

VIATICUM

“Last Rites”

Viaticum is a Latin word which means “food for a journey.”

The Church offers those who are about to leave this life the Eucharist as Viaticum.

A Hospital Chaplain, an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, a Deacon or a Priest administers viaticum.



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ARCHDIOCESE OF BOSTON
Health Care Ministry
66 Brooks Drive
Braintree, MA 02184
617-746-5843



The Office of Health Care Ministry coordinates and supports the work of those designated to provide pastoral care to patients and their caregivers. For more information please call 617-746-5843

Entering a Hospital

A GUIDE

FOR THE

CATHOLIC PATIENT

When you enter a hospital or health care facility;

- Identify yourself as a Catholic
- Tell them what parish you are from
- Request to see a Catholic Chaplain
- Let them know if you have already received the Sacrament of the Sick

Local hospital: _____

Hospital Chaplain: _____

Phone Number: _____

What is Health Care Ministry?

Health care ministry flows directly from Jesus' example of compassionate concern for the sick and vulnerable. The core of the hospital chaplain's ministry is being a compassionate, pastoral presence to those who are suffering and to those who serve as caregivers, such as family and staff.

Who are Health Care Ministers?

Professional health care ministers, Board Certified Chaplains, are laywomen and men, priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers trained to minister to the sick.

When to call a Hospital Chaplain?

- When you are feeling anxious, lonely or isolated
- When you are concerned about family, loved ones or yourself
- When you desire prayer
- When you are experiencing an emotional and/or spiritual crisis
- When you are feeling that things aren't going the way you wish
- When you have questions about your faith
- When you have received or anticipate some bad news
- When you are in need of the Sacraments
- When you are in need of Viaticum
- When you want to talk

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

“Is any among you sick? Let him call the presbyters of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.” Jas 5:14

From ancient times the Church has anointed the sick with blessed oil. Over the centuries the anointing of the sick was reserved more and more exclusively for those at the point of death. The Second Vatican Council urged that the Sacrament be renewed to include prayer for healing as well as for the remission of sin.

Today the Sacrament of the Sick is given to those who are seriously ill, facing surgery or in danger of death from sickness or old age by anointing them on the forehead and hands with blessed oil.

The Sacrament is a gift of the Holy Spirit, one of strengthening, peace and courage to overcome the difficulties that go with the illness and frailties of old age.

The Sacrament gives us the strength and gift of uniting ourselves more closely to Christ's Passion.

Priests are the ministers of the Anointing of the Sick.

“Those needing the Sacrament of the Sick should seek it at the beginning of a serious illness;” celebrated with family members and if possible members of the community.