

# **THE SACRAMENTS.**

## **EXTREME UNCTION.**

- 1.** Extreme Unction has been instituted by Jesus Christ for the spiritual and bodily relief of the sick.
- 2.** The sacrament is so called because in it is given the last anointing that Christians receive, the other sacraments in which there is anointing with Holy Oil or with Holy Chrism being Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders.
- 3.** That Extreme Unction is of divine institution we know from the declaration of the Council of Trent: *If any one says that Extreme Unction is not a true sacrament instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.*
- 4.** Only bishops and priests may administer Extreme Unction.
- 5.** In administering the sacrament the minister anoints with the Holy Oil the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands and feet of the sick person and prays God to forgive him the sins he has committed through his senses.
- 6.** The sacrament remits all the remaining sins of the sick person, fortifies him them against temptations and helps him to die a holy death.
- 7.** When we say that the sacrament « remits all the remaining sins of the sick person », we mean (1) that it remits all the sins that may have been forgotten or could not be enumerated in the previous confession, and (2) that it frees the sick person from all traces of his sins, that is to say, from qualms of conscience, from the fear of death and from every other imperfection still remaining in his soul after it has been cleansed from sin.
- 8.** Sick persons are particularly exposed to temptation either through presumption, which tends to blind them to the evil condition of their souls, or through despair, which on the contrary makes them imagine that their sins are too numerous or too grievous for pardon.

**9.** Extreme Unction gives them the strength of purpose to resist either temptations by inspiring in them both full penitence in view of for their sinfulness and full trust in God's mercy.

**10.** Extreme Unction is a direct aid to a holy death in that it produces an increase of sanctifying grace in the sick person as well as nerves him with the fortitude gladly to make a sacrifice of his life to his Creator.

**11.** Extreme Unction also mitigates the sufferings of the sick person and even tends to restore him to health, should God judge such to be good for the safety of his soul.

**12.** The administration of the sacrament should not be put off until the sick person is at his last extremity, but the priest should be called in the moment the sickness takes a dangerous turn. Thus only can the full benefit be obtained from the sacrament and all risk of his dying without it avoided.

**13.** Before being anointed the sick person should make his confession, if he is in mortal sin. If physically unable to make his confession or there is no time for it, he should at least move himself to perfect contrition and desire to be absolved.

**14.** While being anointed he should implore of God pardon of the sins he has committed through his senses, inspire within himself a lively hope in His mercy and humbly offer up his life as a sacrifice to Him.

**15.** Having received the anointing, he should from time to time make acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, rest his eyes constantly on a Crucifix and piously ejaculate the names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

**16.** It is incumbent on all to warn sick persons in time to receive the last sacraments. No greater service could be rendered them, for on it may depend their eternal salvation. If for any reason we cannot ourselves give such direct warning, we should at least at once warn the priest of the parish.

**17.** When the sick person is at his last agony, those around him should recite the prayers for the dying and sprinkle him with holy water, the effect of which is to keep off the devil away.

**18.** One may receive Extreme Unction more than once, provided it is not in the course of the same sickness.

**19.** In cases of dangerous illness the sacrament should be administered even to children who have not yet made their First Communion, if they have attained the age of reason.

## **Explanation of the Plate.**

**20.** In the picture we see a sick man being given Extreme Unction by one of the Apostles, while above him an angel is holding out a scroll, on which are inscribed the words of St. James to the early Christians (v, 14-15): - *If any man is sick among you, let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.* A second angel is pointing with one hand to heaven, while in the other he holds a crown.

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