

the chrism mass

*You shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer;
a holy anointing oil it shall be. ~ Exodus 30:25*

Why is This Mass Special?

THE CHRISM MASS is celebrated only once a year during Holy Week, if possible, on Holy Thursday. Two significant things happen at this unusual Mass:

- 1) All the priests from the diocese come to renew their promise of obedience to their bishop.
- 2) The holy oils that are used for the coming year are blessed or consecrated, that is, set apart for sacred use. At this Mass, there may be more priests than people in the congregation.

Why are All the Priests There?

All the priests from the entire diocese are encouraged to come to renew their promise of obedience to the bishop during this Mass. The priests get the opportunity to be encouraged by their bishop in their calling to the priesthood. It is also their opportunity to enjoy each other's company and celebrate Mass together as a community of pastors.

The bishop's homily will be one encouraging his priests to strive for holiness and to live their promises more perfectly. His encouragement to them can be taken for every Christian as well, to always try to be more like Jesus, to turn away from sin, and to take joy in the love that God has for us as his children.

What Are the Three Oils That are Blessed?

The first type is the **Oil of the Sick**, used in the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick for those who are seriously sick, infirm, or near death. The second is the **Oil of Catechumens**, normally used in the sacrament of Baptism for an infant and in preparation for Baptism as an adult. The third is the **Oil of Chrism**, used in the sacrament of Baptism of infants (to show the connection of Baptism to the sacrament of Confirmation), in the sacrament of Confirmation, and in the sacrament of Holy Orders.

(CCC 1297)

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The Holy Oils

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