

Sacred Oils

Custody & Care Guidelines

Archdiocese of Cincinnati
Revised 3/9/21

The following guidance is offered to pastors and others who have custody of sacred oils.

BLESSING AND CONSECRATION

"The Blessing of the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens and the Consecration of the Chrism are ordinarily carried out by the Bishop on Thursday of Holy Week at the proper Mass to be celebrated in the morning. If, however, it is somewhat difficult for the clergy and people to gather with the Bishop on that day, this blessing may be anticipated on an earlier day, but near Easter, with the proper Mass always being used." (*The Order of Blessing the Oil of Catechumens and of the Sick and of Consecrating the Chrism*, 10)

"The Consecration of the Chrism belongs exclusively to a Bishop." (*The Order of Blessing...*, 6)

"The Oil of Catechumens is blessed by a Bishop together with oils at the Chrism Mass. Nonetheless, Priests are granted the faculty of blessing the Oil of Catechumens before the anointing at the appropriate stage in the Catechumenate." (*The Order of Blessing...*, 7)

"By law, the oil to be used in Anointing of the Sick may be blessed by one who is equivalent in law to the Diocesan Bishop; **in case of true necessity, any Priest.**" (*The Order of Blessing...*, 8)

RECEPTION BY THE PARISH

"The pastor is to obtain the holy oils from his own bishop and is to preserve them diligently with proper care." (*Code of Canon Law*, 847)

"The reception of the Holy Oils may take place in individual parishes either before the celebration of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper or at another time that seems more appropriate." (*Roman Missal, Chrism Mass*, 15)

The *Order for the Reception of Holy Oils* can be found on the ODWS website and the USCCB website, for use at the Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper or another suitable time.

CUSTODY AND CARE

“The oils used for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, holy orders, and the anointing of the sick according to ancient tradition are reverently reserved in a special place in the church. This repository should be secure and protected by a lock.”
(Book of Blessings, 1125)

“The vessels used to hold the holy oils should be worthy of their function and be closed in such a way as to prevent the oils from being spilled and insure they remain fresh.” *(BB, 1126)*

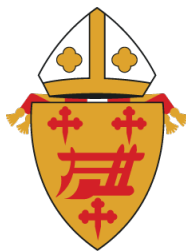
“These oils consecrated or blessed by the bishop at the Mass of Chrism **deserve the special care of the community to which they have been entrusted.** The style of the ambry may take different forms. A parish church might choose a **simple, dignified, and secure niche in the baptistry or in the wall of the sanctuary or a small case for the oils.**” *(Built of Living Stones, 117)*

DISPOSAL OF OLD OILS

“Each year when the bishop blesses the oils and consecrates the chrism, **the pastor should see that the old oils are properly disposed of by burning** and that they are replaced by the newly blessed oils.” *(BB, 1127)*

Spoiled oils should be burnt in a similar manner. In cleaning out oil vessels and stocks, a first rinse of water should be given to the ground via the *sacrarium* or outside.

If you have any concerns or questions about the proper custody and care of sacred oils, please contact the Office for Divine Worship and Sacraments, worship@catholicaoc.org



— ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI —
**DIVINE WORSHIP
& SACRAMENTS**