

J.M.J.
Fr. Patrick

THE SACRAMENT OF ANOINTING

The prayers of “commendation for the dying” may conclude with the priest saying the following prayer:

I commend you, my dear brother/sister, to almighty God, and entrust you to your creator. May you return to Him who formed you from the dust of the earth. May holy Mary, the angels, and all the saints come to meet you as you go forth from this life. May Christ who was crucified for you bring you freedom and peace. May Christ who died for you admit you into His garden of paradise. May Christ, the true Shepherd, acknowledge you as one of His flock. May He forgive you all your sins, and set you among those He has chosen. May you see your Redeemer face to face, and enjoy the vision of God forever.

I have prayed this prayer for many people before their death and it never fails to be a personally intense moment. The words tell exactly what we hope to come for the person we are praying for. I feel it is such a privilege for me to be able pray, commending someone to the care of God, moments before their death.

I would only pray this prayer of course when it seems that death is likely. I would have first given the person the sacrament of Anointing and then prayed those **“prayers of commendation” which include the Litany of the Saints.** If the person was at all conscious and able to communicate they might also be able to receive the sacrament of Confession. If they can still swallow they might receive Holy Eucharist. Shortly before my mom died I gave her a rice-size piece of the Host with a spoon of water.

I urge people not to delay receiving the sacrament of Anointing. Too often people **think it something we don't do until the last minute.** The sacrament of the Anointing can be received for various reasons. One does not have to be dying to receive the Sacrament of Anointing. While the sacrament of anointing is not given for mild or passing sicknesses, one can receive it if:

- they are gravely ill
- suffering from cancer or another disease
- those whose health is seriously impaired by old age when any number of problems could arise
- before a serious surgery
- and of course, when death is imminent.

A person may end up receiving the Anointing more than once. And I encourage people to receive the sacrament of Confession especially if one of the reasons above is leading them to be anointed.

Please see the information on the other side to attend the Anointing Mass for yourself or to bring someone who would benefit.

