

## Anointing of the Catechumens

- 98 During the period of the catechumenate, a rite of anointing the catechumens, through use of the oil of catechumens, may be celebrated wherever this seems beneficial or desirable. The presiding celebrant for such a first anointing of the catechumens is a priest or a deacon.
- 99 Care is to be taken that the catechumens understand the significance of the anointing with oil. The anointing with oil symbolizes their need for God's help and strength so that, undeterred by the bonds of the past and overcoming the opposition of the devil, they will forthrightly take the step of professing their faith and will hold fast to it unflinching throughout their lives.
- 100 The anointing ordinarily takes place after the homily in a celebration of the word of God, and is conferred on each of the catechumens; this rite of anointing may be celebrated several times during the course of the catechumenate. Further, for particular reasons, a priest or a deacon may confer the anointing privately on individual catechumens.
- 101 The oil used for this rite is to be the oil blessed by the bishop at the chrism Mass, but for pastoral reasons a priest celebrant may bless oil for the rite immediately before the anointing.

## Prayers of Exorcism or Blessing of Oil

- 97 When anointing with oil already blessed by the bishop, the celebrant first says the prayer of exorcism given as option A (or one of the other prayers of exorcism in no. 94); a priest celebrant who for pastoral reasons chooses to bless oil for the rite uses the blessing given as option B.

### Option A Prayer of Exorcism

Let us pray,

Lord Jesus Christ,  
sent by the Father and anointed by the Spirit,  
when you read in the synagogue at Nazareth,  
you fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah  
that proclaimed liberty to captives  
and announced a season of forgiveness.

We pray for these your servants  
who have opened their ears and hearts to your word.  
Grant that they may grasp your moment of grace.

Do not let their minds be troubled  
or their lives tied to earthly desires.

Do not let them remain  
estranged from the hope of your promises  
or enslaved by a spirit of unbelief.  
Rather, let them believe in you,  
whom the Father has established as universal Lord  
and to whom he has subjected all things.

Let them submit themselves to the Spirit of grace,  
so that, with hope in their calling,  
they may join the priestly people  
and share in the abundant joy of the new Jerusalem,  
where you live and reign for ever and ever.

**R.** Amen.

### Option B Blessing of Oil

Let us pray,

O God,  
source of strength and defender of your people,  
you have chosen to make this oil,  
created by your hand, an effective sign of your power.

Bless + this oil  
and strengthen the catechumens who will be anointed with it.  
Grant them your wisdom to understand the Gospel more deeply  
and your strength to accept the challenges of Christian life.

Enable them to rejoice in baptism  
and to partake of a new life in the Church  
as true children of your family.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**R.** Amen.

### Anointing

103 Facing the catechumens, the celebrant says:

We anoint you with the oil of salvation  
in the name of Christ our Savior.  
May he strengthen you with his power,  
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**Catechumens**  
Amen

The celebrant anoints each catechumen with the oil of catechumens on the breast or on both hands or, if this seems desirable, even on other parts of the body.

[If there are a great many catechumens, additional priests or deacons may assist in the anointing.]

The anointing may be followed by a blessing of the catechumens (no. 97).