

## **Some Misconceptions that Developed in the Sacrament**

Unfortunately, misconceptions have developed regarding the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick since the Vatican Council established its guidelines. Allow me to explain.

- The Anointing of the Sick is for those who begin to be in danger of death from sickness and old age, or for someone prior to a serious operation.

A person may receive the Sacrament more than once especially if he or she has a grave illness or old age. In some Churches, the Sacrament of Anointing is offered two or three times a year.

In most cases, the individual who has been anointed is asked to sign a book indicating that the anointing took place on a specific date.

- Another common misconception is that if you are suffering with *any kind of illness, including a common old or a chronic condition such as arthritis, you can receive the Sacrament of Anointing*. That is NOT true.

The purpose of the Sacrament is to fortify us at the end of our earthly life – not really for our daily struggles. Often, those suffering from chronic illnesses that are not life threatening, ask for a personal blessing from the priest but the sacramental oil is not used, and the blessing is specific to what the person is facing. – eye operation, etc.

- Although not a common misconception, the Anointing of the Sick is not appropriate for a person who has died. All sacraments are conferred on a living person. This does not mean that the priest cannot bless someone who has died, but the blessing is not sacramental. It is similar to a blessing that would be used at a wake or funeral.

Going forward to the Rite itself  
Sister Helene