

Before Death Occurs

If death is imminent, please call the Church. The pastor will come and pray with the person who is dying. If that is not possible, a simple service that anyone can use for praying with someone follows below.

Ministration at the Time of Death

The Prayer Book states: "When a person is near death, the Minister of the Congregation should be notified, in order that the ministrations of the Church may be provided."

Never hesitate to call the clergy when a loved one is near death. We count it a privilege to minister to both the person dying and to the living.

There are prayers for those who are sick, those who are in the process of dying, and those who have died.

Unction or Anointing with Oil

Holy Oil is a sacramental symbol of healing. We anoint people with healing oil, believing that even in death, God's healing power is at work. We anoint people who are ill, those who are dying, and those who have just died.

We minister to those close to death for their sake and for their family's sake. Often a dying person who is conscious needs to unburden themselves through a confession, or through an expression of hopes and desires for their loved ones. Often they want the assurance that a representative of the church is there to be with the loved ones they leave behind.

When someone is gravely ill or dying it is always appropriate to call the pastor. We want to be supportive of the person who is dying and the persons who will be left behind.

It is always appropriate for family and friends to be near, to pray with the dying person and to commit that person to God's loving care.

Should a clergy person not be available, anyone can lead the prayers in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer on page 453, the Ministration to the Sick. If a person is dying or has just died use the prayers on pages 462 and following, Ministration at the time of death. It is appropriate to lay hands on the person when you pray with and for them, unless there are compelling medical reasons for not touching them.

When you pray, you may always use the forms in the prayer book and pray any other prayers that are on your heart and mind.

Should the person recover near death recover rather than pass away, we give thanks to God.

Should the person die, it is still appropriate to continue to pray, committing that person to Christ's mercy.

Should you not have a prayer book you can print this service which starts below. This is a short form adapted from the Ministration to the Sick in the Book of Common Prayer, p. 453 and following.)

Ministration to the Sick

Peace be to this house (place), and to all who dwell in it.

Part I. Ministry of the Word

One or more of the following or other passages of Scripture are read

2 Corinthians 1:3-5 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

Matthew 9:1-13 Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." And the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"

Other Passages

General

Psalm 91 (He will give his angels charge over you)

Luke 17:11-19 (Your faith has made you well)

Penitence

Hebrews 12:1-2 (Looking to Jesus, the perfecter of our faith)

Psalm 103 (He forgives all your sins)

When Anointing is to follow

James 5:14-16 (Is any among you sick?)

Psalm 23 (You have anointed my head with oil)

Mark 6:7, 12-13 (They anointed with oil many that were sick)

A Confession of Sin

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. *Amen.*

Part II. Laying on of Hands and Anointing

In cases of necessity, a deacon or lay person may perform the anointing, using oil blessed by a bishop or priest. The following anthem is said

Savior of the world, by your cross and precious blood you have redeemed us;
Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech you, O Lord.

The Priest (or other minister) then lays hands upon the sick person, and says one of the following

Name., I lay my hands upon you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, beseeching our Lord Jesus Christ to sustain you with his presence, to drive away all sickness of body and spirit, and to give you that victory of life and peace which will enable you to serve him both now and evermore. *Amen.*

or this

N., I lay my hands upon you in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, beseeching him to uphold you and fill you with his grace, that you may know the healing power of his love. *Amen.*

If the person is to be anointed, the Priest (or other minister) dips a thumb in the holy oil, and makes the sign of the cross on the sick person's forehead, saying

N., I anoint you with oil in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

The Priest (or other minister) may add

As you are outwardly anointed with this holy oil, so may our heavenly Father grant you the inward anointing of the Holy Spirit. Of his great mercy, may he forgive you your sins, release you from suffering, and restore you to wholeness and strength. May he deliver you from all evil, preserve you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

If Communion is not to follow, the Lord's Prayer is said.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Priest (or other minister) concludes

The Almighty Lord, who is a strong tower to all who put their trust in him, to whom all things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth bow and obey: Be now and evermore your defense, and make you know and feel that the only Name under heaven given for health and salvation is the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen*