



THE POPE VIDEO

Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network



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According to Pope Francis, the Anointing of the Sick is not only for those “at the point of death.” It is a sacrament “that heals the spirit.”

- In [The Pope Video](#) for July, **Pope Francis** lifts up his prayer that the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick might become more and more a “visible sign of compassion and hope.”
- In his video message – produced in collaboration with the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles](#) – the **Pope** insists that it “is not a sacrament only for those who are at the point of death,” but states that it “is one of the ‘sacraments of healing,’ of ‘restoration,’ that heals the spirit.”

(Vatican City, 2 July 2024) – **Pope Francis's** prayer intention this month is **for the pastoral care of the sick**. [The Pope Video](#) that accompanies his words is precisely dedicated to the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

In the video message published through the [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#), **Pope Francis** asks that we pray that “the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick grant the Lord’s strength to those who receive it and to their loved ones, and that it may become for everyone an ever more visible sign of compassion and hope.”

Consolation, hope’s engine

“When the priest draws near a person to perform the Anointing of the Sick, **it is not necessarily to help them say goodbye to life**. Thinking this way means giving up every hope. It means taking for granted that after the priest, the undertaker will arrive,” Pope Francis notes at the beginning of the video.

The Church’s sacraments are gifts. They are the ways Jesus uses to bless, enliven, accompany, console us. The Church believes and confesses that the priest comes to our aid by administering the Anointing of the Sick, a sacrament that **offers consolation** to those who are ill, and to their loved ones.



A sacrament with a communitarian dimension

Pope Francis's invitation to the entire Church to pray for this is a way of making visible that the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is **by its nature communitarian and relational**.

"In times of pain and illness, it is always good to know that we are not alone. The priest, and those who are present during the Anointing of the Sick, in fact, represent the entire Christian community like one body huddling around those who suffer and their families, nurturing their faith and hope, and supporting them through their prayers and fraternal warmth," affirmed the Pope before thousands of members of the faithful in a General Audience dedicated to this Sacrament.

Jesus's closeness

This sacrament guarantees that Jesus can be close to the pain of those who are either ill or elderly, the relief of their sufferings, and the forgiveness of their sins. It is not, however, synonymous with receiving a miracle of bodily healing, or that death is imminent.

The Anointing of the Sick is often the forgotten or least recognized sacrament, the Pope continues. Nevertheless, "it is Jesus himself who comes to relieve those who are sick, to give them strength, to give them hope, to help them; and also to forgive their sins. And this is very beautiful!" Hence, it's pastoral significance.

The images accompanying Pope Francis's words – filmed in the two United States' dioceses of Allentown (Pennsylvania) and Los Angeles (California) – highlight the different contexts in which this sacrament can be administered. The video, produced by a team of professionals from the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles](#), weaves together two stories, apparently very different in terms of age and the clinical situation of the sick person, but similar through the grace of the Sacrament and the great affection of their loved ones gathered around the recipient of the Sacrament.

The Anointing of the Sick in light of the Gospels

Father Frédéric Fornos S.J., International Director of the **Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**, stresses that although many have rediscovered the depth of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, it is still often perceived as a way to prepare the sick for death. "This is what Pope Francis says when he recalls that



when someone is seriously ill, we want to postpone the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick as long as we can because the idea persists that the undertakers arrive after the priest (General Audience, 26 February 2014). This is why Pope Francis hopes we can rediscover the complete depth and the true meaning of this Sacrament, not only as a preparation for death, but also as a sacrament that offers consolation to the sick in times of serious illness, and strength to their loved ones and those caring for them.”

The sick person is not alone. With the priest and the other people present, the entire Christian community supports the person with their prayers, nourishing his or her faith and hope, assuring them, and their family as well, that they are not alone in their suffering. All of us know people who are sick. Let us pray for them. And if we think they are facing a serious illness, or they are elderly and declining, let us not hesitate to propose that they experience this Sacrament of consolation and hope,” Father Fornos concludes.

The Pope Video is possible thanks to the generous contributions of many people. You can donate by following [this link](#).

Where can the video be seen?

- [Official website of The Pope Video](#)
- [YouTube channel of The Pope Video](#)
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- [The Pope Video on Instagram](#)
- [The Pope on Twitter/X Verified @Pontifex](#)
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About The Pope Video

The Pope Video is an official global initiative with the purpose of disseminating the Holy Father's monthly prayer intentions. It is carried out by the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network (Apostleship of Prayer). **Since 2016, The Pope Video has had more than 225 million views across all the Vatican's social networks, and is translated into more than 23 languages, receiving press coverage in 114 countries.** The videos are produced and created by The Pope Video Prayer Network team, coordinated by Andrea Sarubbi, and distributed by La Machi Communication for Good Causes. The project is sponsored by [Vatican Media](#). More information: [The Pope Video](#)

About the Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

The Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network is a Vatican foundation, with the mission of mobilizing Catholics through prayer and action in response to the challenges facing humanity and the mission of the Church. These challenges are presented in the form of prayer intentions entrusted by the Pope to the entire Church. The foundation's mission is inscribed in the dynamic of the Heart of Jesus, a mission of compassion for the world. Founded in 1844 as the Apostleship of Prayer, it is present in 89 countries, and is made up of more than 22 million Catholics. It includes a youth branch, the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM). In December 2020, the Pope constituted this pontifical work as a Vatican Foundation and approved its new statutes. Its international director is Fr. Frédéric Fornos, SJ. For more information, visit: <https://www.popesprayer.va>



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About the Archdiocese of Los Angeles

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is a community serving more than 4.3 million Catholics, residing in 120 different cities. In its 288 parishes and 30 missions and chapels, it supports people of various backgrounds and cultures with Mass celebrated in 42 different languages. Through its 265 schools it seeks to form a new generation of Catholics, infused with the joy of the Gospel. Under the pastoral leadership of Archbishop José H. Gomez, LA Catholics collaborate to live and proclaim the good news — committed to building a community of faith and love and eliminating the many faces of poverty — spiritual, economic, and moral - and uphold the dignity of human life. Read more: www.lacatholics.org

PRESS CONTACT

POPE'S WORLDWIDE PRAYER NETWORK - VATICAN CITY

press@thepopevideo.org

+34 633 32 33 29

+39 06 69 868 383

PARTNERS:

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES

Yannina Diaz – Director of Media Relations

+1 (213) 492-1101

ydiaz@la-archdiocese.org