

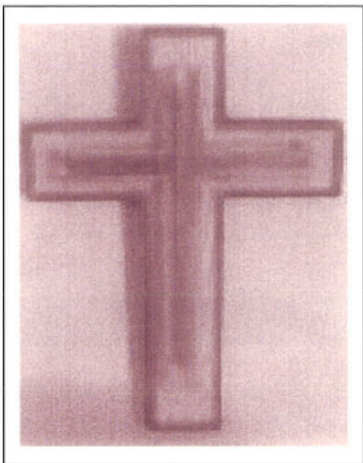
## VII

When death has occurred and Sacraments are no longer indicated, a priest, deacon or designated layperson, together with the family, may offer the PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

## VIII

When a person has lapsed into unconsciousness or died (as in VI and VII above), it is a commendable Christian practice for the family and caregivers to offer prayers for the dying or the dead. **Particularly in these final hours of life, a priest may not be available immediately** (see Number 1 above: "One should not wait...") Any family member should lead prayers in these instances to give comfort to the living and seek God's graces for the dying or deceased. (See insert)

Please call your parish office or hospital chaplain with any questions about ministry to the sick and dying in our Catholic tradition.



## Important Names and Numbers

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## Notes

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# CATHOLIC SACRAMENTS IN TIMES OF ILLNESS

*Roman Catholic*



**Diocese of Fresno**

*"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. 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)."*

## I

Catholics believe that the SACRAMENTS are means by which Christ communicates the graces of salvation to those who are properly disposed to receive them. For this reason, Sacraments should be **requested when a patient is first aware of serious illness and is fully conscious. A family, friend or loved one should not wait until death is imminent and the patient is unconscious to call a priest for the first time.**

## II

The first Sacrament for a baptized Catholic to request in time of serious illness is PENANCE, by which one repents of sin and confesses to a priest. The restores and strengthens grace in one's soul and prepares one for a fruitful reception of the other Sacraments. When Jesus met the paralytic lowered through the roof, He first of all saw and attended to his spiritual illness by forgiving his sins (Mark 2:1-12).

For those who may have forgotten or never learned how to make a good confession, the priest or another minister may help prepare them.

The penitent is to be given privacy with the priest for this Sacrament.

The Sacrament of Penance is to be received **when one is conscious and able to confess one's sins.**

## III

The Sacrament of ANOINTING OF THE SICK is specifically oriented toward those who are ill. It often aids physical healing and always offers spiritual strength during illness.

This Sacrament is administered by an ordained priest by anointing the person (ordinarily forehead and palms) with the blessed oil of the sick. Its origins are found in Mark 6:13 and James 5:13-15.

This Sacrament may be received by baptized Catholics whose health is seriously impaired by **sickness or old age. Prior to a surgery scheduled for a serious illness, one would best approach one's local parish for this Sacrament prior to entering the hospital.** The Sacrament may be given to sick children if they have reached the age of reason. It may be **repeated** if there is a relapse after a remission or if a person's condition noticeably worsens.

The Sacrament is to be requested when the person is conscious and responsive. It may be conferred on those who have **lost consciousness** if they at least implicitly requested it when in control of their faculties. It may not be administered to someone who has died, unless it is still **doubtful** whether or not the person is dead.

The Anointing is administered only by a priest. (A deacon or lay person is not permitted to anoint.) It is preferred that family and loved ones gather around to participate in the prayers if possible.

## IV

Catholics believe that to receive **HOLY COMMUNION** is to truly receive the Body and Blood of the Lord, as He Himself said at the Last Supper, the night before His death. It is the principle Sacrament of spiritual nourishment and our participation in the dying and rising of Christ. It is the Sacrament that may be received most frequently both in times of health and illness.

To be able to receive Communion a patient must be conscious, able to swallow, free of serious sin and properly prepared.

While only a priest may consecrate the Eucharist, a deacon or authorized lay minister may bring Communion to the sick.

**A person who is dying may receive Communion for the last time as "VIATICUM," meaning "food for the journey" from this life to the next.**

## V

A person in danger of death who has never been baptized in any Christian Church may receive the essential primary Sacrament of **BAPTISM**, which involves salvation from sin, and birth into a new life in Christ. The person in danger of death should request baptism explicitly or, in case of unconsciousness, one's intention towards the reception of baptism may be made by a close friend or a member of the family. **A priest or deacon is the ordinary minister of Baptism, but if none is available, anyone may baptize in danger of death by simply pouring water over the head of the person while saying "I baptize you in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."**

A baptized person who has never been confirmed and is in danger of death may request the Sacrament of CONFIRMATION by the anointing on the forehead with sacred oil known as Chrism. In such a case an authorized priest may confer this Sacrament.

## VI

When death is imminent and the Sacraments have been administered, a priest, deacon or designated layperson, together with the family, may offer the **PRAYERS FOR THE DYING.**