

Memo

Date: 19 March 2009

To: All Priests

From: Fr. Theodore Book, Director, Office of Divine Worship

Re: Holy Oils and the Chrism Mass

The Chrism mass is almost upon us! I have a few notes regarding receiving the new oils and disposing of the old ones. Empty Oil Stocks will be received at the Cathedral on Tuesday April 7 from 11:15 - 12:30 prior to the Priest's luncheon, and again from 4:15 - 5:30 prior to the mass. The stocks may be deposited at tables located at the top and bottom of the main staircase of the Donoghue Parish Center. Stocks should be clean and clearly marked as to individual content and Parish. Filled stocks will be available after the dinner following the mass. Please keep in mind that, although Archbishop Gregory will be consecrating more oil this year, the total amount of oil is limited, and we may not be able to completely fill large stocks.

When the oils are received in the parish, this may be done with or without a ritual celebration. If it seems pastorally advantageous to give a ritual form to the reception, the attached rite may be used.

Please dispose of all remaining holy oils from the previous year. The oils may be removed from their particular stocks and used on the new fire of the Easter Vigil or buried. Please remember that Canon 847 suppressed by omission the permission to add unblest oil to that which is already blessed.

The documents on liturgy frequently admonish us to use our sacramental symbols lavishly. In response to this, oil stocks are being produced in beautiful forms that are larger than those of the past. This is a commendable practice if the community can see during the year from Chrism Mass to Chrism Mass that those oils do indeed decrease because they are being used.

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THE RECEPTION OF THE HOLY OILS BLESSED AT THE CHRISM MASS

Introduction

1. It is appropriate that the oil of the sick, the oil of catechumens, and the holy chrism, which are blessed by the bishop during the Chrism Mass, be presented to and received by the local parish community.
2. The reception of the holy oils may take place at the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday or on another day after the celebration of the Chrism Mass.
3. The oils should be reserved in a suitable repository in the sanctuary or near the baptismal font.
4. The oils, in suitable vessels, are carried in the procession of the gifts, before the bread and wine, by members of the assembly.
5. The oils are received by the priest and are then placed on a suitably prepared table in the sanctuary or in the repository where they will be reserved.
6. As each of the oils is presented, the following or other words may be used to explain the significance of the particular oil.
7. The people's response may be sung.

Presenter of the Oil of the Sick: **The oil of the sick.**

Priest: **May the sick who are anointed with this oil experience the compassion of Christ and his saving love, in body and soul.**

The people may respond: **Blessed be God forever.**

Presenter of the Oil of Catechumens:**The oil of catechumens.**

Priest: **Through anointing with this oil may our catechumens who are preparing to receive the savings waters of baptism be strengthened by Christ to resist the power of Satan and reject evil in all its forms.**

The people may respond: **Blessed be God forever.**

Presenter of the Holy Chrism: **The holy Chrism.**

Priest: **Through anointing with this perfumed Chrism may children and adults, who are baptized and confirmed, and presbyters, who are ordained, experience the gracious gift of the Holy Spirit.**

The people may respond: **Blessed be God forever.**

The bread and wine for the Eucharist are then received and the Mass continues in the usual way.