

## 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

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