

Looking Ahead

In this chapter, the Holy Spirit invites you to ►



EXPLORE gentleness that people experience from hospice care.



DISCOVER the healing ministry of Jesus in the Anointing of the Sick.



DECIDE on a moral way of caring for one who is suffering.

Anointing of the Sick

? What helped you feel better the last time you were sick? What do you think is necessary for someone to feel healed spiritually?

In this psalm of lament, the person is severely afflicted and pours out his anguish and pain before the Lord:

*LORD, hear my prayer;
let my cry come to you.
Do not hide your face from me
now that I am in distress . . .
For my days vanish like smoke;
my bones burn away as in a furnace . . .
From my loud groaning
I become just skin and bones.*

PSALM 102:2-3c, 4-6

? How do you think the Lord, who is love and mercy, responds to those who are suffering?



Disciple Power

Gentleness

When we exercise the virtue of temperance, the Holy Spirit provides us with this fruit, which is related to self-control. A gentle person is one who pardons injury and is free from harshness, even in the face of injury or illness. A sense of gentleness is a sense of calming peace and care in the way we treat others and ourselves.

THE CHURCH FOLLOWS JESUS

The Caring Warmth of Family

Everyone, at some point in his or her life, experiences sorrow and pain. With the support of family and faith in God, we can find comfort during such times of difficulty. Here is what one teen named Edgardo recently experienced.

“This past weekend was a really hard time,” he told his friend, Tom, at school. “My family and I visited my grandfather, who was receiving **hospice care**.”

Edgardo told Tom that Lolo, his grandfather, had been living at Sunrise Community for the past two years. His family visited Lolo almost every Sunday after Mass. “This time was different,” he said. “I knew it as soon as we walked into his room.”

Tom asked what was so different this time. “I know you love your grandfather,” he said, “but you’ve said it can be hard visiting him sometimes because he is so sick.”

“This time was different,” Edgardo replied. “This time there was a strange sense of peace and calm even though Lolo was feeling weak and was still in bed. He asked me over to tell me something.” Tom interrupted, “What did he say?”

“Edgardo,” he said, “remember that there is no bread too hard for warm coffee.”

Tom asked, “What did he mean by that?”

Edgardo told Tom, “Lolo would say that often to me. Years ago, I asked my father what Lolo meant. My father said it is a wise Filipino saying and that I will learn what it means as I grow older.”

“What else happened?” Tom asked.

“That was it,” Edgardo smiled. “The priest came and anointed him with oil, and we prayed together. Lolo then closed his eyes. My father held Lolo’s strong hands, and then Lolo passed away. It felt so peaceful and calm even though I was crying.”

? What do you think Edgardo’s grandfather meant when he said, “Remember that there is no bread too hard for warm coffee”?



Healing the Sick

In the Old Testament, we read the story of how the people of Israel became ill in the desert (see Numbers 21:4–9). At God’s direction, Moses lifted up a bronze serpent, and all who looked on it were healed. The Church has understood that lifting up the bronze serpent prefigured the lifting up of Jesus on the Cross. By his suffering, Death, and Resurrection, Jesus heals the whole human family. Each of us is called to embrace Jesus’ healing by receiving grace in the Sacraments.

Throughout his life on Earth, Jesus healed those who were sick physically and spiritually. Matthew tells us,

Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness. MATTHEW 9:35

In the Gospel of Luke, people flocked to Jesus in the hope that he would cure them of their various diseases (read Luke 4:40). This work of Jesus invited people both to see how much God loves them and to place their trust and faith in him. Jesus also sent his disciples to carry out his ministry of healing in his name.

So [the Twelve] went off and preached repentance. They drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them. MARK 6:12-13

Today, the Church continues Jesus’ ministry of healing through the Sacraments of Healing, including the **Anointing of the Sick**. Anyone who is seriously ill can receive the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. For those who are in danger of death because of illness or old age, the Sacrament is especially important.

FAITH FOCUS

How does Jesus continue his healing ministry in the Church today?

FAITH VOCABULARY

Anointing of the Sick

The Anointing of the Sick is the Sacrament of Healing that strengthens our faith, hope, and love for God when we are seriously ill, weakened by old age, or dying.

hospice care

Hospice care is a ministry of caring for the terminally ill by offering them gentle end-of-life care that respects the dignity of the human person according to Church teachings.

Activity

Choose one of the following Gospel accounts of Jesus’ healing ministry. Act it out with a group of your classmates.

Healing a blind man: John 9:1–7, 35–38

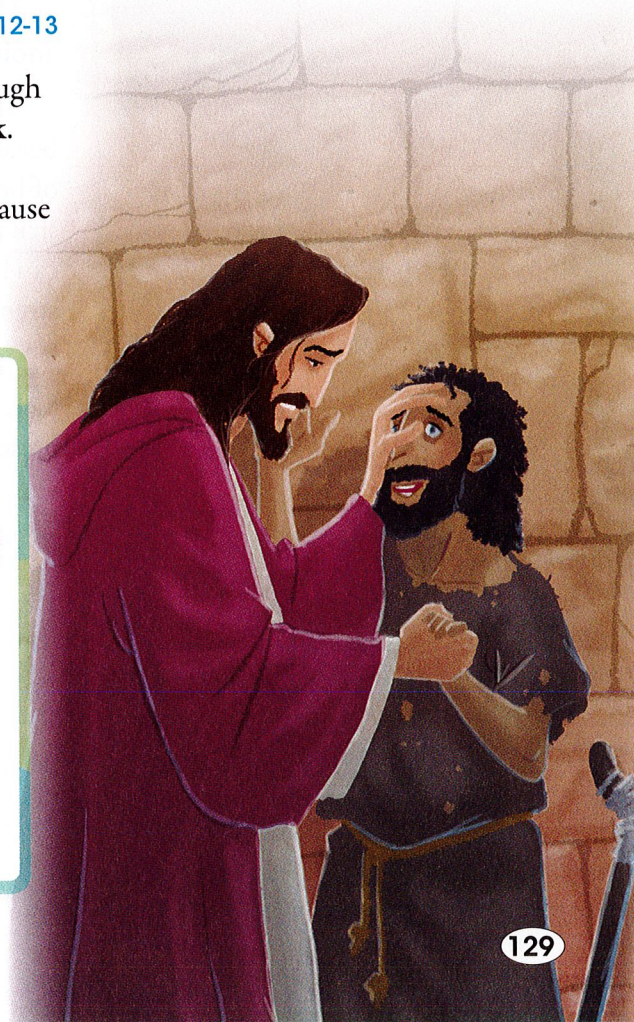
Healing a sick man: John 5:1–8

Healing an official’s son: John 4:43–53 or Luke 7:1–10

Healing a crippled man: Luke 5:17–25

Healing a dying girl and a sick woman:
Luke 8:40–55; Matthew 9:18–26; or
Mark 5:21–43

Healing two blind men: Matthew 20:29–34



Faith-Filled People

Saint Rafqa

During her life, Rafqa experienced personal suffering and witnessed bloody conflict while living in war-torn Lebanon in the mid-1800s. By 1871, Rafqa had joined a monastic order, which she remained with until the last few years of her life. Having experienced intense pain and paralysis, she responded with humility, believing her suffering was united with Christ's. Despite her condition, Rafqa remained patient and uncomplaining.

Ministering to the Sick

From her very beginning, the Church has ministered to the sick in a special way. The New Testament Letter of James states:

Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.

JAMES 5:14-15

Anointing of the Sick may be received each time we become seriously ill. We also may receive this Sacrament more than once during the same illness if our sickness becomes worse. Those who are to undergo surgery are also encouraged to receive this Sacrament.

Rite of Anointing

In the Rite of Anointing, there are three essential aspects to the celebration of the Sacrament: the prayer of faith, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with oil. Only the priest is the minister of the Sacrament.

The oil used to anoint is blessed by the bishop, or if necessary, blessed by a delegated priest. The priest usually anoints the forehead and hands of the sick, but other parts of the body may also be anointed, if deemed necessary.

The Church uses oil because of its natural healing powers and because anointing oil is soothing and comforting. The oil is a sign of healing and signifies the comforting presence of God for the sick person. When the priest is generous in its use, the sick person can better experience the sign of the Holy Spirit's healing and strengthening presence.

Through the celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, Christ's work of healing continues in the world today. His healing presence helps the sick and dying find courage, strength, and hope.

Activity Work with a group. Create a poster to publicize a service of healing that your parish is having. Include a slogan that will encourage the whole parish community to attend. Write your idea for a slogan here.





Respect for Those Who Suffer

Those who suffer illness or physical limitations deserve special respect. Even if death is imminent, the normal care of a sick person should not be interrupted, nor is it morally permissible to intentionally end someone's life if they are suffering greatly or are terminally ill. Neither are we to prolong a person's natural death through the overzealous use of medical treatment.

The Graces of Holy Anointing

In the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, we receive many graces. Some of the important graces of this Sacrament are

Our sufferings are united with those of Jesus, and in this union, we find strength and consolation, knowing that the Lord is with us.

We receive peace and courage to face our sufferings as a gift from the Holy Spirit.

We can receive the forgiveness of our sins if we are unable to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

Our health may be restored; however, equally important, we receive a spiritual healing by the intercession of the Church.

We are prepared for our final journey to eternal life when we are very ill and near death.

Through the celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, Christ continues his work of healing among us. Having our close family and friends by our side when we receive this Sacrament is beneficial in experiencing the support and love of the whole Church. With faith and trust in God, we can face our suffering by offering it up as our sacrifice, in imitation of Christ's suffering on the Cross.

? What are some of the ways your parish works with people who are sick? Talk with your friends about things you and they can do to help.



I FOLLOW JESUS

One of the important characteristics of Jesus' healing was his gentle touch. The Church sees his gentle touch as a sign of respecting the dignity of the human person, especially in times of pain and suffering.

GENTLE OFFER OF HOPE

Think of people in your family, your neighborhood, school, or parish who may be physically or spiritually suffering. Choose a way you could help to ease their pain—a card, a poem, or a drawing that would offer them hope and encouragement in the name of Jesus. Use this space to outline or sketch your idea.

MY FAITH CHOICE

This week, I will be more aware of people and situations that need healing and offer a gentle hand when I can. I will



Pray, "Lord Jesus, may your gentle touch restore those who are suffering and lead them to your glory. Amen."

Chapter Review

Read each sentence, and choose the best answer to complete it. Circle the corresponding letter to the correct answer.

1. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is especially for
 - a. those who are in danger of death because of illness or old age.
 - b. those who have already died.
 - c. those who are not feeling well.
2. In the Rite of Anointing, who anoints the body of the sick person?
 - a. the doctor
 - b. the priest
 - c. the closest family member
3. Which of the following is an essential element used in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?
 - a. holy water
 - b. bread
 - c. blessed oil

TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

1. The Church continues Jesus' ministry of healing in the Sacraments of Healing, including the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
2. Anointing of the Sick is the Sacrament that strengthens our faith and trust in God when we are seriously ill or dying.
3. The Rite of Anointing consists of the prayer of faith, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with oil.

Prayer for the Sick

Saint James tells us to pray for the sick. During the care for the sick and dying, the Church prays a brief form of the Litany of the Saints. Think of people you know or have heard about who are sick, and write in their names to include in this prayer.

Leader:

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Saint Joseph,
Saint Peter,
Saint James,
Saint Mary Magdalene,
Saint Lawrence,
Saint Paul of the Cross,
Saint Benedict of Nursia,
Saint Teresa of the Andes,
Saint Rafqa,

All:

pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.
pray for _____.



With My Family

This Week . . .

In Chapter 14, "Anointing of the Sick," your child learned:

- ▶ The healing ministry of Jesus was directed to those physically and spiritually in need.
- ▶ The Church continues Christ's healing ministry to those who are seriously sick and weak because of old age through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
- ▶ The Church extends the gentle touch of Jesus through other ministries, like hospice care. Gentleness is a Fruit of the Holy Spirit that brings peace to others.

For more about related teachings of the Church, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1499–1532, and the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, pages 249–259.

Sharing God's Word

Read James 5:14–15. Emphasize that the Church continues Jesus' ministry of healing in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

We Live as Disciples

The Christian home and family form a school of discipleship. Choose one of the following activities to do as a family, or design a similar activity of your own:

- ▶ Talk about the ways in which your family cares for one another when sick. Include extended family members like grandparents, aunts, uncles, and other relatives.

- ▶ Form the habit of having your child accompany you when you visit someone who is elderly or experiencing an extended convalescence. Have your child make a small gift to bring cheer to that person. Teach by your example to be thoughtful, gentle, and kind.

Our Spiritual Journey

Dealing with end-of-life issues can be very difficult for both children and adults. Experiencing the support of family and the Church community is vital and can help prepare us. Celebrate frequently the heritage of your family, and recall fond memories of previous generations.



For more ideas on ways that your family can live as disciples of Jesus, visit

www.BeMyDisciples.com