Communal Celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

1. The Rite for the Anointing of the Sick permits the anointing of a number of people in the same celebration of the Sacrament.

2. On such occasions all the disciplinary norms concerning anointing are to be observed, as well as the norms for pastoral preparation and liturgical celebration.

3. “In particular, the practice of indiscriminately anointing numbers of people on these occasions simply because they are ill or have reached advanced age is to be avoided. Only those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age are proper subjects for the sacrament.” (Paragraph 108, pg. 78, Pastoral Care of the Sick, Official Roman Ritual, I.C.E.L. translation)

4. “It is important that all the faithful, and above all the sick, be aided by suitable catechesis in preparing for and participating in the sacraments of anointing and viaticum, especially if the celebration is to be carried out communally.” (Paragraph 36, pg. 78, Pastoral Care of the Sick, Official Roman Ritual, I.C.E.L. translation)

5. In the preparation of the people for the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, besides a catechesis on the Sacrament, the priest should know the name of each person who will be anointed at the group ceremony and ascertain if they meet the requirements for that ceremony.

6. If the priest checks into these things beforehand, it will save any embarrassment to himself or to the individual who may not be a proper recipient of the sacrament.

7. After the ceremony a list should be made so that the necessary pastoral care can continue to be given to the sick of the parish.

8. Wherever it may be considered pastorally beneficial, it is recommended that there be a communal celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick once or twice a year perhaps in the fall and in Lent.

Approved: October 27, 1986

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