

# The Sacraments: Anointing of the Sick

THE SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK IS THE SECOND OF THE SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

-CCC. NOS. 1499-1532



James 5

## Patience in Suffering

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Indeed we call blessed those who showed endurance. You have heard of the endurance of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

<sup>12</sup> Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "Yes" be yes and your "No" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

## The Prayer of Faith

<sup>13</sup> Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. <sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven.

## CHRIST'S COMPASSION FOR THE SICK

*Christ's compassion toward the sick and his healings of almost every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that "God has visited his people."*

-CCC, no. 1503, citing Lk 7:16

Jesus came to heal the whole person, body and soul. Mark's Gospel, chapter 2:1-12, relates the following event that illustrates this teaching. Jesus was in a house in Capernaum teaching an overflow crowd. The house was probably a stone dwelling whose walls were coated with plaster. The rooms surrounded an inner courtyard. A roof of reeds and sticks packed with thick clay would have kept out the rain. Opening a hole in the roof would have been relatively easy. Since they could not enter by the door because of the crowd, four men, carrying a paralytic, climbed the stairway that led to the roof. They opened a hole in it and lowered their friend into the area where Jesus was preaching.

Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Your sins are forgiven" (Mk 2:5).

Scripture makes no comment on the man's reaction. But into that spiritual moment a discordant note emerged. Some religious scholars in the group complained inwardly that Jesus was blasphemous because, according to them, only God could forgive sins. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, challenged them: "Which is easier to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"-he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home" (Mk 2:9-11). The man rose and went home. The people glorified God for Christ's healing of soul and body.

The Anointing of the Sick was practiced by Jesus and continued by his disciples: "And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them." (Mk 6:13)

It is continued today through the Church.

The Church carries forward Christ's healing ministry in a variety of approaches. Catholic families in countless ways care for family members who are ill. There are numerous inspiring stories of an aging spouse who personally ministers to an ailing spouse in cases of Alzheimer's and other illnesses. Caregivers find that faith and prayer mean a great deal to them in these situations.

A multitude of religious orders and congregations have established Catholic hospitals to take care of the physical and spiritual needs of the sick. Church-sponsored hospice care is another form of this ministry of healing. Besides the doctors, nurses, and chaplains, there are occasional instances of individuals with the charism (gift) of healing. "The Holy Spirit gives to some a special charism of healing, so as to make manifest the power of grace of the risen Lord" (CCC, no. 1508).

Millions of believers journey to shrines like the one at Lourdes, often in search of physical cures but always to experience a deepening of faith. The Church requires healing miracles as part of the canonization process, the procedure for declaring the sainthood of a given person.

## A SACRAMENT OF HEALING

*The Anointing of the Sick "is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence as soon as anyone of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived."*

— CCC, no. 1514, citing SC, no. 73

### **1. When should we receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?**

The proper time for receiving this holy anointing has certainly arrived when the believer begins to be in danger of death because of illness or old age. 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. (CCC, nos. 1528, 1529)

### **2. Who are the ministers of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?**

Only priests . . . and bishops can give the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, using oil blessed by the bishop, or if necessary by the celebrating presbyter [priest or celebrant] himself. (CCC, no. 1530)

### **3. What are the effects of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?**

The special grace of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects:

- the uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church;
- [giving the sick person the strength], peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age;
- [imparting] the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance;
- [providing for] the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul;
- [helping the sick person in] the preparation for passing over to eternal life. (CCC, no. 1532)

## MEDITATION

### Good Shepherd Psalm

The sick and the dying of every age have been consoled by the verses of the Shepherd Psalm (Ps 23). They are further inspired by Christ's words, "I am the good shepherd, and I know mine and mine known me. . . . I have come so that they may have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:14, 10). It is not hard for them to see Jesus as the shepherd of the twenty-third Psalm. The Psalm expresses trust in the divine shepherd so needed when one is ill. "The LORD is my shepherd; / there is nothing I lack" (v. 1).

"In green pastures, you let me graze" (v. 2). A shepherd leads his sheep to the rough herbage, then to the smoother grass, and then to the sweet grass of the green pastures where they rest. Jesus abides with the sick throughout their rough moments and guides them to peaceful acceptance and an experience of a soul at rest.

"To safe waters you lead me" (v. 2). Sheep are nervous about drink-ing from running streams. The shepherd often constructs pools of still waters to ease their thirst. Illness breaks the running pace of life, but there is still the need of calming down. Jesus brings the patients an inner stillness that permits the believers to drink of the renewing fountains of his love.

"Even when I walk through a dark valley, / I fear no harm, for you are at my side; / your rod and staff give me courage" (v. 4). In search of better pastures, the shepherd sometimes leads the sheep through dangerous valleys. The sheep may fall into a hole. The shepherd uses the curved part at the top of his staff to gently pull the sheep to safety. Wild dogs and wolves may come to threaten the flock. The shepherd uses the pointed end of his staff to kill them or drive them away. Jesus knows that suffering people are in their own dark valley. Jesus is with them to remove their fears and awaken their hope. There are times that Jesus drives away life-threatening ills through his ministers in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

"You set a table before me. / . . . You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows" (v. 5). In some pastures there is so much rough herbage that the shepherd must harvest the edible grasses and place these on table-like stones from which the sheep may dine. Jesus himself is the Bread of Life who comes to his friends in pain. Communion for the sick is one of Christ's most consoling gifts. When the sheep have wounds caused by thorns, the shepherd anoints them with oil. When they have a fever, the shepherd bathes their heads in cool water. With holy oil Jesus anoints the sick.

"I will dwell in the house of the LORD / for years to come" (v. 6).

The shepherd knows the sheep need him to guard their home. Jesus says he is the gate of the sheepfold (the enclosure where they live). In biblical times the shepherd served as the gate to the sheepfold. He was the living gate, guarding them with his body. To enter the community of Christ the beloved, both the sick and the healthy must enter through his body that will guard them. People in suffering and pain are disposed to the faith that sees these truths. Christ is their guardian.

## PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you chose to share our human nature, to redeem all people, and to heal the sick.

Look with compassion upon your servants whom we have anointed in your name with this holy oil for the healing of their body and spirit.

Support them with your power, comfort them with your protection, and give them the strength to fight against evil.

Since you have given them a share in your own passion, help them to find hope in suffering,

for you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

*-From Pastoral Care of the Sick*

# The Sacraments: Holy Orders

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS IS AT THE SERVICE OF THE  
COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH  
-CCC, NOS. 1533-1600

Genesis 14

## Abram Blessed by Melchizedek

<sup>17</sup> After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley).<sup>18</sup> And King Melchizedek of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High.<sup>19</sup> He blessed him and said,

“Blessed be Abram by God Most High,  
maker of heaven and earth;

<sup>20</sup> and blessed be God Most High,  
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!”

And Abram gave him one-tenth of everything.

## Holy Orders – The Call to Christ's Ministerial Priesthood

Jesus Christ entrusted a mission to his apostles that will continue to be carried out in the church until the end of time. “Holy Orders” is the sacrament that confers this special apostolic ministry and mission that Jesus gave to his apostles. It includes three degrees:



### The Episcopate:

By ordination to the episcopacy, bishops receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders and become successors of the Apostles. Through this Sacrament, a bishop belongs to the college of bishops and serves as the visible head or pastor of the local church entrusted to his care. As a college, the bishops have care and concern for the apostolic mission of all the churches in union with and under the authority of the Pope—the head of the college of bishops, the Bishop of Rome, and the successor of St. Peter.

### The Presbyterate:

By ordination, "priests are united with the bishops in [priestly] dignity and at the same time depend on them in the exercise of their pastoral functions; they are called to be the bishops' prudent co-workers" (CCC, no. 1595). With the bishop, priests form a *presbyteral* (priestly) community and assume with him the pastoral mission for a particular parish. The bishop appoints priests to the pastoral care of parishes and to other diocesan ministries. The priest promises obedience to the bishop in service to God's people.

## **The Diaconate:**

The title *deacon* comes from the Greek word *diakonia* meaning "servant." A deacon has a special attachment to the bishop in the tasks of service and is configured to Christ, the Deacon-or Servant-of all (cf. CCC, nos. 1569-1570).

"There are two degrees of ministerial participation in the priesthood of Christ: the episcopacy and the presbyterate. The diaconate is intended to help and serve them" (CCC, no. 1554). The three degrees of the Sacrament of Holy Orders-bishop, priest, and deacon-are all conferred by ordination.

Deacons receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders from a bishop and are ordained not to the ministerial priesthood but to the ministry of service. Through ordination the deacon is conformed to Christ, who came to serve, not to be served. In the Latin Church, deacons may baptize, proclaim the Gospel, preach the homily, assist the bishop or priest in the celebration of the Eucharist, assist at and bless marriages, and preside at funerals. They dedicate themselves to charitable endeavors, which was their ministerial role in New Testament times.

Whether they are involved in the Church's liturgical or pastoral life or in her social and charitable endeavors, deacons are "strengthened by the imposition of hands that has come down from the apostles. They would be more closely bound to the altar and their ministry would be made more fruitful through the sacramental grace of the diaconate" (AG, 16, no. 6).

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Latin Church has restored the diaconate as a permanent rank of the hierarchy. Now, diaconate as a permanent office may also be conferred on both married and unmarried men. The Eastern Churches have always retained it. Seminarians preparing for priesthood have always been ordained to the diaconate before ordination to priesthood.

## **ORDINATION**

*Let everyone revere the deacons as Jesus Christ, the bishop as image of the Father, and the presbyters as the senate of God and the assembly of the apostles. For without them, one cannot speak of the Church.*

-CCC, no. 1554, citing St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad. Trail.* 3, 1

## **The Priesthood – The Old Testament through Today**

The Church adopted the term *order* from its use in the Roman Empire, where it referred to a governing group. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, there are three degrees or "orders": bishop, priest, and deacon. The rite of ordination is the sacramental act that makes this possible. Ordination "confers a gift of the Holy Spirit that permits the exercise of a 'sacred power' ... which can come only from Christ himself through the Church" (CCC, no. 1538).

The first priest figure to appear in the Old Testament is Melchizedek, who offered a sacrifice of bread and wine on behalf of the patriarch Abraham (Gn 14:18-20). He symbolized the permanence of priesthood: "Like Melchizedek you are a priest forever" (Ps 110:4). God also chose Aaron and his sons to be priests

(Ex 28:1ff.) and designated the tribe of Levi for liturgical service. They acted on behalf of the people and offered gifts and sacrifices for sins. They proclaimed God's Word and led people to communion with him through sacrifices and prayers.

But these priests were unable to provide the fullness of salvation or definitive sanctification for the people. Only the sacrifice of Jesus Christ could bring this about. The priesthood of Melchizedek, Aaron, and the Levites prefigured the priesthood of Christ, as is seen in consecration prayers for the ordination of bishops, priests, and deacons.

The priesthood of the Old Testament found its perfect fulfillment in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, who is the one mediator between God and us. Jesus' sacrifice of himself on the Cross was a priestly act of perfect self-offering accepted by the Father and culminating in his Resurrection from the dead so that, as Risen Lord and High Priest, he continues to offer salvation to all.

By Baptism, all the members of the Church share in Christ's holy priesthood. It is called "the common priesthood of the faithful" because the entire Church shares in it. To build up this priesthood, Christ gives to his Church the ordained ministries of bishops, priests, and deacons through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Only the ordained bishop and priest may be ministers of Confirmation (or Chrismation), the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Only bishops may ordain deacons, priests, and other bishops. "The ministerial priesthood differs in essence from the common priesthood of the faithful because it confers a sacred power for the service of the faithful. The ordained ministers exercise their service for the People of God by teaching (*munus docendi*), divine worship (*munus liturgicum*) and pastoral governance (*munus regendi*)" (CCC, no. 1592). Deacons in the Latin Church can baptize and witness the Sacrament of Marriage, as do priests and bishops.

The ordained bishop and priest serve the Church in the person of Christ as head of the Body. "Through the ordained ministry, especially that of bishops and priests, the presence of Christ as head of the Church is made visible in the midst of the community of believers" (CCC, no. 1549). The Sacrament does not preserve the ordained from weakness and sin, but the Holy Spirit guarantees that the minister's sin does not impede the effectiveness of the Sacrament and its graces. The ordained are called to a holiness of life and an attitude of humility that conforms them to Christ whose priesthood they share. The priest acts not only in the person of Christ, the Head of the Church, but also in the name of the Church when presenting to God the prayer of the Church, especially in the Eucharist.

## **THE ESSENTIAL RITE OF HOLY ORDERS**

*The essential rite of the sacrament of Holy Orders for all three degrees consists in the bishop's imposition of hands on the head of the ordinand and in the bishop's specific consecratory prayer asking God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and his gifts proper to the ministry to which the candidate is being ordained.*

-CCC, no. 1573

## WHO MAY BE ORDAINED?

Only a baptized man may be ordained in the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Jesus Christ chose men to become part of the Twelve. Throughout his ministry, his attitude toward women was different from the culture, and he courageously broke with it. For example, he did not hesitate to speak with the Samaritan woman even though custom forbade it (cf. Jn 4:4-42). But it was only men whom he chose to be the Twelve Apostles and the foundation of the ministerial priesthood.

Although after the Ascension, Mary occupied a privileged place in the little circle gathered in the Upper Room, she was not called to enter the college of the Twelve at the time of the election of Matthias. The Apostles continued Christ's practice and so, too, did their successors through the centuries.

The Church has the power to determine the way in which the Sacraments are to be celebrated, but she has no ability to change the essential aspects established by the Lord Jesus. Sacramental signs are natural, but they also carry a divine meaning. Just as the Eucharist is not only a communal meal, but also makes present the saving sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, so too ministerial priesthood is more than pastoral service: it ensures the continuity of the ministry Christ entrusted to the Apostles.

The priesthood has a sacramental nature. The priest is a sign of what is happening. Sacramental signs represent what they signify by a natural resemblance. This resemblance is as true for persons as for things. When the priest acts in the person of Christ, he takes on the role of Christ, to the point of being his representative. He is a sign of what is happening and must be a sign that is recognizable, which the faithful can see with ease.

An image used to explain this reality talks of a priest as an "icon" of Christ. An icon is a religious painting that is considered to make present the mystery of salvation or the saint it depicts. To say a priest is an icon of Christ means, then, that a priest is not just a reminder or image of Christ but is also a real means by which a person can be touched by Christ. Because Christ is a man, it is fitting that a priest as the icon of Christ should also be a man.

Another reason why the Church understands that ordination is reserved to men is the recognition of the priest's responsibility to reflect Christ as the Bridegroom of the Church. This image and understanding can be reflected most truly only when the priest is a man.

The teaching that priestly ordination is to be reserved to men alone has been preserved by the constant and universal Tradition of the Church (cf. Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration on the*

*Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood [Inter Insigniores]*, nos. 9-10, 13, 20-21, 26-27). Pope John Paul II reaffirmed this teaching in these words: "In order that all doubt may be removed, I declare that the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful" (*On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone [Ordinatio Sacerdotalis]*, no. 4). In that same document, the Pope underlined the incomparable achievements of women for the benefit of the People of God:

The New Testament and the whole history of the Church give ample evidence of the presence in the Church of women, true disciples, witnesses to Christ in the family and in society, as well as in total consecration to the service of God and of the Gospel. "By defending the

dignity of women and their vocation, the Church has shown honor and gratitude for those women who, faithful to the Gospel, have shared in every age in the apostolic mission of the whole People of God. They are the holy martyrs, virgins and mothers of families, who bravely bore witness to their faith and passed on the Church's faith and tradition by bringing up their children in the spirit of the Gospel." (*On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone*, no. 3, citing *On the Dignity and Vocation of Women [Mulieris Dignitatem]*, no. 27)

Ordination to the priesthood is always a call and a gift from God. Christ reminded his Apostles that they needed to ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest. Those who seek priesthood respond generously to God's call using the words of the prophet, "Here I am, send me" (Is 6:8). This call from God can be recognized and understood from the daily signs that disclose his will to those in charge of discerning the vocation of the candidate.

When God chooses men to share in the ordained priesthood of Christ, he moves and helps them by his grace. At the same time, he entrusts the bishop with the task of calling suitable and approved candidates and of consecrating them by a special seal of the Holy Spirit to the ministry of God and of the Church (*Admission to Candidacy for Priesthood*, 5).

## THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE PRIEST

A bishop is given the grace to teach in the name of Christ; to sanctify the Church through the celebration of the Sacraments; to guide, govern, and defend the Church; and to be a sign of the unity of the Church.

A priest is given the grace to proclaim the Gospel and preach, to celebrate the Sacraments (except Holy Orders), and to shepherd the people entrusted to him.

A deacon in the Latin Church is ordained to proclaim the Gospel and preach, to baptize, to assist the bishop or priest in the celebration of the Eucharist, to assist at and bless marriages, to preside at funerals, and to serve the community through works of charity.

[Priests] should be taught to seek Christ. This along with the *quaerere Deum* [the search for God] is a classical theme of Christian spirituality. It has a specific application in the context of the calling of the Apostles. When John tells the story of the way the first two disciples followed Christ, he highlights this "search." It is Jesus himself who asks the question: "What do you seek?" And the two reply, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day" (Jn 1:37-39). In a certain sense, the spiritual life of the person who is preparing for priesthood is dominated by this search; by it and by the "finding" of the Master, to follow him, to be in communion with him. So inexhaustible is the mystery of the

imitation of Christ and the sharing in his life that this "seeking" will have to continue throughout the priest's life and ministry. Likewise this "finding" the Master will have to continue in order to bring him to others, or rather in order to excite in others the desire to seek out the Master. But all this becomes possible if it is proposed to others as a living "experience," an experience that is worthwhile sharing. This was the path followed by Andrew to lead his brother Simon to Jesus. The evangelist John writes that Andrew "first found his brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah (which means Christ)" and brought him to Jesus (Jn 1:41-42). And so Simon too will be called, as an apostle, to follow the Messiah: "Jesus looked at him and said, 'So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas' (which means Peter)" (Jn 1:42)... .. An essential element of spiritual formation is the prayerful and meditated reading of the Word of God, a humble and loving listening to him who speaks.... Familiarity with the Word of God will make conversion easy, not only in the sense of detaching us from evil, so as to adhere to the good, but also in the sense of nourishing our heart with the thoughts of God, so that faith (as a response to the word) becomes our new basis for judging and evaluating persons and things, events and problems. (Pope John Paul II, *I Will Give You Shepherds [Pastores Dabo Vobis]*, nos. 46-47)

What we have left to go:

Period of Purification and Preparation      Lent

Session 1: February 7<sup>th</sup>      The Sacrament of Matrimony,

Session 2: February 14<sup>rd</sup>      Moral Virtues

Feb 14<sup>th</sup> The Moral Virtues

Feb 21<sup>st</sup> The Ten Commandments 1-5

Feb 28<sup>th</sup> The Ten Commandments 6-10

The Rite of Election @ St. Mary's Cathedral 3:00 pm March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

March 7<sup>th</sup> Heaven, Hell,& Purgatory

1<sup>st</sup> Scrutiny & Presentation of the Creed @ the University Chapel 4:30 Mass March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

March 28<sup>th</sup> Introduction to Prayer

2<sup>nd</sup> Scrutiny & Presentation of the Lords Prayer @ the University Chapel 4:30 Mass April 2<sup>th</sup>, 2016

April 4<sup>th</sup> Praying the Scriptures

April 11<sup>th</sup> Happiness and Freedom

Initiation @ the University Chapel Easter Vigil 7:30 pm April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016

April 18<sup>th</sup> Devotional Practices

April 25<sup>th</sup> Spiritual Direction

May 2<sup>nd</sup> Is the Church Safe for the Modern World?

May 9<sup>th</sup> Concluding Dinner