

PREPARING THE SICK ROOM FOR THE SACRAMENTS

The sick-room out to be the best room we have. When the sacraments are to be administered, it should be clean and well ventilated; all unnecessary things such as dishes, medicines, etc. should be removed. No animals are to be allowed in the room. A change of linens before the sacraments are administered is recommended. The patient should be washed and combed and the parts to be anointed should be clean and presentable. Since the house becomes the dwelling place of our Lord in the **Holy Eucharist**, all who are present are expected to show by their conduct the spirit of Christian faith. Their clothes must be neat and clean with clothing covering the body and recommended that veils are worn by women. Also, all people present during the administration of the sacraments, especially **Holy Communion** must conduct themselves as if in Church. It is proper to genuflect when passing the Blessed Sacrament such as when entering or leaving the room where Our Lord is.

If the sick person wishes to go to **Confession**, place a chair at the head of the bed facing the foot so that the confessor will not be obliged to turn away in order to avoid looking the patient in the face. Place a table, so that the patient can see it. The table should be covered with a **white cloth** and free from anything that is not necessary for the administration of the sacraments. Make these preparations **BEFORE** the priest arrives and give the patient ample quiet time alone to prepare himself for the reception of the sacraments.

Items To Place on the Sick-Room Table:

1. A White Cloth covering the table.
2. Crucifix.
3. Two Candlesticks with Beeswax Candles and a lighter or matches.
4. Finger bowl with Water.
5. Holy Water bottle.
6. Spoon, Napkin, small towel.
7. Saucer with small balls of cotton.
8. Salt
9. Clean Plate.

Whoever is managing the affairs of the house, or one appointed by him should lead in prayer and help the priest when he administers **Extreme Unction**. The others assist by joining in prayer, avoiding noisy talk or whispering. This displays true Christian charity for the sick person.

As the priest approaches the house someone should light the candles. A disturbance is caused by waiting until the priest is in the room before the candles are lit. It would be worse still if after the priest arrives, someone is obliged to hunt for matches or other articles needed for the administration of the sacraments.

When the priest is at the door someone should meet him with a lighted candle. Other people should be in the room kneeling and praying. No one should speak to the priest unless strictly necessary. They should remain kneeling until he bids them to retire. They remain out during the patient's confession until given a sign by the priest to return to the room. During this time, it is very advisable to kneel and pray for the patient. While in the sick room, all should follow the priest in prayer. Someone should be available to help with the removal and replacement of bed clothing, re-positioning the patient's head if needed, etc. After the priest leaves, if there are any remaining cotton balls with Holy Oil, they should be burned to prevent desecration.

