

A GUIDELINE FOR THE LAY ADMINISTRATION OF ANOINTING OIL

“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.” (James 5:14)

RATIONALE: For some time, the use of oil in anointing the sick was used mainly at the time of death. In recent years, this practice has changed. Traditionally, oil has been blessed by the bishop and set aside for the purposes of the healing ministry. Pastoral visits to the sick are now accompanied by the laying on of hands and anointing with oil. In all cases, the ordained priest has been the only one able to offer the anointing with oil. Today, the anointing is being restored to its rightful place at the center of ministry. Anointing may be seen today as part of the work of the laity who are called to the healing ministry as well as the ordained.

GUIDELINE:

As with the lay administration of Holy Communion in nursing homes, institutions, hospitals or the home, the healing ministry needs to be seen as normative in the Christian context. The healing ministry involves both clergy and laity acting in teamwork and offering prayers for the sick in nursing homes, institutions and private homes upon individual request. A training package, “Tend My Sheep,” has been prepared for parish prayer teams by the International Order of St. Luke the Physician (OSL). The OSL is an international, inter-denominational ministry of healing, with chapters in Province 10, (the Province of Manitoba). The following points are recommended for adoption as a guideline:

1. The administration of anointing oil, apart from the normal gathering of the faithful in the Church, should be linked to a parish healing team that has been trained and licensed for this specific pastoral care.
2. Lay ministrants of anointing oil should be carefully selected and trained and subsequently authorized by the Bishop. All ministrants are under the authority of the local incumbent or priest.
3. A suitable pyx for the consecrated oil must be used. When not in use, the pyx is to be kept in a safe and secure location. It is noted that an annual service for the Blessing of Oils is held at the Cathedral. Pyxes and oil stocks can be refilled at the Cathedral by arrangement.
4. The intended recipients of anointing oil must give their consent prior to the laying on of hands and anointing. Appropriate pastoral care needs to be exercised, especially in dealing with the recipient’s expectations of the outcome of this ministry of healing. In situations where it is not possible to receive the consent of the recipient, the ministrant should exercise appropriate discretion, in consultation with members of the family where feasible.
5. When healing ministry is part of a regular Eucharist, trained and licensed members are to be visible at the time of communion so that parishioners who wish to receive this ministry may
 - a) remain at the altar rail; or,
 - b) move to a designated place.

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Special healing services will have their own specific arrangements as part of the service.

6. Prior consent for the laying on of hands and anointing must be received prior to the healing ministry. In an institution, hospital, home or other location outside the Sunday service, the form of service to be used for the administration of anointing oil shall include the following:
 - a) The gathering sentence
 - b) A brief reading of scripture eg. James 5:13-16
 - c) If confession is desired, the form found on p. 168 of the BAS or the Penitential Order on p. 217 of the BAS may be used.
Laying on of hands with the appropriate words from either the BAS or the BCP (see note).
 - d) The minister anoints the person's forehead with oil, making the sign of the cross, and saying:
"N, through this holy anointing, may the Lord in His love and mercy uphold you by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit." Amen.
 - e) The Lord's prayer and final blessing
7. Once a team has visited the sick and offered prayer with the laying on of hands and anointing, the team leader will report back to the incumbent/priest and record the ministry in the registries of the parish.
8. While being sensitive to privacy issues, the names of those who have received prayer may be read at the public service of worship on Sunday.

Note:

[suggested wording from BCP] I lay my hands on you in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, beseeching Him that through His merits and precious death, He will grant you forgiveness of sins, relief from pain, and recovery of health in mind and body to the glory of His name. Amen.

[suggested wording from BAS] (Name) may the Lord, in His love and mercy uphold you by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. Amen

[another form of wording] I anoint you, (make the sign of the cross on the forehead) in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As you are outwardly anointed with this holy oil, so may our heavenly Father grant you the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit.