

# Anointing of the Sick

The Anointing of the Sick is to offer prayers for possible recovery, but the more important intention is to give strength to the soul of the sick person. The Church believes that the sacrament offers a special grace to calm and strengthen the spirit. This can be of great comfort in time of illness. This sacrament has its origin based on St. James' Epistle: "Are there any sick among you? Then let them send for the priests and let the priest pray over them, anointing them with oil." (James 4:14)

## Anointing of the Sick FAQs

### **WHEN CAN I RECEIVE THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK?**

You may ask to receive the sacrament any time that you are to undergo surgery under general anesthetic and when you have a serious injury or illness. Advanced age may also be a sufficient reason, too. You may receive this sacrament more than once. In fact, all Catholics of any age are encouraged to ask for this sacrament any time a new condition or surgery arises. Contact the parish office at 309-852-459 to speak to a priest about receiving the sacrament.

### **WHAT IS "LAST RITES"?**

Years ago, this sacrament was called Extreme Unction (last anointing), not because it was the last sacrament you received before you died, but because it was the last anointing a person received. Baptism and Confirmation are the first two times we are anointed. Many older Catholics are under the mistaken impression that you can only receive the sacrament on your death bed; quite literally "Last Rites". This may have seemed true in years past, but with modern medical advances today improving our recovery from illness, the sacrament is rightly received by anyone suffering a serious injury or illness and can be received as often as needed.