

**BACKGROUND NOTES FOR PARENTS AND CARERS**  
**ANOINTING OF THE SICK**  
**(Year 6)**

To help us understand the Sacrament of the Anointing of the sick we need to know a little bit about a Sacrament. A sacrament is something that uses signs – usually a combination of words and actions. The signs are not just words and actions that have a message for those who are celebrating it, they give them a gift. This gift (which Catholics call grace) is given by Jesus whom they meet in the Sacrament, to deepen and develop their relationship with him. Through the Sacraments God helps Catholics grow in friendship with him.

In the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick the key signs are:

- The anointing which brings the sick person healing and comfort.
- The laying on of hands which occurs many times during the sacraments. In each case it symbolises the giving of strength and power. When the sign is used in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, it reminds us of the times when Jesus laid his hands on the sick and healed them.

Through these signs God gives the sick person his power to face illness and even death itself with peace and confidence.

From the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, he was concerned with the sick and needy. He never turned anyone away even when he was tired and weary. In Jesus' day, there were many sick people and they often had to survive by begging at the roadside (Luke 18 – the story of the Blind Beggar; Mark 1 – The Leper).

Christians are called to care for others, especially for those most in need. Jesus explains this very clearly in a parable of the Good Samaritan. Part of the responsibility of Christians is to have compassion and care for those in need especially the sick. This is clearly demonstrated in the work of the hospice movement.

Illness and suffering are not easy to cope with. Often it is an occasion when people have time to reflect on what is important to them in life. It is often a time when people think about God and pray more. Christians remember the suffering of Jesus.

The anointing with oil is a symbol of healing and is used in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. When Jesus sent out his disciples to preach the Good News they *'anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them'* (Mark 6: 13).

In the parable the Good Samaritan anointed the wounds of the man who had been mugged and used oil to clean and heal them. He ensured he was cared for.

The person who is very ill welcomes the prayers and kindness of those who visit them. James' letter has many practical suggestions which include reference to anointing the sick. *'Are any of you ill? 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 one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven'*. (James 5: 14-15)

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament for anyone who is seriously ill. It is a sacrament that is commonly given a number of times during an illness, sometimes because the person becomes more ill, or because the sick person would benefit from the strength and comfort the Sacrament gives them. Through the Sacrament the Holy Spirit helps to calm the worry, anxiety and discouragement the sick person may experience.

### **Celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick**

The Sacrament is usually administered either in a sick person's home or in some parishes there may be an anointing of the sick at a special Mass for people of the parish who have need of the Sacrament. Family and friends, as well as members of the parish family, will be there supporting those who are sick and praying for them. When a person is near to death, there are three Sacraments which they may wish to receive: the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion. If possible, these Sacraments will be celebrated separately, but sometimes there isn't time because the person is very, very ill and possibly dying. In this instance the priest will celebrate all three in one ceremony.

#### **The Greeting and Address**

When the priest will greet the sick person with the words:

*'The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and love of God and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all'.*

Those present will reply: *'and with your spirit'.*

He then sprinkles the sick person with holy water, reminding them of their baptism.

#### **The Penitential Rite (or Confession)**

At this point, if possible, the sick person will confess their sins and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Sometimes the person is too ill to make their Confession, (or this is not possible during mass) however they still receive forgiveness and there will be a penitential rite like the one at the beginning of Mass.

#### **The Readings**

This is followed by a short scripture reading(s). The scripture will be chosen to give the sick person comfort and a sense that they are loved by God.

#### **The Litany and Laying on of Hands**

The Litany are prayers in which God is asked to heal the sick person.

The priest then places his hand on the sick person's head. The 'laying on of hands' is a very ancient symbol which signifies giving strength and power. Used here, 'the laying on of hands' reminds Catholics of the times Jesus laid hands on the sick and healed them.

A **Prayer of Thanksgiving** is said for the care God gives.

**The Anointing:** after the priest lays his hands on the head of the sick person he anoints their head and hands. Oil has always been associated with healing.

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

This prayer can be especially meaningful to the sick as God is called 'Father' and loves the sick person especially when they are sick or suffering.

#### **Holy Communion**

The priest gives the sick person Holy Communion in which they are united with Jesus in a special way. (Sometimes the person is too ill to receive Communion).

#### **The Blessing**

The ceremony of the Anointing of the Sick ends with a blessing.

These three sacraments prepare the person who receives them for their final journey to God and marks the end of their pilgrimage of life on earth. They provide spiritual healing, giving the person strength, peace, courage and forgiveness of their sins. They will know that Jesus Christ is very near to them. It does sometimes happen that the person regains their health and continues on with their life on earth.

## Overview

Key Vocabulary	<b>YEAR 6</b> <b>Healing</b> <b>ANOINTING OF THE SICK</b>
care	
sickness	
hospice	
compassion	
Sacrament	
Anointing	
sin	
forgiveness	
parable	
Lourdes	
responsibility	
	<p>The Church believes that the anointing of the sick is one the seven sacraments. It is intended to strengthen those who are ill.</p> <p>Children know and understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When people become sick and need care</li><li>• The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick</li></ul> <p><i>** (Please note if children have been affected by, or are anxious about, Coronavirus the Year 5 topic may be studied instead.) **</i></p> <p><b>See Background Notes for Parents and Carers</b></p> <p><b>Week 1:</b> Read the story of A Children’s Hospice. Talk about the work of hospices and the qualities of the people who work in hospices. Ask children to design a wanted poster for staff at a hospice including the qualities, beliefs and values needed for the job.</p> <p><b>Week 2:</b> Throughout Jesus’ ministry, he was concerned with the sick and needy. Read ‘Jesus gives sight to a blind man’ and ‘The Good Samaritan’. Discuss how Christians are called to follow Christ’s example and teachings and care for all our neighbours. Ask children to create a storyboard or Powerpoint of this parable, including the reasons why the Samaritan acted as he did and the effect on the man who was mugged.</p> <p><b>Week 3:</b> When a person is very sick, they often have time to reflect on what is important to them in life. It is often a time when people think about God and pray more. The anointing with oil is a symbol of healing and is used in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Read about the Sacrament, finding out what happens at this celebration. Ask children to make a service booklet for the Sacrament using the description and the photographs, include an opening paragraph explaining why someone would want to receive this Sacrament and add some suggestions for appropriate scripture readings and their own prayer of thanksgiving.</p> <p><b>Week 4:</b> Look at the key vocabulary for this topic and use it to remember all we have learnt about the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. If children have access to the internet they can carry out a research project on Lourdes explaining how and why it became a place of pilgrimage. Celebrate with a simple Act of Worship.</p>

## Year 6

### Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

This topic should always be approached sensitively in case any children are suffering loss. This is even more important in view of our current circumstances. If any children have been affected by, or are anxious about Coronavirus it may be appropriate to study the Year 5 topic instead, particularly if they have lost relatives.

**Week 1:** Read the story of 'A Children's Hospice' (see below). Talk about the sort of care a hospice can offer to very sick people and their families. Think about the people who work in hospices. What qualities do you think are needed to look after someone who is sick? What beliefs and values would be important? *Design a wanted poster for staff at a hospice including the qualities, beliefs and values needed for the job.*

**Week 2:** Throughout Jesus' ministry, he was concerned with the sick and needy. He never turned anyone away even when he was tired and weary. In Jesus' day, there were many sick people and they often had to survive by begging at the roadside. Read 'Jesus gives sight to a blind man' (see below) which illustrates Jesus' compassion.

When Jesus sent out his disciples to preach the Good News they "...anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them." Mark 6: 13.

Christians are called to follow Christ's example and care for others, especially for those most in need. Jesus explains this very clearly in the parable of the 'Good Samaritan' (see below). A parable is a story which conveys an important meaning or more than one meaning. In this story from Luke's Gospel, a lawyer was trying to catch Jesus out with questions. The final one was, 'Who is my neighbour?' Jesus answers this with a story, but the story also has another meaning. It shows the care and compassion with which we should treat each other. *Create a storyboard or Powerpoint of this parable. Include the reasons why the Samaritan acted as he did and what effect it had on the man who was mugged.*

**Week 3:** Illness and suffering are not easy to cope with. When a person is very sick, they are not able to do what they normally do. Often it is an occasion when people have time to reflect on what is important to them in life. It is often a time when people think about God and pray more.

The anointing with oil is a symbol of healing and is used in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Read about the Sacrament (see below). The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament for anyone who is seriously ill. It is a sacrament that is commonly given a number of times during an illness, sometimes because the person becomes more ill, or because the sick person would benefit from the strength and comfort the Sacrament gives them. *Make a service booklet for the Sacrament using the description and the photographs. Include an opening paragraph explaining why someone would want to receive this Sacrament. Add some suggestions for appropriate scripture readings and your own prayer of thanksgiving.*

**Week 4:** Look at the key vocabulary for this topic and use it to remember all we have learnt about the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. *If you have access to the internet carry out a research project on Lourdes explaining how and why it became a place of pilgrimage for sick people. Celebrate with a simple Act of Worship (see below).*

## Week 1 A Children's Hospice

Children, as well as adults, can become sick and have need of care. Sister Frances Dominica, a Church of England nursing nun, first thought of a children's hospice through her work caring for a young girl named Helen, who lived at home with her family but needed 24 hour care. She founded Helen House, the world's first children's hospice, which opened in November 1982. A hospice is a place rather like a home for those who are very seriously ill and likely to die.

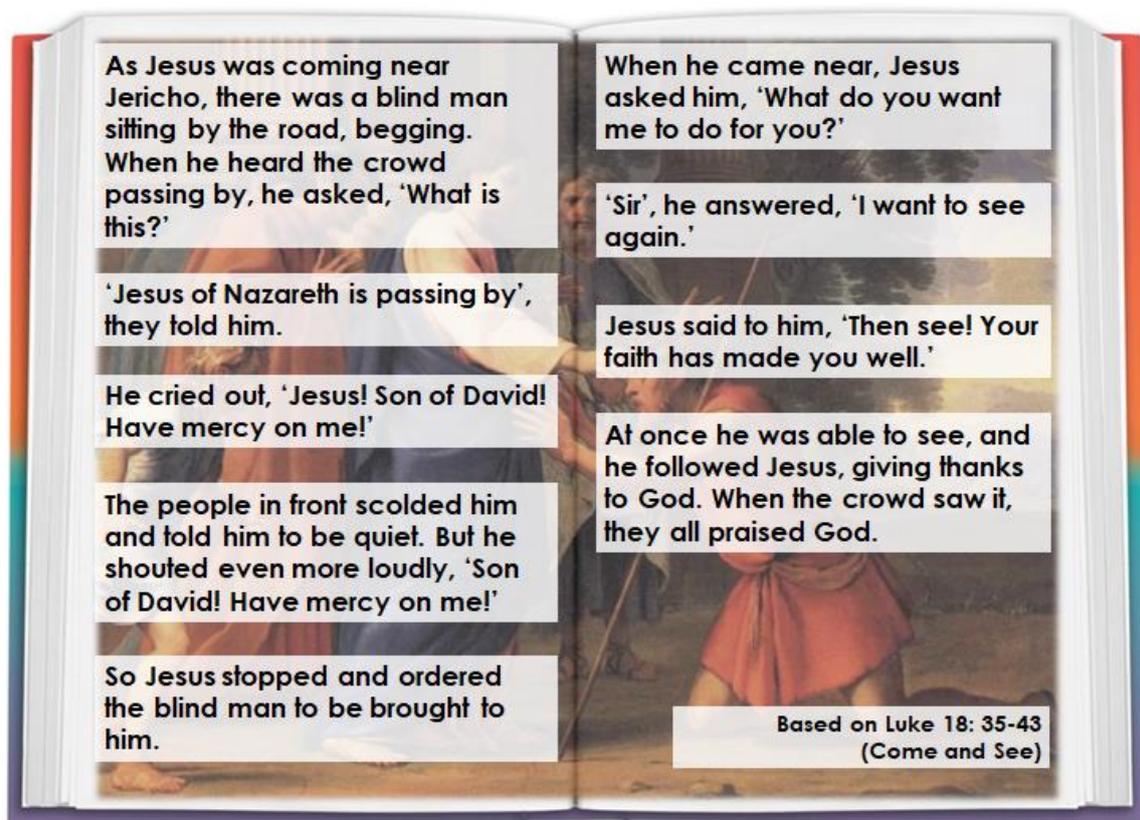
It is natural that the parents of a much-loved but very ill child would want to care for them at home, but caring for your child every day and night, as well as looking after the rest of your family and earning a living, can be exhausting. Helen's family's experience highlighted the need for care and support for children with life-shortening conditions and for their family. Helen House was set up to help families cope by providing occasional respite care, modelled on that provided in the family home – personalised and tailored to individual needs. The hospice was designed to be as much like an ordinary home as possible. It had eight children's bedrooms, as well as rooms for parents to stay. The hospice is about making the most of life, whatever the circumstances. Thirty years on, there are now two hospice houses. Helen House is for children from birth up to 18 years old, and Douglas House for young adults. The two hospice houses offer specialist care and pain management, short breaks and end-of-life care, as well as counselling and practical support for the whole family.

Jane came to Helen House in 2003 with her 9 year old son Sebastian, who was battling with cancer. "Helen House cared for us; it made us feel very safe. It gave us the chance to do what we wanted to do for our son, the way that we wanted to do it. There was so much love and support. We have much cherished memories."

"Helen House stayed in touch with us and we became part of a Helen House group of families and we continue to support one another."

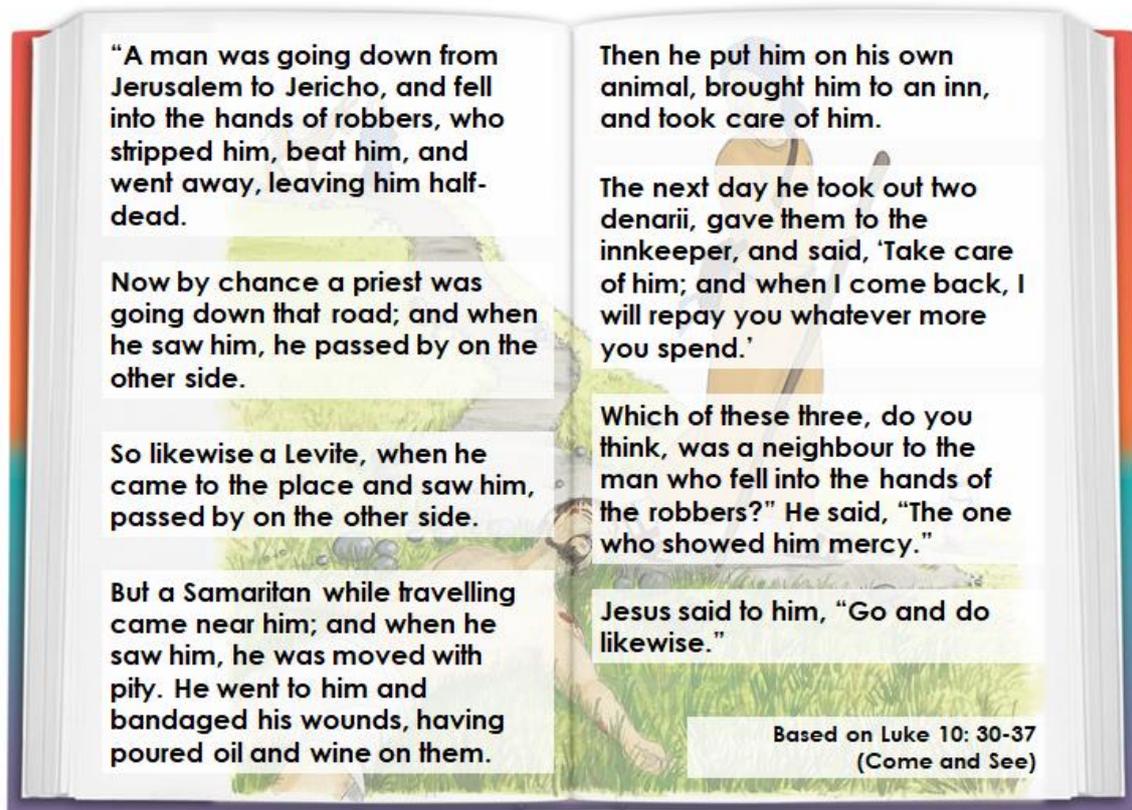
- Q What has been your experience of illness and who or what helped you most?
- Q What do you think sick children need most?
- Q How do you think their parents feel?
- Q What do parents need?
- Q How do you think you can show compassion and care for those who are ill?

Week 2 Jesus gives sight to a blind man



- Q Why do you think Jesus was so concerned with the sick and needy?
- Q Why do you think the people scolded the blind man?
- Q How do you think the blind man felt?
- Q What do you think was the significance of the title the blind man gave to Jesus, 'Jesus! Son of David!' What did it show about his faith?
- Q What was Jesus' attitude to the blind man?
- Q What do you think Jesus meant when he said, 'Your faith has made you well'?
- Q What do you think of the attitude of the people once they saw Jesus' healing power?
- Q How do you think the blind man felt when he could see?

## Week 2 The Good Samaritan



- Q Why do you think the Samaritan acted as he did?
- Q How do you think the man who was mugged felt?
- Q What showed that the Samaritan was doing more than his mere duty towards another person?
- Q What does this parable have to say to us today?
- Q What do you think 'mercy' means?
- Q Good deeds are often called 'acts of mercy'. Why do you think that is?
- Q Why are these acts of mercy a particular responsibility for the Christian?

Notice how the Good Samaritan anointed the wounds of the man who had been mugged and used oil to clean and heal them.

## Week 3 The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

### **Celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick**

The Sacrament is usually administered either in a sick person's home or in some parishes there may be an anointing of the sick at a special Mass for people of the parish. Family and friends, as well as members of the parish family, will be there supporting those who sick and praying for them.

When a person is near to death, there are three Sacraments which they may wish to receive: the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion. If possible, these Sacraments will be celebrated separately, but sometimes there isn't time because the person is very, very ill. In this instance the priest will celebrate all three in one ceremony.

#### **The Greeting and Address**

When the priest will greet the sick person with the words:

*'The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and love of God and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all'.* Those present will reply: *'and with your spirit'.*

He then sprinkles the sick person with holy water, reminding them of their baptism.

#### **The Penitential Rite (or Confession)**

At this point, if possible, the sick person will confess their sins and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Sometimes the person is too ill to make their Confession,(or if the sacrament is celebrated within Mass) however they still receive forgiveness and there will be a penitential rite like the one at the beginning of Mass.

#### **The Readings**

This is followed by a short scripture reading(s). The scripture will be chosen to give the sick person comfort and a sense that they are loved by God.

#### **The Litany and Laying on of Hands**

The Litany are prayers in which God is asked to heal the sick person.

The priest then places his hand on the sick person's head. The 'laying on of hands' is a very ancient symbol which signifies giving strength and power.

A **Prayer of Thanksgiving is said** for the care God gives.

**The Anointing:** after the priest lays his hands on the head of the sick person he anoints their head and hands. Oil has always been associated with healing. He anoints the forehead of each sick person saying: "Through this anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Amen." He anoints the hands of each sick person saying, "May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up. Amen."

#### **The Lord's Prayer**

This prayer can be especially meaningful to the sick as God is called 'Father' and loves the sick person especially when they are sick or suffering.

#### **Holy Communion**

The priest gives the sick person Holy Communion in which they are united with Jesus in a special way. (Sometimes the person is too ill to receive Communion).

#### **The Blessing**

The ceremony of the Anointing of the Sick ends with a blessing.

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Week 3 The Sacrament of the Sick – what is happening in each photograph



## Week 4

### Act of Worship

Year 6

### HEALING

### “Healing – The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick”

**Gathering**

**Together**

You might like to set up a focal table:

Table with a cloth and candle

Pictures of nurse/doctor/carers/hospice etc

Oil (very small dish of olive/vegetable oil would be fine)

Bible if possible

We begin our liturgy on ‘Healing’ by lighting our candle and remembering that God is present in our gathering.

We gather together **In the name of the Father...**

The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and love of God and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And with your spirit**

We have been reflecting on and appreciating the care and compassion that so many people offer in caring for the sick and those in need - at home, in hospices or hospitals. We have been thinking about why they do it and what their inspiration is.

**The Word**

From the very beginning of Jesus’ ministry, he was concerned with the sick and needy. He never turned anyone away even when he was tired and weary. He told stories such as the parable of the Good Samaritan which shows the care and compassion with which we should treat each other. Caring for the sick is a Christian responsibility.

When Jesus sent out his disciples to preach the Good News they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them.

The anointing with oil is a symbol of healing and is used in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. This is a sacrament for anyone who is seriously ill. St James in his letter makes reference to the Anointing of the Sick. Let’s listen to his words...

A reading from the Letter of James

Are any of you ill? 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 one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Response to  
the Word**

We will now anoint one another with oil asking God to bless us, strengthen us and bring us healing in body, mind and soul.

*(With a small amount of olive oil in a dish, make the Sign of the Cross on one another's foreheads or palms, with words like: **(name)...May God bring you strength and healing.***

**Going  
Forth**

It is a Christian responsibility to care for and pray for the sick. We will try to remember anyone we know who is sick in our prayers every night before bed. But now we also pray....

For those who are sick: **Lord, bring them hope and courage**

For their family and friends: **Lord, bring them strength and comfort**

For those who care for anyone in need: **Lord give them kindness and compassion**

We pray especially (insert the names of those you want to pray for at this time) **Lord be with them**

(Add any other prayers)

Let us end our celebration by giving praise to God who brings us healing as we say together

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen**