

**Diocese of San Diego**

**POLICY ON THE USE OF BLESSED OILS**

No permission is necessary for the private use of blessed oil by individuals to bless themselves or members of their families.

The faculty is granted to pastors and priest-chaplains to give permission for lay ministers to use blessed oil for ministry to the sick in their parish or institution.

When blessed oil is used in the ministry of healing care must be taken to avoid any confusion with the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, which may be celebrated only by a priest. The minister should always make it clear that the blessing is in no way regarded as the sacrament of the sick. A lay minister may not perform anointings either with the oil of the sick or with any unblessed oil.

Blessed oil, used as a sacramental, must be blessed by a priest or deacon using a distinct formula of blessing (*Book of Blessings*, chapter 59).

A prayer must always accompany the application of the blessed oil since sacramentals achieve their effects through the Church's intercession (*Book of Blessings*, #10; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #60).

Blessed oil may be used by a designated lay minister at the conclusion of the Order for the Blessing of the Sick (*Book of Blessings*, chapter 2), or likewise, at the conclusion of the rite of a visit to the sick (*Pastoral Care of the Sick*, chapters 1 and 2), provided that the rites and prayers designated for a lay minister are followed.