Holy Spirit.

“If the anointing is to be an effective sacramental symbol, there should be a **generous use of oil** so that it will be **seen and felt** by the sick person as a **sign of the Spirit's healing and strengthening** presence. For the same reason, it is **not desirable to wipe off** the oil after the anointing.”