

**SYSTEMATIC
THEOLOGY
502
DISTANCE**

ANOINTING

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ANOINTING

The sacrament of anointing is for the physical and spiritual healing of the infirm. Since it uses blessed olive oil, it is sometimes called unction. While you will receive oil for Anointing blessed by the bishop at the Chrismal Mass, the '79 BCP has a prayer for a priest to bless oil.

- Scriptural Foundation

- 'Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.' (James 5:14-16)
- While many commentators think it refers to the fact that oil was medicinal in ancient times, in Mark 6 Jesus bids his disciple to heal the sick and possessed, and there we are told: 'And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick' (Mark 6:13)

- Unction in History

- Historically, anointing became known as last rites and was used as a sacrament only upon death until Vatican II corrected this misconception in Roman Catholicism

- Unction in Anglicanism

- The rite of unction was found in the 1549 Prayer Book, but it was dropped in the 1552 Prayer Book.
- There is no provision for unction in the 1662 BCP.
- The rite of unction was added back to the 1928 Prayer Book (p. 320) and 1979 BCP

- Sickness and Sin

- Sickness is always a result of sin (either original sin or actual sin)
- The rite of Anointing in the '79 BCP includes and Confession for this very reason
- Pastorally, it is very important to explain the difference to people between sickness caused by original sin from that of actual
- People often feel guilty or that they are incurring God's judgment when sick
- In such cases, it is helpful to point out that our sickness can be from the fallenness of nature that everyone experiences and that our bodies grow old and wear out

