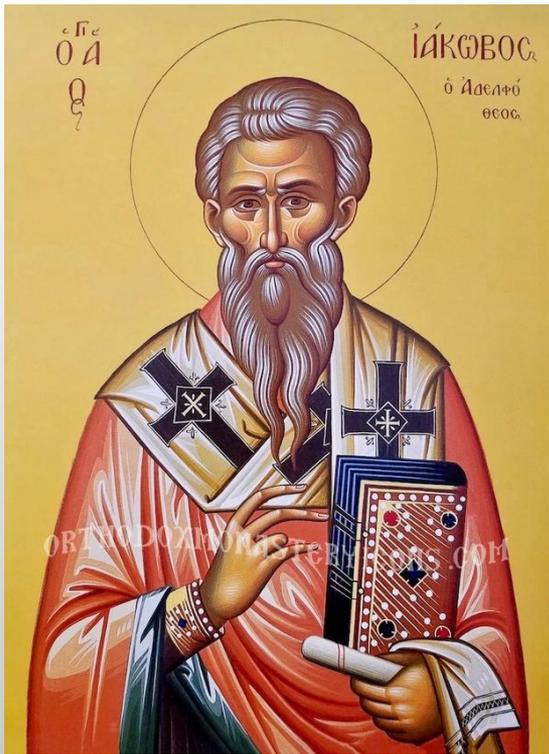


‘Let Him Call the Presbyters of the Church’  
**Mystery of Holy Unction**



“Brethren, take as an example of suffering and patience the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. Behold, we call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under condemnation. Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is any among you sick? Let him call for the presbyters of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.”

- **First Epistle of Holy Unction Service, James 5:10-16**

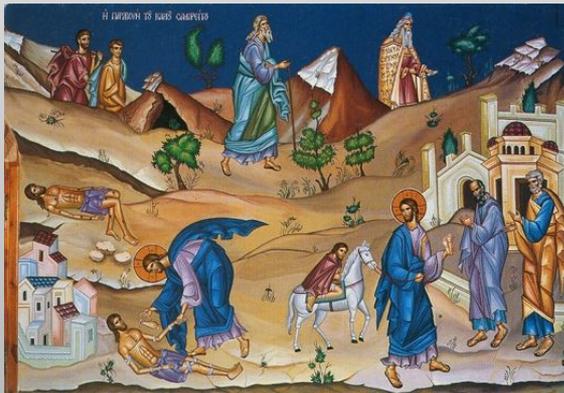


“But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and **bound up his wounds**, pouring on **oil and wine**; then he set him on his own beast and **brought him to an inn**, and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers? He said, 'The one who showed mercy on him.' And Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'”

- **First Gospel of Holy Unction Service, Luke 10:25-37**

**The Lord continues to anoint the sick with oil and wine through the hands of His priests.**

**In the Mystery of Holy Unction, believers are anointed with oil (mixed with a small amount of wine) for the healing of soul and body.**





“. . . when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.”

- **Luke 10:34**

**The Mystery of Holy Unction is traditionally celebrated by multiple priests, if possible (may be seven priests).**

**The faithful (having prepared themselves through Holy Confession and often through fasting) are anointed by the priests.**

**Holy Unction is not a substitute for Holy Confession and Holy Communion, but is also a part of the sacramental Mysteries of the Church, through which Christ acts to touch and heal His faithful.**

**During the service, the priests traditionally hold the book of the Holy Gospel over the head of the one in need of healing while offering prayer for them.**





“. . . when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.”

- **Luke 10:34**

**The Mystery of Holy Unction is traditionally performed in many churches on Holy Wednesday, when all believers (who have prepared) receive the Mystery.**

**Seven Gospel and seven Epistle readings are read.**

**The faithful may receive Holy Unction at other times when experiencing illness, or at the discretion of the priest.**

**The faithful may receive bodily healing, if God so wills.**

**The Lord is faithful to offer His Divine Grace and forgiveness of sins through the Mystery, effecting spiritual healing.**

**The Lord gives His Grace through the Mystery to endure the sufferings of illness with patience and love.**





“. . . when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.”

- **Luke 10:34**

**In some churches, believers receive anointing with holy oil (distinct from the full Mystery of Holy Unction, yet also sanctified through prayer) during certain services, such as during the Saturday night vigil.**

**The entire service may be performed for a sick person, or the priest may bring the oil from Holy Wednesday.**

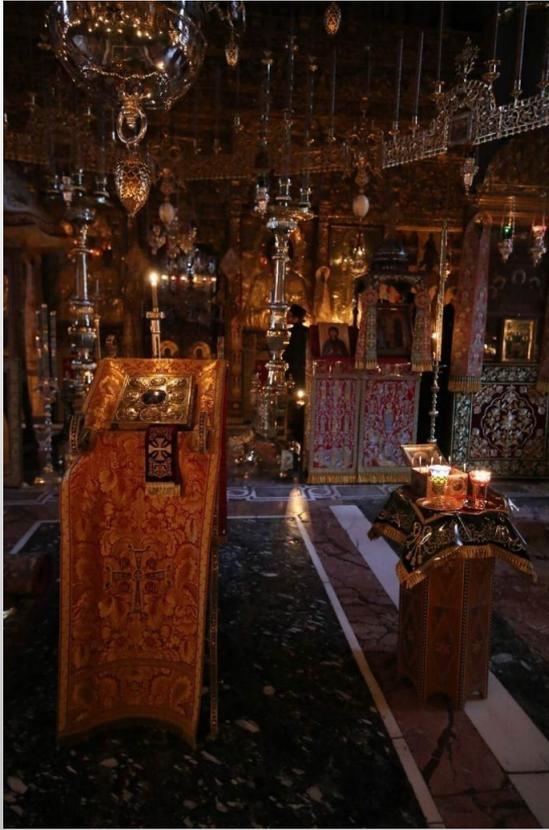
**Believers may also be anointed with various other holy oils, such as those from vigil lamps (especially those burning over the relics of saints). Through these, believers encounter the touch of God.**

**Through the anointing with oil, the Lord has brought about miraculous transformation of the human person.**





“O **Master, Lord our God, Physician of souls and bodies**, it is You Who soothe the chronic pains and heal every infirmity and malady of the people. **You desire that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth**, and You will not the death of the sinner, but rather that he should repent and live. For **You, O Lord**, in the Old Testament, **ordained repentance for sinners**: for David and the Ninevites, and for those before and after them. But also in the new dispensation of Your coming in the flesh, **You called not the righteous but the sinners to repentance**; like the publican, the harlot, the robber, and the blasphemer and great persecutor Paul, **receiving them all through repentance**. Peter, Your great Apostle who denied You three times, You received in repentance, and promised him, saying: ‘You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give You the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.’ Therefore, O merciful and loving God, encouraged by Your faithful promise, we pray and entreat You at this hour. **Hear our prayer and accept it as incense offered to You.**



**“Visit these Your servants, and if they have transgressed** in either word or deed or thought, by night or by day, **if they have come under the curse of a priest or their own anathema**, or have **sworn an oath**, we pray to You; **loose, pardon, and forgive them, O God**, overlooking their transgressions and their sins, committed by them knowingly or in ignorance. And if they have transgressed Your commandments, or have erred, as bearing flesh and living in the world, or by the prompting of the devil, **forgive them, as a merciful and loving God**; for there is no man who lives and does not sin. **Only You are sinless**; Your righteousness is to all eternity, and Your word is truth. **You did not create man for destruction, but for the keeping Your commandments, and to inherit life incorruptible**. To You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father, Who is from everlasting, and Your all-holy, good, and lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.”

- **Seventh Prayer of the Holy Unction Service**



“**Holy King**, compassionate and very merciful Lord Jesus Christ, Son and Logos of the living God, **You wish not the death of the sinner, but that he should return and live.** Therefore, **not my sinful hand do I lay on the heads of these people** who have come to You in sins and who seek the forgiveness of their sins from You; **but rather You extend Your mighty and powerful hand** that is in this holy Gospel Book, which my brother celebrants are holding over the heads of Your servants. Together we pray and entreat Your love for humanity, which is most sympathetic and not resentful. O God, our Savior, as through Your Prophet Nathan You granted David the forgiveness of his sins when he repented, and as You accepted the penitential prayer of Manasseh, so also in your customary love for humanity **accept these Your servants who are repentant of their offences, and overlook all their transgressions.** For **You** are our God, who **commanded that those who fall into sins should be forgiven** seventy times seven. **Your mercy is as great as Your majesty.** And all glory, honor and worship belong to You and Your unoriginate Father and Your all-holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.”

- **Prayer of Forgiveness, Service of Holy Unction**



# Questions / Discussion