

Chapter 10

Answer Key for Double-Check Questions

1. *What is the purpose of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, and who may receive it?*

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is intended to bestow special grace on the Christian experiencing the difficulties of serious illness or old age. Any gravely ill, aging, or dying person may receive the sacrament, but one does not need to be dying to receive it. Serious illness may include addictions or mental illness.

2. *How can illness be a turning point in human life?*

Serious illness can be a turning point by serving as a wake-up call, alerting us to what is essential to life. Illness can force us to evaluate our lives, even to search for the cause of the illness, and to plan for change in the future. It can also bring about a change of heart (or *metanoia*), a conversion toward God and a greater appreciation of his gifts.

3. *What are the scriptural roots of using the Oil of the Sick?*

In Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells us that the Samaritan used healing oil to help a man attacked on the road (see Luke 10:34). In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus advises the Apostles to anoint the sick with oil (see Mark 6:12–13). Accordingly, Saint James the Apostle wrote in his epistle that those who are sick should ask the priests to pray and anoint them with oil in God's name (see James 5:14).

4. *The oil used in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is a sign of what?*

The Oil of the Sick is a sign of healing, strengthening, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. People of ancient times, including the people of the Bible, used oil as a common healing agent.

5. *Where and with whom may the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick be celebrated?*

The Sacrament of Anointing of the sick may be celebrated in various places with various groups of people: in the home, in hospitals or assisted-care facilities, or in church. It may be offered to one individual or a group of people. Recipients may be seriously ill, elderly, or dying. The sacrament can be offered inside or outside the Mass.

6. *What are the three integral aspects of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick?*

The three integral aspects of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick are the prayer of faith, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with the Oil of the Sick.

7. *How can physical suffering be a way for us to take up our cross with Jesus and, in our own small way, participate in his redemptive suffering?*

Christ asks us to take up our own crosses, including the cross of physical suffering and illness, and to follow him as his disciples. Because of Christ's suffering, we know that earthly suffering is only temporary. We are called to use physical suffering to become closer to Christ. That is, by considering our suffering as a reminder of Christ's suffering, we unite ourselves more closely with Christ and his redemptive suffering.



8. *Among all Jesus' miracles of healing, why are his healings of lepers so significant in our understanding of the Sacraments of Healing?*

In biblical times, lepers were forced to live on the outskirts of the community in perpetual quarantine. Jesus' healing of lepers helps us to understand the Sacraments of Healing because leprosy became a symbol of separation from God and the community—a symbol of sin. Jesus showed us that even the worst separation from God and isolation from one's community can be overcome and healed, even the worst sin can be forgiven, and even the worst sinner can be restored to fullness of life.

9. *What three sacraments prepare us for our journey into eternal life, and what is the work of each in our transition to eternal life?*

The Sacraments of Penance and Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick, along with the Eucharist as *viaticum*, are the sacraments through which we complete our journey here on Earth. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation provides us with an opportunity to repent and be forgiven for our sinful behavior before we die. Part of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick can be confession and reconciliation if the person is able. If possible, physical healing is granted. If not, a spiritual healing takes place during this sacrament that helps those receiving it to prepare to pass from this life into eternal life with Christ. And *viaticum* refers to Christ being with the dying person who is ready to make the journey from this life to eternal life.

10. *In what ways has the Church, from the earliest days of Christianity, provided for the care of those who are ill?*

The Church has cared for the sick, especially when others hesitated to do so for fear of contagion or death. In the Early Middle Ages, the monastic guest houses became the first hospitals. Out of concern for the sick, religious orders of brothers and sisters were founded. In particular, the Church's greatest gift to the sick is the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. In this sacrament, the Church offers the grace of God for strength and healing.

