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Source - Bishops Office

## ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island

1. The Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament of healing, available whenever our health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age. God is always with us in our illness, and so we pray for God's gift of healing of body, soul, and spirit. Through our faith we know that we will have life forever.
2. When we are sick, we are strengthened through this sacrament, and encouraged to face any anxiety or fear we may have about frailty or death. Faith is renewed and the tendency in illness to despair and hopelessness is overcome by the loving signs of the Lord's presence at this special time in our lives.
3. The Biblical authority for unction or anointing of the sick comes from Mark 6:7,12,13 etc. and James 5:14-16 and is set forth in the BCP on page 586 and in BAS on page 558.
4. It is not a substitute for the other forms of Ministry to the sick as set forth in the BCP or BAS, but an additional means of grace.
5. The impression of anointing or unction as exclusively a sacrament of dying should be corrected. Some people have the idea that this sacrament is rather like the sign of death or approaching death; it is offered only when all hope is lost. In fact the reverse is true: it is a sign of life, the eternal life promised by Jesus Christ, here and now as well as in the future. Christ came to show us how we can have life to the full in whatever situation we find ourselves. His Spirit, active and dynamic in our sickness and frailty as well as in our health and strength, is a real presence. The sacrament of the sick confirms this in a tangible way.
6. Oil for the Anointing of the Sick is available from the Bishop's office. If unable to obtain blessed oil from the Bishop, the priest shall obtain pure olive oil and bless it according to the Consecration Prayer on page 585 of the BCP. It is advised that all clergy should have their own oil stock, or one provided by the parish, for use in the sacrament of healing. In the oil stock is placed some cotton batting to absorb the oil so that there will be reduced risk of spilling the oil.
7. Anointing should normally be used only for those who earnestly desire it, and should not be used for trifling disabilities. Generally, its use is confined to once in the same illness, in order to guard against too casual an attitude. However, there is Gospel evidence that a second touch (or many) may be necessary (Mark 8:22-30). The BCP and BAS require each person to make such preparation as his or her condition will permit and this should include confession of sins either by self-examination, or in the presence of a priest, so that the sick person will be ready to receive the fullest possible benefit. (BCP, page 581; BAS page 169 or page 217)
8. The service of Anointing of the Sick will normally consist of four parts: (1) The ministry of the Word, (2) Confession and Absolution, (3) The Laying on of the Hands and Anointing, (4) Holy Communion.
9. Blessing of the oil of the sick shall take place at a Synod service, in addition to the regular blessing of the oils in the Cathedral on Maundy Thursday.
10. Current practice in the Diocese is that anointing of the sick is administered solely by a priest or bishop. It is also helpful to have another person (clergy or lay) present to minister prayerfully with the person to be anointed.