



Prayer At The Ambry

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PURPOSE

This is an intentional prayer service to highlight the Ambry. The Ambry is significant as it is what you call the cabinet that houses the oils that were blessed during Holy Week by the Bishop. The focus of this prayer service is to pray for the truths of these oils to be felt in our lives.

PRAYER SERVICE AT A GLANCE

0:00 Gather

0:15 Welcome and Introductions

0:20 Prayer at the Ambry

0:40 Good Night!

PREPARATION

Materials Needed

- Candles (for around the Ambry)
- Votive Candles (enough for each participant)
- Lighter - way in which to light the votives
- Envelope and Pen
- Large Basket



Prepare in Advance

Content Prep:

This prayer service is designed to last approximately 20 minutes. You can design this as a stand alone offering during Lent - specifically during Holy Week - or as part of an already calendared youth ministry session or faith formation gathering.

The following are set-up instructions and resources needed for the prayer:

1. Locate the Ambry in your Church.
2. Arrange and light a few candles around the Ambry (More will be called for below).
3. Place a large basket near the bottom of the Ambry.
4. Print enough copies of **Handout 1 - Oils of Salvation and Healing** for each person.
5. Secure a votive candle for each person. These candles should be positioned around the basket that lies near the Ambry.
6. Secure a means for the teens to light the candles during the ritual response detailed below.
7. Provide an envelope for each person.
8. Provide a pen or pencil for everyone.

SESSION OUTLINE

Gathering (15 minutes)

It is suggested that you gather in a typical gathering spot for your teens at the church. Then walk over to the location where the Ambry can be found. This allows you as the leader to explain the sacred nature of the prayer experience.

Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

>Welcome! Thank you for coming out for this time of intentional prayer.



The Catholic Church is a Church of Sacraments. These are real, tangible things that are physical encounters with the saving power of God. The water of baptism washes away sin and brings us into communion with Christ and all members of the Church. The Bread of Life that is the Eucharist is the Real Presence of Christ. In addition to these, there are the sacred oils. Each year, the bishop of the diocese brings his priests together for a special mass, the Chrism Mass. During this Mass, the sacred oils are blessed by the bishop and they are given to each pastor of every parish in the diocese for them to be brought to the parish to be used in the sacraments. The oils that are here were blessed during that Holy Week liturgy and have been stored in this cabinet called an “Ambry” (AM-bree). Now, we come here before the Ambry to pray for the truths of these oils to be felt in our lives.

Prayer at the Ambry (20 minutes)

Prayer Leader: *(begin with the Sign of the Cross)*

Opening song: Come, Holy Ghost - Louis Lambillotte, SJ

Reader: 1st Reading

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

⁸ But you, Israel, my servant,

Jacob, whom I have chosen,

offspring of Abraham my friend—

⁹ You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth

and summoned from its far-off places,

To whom I have said, You are my servant;

I chose you, I have not rejected you—

¹⁰ Do not fear: I am with you;

do not be anxious: I am your God.

I will strengthen you, I will help you,

I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.



The Word of the Lord

Reflection on the Oil of Catechumens

The first sacred oil that touches us is the Oil of Catechumens. During baptism, we are anointed over our heart with the Oil of Catechumens as this prayer is prayed over us:

May the strength of Christ the Savior protect you. As a sign of this we anoint you with the oil of salvation in the same Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Christian life is not easy. There are things that work to pull us away from being the people God has created us to be. There are things in our culture that are against the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Scripture says that there is an Accuser who taunts us with thoughts of guilt or shame. As we let these thoughts overcome us, we can then be our own worst enemy. The fight against these thoughts, feelings, and pressures can leave us exhausted. But, we are not alone. When we were anointed at baptism, the Holy Spirit came to give us strength to remain true to what we know is right and help us to walk more closely with God. We don't have to try to live our life on our own. The Holy Spirit strengthens us.

Please refer to **Handout 1 - Oils of Healing and Salvation**

On the handout you have, there is a line at the bottom beneath a glass container with the letters "OS". This contains the oil that anointed you at baptism. It is the oil that conveys the strength of God to continue when you feel weary or exhausted from dealing with pressure from society, internal guilt or shame, or our own bad decisions. Where do you feel the need for this strength in your life? In the space on the bottom middle, please write what you are struggling with and need the strength of God to help you overcome. Please know that this is only for you. At the end of our prayer time, you will be asked to place the handout in the envelope and seal it. This is for you to communicate with God. Tell Him where in your life you need strength.

Allow time for them to write. If it is helpful, you can provide some quiet music to help them reflect. After allowing time for them to reflect, ask for the second reading to be proclaimed.

Reader: 2nd Reading

A Reading from the Letter from St. James

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone in good spirits? He should sing praise. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over



him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, ¹⁵ and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.

The Word of the Lord

Reflection on the Oil of the Sick

When Jesus walked the earth He taught the teachings from God, He preached about the Kingdom of God, but also healed people. His healing power was a sign of what the Kingdom of God is like. In the Kingdom of God, there is freedom. There is restoration. There is wholeness. There is mercy. The reading that we just heard shows how the Church continued the healing work of Christ. They continued this work through the anointing with oil. Among the three sacred oils that are here in the Ambry, there is the Oil of the Sick. When then Church anoints the sick, this is what is prayed:

Through this holy anointing may the Lord in His love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit.

This prayer is prayed as the forehead is anointed. Then the hands are anointed with this prayer.

May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.

After the anointing, the sacred minister prays:

Father in heaven,

through this holy anointing

grant them comfort in their suffering.

When they are afraid, give them courage,

when afflicted, give them patience,

when dejected, afford them hope,

and when alone, assure them of the support of your holy people.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Please refer to **Handout 1 - Oils of Healing and Salvation**

On the handout you have, there are three lines next to the glass container with the letters "OI". This contains the oil of the infirmed, also called the oil of the sick. Do you suffer either in your mental or emotional health? Do you suffer in your body? The anointing with the healing oil gives to us God's love, mercy, and help from the Holy Spirit. Are we suffering in mind, emotions, or body? On the handout next



to the container on the right, please write about the help you need from God. If you are feeling sound in mind, emotions, and body, you may use that space to write the names of those you love who may be in need of the grace of the Holy Spirit. If need be, please feel free to pray both for yourself and for others as you write.

Allow time for them to write. If it is helpful, you can provide some quiet music to help them reflect. After allowing time for them to reflect, ask for the third reading to be proclaimed.

Reader: 3rd Reading

A Reading from the First Letter from St. Peter

⁴ Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God,

⁵ and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

⁶ For it says in scripture:

“Behold, I am laying a stone in Zion,

a cornerstone, chosen and precious,

and whoever believes in it shall not be put to shame.”

⁷ Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith:

“The stone which the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone,”

⁸ and “A stone that will make people stumble,

and a rock that will make them fall.”

They stumble by disobeying the word, as is their destiny.

⁹ But you are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises” of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.



¹⁰ Once you were “no people”
but now you are God’s people;
you “had not received mercy”
but now you have received mercy.
The Word of the Lord

Reflection on the Oil of Chrism

To be “consecrated” means to be set apart. Altars are set apart as the place of the sacrificial meal that is the Eucharist. Churches are set apart as the place of worship of God. When the altar and churches are consecrated the oil of Sacred Chrism is used to set them apart for God’s purpose. Sacred Chrism is used to set us, the People of God, apart as well. When a priest is consecrated to be a bishop, Chrism is used. When a man is ordained to be a deacon and also a priest, Chrism is used. This fragrant oil is also used at baptism and it is used to seal us with the Holy Spirit during confirmation. It consecrates us. It sets us apart for God’s purpose.

Please refer to **Handout 1 - Oils of Healing and Salvation**

On the handout, there are lines on the left. They are next to the glass container with “SC” etched on it. This is the container that holds the Sacred Chrism. At the Chrism mass, the bishop breathed on the oil to receive the Holy Spirit just as Jesus had breathed on the apostles for them to receive the Holy Spirit. The Oil of Chrism has consecrated us. The gift of the Holy Spirit has been given to us as a free gift. Yet, we have a choice to make. Will we say “yes” to God’s purpose for our lives? When we were baptized, this prayer was prayed for us:

Through baptism and confirmation, make her/him your faithful follower and a witness to your gospel.

In the space provided, please renew your commitment to being set apart to being a faithful follower of Jesus and a witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Allow time for them to write. If it is helpful, you can provide some quiet music to help them reflect.

Ritual Response

After allowing time for them to reflect and write, distribute the envelopes. Instruct them to fold the handout, to place the handout inside the envelope and seal it, and to write their names on the outside of the envelope.



Lead a song that sings about a commitment to God. “Here I Am, Lord” by Dan Schutte serves as an example. When they have sealed the envelopes in their hand, invite them to come forward and to place their envelopes in the basket. After they have placed the envelopes in the basket, instruct them to light one of the candles. After everyone has placed their envelope in the basket, lit their candle, and the song has concluded, you will lead the closing prayer.

Closing Prayer

Father of all light, you never abandon your people. You send your very Love to be closer to us than the air we breath. Through this gift of the Holy Spirit, you give us strength when we are tempted. You bring mercy, comfort, and help when our minds, emotions, and bodies are in need of help. Yet, your Love goes beyond providing us help. Your Love invites us even closer to yourself as you set us apart for your purpose. Through the strength and power of the Holy Spirit, we ask for the grace to always and everywhere say “yes” to your perfect will for our lives. We ask this through your Son, Jesus, our Savior and our Lord, in communion with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Closing Song

Suggested songs are:

- Holy Spirit *written by Katie and Bryan Torwalt*
- Fresh Wind *written by Ben Fielding, Brooke Ligertwood, David Ware, Matt Crocker*
- Holy Spirit, Come Now *written by Jesse Manibusan*

Biblical passages from New American Bible Revised Edition

Liturgical prayers from the Roman Missal, 3rd edition

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Handout 1 - Oils of Healing and Salvation



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