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Oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals: Inculturation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, Uganda

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Theology in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Theology with Specialization in Sacred Liturgy

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ABSTRACT

This Dissertation, entitled "**Oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals: Inculturation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, Uganda**," aims to increase the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, Uganda. The study is anchored on three pillars. These are: symbolism of the Oil of the Sick, custody of the Oil of the Sick and the use of another plant oil for anointing the sick. The study is necessitated by the fact that in the Arua Diocese, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is shunned by many Catholics. Thus, investigation into the oils used in the Lugbara traditional healing rituals has been done, so that the Rite of Anointing of the Sick could be inculturated. The work is divided into six chapters.

Chapter One gives the background of Arua Diocese where the study was contextualized. Arua Diocese is located in the northwestern part of Uganda. The Diocese is a home to nine ethinic groups of whom the Lugbara are the majority. The Lugbara belong to the Central-Sudanic speaking group. Socially, the Lugbara are organized according kinship and clan system. The clans give them the political set-up. Majority of them have embraced Christianity, and many are Muslims. In times of sickness, their traditional believes and rituals come are strongly practices.

Chapter Two presents the challenges related to the use of Oil in the care of the Sick in Arua Diocese. The presentation of the challenges is preceded by explanation of the meaning of oil, its classifications and general uses. The challenges fall into four categories. These categories are: Perception of the Oil of the Sick, Custody of the Oil of the Sick, Oils used in other religious groups both within and outside the Catholic Church, and deficient catechesis about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

Chapter Three describes the oils that used in Lugbara traditional healing rituals. This is preceded by brief discussion on Lugbara concept of sickness and healing. The traditional healing rituals identified as diagnostic and therapeutic. Oils are used in the rituals for therapeutic purposes. The oils are plant oils, animal oils and mineral oils. Of the plant oils, "*lögba odu*" (balanites oil) is commonly used in the treatment of the sick people. The commonest container for the storing oil is "*lu'bu*" (guard).

Chapter Four discusses the use of oil in the care of the sick in the Sacred Scripture and Church Tradition. The biblical concepts of sickness and healing are briefly discussed. The sources and the types of the oils used in Jewish healing rituals are explained. Liturgical sources, council pronouncements, teachings of some theologians and papal documents investigated the oil for anointing the sick was known by various names: holy oil, consecrated oil, anointing oil, and Oil of the Sick. At some point, it came to considered as "oil of the dying." In most cases, the oil was olive oil. It was blessed by the bishop. From an informal usage of oil in the care of the sick, a Rite of the Anointing the Sick developed.

Chapter Five discusses the oil the current Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The promulgation documents are analyzed. The general and the particulars structures of the Rite are also described. In the Prayer for Blessing the Oil, the Oil of the Sick is fruit of the earth, natural oil, unguent, and holy remedy. Oil stands as an element to reveal the healing work of God the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, to the humanity. Care and custody of the oil are left to the responsibility of the minister. The current Rite presents ample opportunities for inculturation so that the faithful participate fully, actively and consciously in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

Chapter Six gives recommendations for inculturating the Rite of Anointing of the Sick. Recommendations are given for inculturating the custody of the oil. "*Lu'bu*" (gourd) is proposed as the culturally relevant container for the storage of the oil. The key liturgical recommendation is the revision and updating of the Rite in the vernacular languages that are

used in the liturgy in Arua Diocese. While the vernacular versions are revised and updated, other recommendation can be incorpated in the introduction rites, the liturgy of the Word and the liturgy of anointing. Pastoral recommendations requires that liturgical catechesis be carried, aided by a harmonized local catechism. This recommendation needs to be enforced through authoritative directives that carry juridical implications. Since way has been opened for use of another plant oil, "*lögba odu*" (balanites oil) is a viable option for use in the Anointing of the Sick. When implemented, these recommendations can lead to increase the reception of the Sacrament in Arua Diocese.

The research methodology used in the research is theological, historical, pastoral, spiritual, juridical and anthropological. The sources used are church documents, books, articles, and online articles or books. The information has been obtained through reading and reflection, interviews and questionnaire and personal observations. All the sources have been duly acknowledged.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, **Azale Norbert**, Reg. No. 1061902, hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work achieved through personal reading, research and reflection. It has not been submitted to any other college or university for an academic credit. All information from other sources have been duly acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, Nyati Natal and Mariana Agazu. To all the sick who treasure the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

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I am grateful to Almighty God for His divine providence, guidance and good health He has gave me while doing my studies at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa. I express my acknowledgements to several people who have helped me while undertaking the study.

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I sincerely acknowledge the contribution of the priests of Arua Diocese, my family members, friends and colleagues towards the accomplishment of this work. May God bless each and every one of them abundantly.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (since 1909)
AIM	African Inland Mission
AJ	Apostles of Jesus
BIHM	Brother of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church (2001)
CIC	*Codex Iuris Canonici*
CMS	Comboni Missionary Sisters
DC	District Commissioner
DMLJMQA	Daughters of the Merciful Love Jesus and Mary Queen of Apostles
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DDWDS	Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments
FLP	Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady of the Poor
GeV	*Gelasianum Vetus*
GIRM	General Instruction to the Roman Missal
GrH	*Gregorianum Hadrianum*
IASP	International Association of Studies of Pain
LSMIG	Little Sisters of Mary Immaculate of Gulu
NDC	New Directory for Catechesis
M. Afri.	Missionaries of Africa
MCCJ	*Missionari Comboniana Corde Jesu*
MIDM	Missionaries of Jesus the Divine Master
MMS	Medical Mission Sisters
MSMMC	Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church
OFM, Cap.	Order of Friars Minor, Capuchins

OSB	Order of St. Benedict
OUI	*Ordo Unctionis Infirmorum eorumque Pastoralis Curae* (1972)
PCS	*Pastoral Care of the Sick* (1990)
PL	*Patrologia Latina*
PRG	*Pontificale Romanum Germanicum*
SC	*Sacrosanctum Concilium*
SHS	Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Juba
SSPS	Missionaries Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit
SVD	Society of the Divine Word
WHO	World Health Organization

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This section gives a general introduction to the study. It states the purpose of the study, the rationale and the central question of investigation. The section also states the three hypotheses that have guided that study. The section also contains brief descriptions of the structure of the Dissertation, and the related literature that have been reviewed.

Purpose

To study the oils used in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals so as to inculturate the Rite of Anointing of the Sick for increased reception of the Sacrament in Arua Catholic Diocese, Uganda.

Rationale

Anointing with oil is a central feature in the Church's care for the sick. The oil is ordinarily blessed by the bishop during the Chrism Mass. In a case of necessity, it can be blessed by the priest during the actual celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.[1] The oil is to be accorded dignified custody, and brought to the sick in a clean vessel of suitable material.[2] The Apostolic Constitution *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* by Pope Paul VI in 1972 decreed that: "according to circumstances, another kind of oil can also be used, provided it is derived from plants, and is thus similar to olive oil."[3]

In Arua Catholic Diocese, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is shunned by many Catholics. This is because the Sacrament is associated with imminent death of the sick person. It is perceived that to be anointed with the Oil of the Sick is to be prepared to die. Some

[1] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2001), no. 1530. Hereafter cited as *CCC*; *Code of Canon Law*, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2013), Can. 999. Hereafter cited as *CIC*.
[2] *Ordo Unctionis Infirmorum eorumque Pastoralis Curae, editio typica* (Città del Vaticana: Typis Polyglottis Vaticana, MCMLXXIII), no. 22. Henceforth cited as *OUI*.
[3] Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972), in *AAS* 65 (1973): 5-9; *OUI*, no. 20.

members of Catholic Charismatic Renewal group and Pentecostals encourage people to anoint themselves, when are sick or undergoing any health-related challenge. The oils used for such anointing are bought on the streets or shops. Some priests even bless those oils outside the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. This has blurred the symbolism of the oil ordinarily blessed during the Chrism Mass. It has also obfuscated the role of the proper and ordinary minister of the Sacrament.

The Oil of the Sick is not accorded safe and dignified custody. The vessels or the oil stocks for keeping the sacred oils are not available to most priests and parishes in the Diocese. During the Chrism Mass, it is observed that many priests fetch the blessed oils in plastic bottles. They also carry the oils to the sick in those plastic bottles. The oils are stored in cupboards or paper boxes. In the architectural designs of most church buildings in the Diocese, there are no places for storage of the blessed oils. Such poor handling and storage of the oil reduces people's confidence in the use of the oil for the anointing of the sick.

Some Christians, when sick, go to be anointed with oils by traditional healers. These traditional healers are found in various villages in the Diocese. This reduces the frequency of receiving the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, as people place more trust and confidence in the oils used by the traditional healers. It has also led to Christians participating in syncretic practices in the name of searching for healing and good health.

A study of the oils used in Lugbara traditional healing rituals would deepen the understanding of the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick. It would also promote reverent custody of the oil. Another plant oil could also be discovered for use in the Anointing of the Sick. From the study, an inculturated Rite of Anointing of the Sick would emerge, leading to increased reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in the Diocese.

Central Question of Investigation

How can the study of the oils used in the Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals lead to an inculturated Rite of the Anointing of the Sick in order to increase the reception of the Sacrament?

Research Hypotheses

i. Maybe a deeper liturgical catechesis for the clergy, religious and lay faithful on the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick can promote an increased reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.
ii. Perhaps the custody of the oil in a culturally relevant vessel, in a well-designed section of the church building can elicit faith and desire to be anointed with the oil, and promote frequent reception of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.
iii. Probably detailed study of the oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals may increase the reception of the Sacrament from its proper ministers.

Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study has been the one proposed by *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, numbers 16 and 23[4], for the study of the Sacred Liturgy, that is, theological, historical, pastoral, spiritual, juridical and anthropological.

[4] These paragraphs give direction methodology in Sacred Liturgy. Number 16 states that Sacred Liturgy is to be taught under its theological, historical, pastoral, spiritual and juridical aspects. Number 23 emphasizes that careful investigation is always to be made into each part of the liturgy which is to be revised so that sound tradition may be retained, and yet the way remains open to legitimate progress. The investigation should be theological, historical and pastoral. Cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (4 December, 1963), nos 16 & 23, in *AAS* 56 (1964): 97-138. Henceforth cited as *SC.*

a) Theological Method

The theological method stands as the foundation for the entire study. The theological method established the liturgical reality in conveying the salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ. The method recognized that Christ is referent of the liturgical celebrations, and the Church is the object of the celebration.[5] In using the theological method, the study has investigated the symbolism of oil in the celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Christ, particularly in celebration the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Biblical sources, the works of the Church Fathers and the teaching of some Councils have been examined to explore the theological understanding of oil in celebration of the Sacrament.

b) Historical Method

The historical method investigates the evolution of the shape of the liturgical in the various epochs of the Church, so as to understand the original and genuine spirit of the liturgy. Through the historical method, the earliest witnesses in the New Testament, the Apostolic Period, the Patristic period, the medieval period, and post-Tridentine period investigated. In the light of these witnesses, the authenticity of the new forms in the later periods is assessed. Their faithfulness to the original sources is also evaluated.[6] In relation to this research, the historical method has been used to examine the documentary witnesses on the Oil of the sick.

c) Pastoral Method

The pastoral method emphasizes that the study of the liturgy is to be considered in the celebrative dimension in a concrete community. This is because of the fact that in the celebration, the people have a living experience of the Paschal Mystery.[7] The method focuses

[5] Cf. John Kyule, John Lukwata and Clement Majawa, (eds.), *A Guide to Research Work and University Studies for the Faculty of Theology* (Nairobi: CUEA Press, 2013), 172.
[6] Cf. John Kyule *et al* (2013), 172.
[7] Cf. Johm Kyule *et al* (2013), 173.

on the actual celebration, assessing how the history of salvation connects to the lives of those who are celebrating. In using the pastoral method, the researcher has discussed the use of oil in the context of the Christian communities in Arua Diocese, especially those of Lugbara tribe.

d) Spiritual Method

The spiritual method is anchored on the understanding that the study of the liturgy is not only intellectual exercised, but it is also directed the glorification of God and sanctification of the participants.[8] It treats liturgy as a transformative encounter with the Divine. In using this method, spiritual reflections and mediations are made about the liturgical texts for the celebration of the liturgy.

e) Juridical Method

The juridical method bases on the fact that study and celebration of the liturgy is done in accordance with the established norms and the laws of the Church. The method focusses on the study of the norms and regulations that govern the celebration of the liturgy.[9] The norms are laid down in universal laws and the particular laws. They are also stipulated in the authentic liturgical books. In using this method, the authorities of the liturgical books have been established in order determined their sources. The rubrics in the liturgical books, especially the *OUI*, be analyzed to examine the precise directions that they give for the celebrations. The General Instruction has been discussed to explore the theological teachings and the directions give for adaptation, accommodation and inculturation.

[8] Cf. SC, no.
[9] Cf. *CIC*, can. 838.

f) Anthropological Approach

The anthropological method bases on the fact that the liturgy has a human dimension. The holy realities which belong to God are signified and expressed through the texts and rites which belong to human beings. Liturgical investigations, therefore, have to make use of the data offered by human sciences, especially anthropology. Anthropological findings must accompany and sustain investigations in liturgy in the progressive understanding of the mysteries of faith.[10] The anthropological method has been employed to discuss the use of oil in the human societies for various needs, including the need for healing. The Lugbara people of Arua Diocese were chosen as the human society for study. During investigation, information about the use of oils has been obtained through oral interviews and questionnaires. 130 individuals and five groups were interviewed. Of the 100 questionnaires sent out, only 57 were returned. Intentional observation was also done, especially in relation to the custody of the oils.

Structure of the Dissertation

Apart from the general introduction and general conclusion, the work consists of six chapters. Each Chapter has an introduction and a conclusion. The bibliography and the appendices are also included.

Chapter One focuses on the background of Arua Catholic Diocese. Chapter presents the geographical location of the Diocese, the population distribution in the Diocese, and the ethnic groups in the Diocese. Among the ethics groups present in the diocese, the Chapter expounds on the Lugbara, describing their origin, social structure, political organization, economic activities, cultural and religious beliefs. This is followed by description of the beginning of evangelization of the Lugbara people. The Chapter also gives the history of Arua Catholic

[10] Cf. John Kyule *et al* (2013*)*, 173.

Diocese and its current pastoral organization and structure. The Chapter ends with survey of the healing institution in the diocese.

Chapter Two discusses the challenges facing the use of oil in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese. The chapter opens with the explanation of the meaning, classification and general uses of oil. The challenges are categorized under four sub-sections: perception of the oil, custody of the oil, use of oil in other religious groups, and deficient catechesis.

Chapter Three describes the oils in the traditional healing rituals of the Lugbara. The chapter begins by giving the Lugbara concept of sickness and healing. Since the oils are used in the healing rituals, a description of the healing rituals is also given. The various categories of the oils, ways of processing and appropriating the oils in healing rituals are deeply explained. The chapter ends by a consideration of the traditional ways of storing the oils and holding them during the healing rituals.

Chapter Four presents the use oil in the care of the Sick in the Sacred Scripture and Church tradition. The Chapter begins by presenting the biblical concept of sickness and healing. The various types of oils mentioned in the Bible and their sources are described. A description of the ritual in which oil is used is also given. The chapter the discussed the Christian ritual of healing in which oil is used in the various epochs of the Church. These epochs are: first four centuries, medieval period, Tridentine person, and the post- Vatican II period. The sources that have been examined are the Papal documents, sermons and writings of some selected Church Fathers, Council teachings and liturgical documents.

Chapter Five focuses on oil in the current Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The chapter describes the preliminaries to the Rite, that is, preparation, promulgation and the General Introduction or *Praenotanda*. The general structure and the particular structure are also described. In order to explore the symbolism of oil in the Rite, the Prayer of Blessing of Oil is

analyzed. This is followed by discussion of the preparation and custody of oil custody of the Oil of the Sick. In the same Chapter, the theological dimensions of the Rite are discussed. The dimensions are identified as: Trinitarian, Christological, Pneumatological, Sacramental, Ecclesiological, Anthropological and Eschatological. The chapter ends by examining the teaching of the popes on the Oil of the Sick.

Chapter Six contains recommendations and proposals for inculturating the Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The chapter begins by outlining the similarities and differences of understating of oil and its custody in Lugbara traditional rituals and the current Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The meaning of inculturation and liturgical inculturation are also explained in the chapter. The elements for inculturation are identified. The recommendations and proposals are categorized as liturgical, pastoral, and juridical. The chapter ends with an exhortation to care for the sick so that they can experience the healing of Christ through the care of the Community.

The general conclusion presents the summary of the entire work. It also mentions a key recommendation which, if implemented, would improve the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese.

Review of Related Literature

i. **Asiimwe, John Bosco*, The Healing Dimension of the Rite of the Anointing of the Sick: Towards Strengthening Faith in the Diocese of Witbank, South Africa,* Nairobi: CUEA Press, 2019.**

In this work the author explores the healing dimension of the Anointing of the Sick in view of strengthening faith in the Catholic Diocese of Witbank in South Africa. The author identifies oil as one of the common healing symbols or elements in the Christian religious groups in the Diocese. These groups are Zionist Christian Church, Pentecostal Church and

Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In the Zionist Christian Church, two types of oil are used: cooking oil, and oil drawn from electrical transformer. The oil from electrical transformer is considered to have curative and protective property. In the Pentecostal Church and Catholic Charismatic Renewal group, olive oil is used, having been prayed over. The olive oil is understood to be a symbol of the Holy Spirit, healing, wholeness and reconciliation. The oil is used in different ways by the ministers and the sick people themselves. The various way include: anointing, pouring, smearing, drinking directly or indirectly in water, herbs or food.[11]

The author examines the healing dimension of the use of oil in the Scripture and Church tradition. The author expresses awareness of the decree regarding the possibility to use vegetable oil as the matter for the Sacrament. However, he does not propose a specific plant oil and the criteria for getting such an oil.

Among the elements for inculturating the Rite of the Anointing of the Sick, the author emphasizes the lavish, generous and diligent use of the oil.[12] He also advocates for the *gustanti* that is, drinking the oil directly or mixing it with water, food and herbs to enhance healing. This suggestion is incorporated in the proposed prayer for the blessing of the oils.[13] He also suggests that the use of blessed oil as a sacramental should be encouraged. The author further advises that these practices should be seen as "an extension of the Formal Anointing of the Sick by the Priest as the sole Minister of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick."[14]

The book presents a study that dealt with the entire Rite of the Anointing of the Sick in a South African context. The researcher, in this work, has deepened the understanding of one element of the rite, that is, the oil, in an East African context of the Lugbara of Arua Catholic Diocese in Uganda. The researcher has also discussed the symbolisms of the oil, appropriating

[11] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe, *The Healing Dimension of the Rite of the Anointing of the Sick: Towards Strengthening Faith in the Diocese of Witbank, South Africa* (Nairobi: CUEA Press, 2019), 87-88.
[12] Cf. *OUI*, no. 20.
[13] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 340-341.
[14]John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 335.

them comprehensively. This research has also delved into investigating the possible plant or vegetable oils that can serve as alternatives to the olive oil, using the Lugbara traditional healing rituals as search ground.

ii. Lukwata, John, *Integrated African Liturgy*, Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publications-CUEA Press, 2011.

In this book, the author discusses how the traditional African heritage serves as the context in which Africans worship to God in Christian manner. In Chapter Six, he mentions oil in relation to the human body as a cultic symbol in worship. In African practices of initiation rites and healing process, the body is smeared with oil. "Initiation is done on the body to awaken the person to the surroundings, for example the facial and bodily markings as well as one's exposure to the general hazards of nature. This is done in a communal spirit aimed at consolidating the unity of the members."[15]

The author has pointed out that Africans too use oil in their traditional rites, be it initiation, passage or healing. However, the specific types of oils that are used in those rites are not pointed out. Further still, the precise relationship between Africans' use of oil and the Christian usage in the realization of the Paschal Mystery of Christ has not been examined by the author. This study has given justification for the smearing of the body with oil with in a specific community, that is, an African tribal group, called the Lugbara. The study has also discussed the healing rituals of the Lugbara where oil is used. The study has also proposed ways of incorporating some elements of those rituals into the Rite of the Anointing of the Sick for effective consolidation of unity among the members of an African Christian Community.

[15] John Lukwata, *Integrated African Liturgy,* (Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publications-CUEA Press, 2011), 160-161.

iii. Rinaldo, Ronzani, *Christian Healing: The Anointing of the Sick*, Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 2007.

In this work, the author examines the Rite of Anointing of the Sick, tracing its development from the bible. He begins by presenting the anthropological foundations of sickness and healing. He presents this to show that the deep longing for life and harmony in human beings forms a basis for the Anointing of the Sick. In Chapter Four, the author mentions oil as the primary symbol in the Anointing of the Sick. He advises that the meaning and value of oil must be expressed in a clear way, "no one should try to guess what is inside the oil container or the vessel."[16] In Chapter Five, he states that oil is often applied to bodies as a means of refreshment, beauty and healing. He presents the used of olive oil in the Mediterranean world as a witness to the custom of applying oil to the body of the sick for easing its suffering. The author also shows conversance with what is decreed in the Apostolic Constitution *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* that oil of another sort could be also be used, provided it were obtained from plants. [17]

The work of Ronzani is a general consideration on the current Rite of the Anointing of the Sick. It is not contextualized in any African community, although he discusses briefly the African attitude towards sickness. He also limits use of oil in the care of the sick to the Mediterranean world. The author has not also explored on the type of the container or the vessel which should not leave people to guess its contents. Further still, the author leaves the issues pertaining to the care of the oil to the guess or concern of the reader. The research has gone further and deeper in discussing the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick and types of container or vessels that can be used for storing and holding the Oil of the Sick. It has also brought out other plant oils that may not be found in the Mediterranean world, but are similar to olive oil.

[16] Rinaldo Ronzani, *Christian Healing: The Anointing of the Sick* (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 2007), 66.
[17] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 110.

iv. Kalungi, J. Herman, *The Christian Sacraments: A Course in Sacramentology*, Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 2024.

Kalungi presents is a systematic exposition on the seven sacraments. In Part V, he argues that the Anointing of the Sick is a part of God's care for His sick people in illness and suffering.[18] He sees the beginning of the development of theology of Anointing of the Sick in Church tradition in Mark 6:7-13. He states that: "Jesus adopted the use of oil among the Jews and pagans for therapeutic purposes and enhanced it charismatically as shown by the text." [19] He further argues that oil was one of the two ways by which the elders in the community of St. James intervened in the care of the sick. The Church expected that this anointing with oil was to bring about integral healing of both soul and body. Following the footsteps of the scholastic theologians, the author asserts that: "oil blessed by the bishop is the remote matter of the anointing of the sick, and the anointing of the sick with this oil is the proximate matter."[20]

However, the Kalungi has not defined the elders, who in the community of St. James, intervened with the use of oil in the case of the sick. He quotes from the liturgical text of the Pastoral Care of the Sick about the possibility of using plant oil. However, he does not give a suggestion on what kind of plant oil, and how the oil is taken to the sick for the anointing. This research has clarified the sacramental usage of oil in the hands of the ministers of the Church. It has also provided abundant information to help the Church authorities in determining what other kind of plant oil can be allowed for anointing sick.

[18] Cf. Herman Joseph Kalungi, *The Christian Sacraments: A Course in Sacramentology* (Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 2024), 373-396.
[19] Herman Joseph Kalungi (2024), 374.
[20] Herman Josesph Kalungi (2024), 383.

v. Magesa, Laurenti, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa*, Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 2004.

Magesa discusses the inculturation of the Christian faith as part and parcel of the growth of the Church. By offering empirical facts, he shows the contemporary state of the reception of the Christian faith in three East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The work does not say much about the type of matter to be used in the celebration of the sacraments, for example, the kind of oil for anointing. However, he briefly states anointing with oil (along other gestures like laying on of hands, and sharing food) is a reminder to the sick person "of vital forces throughout the universe, to which his or her own vital force will be joined at death. The sting of death is thus somewhere diminished, or at least placed in proper view."[21] In this statement, the author is stuck to the medieval view that anointing with oil is a preparation for death.

The author confesses that his work says little about matter for the celebration of the sacraments since it did not ask questions to that effect. This research has explained the meaning of the Oil of the Sick, sources of obtaining the oil, means of storing and caring for it, and whether such oil can be got from the deposit of local oils. This research has also been oriented towards adopting Oil of the Sick an instrument of life-affirming energies that Magesa pointed out.

vi. Kabasele, Lumbala Francois, *Celebrating Jesus Christ in Africa: Liturgy and Inculturation*, New York: Orbis Book, 1998.

In Chapter Six of this book, Kabasele discusses Anointing of the Sick, which he calls "Sacrament of the Sick," not the "Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick." He actually states that:

[21] Laurenti Magesa, *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa* (Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 2004), 250.

"The anointing is not necessary."[22] In doing so, he eliminates the concept of anointing. He then presents a proposed African Christian ritual in which anointing with oil is completely left out. He argues that: "the anointing would be reserved for those particular cases when a priest would visit a home."[23] However, those particular cases are note mentioned. The author also downplays the role of the proper and ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. He gives two reasons for the evolution of the Sacrament: awareness that the Church ought to be involved in the suffering of those who are sick, and in death; secondly because medical science has been involved in the sickness.[24]

Since the author is bent to eliminating the aspect of anointing, he does not discuss issues relating to the symbolism, custody and available African plant oils that can be used in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. This study has highlighted highlight the symbolism, custody and available African plant oils that can be used for anointing the sick.

vii. Laison-Miller, Lizette, *The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2005.

Laison-Miller reviews the Rite of the Pastoral Care of the Sick paying attention to the structure of the rite, words and actions. In Chapter Two, he explores the central sacramental ideas surrounding the Anointing of the Sick. These ideas emerge from the three primary actions (aspects) in the celebration of the Sacrament. These primary actions are the prayer of faith, the laying on of hands, and the anointing with the blessed oil. Anointing with the blessed oil is a centra element of the Rite. It signifies healing, strengthening and the presence of the Holy Spirit. The author calls for a generous use of the oil, if the anointing is to be an effective sacramental symbol. Such a symbol is to be seen and felt by the sick person as a sign of Spirit's

[22] Lumbala Francois Kabasele, *Celebrating Jesus Christ in Africa: Liturgy and Inculturation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1998), 81.
[23] Lumbala Francois Kabasele (1998), 84.
[24] Cf. Lumbala Francois Kabasele (1998), 84.

healing and strengthening presence. The author identifies three types of oils in the Old Testament writings. These types are: "*yishar", "sĕmen",* and *"rogah."*[25] "*Yishar"* is the oil made from the first fruits of olive fruits. "*Sĕmen"* is oil of an inferior quality pressed from olive pulp. "*Rogah"* is a blend of *semen* and other spices or ingredients. In the section describing the liturgical manifestation of the oil, the authors quote the *Praenotanda* (nos 20-25) from the *Ordo Unctionis Infirmorum eorumque Pastoralis Curae* (*OUI*).

Three loopholes are noted in this exposition by Laison-Miller. Firstly, he does not elaborate what the generous use of the oil should entail. Secondly, he does not clearly articulate which of the three oils evolved to be the Oil of the Sick for use in Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Thirdly, he has not expounded on the pastoral directives given in the *Praenotanda* and their implication for inculturation. This research has investigated three types of oils used in the Bible, clarifying which evolution of the use of each type. The research has also expounded on the pastoral directives given in the General Introduction or *Praenotanda* of the Rite. From the background of the Lugbara traditional healing rituals, the researcher has elaborated on the meaning of the generous use of the oil.

viii. Martinez, German, *Signs of Freedom: Theology of Christian Sacraments*, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2003.

In Chapter Nine of this book, Martinez observes that Anointing of the Sick is a precious sacramental sign of healing. However, the Sacrament has been neglected and shunned in this age of pragmatic belief, because of the lingering fears. The fears are due to the old mentality in which the Sacrament is reduced to the practice of extreme unction. Other challenges, he argues, impact greatly on priestly roles with the modern institutionalized medicine. The author

[25] Lizette Laison-Miller, *The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2005), 37-38.

observes an opposite trend in which "manifold healing practices within various groups and religious communities at grass roots, in which blessed oil is used."[26]

The author asserts that anointing with oil was one of the ways through the apostles continued the healing ministry of Jesus. They used oil as a means of both spiritual and physical healing (cf. Acts 3:6; Mark 6:12-13). The ritual of using oil as a salvific gesture that brings holistic healing became established and official practice as revealed by the classical texts of James 5:14-15.[27] The author expounds on how oil became the main sacramental symbol in the healing praxis in the first 800 years of Christianity. The oil would be blessed through prayers recited by the bishop. The author notes that the 1972 Rite is "a key statement emerging from the reforms of the Vatican Council II."[28] He states three elements that the Rite brought to the understanding of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. First, the rite added a new sacramental meaning: "the whole church commends the sick to the suffering and the glorified Lord, so that he may raise them up and save them." Second, the rite revised the name of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick: properly to be called the anointing of the sick rather than extreme unction. Third, the rite clarified that the recipients of the Sacrament are those in sickness, not at the end of their life.[29] The author then calls for a holistic understanding of the anointing of the sick. Such an understanding should factor in when considering to foster a rich context for the Church's pastoral care of the sick and to effectively integrate the different aspects of the sacrament.

The author does not considered opportunities for adaptations, which the 1972 Rite encouraged. The author quotes the formula for the blessing of the oil in the Apostolic Tradition. However, he does not analyze the formular to show how the elements of freedom emerge from them. In this work, the researcher has reread the 1972 *OUI*, and explored the opportunities for

[26] German Martinez, *Signs of Freedom: Theology of Christian Sacraments* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2003), 222.
[27] Cf. German Martinez (2003), 226.
[28] German Martinez (2003), 226.
[29] Cf. German Martinez (2003), 230.

adaptation and inculturation. The researcher has also analyzed the Prayer for the Blessing of Oil to show the theological elements that emerge from it.

ix. Martos, Joseph, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church*, Missouri: Ligouri, 2001.

In this book, Martos discusses the historical evolution of the sacraments. In Chapter Ten, he focuses on the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick, in which the oil is specially used.[30] He observes that, long before the emergence of an ecclesiastical rite of anointing of the sick, blessed oil was already regarded as a sacramental substance. Through the oil, physical cures, healing of the body and the strengthening of the spirit could be effected by God. The oil was could be used by the lay as well as the clerics. Martos also observes that, in the Middle Ages when the Sacrament was considered as a sacrament for the dying, the administration of the oil was reserved to the priests. Describing the places for anointing, according to the *OUI*, the author mentions that oil is not placed on the five senses, but on the forehead and hands with the accompanying prayers. The minister is a priest who may use blessed oil, or he may bless the oil himself before the anointing.

In a later work of his, Martos explains the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick. He asserts that: "oil was carried to the sick person with the hope of conveying the power of the healer to those who need to receive it. Whenever those with healing power could not get to those in need of healing, they would bless something (water, oil, piece of cloth, a cross of wood) and send it to the sick."[31] However, he does not state whether this healer was a cleric or a lay faithful.

In his previous work reviewed here, the author does not give detailed analysis of the euchological texts in their historical contexts. He does not also make reference to the blessing

[30] Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church*. (Missouri: Ligouri/Triumph, 2001), 325-350

[31] Cf. Joseph Martos, *The Sacraments: An Interdisciplinary and Interactive Study* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2009), 203.

of the oil, its care and storage. This research has delved into the study of the custody of blessed oils. It has also analyzed the Prayer of Blessing Oil to explored the theological implication for the use of oil.

x. Mallia, Christopher, *The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick: The Risen Life,* Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2000.

In this book, Mallia shows how committed Christians faced their own death with the help of the Anointing of the Sick. He gives a description of the multipurpose use of the olive oil in the Old Testament. He underlines five uses of olive oil. Firstly, olive oil was part of the daily food. Secondly, it was also used as a refreshing unguent (ointment) to make the skin of the body shiny, especially after birth. Thirdly, since olive oil was considered as a substance containing medicinal properties, it was used to anoint wounds. Fourthly, olive oil used as a basis for the mixture of the perfumes such as myrrh and nard. Fifthly, olive oil served as fuel for lamps. Mallia also describes the preparation and blessing of the olive oil in the annual Holy Thursday liturgy.

The author does not differentiate the three oils blessed during this liturgy of the Holy Thursday. He also expresses ignorance about the sacred meaning of anointing. He has not gone deeper to discuss how olive oil came to be appropriated in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick. The researcher, in this work, has shown how and why olive oil came to be used in the care of the sick in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

xi. Ziegler, J. John, *Let Them Anoint the Sick*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987.

This work is a historical study intended to answer the question of extending the ministry of anointing to deacons and lay people. Ziegler traces the origins of the anointing of the sick

with oil from the Hellenistic and Jewish background through the New Testament times. He notes that the use of the oil was not only medicinal, but also a part of the magical and religious practice. In the community of St. James (cf. James 5:14-15), anointing of the sick with oil was more institutional in nature than a type of "home remedy" or charismatic healing. He further asserts that the prayer "in the name of the Lord," found in the liturgical books, could have been used as a qualification of the oil. Ziegler concentrates attention on the Tridentine canon by which any other person other than the priest was prevented from anointing the sick.[32]

Since the author is more concerned with the issue of the minister, he does not clarify whether the oil talked about is olive oil or any other oil. He does not also explain how the prayer "in the name of the Lord" qualifies the oil. This research has clarified about the kind of the oil used in the Anointing of the Sick, various ministries and ministers in celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

xii. Biwul, K.T. Joel, "The African Church's Application of Anointing Oil: An Expression of Christian Spirituality or a Display of Fetish Ancestral Religion?" in *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies 7* (2021): 1-10.

In this article, Biwul discusses the emerging practical use of anointing oil in some African Christian communities. He argues that the manner in which the purported "anointing oil" is used in these communities does not portray the original intent in the Jewish culture. The original intent was for sacred usage. In this sacred usage, specially prepared oil was applied only to the people Yahweh had chosen and engaged in his service, cultic or political. It was also applied to innate articles to be used in service to God. The spices used for making the oil,

[32] This canon anathemizes anyone who denies that the minister of the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is not a priest ordained by the bishop: "*Si quis dixerit, presbyteros ecclesiae, quos beatus Iacobus adducendos esse infirmun inungendum hortatus, non esse sacerdotes ab episcopo ordinatos, sed aetate seniores in quavis communitate, ob idque proprium extremae unctionis ministrum non esse solum sacerdotem: a. s."* Cf. Norman Tarner, (ed.), *Decrees of Ecumenical Councils, Volume II: Trent to Vatican II* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1990), 713.

and the method for making the oil made it fundamentally sacred with its restricted usage. The spices were to be of special, finest and best quality. They included: liquid myrrh, fragrant/sweet-smelling cinnamon, fragrant calamus/aromatic cane, cassia and olive oil. The author places the oil for anointing the sick among those for ordinary usages. Ordinary usages included domestic functions, lubrication functions, cosmetic functions and therapeutic purposes. Christ's disciples used oil symbolically to anoint heads of the sick for healing. The author argues that this was Old Testament tradition which later the community of St. James picked up when he invited the elders to appreciate it.

While evaluating the contemporary African Churches' contextual usage of the anointing oil, Biwul states that oil is now used as a healing balm, an exorcist's expellant, protective spell and a means of fortune, wealth generation and prosperity. This, according to him, does not express Christian spirituality but rather is a display of fetish ancestral religion.

The author's dismissal of African manner of expressing faith, belief and practice as fetish can be a stumbling block to the process of inculturation. The author does not specify which African Christian communities and the churches he is referring to. He has not also given a deeper consideration of the texts that are fundamental to the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. These texts are Mark 6:12-13 and James 5:14-16. The researcher, in this work, has investigated the sources of the oils from the perspective of the entire Bible, and from the Lugbara traditional perspective.

xiii. Kaufman, R. Kent, "Anointing of the Sick: A Biblical Treasure," in *The Bible Today,* July/August, 2003, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2003): 242-248.

At the beginning of the article, the Kaufman stated that he would examine biblical texts of Mark 6:13 and James 5:14-15. But in the course of the article, he shifts attention to other

biblical texts suggested for the celebration of Anointing of the Sick.[33] The readings are meant to console and strengthen first the person who is ill, and then those who surround the ill person with love and support. In consideration of the Oil of the Sick, the author narrates a scenario (in Toledo Diocese, United States of America) where he saw oils for blessing being brought by lay faithful from different parishes or institutions. Members of each parish or institution within the diocese travel to the cathedral with their own vessels of oil to be blessed. At the appropriate point in Mass, the oil bearers are called before into the sanctuary, each holding his or her vessel with the oil. No two vessels resemble each other. The oil of the sick is blessed in these vessels and taken back to the parishes in them. The scenario the author has presented is in American context. However, it is relevant in considering the issue of the vessels for blessing and carrying the oil of the sick.

In the course of the article, the author does not examine the mentioned texts (Mark 6:13 and James 5:14-15). The author does also not make the reader to understand the authenticity of the oils in those various vessels. It's not clear whether they all contained olive oil or another plant oil. This research has analyzed the of Mark 6:13 and James 5:14-16. The researcher also discussed the means of ensuring authenticity of the oil blessed for the anointing the sick, and dignity of the vessels used for carrying the oil.

xiv. Fink, E. Peter, "Anointing of the Sick and the Forgiveness of Sin," in Glen, Genevieve, (ed.), ***Recovering the Riches of Anointing: A Study of the Sacrament of the Sick*** **(Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001): 21-36.**

In this article, Fink examines the relationship between the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and forgiveness of sins. The anointing involves two elements: prayer and the anointing with oil. Oil is a symbol of embrace, love and deliverance. He asserts that: "there can

[33] Cf. *OUI*, nos 153-229.

be many ways of anointing, but they are always symbols of love."[34] Taking from the Eastern Church, the author argues that oil is not just medicinal, but it also serves as Christ the healer and Christ the reconciler. Those who take blessed oil or who anoint themselves or bless it allow the embrace and deliverance of Christ to become tangible in the person's life.

The author also talks of oil that is a "sacramental" which may be kept at home to anoint oneself in case of minor sicknesses like cold, fevers, etc., and the "consecrated oil of the sick." However, he does not explain clearly distinction between the two. This becomes a cause of confusion for many Catholics. He also makes no mention of the storage of oil. The researcher, in this work, has explained the meaning of oil as "sacramental" and "Oil of the Sick" for celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

xv. Greshake, Gisbert, "The Anointing of the Sick: The Oscillation of the Church between Physical and Spiritual Healing," in Chauvet, and Miklos Tomka, *Concilium* 1998/5 (London: SCM Press, 1998): 79-88.

In this article, Greshake discusses the symbolism of the "consecrated oil" that is used in the Anointing of the Sick. He bases his argument of the prayers used for blessing the oil. He states that since the third century BCE, the prayers used in the consecration of oil express the fact that the oil receives that power to bring strength and health. The consecrated oil is regarded as the bearer of grace and Christ's blessing. As a bearer of grace, it is "a sacramental sign which can be applied not only by those who hold such an office, but also by any giver." The occasion and the subject of anointing with the oil in principle could be anything: a headache, a dogbite, even at the slightest sense of being worried of any illness. Alongside an anointing proper, people also used the same consecrated oil for washing and it could also be drunk. The

[34] Peter E. Fink, "Anointing of the Sick and the Forgiveness of Sin," in Genevieve Glen, (ed.), *Recovering the Riches of Anointing: A Study of the Sacrament of the Sick* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001): 35.

consecrated oil was also used for exorcisitic practice to some degree as an alternative pagan magic. It was to provide healing, help and protection against every conceivable damage to good life. The author does not answer the questions the source, storage, and care for the oil. In this work the researcher has investigated issues surrounding these aspects.

xvi. Dudley, Martin, "Rites for the Blessing Oils and Anointing", in Dudley, Martin and Rowel, Geoffrey, (eds.), *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1993): 176-210.

In this article, Dudley gives a synopsis of the prayers for blessing oils and anointing in Catholic Church, Anglican Church and Lutheran Church. For the Catholic Church, he gives the three formulas for blessing the oil of the sick in the 1972 *OUI*.[35] The first one is used by the Bishop during the Chrism Mass or by the priest during the rite of anointing. The second one is a responsive form with a Trinitarian structure and it is to be used by the priest during the rite with a different concluding part. This is actually a prayer of thanksgiving over the oil that has already been blessed. The third comes as a provision for exceptional circumstances in the case of a Continuous Rite of Penance. The prayers for the blessing of the oils in the contemporary Anglian rites, though not uniform, are modeled on James 5:14-15. They follow the shape and language of the reformed Roman rite. The rites in the Lutheran Church provide a formula for the dedication of worship furnishings. In this prayer, oil is dedicated. In another formula of the Lutheran rite, it is prescribed that the oil for anointing of the sick should be olive oil with an aromatic ingredient such as synthetic oil of cinnamon or oil of bergamot

With regard to anointing, author gives an outline of the liturgy of anointing in the reformed Catholic Rites. He mentioned the major parts of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick as: the Litany, the Laying of hands, prayer over the oil, the anointing, and the prayer after the

[35] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 123, 140 & 248.

anointing. In the prayer after the anointing of a child, the oil is called, "the oil of healing and peace."[36] Concerning anointing rites in other Churches, the author asserts that the anointing with oil is an optional supplement in Anglican rite, and a recent discovery in the Lutheran Churches.[37] The author also quotes the 1917 *Codex Iuris Canonici* about the custody of the oil: the oil is to be kept under lock and key, in a special place in the sacristy, baptistery or the church.

In the article, the author does not give an analysis of the theology embedded in the prayers and the anointing formulas of the rites of the churches. He does not also delve into a discussion of their similarities and differences. In this study, the researcher has given an analysis of the Prayer for Blessing the Oil.

xvii. Abrams, Rebecca and Hugo Slim, "The Reviving of Oils in Contemporary Culture: Implications for the Sacrament of Anointing," in Dudley, Martin and Geoffrey Rowel, (eds.), The *Oil of Gladness: Anointing in Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1993): 169-175.

The authors of this article explore the increased use of oil in secular society and appropriation of sacramental image by health and beauty industries. They assert that there is "massification of oils," that is, oil being used extensively and applied in a variety of ways. These include bath oils, sun oils, massage oils, aromatherapy oils, incense oils, hair oils, and skin care oils. These increased usages of oils are a result of the global encounters in the economic sphere. They also represent a change in spiritual view of the body and material world. A given number of people are experimenting with a variety of alternative treatments for physical ailments and in the same way have increasingly abandoned the procedures of orthodox

[36] Martin Dudley, "Rites for the Blessing Oils and Anointing", in Dudley, Martin and Geoffrey Rowel, (eds.), *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1993): 208.
[37] Cf. Martin Dudley (1993), 209; cf. *OUI,* no. 125.

religions to explore a variety of spiritual cures. The prescriptive and marketing languages used to describe oils for health and beauty reasons are drawn from sacramental language; oils "revitalize", "refresh", "renew" and "restore." This increasing role of oils in people's secular lives is bound to influence the way they view sacred oils. The authors conclude that these secular usages provided a new and unprecedented opportunity for renewal and development of the sacramental use of oils in the contemporary Christianity.

The authors do not distinguish between "sacrament of oil" and "Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick" in which oil is used. The researcher has discussed the relationship between the secular oils and sickness, and Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

xviii. Martimort, Aimé Georges, "Prayer for the Sick and Sacramental Anointing," in Martimort, Aimé Georges, *The Church at Prayer Volume III: The Sacraments*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987): 117-138.

In this article, Martimort gives precise exposition of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick with a comprehensive biblical and historical background. He asserts that Jesus gave power to his apostles to heal through signs. The two pertinent signs are the anointing with oil (Mark 6:12) and the laying on of hands (Mark 16:18). The letter of James (James 5:13-15), which serves as an instruction for all times, shows that the mission that Jesus gave did not remain limited to the beginning of the Church. The author gives a historical survey of anointing in the West and East, examining the various formularies for the blessing of the Oil of the Sick. These formularies are found in the early century documents like the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus (A.D 215), the Testament of the Lord, the Apostolic Constitutions, and the *Euchologion* of Serapio. The formularies reveal that the Oil of the Sick was brought by the people to be blessed during Eucharistic celebration. These oils were intended for use in the bodily and spiritual

healing of the sick. The prayers were to invoke the Holy Spirit upon the oil. Many of these formularies were adapted upon the recommendation of the Second Vatican Council and inserted in the ritual of Paul VI.

Martimort points out that the long-term conception of using only the olive oil was abandoned in the ritual of Paul VI. According to him, the decision to permit the use of another vegetable oil was in response to the "concern of the Episcopal Conferences of the Third world, where it is presumed obtaining olive oil would be difficult."[38] The new ritual allows that in case of true necessity any priest can bless the oil during the ceremony of anointing. However, in principle, a priest is to use oil already blessed by the bishop at Chrism Mass. If the priest is using the oil already blessed, a prayer of thanksgiving said over it before performing the anointing will serve to bring out the sacramental symbolism.

The author has explained the reason for the use of any other plant oil other than olive oil. However, attributing it to the concern of those in the Third World is discriminatory, as if the "First World" and "Second World" would use the olive oil, and the "Third World" would use oil of another vegetable. He has not elucidated the issue of the vessels for holding the oils during the ceremony of anointing. The researcher of this work has investigated the plants from which oils could be processed for use in the Anointing of the Sick. The researcher has also described and proposed worthy vessels for the holding the oil. The proposals are meant to serve the universal Church in the fulfillment of the mission of Christ. The next section is the major presentation of the work. It begins with Chapter One entitled: The Background of Arua Catholic Diocese.

[38] Georges Aimé Martimort, "Prayer for the Sick and Sacramental Anointing," in Georges Aimé Martimort, *The Church at Prayer Volume III: The Sacraments*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987): 138.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BACKGROUND OF ARUA CATHOLIC DIOCESE

Introduction

In this chapter, the background of Arua Catholic Diocese is discussed. The first section of chapter presents the geographical location of the Diocese where the study is contextualized. The second section shows the population distribution in the Diocese. In the third section, the various ethnic groups found in the Diocese are described. Of these group, the Lugbara are singled out for further description. The fourth section describes the origin, social structure, political organization, economic activities, cultural and religious beliefs of the Lugbara. Their first encounter with foreign religious is also explained. These religions are Islam and Christianity. The fifth section presents historical background of Arua Diocese, and the pastoral and administrative structures of the diocese, and the healing institutions found in the diocese.

1.1 Geographical Location

Arua Catholic Diocese is located in the north-western part of Uganda. The Diocese lies on the Global Positions System (GPS) coordinates of latitude 3º 1' 00' North and longitude 31º 00' 00 East.[39] The area is about 2000 feet above sea level, rising to approximately 4000 feet towards the western side, and around 6000 feet towards the south.[40]

[39] Cf. *GPS Coordinates of West-Nile Sub-region, Uganda*. Retrieved from https://www.latitude.to>articles-by-country, (accessed 16/03/2025).

[40] Cf. John F. Middleton and D.J Greenland, "Land and Population in West Nile District, Uganda," in *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 120, no. 4 (Dec, 1954): 446.

The Diocese covers ¾ of the West Nile region.[41] Spatially, the Diocese covers land size of approximately 4,046 square miles (10,561 sq. kilometers).[42] Today, this area constitutes nine civil districts[43] and one city (Arua). The districts: Arua, Koboko, Maracha, Terego, Yumbe, Zombo, Adjumani, Moyo and Obongi.

The Diocese shares international boundaries with Democratic Republic of Congo (henceforth DRC) to the west, and Republic of South Sudan to the north. The Diocese also shares boundaries with seven Catholic Dioceses. These are: Torit and Yei (both in South Sudan), Mahagi-Nioka in DRC, Nebbi to the south (in Uganda), and Gulu Archdiocese to the east (in Uganda).

1.2 Population Distribution

Population distribution refers to the pattern showing the spread of people in a specific geographical area. It can be described in terms of sex, age, religious afflictions, tribe and nationality. Population distribution gives information about the number of individual persons living in different parts of the area. This provides useful information for understanding the pattern of settlement.[44] Many a time it is difficult to get exact population figures. This is due to

[41] The name "West Nile" was given by Fredrick John Johnson, the Governor of the Uganda Protectorate from 1911-1917. In a report he presented to the British parliament, he wrote: "The new territory on the West bank of the Nile, which came under the Protectorate administration in the latter part of the year 1913-14, has been lightly administered, with gratifying results." The British administrator of the area was Alfred Evelyn Weatherhead, who shorted the "West bank of the Nile" to "West Nile."
Cf. University of Illinois, *Colonial Reports- Annual, no. 874, Uganda, Report for 1914-1915*, (Urbana-Champaign: Digital Content Creation Unit, 2010), 22. Retrieved from https://libsysdigi.library.illinois.edu/ilharvest/Africana/Books2011-05/466563/466563_1914_1915/466563_1914_1915_opt.pdf, (accessed 06/06/2026); Mark Leopold, *Inside West Nile: Violence, History and Representation on African Frontier* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2005), 4-5; Mark Leopold, "Crossing the Line: 100 Years of the North-West Uganda/Sudan Border", in *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 3:3 (2009): 468-469.

[42] Cf. Arua Diocese, *Some Interesting Facts About Arua Diocese* (2025). Retrieved from https://www.dioceseofarua.org, (accessed 16/03/2025).

[43] A district is an administrative division that is managed by the local government. Currently, there are 137 districts in Uganda. This number rises every year as new districts are created by Ministry of Local Government.

[44] Cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2024, *The National Population and Housing Census 2024- Final Report-Volume 1 (Main)* (Kampala: UBOS, 2024), 16. Retrieved from https://www.ubos.org>uploads/2024/12/National-Population-and-Housing-Census-2024-Final-Report-Volume1-mainpdf, (accessed 27/02/2025).

the fact that population is dynamic, mobile and expansive. The information from different sources also reveals different figures. Hence, the population distribution of Arua Diocese is estimated.

The total population of Arua Diocese is approximately 3,316,255 people.[45] Of these, 2,620,277 are Catholics.[46] The Anglicans are approximately 70,000 persons.[47] Others are Muslims and Pentecostals or Evangelicals. The refugee population in Arua Diocese by February 2025 stood at 664, 185 persons.[48]

The *presbyterium* of Arua Diocese is made of over 170 priests who are both diocesan clergy and members of religion congregations. The clerical religious congregations ministering in Arua Diocese are the Comboni Missionaries (MCCJ), Apostles of Jesus (AJ), Missionaries of Jesus the Divine Master (MIDM), Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady of the Poor (FLP), Society of the Divine Word (SVD), Brothers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (BIHM) also known as the Marian Brothers, Order of Friars Minor Capuchins, Missionaries of Africa (M. Afr) also known as the White Fathers, and the Scalabrini Fathers.[49]

There are 184 religious women and 38 religious men working in Arua Diocese.[50] The religious women belong several different congregations. Among the congregation of women religious are: Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (OSB) of Holy Trinity Monastery and Daughters of Merciful Love of Jesus and Mary Queen of Apostles (DMLJMQA), Little Sisters of Mary Immaculate of Gulu (LSMIG), Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Juba (SHS), Missionary Sisters of Mary Mother of the Church (MSMMC) and Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (White Sisters). Comboni Missionary Sisters (CMS), Missionary Sisters

[45] Uganda Episcopal Conference, *Uganda Catholic Directory* (Kampala: Uganda Catholic Secretariat, 2022), 55.
[46] Cf. Arua Diocese (2025); Uganda Episcopal Conference (2022), 55.
[47] Cf. Madi West Nile Diocese, *Church of Uganda: Madi West Nile Diocese* (2025*)*. Retrieved from https://www.madiwestnilediocese.ug., (accessed 15/03/2025).
[48] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, *Uganda-Refugee Statistics February, 2025 Active Population by Settlement* (4 March, 2025), 1. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/114880, (accessed 08/03/2025).
[49] Cf. Arua Diocese (2025).
[50] Cf. Arua Diocese (2025).

Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSPS), Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Cabrini), Medical Mission Sisters (MMS) and Daughters of St. Joseph. The men religious congregations are: Brothers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Missionaries of Jesus the Divine Master and Comboni Missionaries.

There are also over 1,120 catechists serving the Catholic population in the different parts of the diocese. This population is constituent of seven ethnic groups, inhabiting Arua Diocese.

1.3 Ethnic Groups in the Diocese

An ethnic group refers to a group of people who identity with each as belonging together by race, tribe or nationality. The National Population and Housing Census 2024 report indicates that Arua Catholic Diocese is multiethnic, with over nine ethnic groups. These are Lugbara, Aringa, Madi, Kakwa, Kebu, Alur, Jonam, Gimara and Reli. Due to its vicinity to DRC and South Sudan, the Diocese has seen the influx of the many other ethnic groups who have come as refugees. Among such ethnic groups are Dinka, Nuer, Zande, Lotuka and Bari.

The predominant and largest ethnic group in Arua Diocese is the Lugbara. According the report of the Uganda's National Population and Housing Census (UNPHC) carried out in May 2024, the Lugbara number 1,218,121 persons.[51] Closely related to the Lugbara are the Aringa. The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, in the third schedule (Article 10a), considered the Aringa as a separated indigenous community.[52] However, they bear all the cultural and social traits of the Lugbara. The Aringa number to 872,714 persons.[53] They live in the present Yumbe District.

[51] Cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2024 (2024), 18.
[52] Cf. *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995* (Kampala: The Republic of Uganda, 1995), Article, 10a.
[53] Cf. Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2024 (2024), 18.

The Madi live in the districts of Moyo, Adjumani and Obongi. The population of Madi is 385,629 persons. In the same district are found the Gimara and Reli. They are also found Obongi District. Their population is 14,367 persons and 9,596 persons respectively.

The Kakwa live in Koboko District in Uganda. Some of them are found in Yei District (South Sudan) and Aba Sub-district (DRC). They are of Nilo-Hamitic group.[54] Their population is 261,748 persons.

The Kebu (also known as Ndö) and Alur are found in Zombo district. They are number about 51,691 persons and number is 1,152,858 respectively. Many of them have also settled in Arua District and Arua City. Arua City is also a home some Jonam and the refugees, and several other unidentified ethnic groups. The refugee population in Arua Diocese by February 2025 stood at 664, 185 persons.[55]

1.4 Background of the Lugbara People

In this section, the detailed background of the Lugbara people is discussed. The aspects for discussion include origin, migration and settlement of the Lugbara people into present territory. It also includes their social structure, political organization, economic activities, traditional cultural practices and religious beliefs.

1.4.1 Their Origin

The available philological evidence shows that the Lugbara are Central Sudanic-speaking people, who originated from central Sudan.[56] Philological evidence is based on words,

[54] Cf. Lubali Ramba Lokolo, *The Kakwa: Origin and History, Naming Systems* (Khartoum: Sudan Workshop Programme, 2011), 4; cf. Middleton (1998), 1.

[55] Cf. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2025), 1.

[56] The people who inhabit the Africa south of Sahara belong to four major linguistic groupings: These are Bantu, Nilotic, Hamitic and the Central Sudanic. Among the Central Sudanic-speakers are Kreish and Bango-Yulu in Western part of South Sudan, Central African Republic and Chad; and Lendu, Magbetu, Manvu-Lese and Moru-Madi in Uganda, South Sudan and DRC. Cf. Christopher Ehret, Thomas Coffman, Laura Fliegelman, Alice Cold, Morinez Hubbard and Douglas Johnson, "Some Thoughts on the Early History of the Nile-Congo

phrases, syntax, and tonal features of a particular language or language family.[57] Archibald Norman Tucker provides the earliest source for philological evidence of the Lugbara. Tucker non-Arabic languages of Sudan in early 20th century. He classified the Lugbara as members of the Moru-Madi group.[58] The Moru-Madi group inhabited the central part of Sudan around the year 1000. Their languages have close grammatical and vocabulary affinities, making them mutually intelligible. The philological evidence is further supplied by Egidio Ramponi. He asserted that: "philologically, the Logbara are Sudanic."[59] The evidence is augmented by John Middleton that "the Lugbara are a Sudanic-speaking people."[60]

The close relationship that the Lugbara have with other tribes of Sudanic origin has been subject of study. Douglas Boone and Richard L. conducted research on the Moru-Madi languages in the tri-junction border area of Uganda, South Sudan and DRC to ascertain the relationship among them. They found that the languages are similar in lexis and grammar. This made Boone, *et al,* to conclude that they tribes shared close historical origin. Boone, *et al,* state that: "It would appear that the Lugbara have occupied approximately the same location for hundreds of years. It is likely that they have a shared history with the Ma'di, and especially with the Lulubo."[61] The lexical and grammatically similarity, together with high degree of mutual intelligibility suggest that these were once people of one stock, inhabiting a territory in the central part of the Sudan. Tribes that bear relationship with the Lugbara are found in all the

Watershed," in *Ufaham: A Jounal of African Studies*, 5, 2 (1974): 87. Retrieved from https://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/2gd85265, (accessed 28/02/2025).

[57] Cf. Definition of 'Philology' in *Collins COBUILD Advances Leaner's Dictionary* (Herper Collins Publishers). Retrieved from https://www.collinsdioctionary.com/dictioinary/english/philology, (accessed 06/03/2025).

[58] Cf. Archibald Norman Tucker, "Survey of the Language Groups in the Southern Sudan", in *Bulletin of Scholl of Oriental Studies,* Volume 7, no. 4 (1935):866-896. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/608274?seq=8, (accessed 20/06/2026).

[59] Egidio Ramponi, "Religion and Divination of the Logbara Tribe of North-Uganda", in *Anthropos* Tome XXXII (1937): 572.

[60] John Middleton, *Lugbara Religion: Ritual and Authority among an Eastern African People* (London: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1.

[61] Douglas Boone and Richard L. Watson, *Moru-Madi Survey Report* (Nairobi: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1996), 29.

three counties at the tri-junction Uganda-South Sudan-DRC border. The tribes are: Moru, Pojulu, Avukaya, and Keliko are found in South Sudan; Madi are found both in Uganda and Sudan; Logo and Kaliko in DRC.

Prior to their coming to the present territory,[62] Lugbara did not exist as an ethnic group. The Lugbara were "loins" of other tribal groups, mainly of the Moru-Madi and Bari who are a Nilotic group.[63] Faced with pressures of was and land shortage, some of the clans and lineage groups migrated outwards in search of peace and spacious lands.[64] The migration would be in trickles taking many years.

1.4.2 Migration and Settlement of the Lugbara

The Lugbara narrative traditions acknowledge four separate groups that migrated from central Sudan. The first and earliest group was the Madi division. Their forefathers entered Lugbaraland via the northern part of the West Nile. The present clans of Aya, Alia, Invepi, Aripi, Udupi, Ora and Ibia are said to belong this group.[65] They could have settled in the present Lugbaraland land in the middle of the 16th century.

The second group belonged to the Jaki division. This group is considered to have broken away from the Bari in South Sudan in the late 16th century.[66] Their oral tradition holds that they were led by their hero-ancestor, Jaki or Zaki, who finally settled near Mount Liru.[67] Mount Liru is found in the two districts of Koboko and Maracha. After a generation, this Jaki division

[62] The territory occupied by the Lugbara both in Uganda and DRC has been described as the "Nile-Congo divide" or "Nile-Congo watershed." The "Nile-Congo watershed" covers the Western part of South Sudan, extending southwards through eastern DRC to Rwanda. Cf. John Middleton (1998), 1.

[63] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 1; Douglas Boone and Richard L. Watson (1996), v.

[64] Douglas Boone and Richard L. Watson (1996), v.

[65] Cf. Okete J. E. Shiroya, "The Lugbara States: Politics, Economics and Warfare in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," in *Transafrican Journal of History*, Vol 10 (1981): 126.

[66] Cf. Okete J. E. Shiroya (1981): 126.

[67] Cf. Odama, John Baptist, *God's Word as Event-Call in DT. 26:1-11 (An Exegetical Interpretation and Pastoral Application to the Lugbari)*, (Kampala: Kisubi Marianum Press, 1991), 17; Okete J. E. Shiroya (1981): 126.

split into two branches. Both branches move from Mount Liru in separate direction. Okete J. E. Shiroya narrates that:

> One branch moved to the south and southwest, and became ancestors of such clans as Maraca, Tara, Oleba, and Rubu. The other branch moved north and north-west and became the founding fathers of what most of small chiefdoms of the what constitute the ethnic group we now call the Kakwa.[68]

It is highly disputable that the Kakwa originate from this group. This is because, Kakwa language does not bear lexical and grammatic similarity with that of the Lugbara. The Kakwa belong to the Nilo-Hamitic group.[69]

The third group is described as the Banale division. The group arrived into the present Lugbaraland at the beginning of the 17th century. The group derives its name from an ancestor called Banale, son of Utere/Tere.[70] The oral tradition of the Lugbara of Terego holds that Banale entered Lugbaraland in the Eastern direction from Acholiland (northern Uganda). Having crossed River Nile a boat, he moved to settle on Mount Eti, where he met and married a woman called Ofunaru (a name which means "the one infected with leprosy"). With Ofunaru, he begot Angundru, who had eleven sons that became the founding fathers of the Terego clans and those related to them.[71]

The fourth group consists of clans of ethnic groups that were not part of the Moru-Madi group. These ethnic groups are: Bari, Kebu and Alur. Bari and Alur belong to Nilotic group, while the Kebu belong to Eastern-Sudanic speaking group. The ethnic groups got assimilated into the Lugbara between 1780 and 1850. The Lugbara of Aringa, who were initially Bari-speakers, adopted Lugbara language and other cultural traits of the Lugbara.[72] As the Lugbara moved southwards, they assimilated some of the Kebu clans. These clans are Tuli, Jiki, Omoli and Pakia clans. Some Madi groups, like Lezoo and Ayuwara, that lived in the southern end of

[68] Okete J. E. Shiroya (1981): 127.
[69] Cf. Lubali Ramba Lokolo (2011), 4; John Middleton (1998), 1; Archibald Norman Tucker (1935):867
[70] Odama, John Baptist (1991), 17.
[71] Cf. Okete J. E. Shiroya (1981): 127.
[72] Cf. Okete J. E. Shiroya (1981): 129; John Baptism Odama (1991), 15.

the Lugbara territory were also assimilated into the Lugbara society. Towards the end of the 19th century, the clans their separate identities, and united to form the ethnic group that today is known as the Lugbara.[73] The Lugbara identity was introduced during the years of Arab infiltration of the Lugbaraland (*circa* 1900), and fixed by the British colonial administration, which started in Lugbaraland in 1914.[74]

The Lugbara identity by speaking a common language, Lugbarati.[75] The suffix "*ti*" literally means "mouth." It is used refer to language, that is, as the intelligible words that come

[73] There are several theologies advance to explained how the ethnic group came to be called the "Lugbara." John Baptist Odama makes two claims. Firstly, he states that the "Lugbara" is a generalization of "*Lugbari.*" The agents of the Arab slavers, whom the Lugbara called "*Kotoria*" or "*Mundukuru,*" found a clan formerly known as "Madi," and they called it "Lugbari." This clan had earlier on migrated from the Sudan and settled at Mount Awa in the present Udupi area around the 1630s. Secondly, Odama claims that the name "Lugbari" was a corrupted form of what should have been the Arabic "Lugadbari," the language of Bari [in Kiswahili *luga ya bari*]. In the process of the development, the ending of "Lugadbari" gave way to "Bari", hence, "Lug(ad)bari." In an unpublished thesis, Lazarus Ijoyi hypothesizes that the name Lugbara originates from the Bari word "lugbari" which means "broom." He claims that the founder ancestor, called Coki, had a son who had the habit of fighting his peers with the broom, and consequently was nicknamed "lugbari." The clan that descended from that son came to be known as the "Lugbari" and this name was generalized to include all the clans that settled in the West Nile Region excluding the Alur and Madi. It's true that such a clan exists, but the tonation of the name does not support the claim of generalization. Neither Odama nor Ijoyi does explain why today the people are called "Lugbara." cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), x; cf. Lazarus Ijoyi, *A History of the Lugbari Clans of West Nile 1000-1925 A.D A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in History* (Kampala*:* Kyambogo University, October, 2012), 201.

In his "Notes on Lugwari Tribe of Central Africa," anthropologist R. E. McConnell writes that:
"The Lugwari Tribe of the West Nile District of Uganda does not seem to have been described (…) Their language is a difficult one, which takes years to learn well (…) The habitat of the Lugwari is part of the West Nile District of the Uganda Protectorate and an adjacent area of about similar size in the Belgian Congo (…). As part of the Lado Enclave the district was leased to the late King of the Belgians for twenty-five years. Theirs was a semi-military occupation, and the Lugwari, the strongest tribe coming under them, were not really administered, though they were from time to time subjected to severe punishment by military detachments." There is a highly likelihood that the name "*Lugwari"* was a misspelling and a mispronunciation of the labio-velar plosive "*gb*." Today the pronunciation is still being heard from the Luo-speakers of the Acholi tribe, who called the Lugbara as "*Lugwara*." R.E. McConnell, "Notes on the Lugwari Tribe of Central Africa", in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 55 (Jul.- Dec., 1925): 439-440. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581561, (accessed 27/02/2025); cf. Archibald Norman Tucker (1935):869.

[74] The Arabs, through their agents, entered the Lugbara between the 1850s and 1870s in search of slaves. The Lugbara did not have did not have direct contact with the Arabs. However, the agents of the Arabs and ivory traders operated in the northern neighbourhood of the Lugbara territory. cf. John Middleton, "The Yakan or Allah Water Cult Among the Lugbara", in *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 93, No. 1 (Jan.-Jun., 1963): 82-83.

[75] Some early writings on the Lugbara had written the language as *Lugbari.* "*Lugbarati"* is a recent appearance in the Lugbara literature. The forerunners in alphabetizing *Lugbarati* were the Comboni Missionaries. One of them Albertus Titus Dalfovo, popularized the language in literature form. He did this by publishing a number of collections of Lugbara proverbs. Cf. Robert Wadri Aluma, "Aristotelian Theory of Ethics of Virtue and the Lugbara Concept of Virtue," in *Open Access Library Journal*, Volume 12, No. 2 (February, 2025): 8; John Baptism Odama (1991), 1; Albertus Titus Dalfovo, "The Divinity Among the Lugbara" in *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 28, Fasc 4 (Nov., 1998): 470. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1581561, (accessed 19/02/2025); cf. John Pasquale Crazollara (1960), 47.

from the mouth. Lugbarati consists of several dialectical variations. The dialects are identified as Marachat*i*, Aringat*i*, Logirit*i*, Ayivut*i*, Teregot*i*, and so on. Wherever the Lugbara have migrated, they are identified with these dialects.[76] Despite these dialectical differences, the Lugbara clans have similar social structure.

1.4.3 Social Structure of the Lugbara

This section describes the social structure of the Lugbara people. Social structure refers to existing relations among persons in a group. It shows their interaction among themselves and those outside the group. The Lugbara maintain two systems of social structure and organization. These are: close relationships and extended relationship. The close relationships are clans and lineages. The extended relationships are kinship and affinity.

1.4.3.1 Clans and Lineage System

A clan refers to a group of people who are related to each other through a common ancestor. The Lugbara use two generic terms to describe clan. These terms are "*suru*" and "*oriba*." "*Suru*" includes a group of people who consider themselves living in a common territory, and have ties between them based on a common patrilineal ancestry. This implies that a clan is made up of the members of the patrilineal lineage, including the women married from other clans. One may then opine from this that Lugbara society is a patrilineal society. One's

[76] A significant number of the Lugbara are found in some districts outside West Nile. Among these districts are: Lugazi and Buikwe in Buganda region, Jinja and Iganga in Busoga region, Hoima and Masindi (both in Bunyoro region), and Kampala city. Several factors are responsible for the migration and settlement of the Lugbara in the regions outside West Nile. The earliest key factor is the designation of the West Nile by the British colonialists as a "labour reserve" district. Between 1914 and 1962, many youngmen were recruited from the region for plantation work outside the region and as military personnel. Together with other ethnic groups from West Nile, the Lugbara were widely recruited to work on sugarcane plantations in the south (Lugazi in Buganda region, Kakira in Busoga region) and west (Kinyara in Bunyoro region). This therefore led to the increase of the population of the Lugbara outside the West Nile region.
Cf. J. C. Both, "Conflict Legacies: Understanding Youth's Post-Peace Agreement Practices in Yumbe, North Western Uganda," in *Uva-DARE* (Amsterdam: Univesiteit van Amsterdam, 2017): 118. Retrieved from http://www.pure.uva.nl.files/13833866.pdf, (accessed 05/03/2025),

kinspeople are those from his or her father's line. One's ancestry is traced from the father's line.

An ancestor is a person who has died recently or in a distant past and continues to have influence over the living members of the immediate kinship. Such influence may be positive or negative depending on the conduct of the living persons.[77] The Lugbara use two terms to render the meaning of an ancestor. One term is "*a'bi*" (plural: *a'bii*)[78]and the other is "*ori*." "*A'bi*" signifies a grandfather and all other males consanguineously and affinally related to him at his generational level and from his level upwards.[79] A person becomes "*a'bi*" by passing into the generation level above that of his own father's father. Having attained the status of "*a'bi,"* he remains such, independent of his death. For the Lugbara, death is not an essential element in the concept of "*a'bi."* "*A'bi"* may be physically alive. When he dies, he remains "*a'bi*," respected as he was before. After some time, his descendants may conjure his spirit to dwell in shrines[80] that are placed under granaries for him. He then becomes "*ori.*"[81] Etymologically, "*ori*" derives from "*orindi*," a term that renders the English word "soul" or "spirit." The Lugbara use the term "*ori*" to refer to the ancestral spirit that has been conjured to dwell under the granary or under a tree by his descendants.[82]

[77] Cf. John Lukwata (2011), 9.

[78] There are dialectical variations in the use of the term "*a'bi.*" In some areas of the Lugbaraland, the term "*a'biipi*" or "*ayipi*" is used. The corresponding female term for *"a'bi*" is "*dede*"- an ancestress, or "*edapi*"*, "edepi*"*, "idi"*or *"dei.*" But in the Lugbara social structure, ancestresses are given less consideration.

[79] Charles Nyamiti summaries the qualities of ancestors in this way: They have consanguineous ties with the living relatives. They have passed from the earthly life through death. They possessive mediative role between earthly kin and the Supreme Being. They have lived exemplary virtues lives. They possess the right to be venerated through ritual offerings and other kinds of homage. When the living neglect this obligation, misfortunes and calamites befall them. Ancestors visit their relatives in form of snakes. They can also dwell in trees, shrines and grave years. Cf. Charles Nyamiti, *Jesus Christ, the Ancestor of Mankind: An Essay on African Christology* (Nairobi: CUEA Publications, 2006), 3; John Lukwata (2011), 9-10.

[80] The concept of "shrine" is expounded in sub-section 1.4.5.2 b.

[81] Cf. Albert Titus Dalfovo, "Lugbara Ancestors" in *Anthropos* Bd. 92, H. 4. /6. (1997): 485-486. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/40464684, (accessed 25/02/2025).

[82] The term "*ori*" with extended or double "*i*" (*orii*) means "the act of many people sitting together." It points to the people descending from a common ancestor, sitting together for purpose of maintaining or restoring relationship among themselves, and between them and their ancestors. Cf. Albert Titus Dalfovo (1997): 486.

A lineage is a direct descent from an ancestor, in a unilineal system where individuals trace their ancestry through one parent. It is a direct descent from a particular ancestor, and member of the lineage can trace their history back to the same ancestor. A lineage is a consequence of biological entities connected by ancestry-descent relationship. A direct consequence containing a son, a father and a grandfather is direct lineage, because it is single direct line of descent among organisms.[83] People of the same lineage refer to themselves as "*atanzi*" (children of the father) or "*ataezo*" (daughters of the same father).

For the Lugbara, a permanent relationship exists between the living and the dead members of the same lineage. The dead (*ba odraapi 'bo 'dii*) are aware of the actions and the thoughts of the living and their children. The living take care "of the prosperity, the prestige and the general well-being of the lineage on behalf of the dead."[84] United with the dead, the clan members form a local group or division called "*ori'ba.*" "*Ori'ba*" means literally "people of the same spirit." The people subscribe to the ritual authority of one elder who makes entreaties and supplications to the spirits of the ancestors.[85]

When a group is smaller than "*suru*" or "*ori'ba*," it is described as "*enyati.*" "*Enyati*" refers to a group of people who live at a close range to each other and normally feed together. They are so close that they can easily be called when needed to share a meal (*enya*). The unified entity of "*enyati*" is formed when the members can trace the origin of their clan, along the patrilineal line. Members of the same clan or lineage express their unity and belonging through mutual assistance, for example, at marriage celebration, digging, crop harvests and funerals. Some clans or lineages also have common ownership of land and livestock.[86]

[83] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 11
[84] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 11
[85] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 11
[86] Cf. John Baptism Odama (1991), 19.

1.4.3.2 Kinship and Affinity

Kinship refers to relationship of members of society based on the human experiences of birth and nurturance. Affinity is relatedness that is constructed on the bases of marriage. Among the Lugbara, three kinship ties are identifiable among the Lugbara: kinship ties among the living, between the living and the dead, and ties among the dead themselves.

Kinship ties among the living binds all those connected by blood. The view each other relatives, that is, father, mother, brothers or sisters. All those engaged in integral formation of a person, especially preparation of young people for marriage, are also considered relatives.

Maternal kinship was created through the birth of a child. The ties of maternal kinship bind a child to his or her mother's lineage. The relatives of one's mother are his "*adropii*" (uncles). The maternal kinship for the Lugbara is considered very intimate, for it was a tie of blood. Maternal uncles are highly respected among the Lugbara. Their words are considered to be powerful. The maternal uncle and all the members of the mother's lineage considered the child are their own, and showed affection to him or her.[87]

Marriage establishes affinity relations among the marriage partners, their clanmates and their lineage members. Through marriage, they become *otuupi* (in-laws).[88] The relationship between the in-laws in marked by brotherhood and friendship. The bond that is established between the marriage partners also binds each to the other's clanmates and lineage members. This makes marriage to be considered not just an affair between two individuals (man and women), but also involving all the members of the kinfolk.

Lugbara customs prefer exogamous marriages. This means that the two lineages of the couple should not have a prior consanguineal relationship.[89] This helps to widen the circle of affinity. Affinity is further widened through polygynous marriage, which is practice by many

[87] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 21.
[88] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 21.
[89] Cf. John Baptism Odama (1991), 20.

Lugbara. Polygynous marriage is a marital union of one man as a husband, with two or more women as his wives.[90]

The Lugbara maintain affinity in several ways. Previously, exchange of arrows and labour were dominant. Nowadays, it's done by giving animals or money as dowry to the lineage of the bride. Other gifts may also be given to the lineage of the bridegroom by that of the bride. The Lugbara consider this as a sign of appreciation and honour. The mutual support exchanged among the members of the lineage of the partners is usually continuous, especially in times of funerals, and marriage celebrations.[91]

1.4.4 Political Organization

Political organization of a society or an ethnic group refers to the institutions or mechanisms for managements and decision-making in the society. Basically, the Lugbara political organization is clan-based. At some point in history, there were chiefs. Currently, there are efforts to establish the Lugbara under Lugbara *Kari* (Lugbara Kingdom) institution.

1.4.4.1 Clan-Based Leadership

The largest political unit for the Lugbara is the clan. Each clan is established in area well marked by the political sovereignty of its founder who was often buried in the land. At the clan lever, decisions and activities pertaining to marriage and funeral celebrations or dances are made.

Each clan is headed by a clan leader, who is referred to by the term "*ba ambo*" (big man). Since the Lugbara are a patrilineal society, the clan leader is supposed to be a male elder.

[90] Cf. Mbiti, John, *African Religions and Philosophy* (London: Heinemann Books, 1989), 138.
[91] Cf. John Baptism Odama (1991), 20.

The clan leader is chosen from among the several elders in the clan. He is chosen by a group of elders (*'ba 'wara,* literally meaning "big people"), who also form the "council of elders." The council of elders meets when required to make decisions for peace and security of the clan. The clan leader was consulted in times of drought, famine, floods, war and epidemics. Each individual elder acts a judge and an arbitrator in internal disputes like marriage conflicts or external disputes with other clans or lineages.[92]

Some factors that qualify a person to be elder are: age, order of birth, strong will or wealth, and power of invocation of spirits of the dead. By age, he has to be a most senior living male in the clan. In the order of birth, he has to be eldest son of the senior wife (the wife of the youthfulness of his father). A person who possesses a strong will or wealth interns of money and livestock may also be called an elder, even he is younger, and not a son of the senior wife. A man may also become an elder if he successfully invokes the spirits of the dead to bring about sickness to a dependant who flouts his lineage authority or goes against the clan codes.[93] An elder was supposed to be gentle in speech, slow in decision, just and ready to act in union with his brothers of the same grade in the clan.

The clan leader is sometimes be referred to as "*opi,*" a term which could be translated as "chief."[94] According to John Baptism Odama, the term "*opi*" was used for clan leaders of the Lugbara in Terego. He states: "It was only on a small scale among the Lugbari clans of Terego: Katrii, Aivu, Bileafe, Ombaci and Ewadri that a system of centralization began before the coming of the British." [95] In this system, the clans' leaders rendered loyalty to one "*opi*" provided by a family in Bileafe Clan. The family was called "Opivu."[96] The clan is believed to

[92] Cf. John Baptism Odama (1991), 20-22.
[93] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 10.
[94] The same term has also been translated as "king." However, there has not been evidence of the Lugbara have an overall sovereign who rules over all the Lugbara.
[95] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 22.
[96] "*Opivu*" means "of chiefs." Over the years the family has extended and gained the status of a clan. It is currently called "Opivu clan." Their territory falls under the ecclesiastical parish of Ocodri (Arua Diocese), in Terego District.

have descended from the grandson of the hero-ancestor of Banale group. Being the fast to settle in area, made other clans to consider them as chiefs to rule them. However, this system did not extend to cover all the Lugbara clans, until the coming of Belgians and British colonialist.

1.4.4.2 Governance by Colonial Chiefs

Belgians, whom the Lugbara called the *Belejiki*, attempted to impose foreign chiefs to govern the Lugbara.[97] For example, in 1900, a Belgian Officer of the *Etat Independent du Congo* set up a small one-man post at Offude (current Maracha District), and appointed chiefs. The appointed chiefs were the former agents of the "*Yakan*" cult. This cult appeared among the Lugbara in the early 20th century as a response to the external rule by the Europeans. The cult was centred upon the drinking of sacred or magic water. [98] However, this Belgian attempt was resisted. The use of force to extort tributes, and seize livestock and food by those chiefs soured the relationship between them and the people.[99]

The British colonial administration under Alfred Evelyn Weatherhead tried to revive the use of chiefs for administering the Lugbara. Weatherhead was appointed as first District Commission (D.C) in Lugbara and West Nile as a whole.[100] He established three levels of chieftaincy. These levels: chief, sub-chief and assistant sub-chief. Mark Leopold, commenting on the plan of Weatherhead, states that:

> the general policy is to strengthen the people as much as possible under big-chiefs, to strength their hands and to throw responsibility and onus on them. As far as possible the natural chiefs were made, but a preference is given to a man who can be a chief, if necessary imported.[101]

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[97] The Belgian administration started in Lugbaraland in 1900. It is made little administrative impact in the area. Their reign over the area ended with the death of Kind Leopold II in 1908.

[98] Cf. John Middleton, "Social Change Among the Lugbara of Uganda", in *Civilizations*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (1960): 448; Middleton (1963): 80.

[99] Cf. John Middleton (1963): 80

[100] Alfred Evelyn Weatherhead is known among the Lugbara by his nickname *Ejerekedi*, meaning "the one who moves swiftly." This was in reference to the high speed at which he travelled while executing his duty as Commissioner. Cf. Mark Leopold, (2005), 90

[101] Mark Leopold (2005), 103.

In this plan of Weatherhead, the chiefs were to be imported from other tribes where they had existed, for example, in Alurland or Bugandaland. The chiefs were also to be assigned fixed territories. The role of the chief was to mobilize people to work so as to raise tributes and taxes. Consequently, the chiefs were the imported from Alurland. Some of the ex-soldiers of Emin Pasha were also appointed chiefs over the Lugbara.[102]

Weatherhead grouped the Lugbara into the counties of Aringa, Maracha, Ayivu, Terego and Vurra under appointed native colonial chiefs. The chiefs, as the colonial appointees, were agents of the centralized government. They collected taxes for the colonial government, raised recruits for King's African Rifles (KAR), and for labour.[103] None of chiefs was an overall, since they all subscribed to the authority of the District Commissioner. The chiefs did not unite the Lugbara under a central political-cultural administration, until the middle of the first decade of the 21st century when attempts to unite the Lugbara *Kari* emerged.

1.4.4.3 Lugbara Kari Institution

Lugbara *Kari* seeks to bring the Lugbara under one paramount chief, or a king, called *agofe. "Kari*" is the Lugbara word for "kingdom." The word *"agofe"* means "pillar" or "a

[102] Emin Pasha (originally called Eduard Schnitze) was a German-born Governor of Sudan's Equatorial Province. He, in order to advance the Ottoman Egyptian rule headed by Khedive Muhammad Ali Isma'il over the Nile Valley, established a military force to conquer Sudan. He recruited troops from Upper Egypt and Nuba mountains of the Sudan. His recruitment campaign extended towards the south, as far as Lugbaraland. In Lugbaraland some young people, especially from Aringa, were recruited. The recruits also got converted to Islam and were given Muslim names. Their names are: Addu Anula (Fadhal el Mula Ali), Okuni Diba (Fadhal el Mula Morjan), Azabo Uruta (Bilal Farjala), Geria Ondoga (Adam Mbusesaka), Abiyo Longira (Rizi), Andi (Asubala). When Emin Pasha went back to Germany, his soldiers settled in Bombo in Kampala. They were taken on by Frederick Lugard (1858 -1945) of the Imperial British East African Company (IBEAC) to serve and advance the British imperial objectives and ambitions. Lugard coopted them in 1905 as the core of the King's African Rifles (KAR). Others were appointed as chiefs. Among those appointed chiefs was Fadhal el Mula Ali. He was appointed as chief of Aringa. Cf. "West Nile Muslim Leaders Want More Administrative Units", *New Vision* (May 4, 2023). Retrieved from https://www.newvision.ug/category/NV.159598, (accessed 12/03/2025; John Haden (2018), 3. John Haden, (ed.), *'Celebrating Our Centenary:' The Story of What God in Christ has Done Through the Anglican Church in West Nile 1918-2018* (Stamford: Barny Books, 2018), 10; Cf. Gabriel R. Warburg, *Historical Discord in the Nile Valley* (London: Hurst and Company, 1992), 1; cf. Omari H. Kokole, "Idi Amin 'the Nubi in Uganda Politics 1971-1979," in Holger Bernt Hansen and Michael Twaddle, (eds.), *Religion and Politics in East Africa: The Period Since Independence* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1995): 46-49; Cf. Mark Leopold (2015), 180

[103] Cf. Mark Leopold (2005), 103.

leader." In the implementation of the plan of Weatherhead, the British used the term *agofe* when they installed an Alur prince, Jalwere Jalasiga (1896-1978), as a chief over entire West Nile. He was given the title "*Agofe Olim*." He actually succeeded Weatherhead as the District Commissioner of West Nile. After independence of Uganda in 1962, the role of "*agofe"* metamorphosed to civil leadership in the district council. In the regions where the cultural institutions created by the British, the leaders were to be elected by the district council. Consequently, Mariko Boroa from Terego was elected as the "*agofe*." Jalwere handed over to him. The advocates and the loyalist of Lugbara *Kari* consider Jalwere to be the first "*agofe*," and Boroa as the second *"agofe*." The *"agofe*" institution was banned in 1966 together with other cultural institution in Uganda. By this time, there was yet no organization called Lugbara *Kari*.

The conception of the Lugbara *Kari* came after the passing of the "Institution of Traditional or Cultural Leaders Bill" by the Parliament of Uganda in 2010. This bill was introduced in order to fully operationalize Article 246 of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda on the institution of traditional or cultural leader.[104] Article states that:

> 1. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the institution of traditional leader or cultural leader may exist in any area of wishes and aspirations of the people to whom it applies.
> 2. In any community, where the issue of traditional or cultural leader has not been resolved, the issue shall be resolved by the community concerned using a method prescribed by Parliament.[105]

[104] In Uganda, kingdoms and chiefdoms were restored in 1993, but without any political powers. The 1995 Constitution of Uganda later gave a legal framework for their restoration and existence. By 2010, twelve traditional cultural institutions had been restored, and recognized by Uganda Government. These were the Acholi Chiefdom, Tieng Adhola Chiefdom, Alur Kingdom, Buganda Kingdom, Bunyoro Kingdom, Buruuli Chiefdom, Busoga Kingdom, Kooki Chiefdom, Lango Chiefdom, Teso Chiefdom, Tooro Kingdom and Ruwenzururu Kingdom. Lugbara Kari was not among them. The restored kingdoms and chiefdoms are placed under the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social Development. This ministry oversees the activities of the traditional cultural institutions on behalf of the Government. Cf. Joana R. Quinn, "Tradition?! Traditional Cultural Institutions on Customary Practices in Uganda", in *Africa Spectrum*, 49, 3 (2014): 37-38. Retrieved from https://www.africa-spectrum.org>, (Accessed 28/02/2025; Drasimaku Richard, "Lugbara Now Want a King", *New Vision* (July 29, 2014), Retrieved from https://www.newvision.co.ug., (accessed 10/03/2025).

[105] *Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995*, Article, 246.

The bill, assented to by the President of the Republic of Uganda in 2011, makes two provisions regarding traditional and cultural leaders. First, it makes provision for the existence of traditional and cultural leaders in any area of Uganda. Second, it provides for government recognitions of the traditional and cultural leaders and privileges or benefits that accrue to them. However, Lugbara *Kari* has not been formally recognized.[106] This could be partly due to the contentions and power struggles in institution.[107] The origins of Lugbara *Kari* has also been contested.

Some writers have sought the origin of Lugbara Kari in the peace and reconciliation efforts in the mid-1980s. Joana R. Quinn narrates that Lugbara *Kari* was started as an association of elders in search for reconciliation. She states that:

> Lugbara Kari was created a group of elders who participated in an inter-tribal reconciliation ceremony called *"omo tong*" (in Acholi language meaning, "the bending of spears"). This ceremony took place at Labwomoro Teachers Training School on 8th February, 1986 A.D. The ceremony was to signify the cessation of war or fighting between the Acholi and Madi, Kakwa, Lugbara and Alur of West Nile. It was to mark the end of revenge killing between the Acholi people (under Amin) and the Lugbara people (under Obote II).[108]

Upon return to Lugbaraland, one of the elders, Jason Avutia (died: 2023), a former tutor at Arua Teachers' Training College, was elected as the chairman of the association. The chairman took name "*agofe*." The group them began forming association of elders at county levels. The associations are premised on the colonial chieftaincies and government-led efforts to promote cultural representation.[109] The associations were formed in the counties of Ayivu, Maracha, Terego and Vurra.

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[106] Cf. Sunday Amandi, *Election of Lugbara Kari Agofe stalled as Voting Ended in Draw*. Retrieved from at https://www.radiopacis.org., (accessed 10/03/2025); Cf. Drasimaku Richard (July 29, 2014).

[107] The contentions have mainly been over who should be the "*agofe*." In a contentious election on the 13th July, 2023, Manase Yuma Amuku was elected as the fourth "*agofe*" to succeed later Avutia. Due to disagreements and conflicts, Yuma could only be declared as "*agofe*" on 26th January, 2024. On 8th October, 2025, Yuma was declared illegal and replaced by one Alia Angelo Pati as the "*agofe*." The constant feuds and contentions in the Lugbara *Kari* may not make the institution to be a credible for cultural and political unity of the Lugbara.

[108] Cf. Joana R. Quinn (2014): 36.

[109] Cf. Joana R. Quinn (2014): 38.

The working and affairs of Lugbara *Kari* are supposed to be are regulated by the Government of Uganda through Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. The government pledges to support programmes initiated within it. These programmes mainly comprise of community mobilization for health promotion, education, sports, and music.[110] The Lugbara Kari is not fully embraced by all the Lugbara. However, it is a positive step in efforts for the promotion of traditional cultural values and economic sustainability.

1.4.5 Economic Activities of the Lugbara

The Lugbara do engage in diverse economic activities. Among these are: arable faming, livestock rearing, and business enterprises. In arable farming, the Lugbara participate in growing various crops. Among such crops are: millet, sorghum and cow peas (*moniga or uniga*), beans, peas, pumpkin, sugarcane, bananas, maize, groundnuts, Irish potatoes, egg plants and cabbages in small scale. Most of these are grown to sustain the households, that is, they are consumed at the household.

With the advent of the colonial government, cash crops were introduced into Lugbaraland. Cassava was introduced in 1922; cotton in 1924 and tobacco in 1925. Cassava today has become one of the staple foods of the Lugbara; cotton growing has become extinct among the Lugbara. Tobacco continues to remain the dominant cash crops for many Lugbara households.

In livestock economy, the Lugbara rare cattle, sheep, goats and fouls. These are local breeds which Lugbara seen to have inherited from their fore parents. Most Lugbara have abandoned some of these activities due to shortage of land.

[110] Cf. Joana R. Quinn (2014): 43.

The Lugbara are much included in business enterprise. They trade in manufactured goods and foodstuffs produced yearly. There are several trading and business centers in which the Lugbara are active.

Few of the Lugbara are still engage in traditional economic activities, which consist of harvesting from the wild. These activities include: hunting, fishing, fruit gathering, entomophagy and foraging or fowling. In some of the Lugbara clans, there are blacksmiths. They make iron implements such as knifes, arrow, spears and body ornaments. Earlier writers had attributed blacksmithing to the Okebu ethnic group.[111] It is possible that these Lugbara clans learned this skill from the Okebu. The Lugbara also share cultural practices and beliefs with these some of these ethnic groups.

1.4.6 Cultural Practices and Religious Beliefs

Culture refers to way of life that has been cultivated by people. Rodrigo Meija identifies the elements that include culture as : "knowledge, belief, art, morals, lay, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."[112] Cultural practices include the ways in which people initiated one to be a member of the community. Religious beliefs regulated the interaction of the people with the divine.

1.4.6.1 Cultural Practices

The cultural practices of the Lugbara consisted of birth rites and naming rites, marriages celebrations and funeral celebrations.

a) Initiation Rites

[111] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 22.
[112] Rodrigo Meija, *Evangelization of Cultures: Reflections on Inculturation* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2023), 26.

Initiation is "a specific process and ritual that marks an important transition in people's life."[113] Through initiation, a person is introduced into a society or into special function. Micea Eliade, quoted by Ronzani, defines initiation as: "body of rites and oral teachings whose purpose is to produce a decisive alteration in the religious and social status of the person to be initiated."[114] One becomes a member of the culture in which is born and participates in its life. The cultural initiation practices of the Lugbara include: pre-infancy rites, infancy rites, education during adolescent, and initiation into adulthood.

Pre-infancy rites are rites that prepare for the reception of the unborn child into the society. The rites begin as soon as conception has occurred. The marriage woman who has conceived is prepared for birth by elderly women who are experts in the affair. They prepare the young woman to bring the child into the world.[115] At birth the child is separated from its former environment (the womb).

Infancy rites include birth rites and naming rites. Birth rites are performed as soon as the child is born. For the Lugbara, the birth rites must be performed, regardless of where the birth takes place. Birth generally may take place in house of the expectant mother, in anywhere in the homestead if the expectant mother happens to be at home. It may also take place in modern health facilities. The birth of a child is a moment of hope, joy and happiness.

The joy and happiness are expressed in the naming ceremony. The place of birth and the circumstances surrounding the pregnancy and the birth may determine the name to be given to the neonate. The purpose of the naming rites is to ensure that the child is recognized and made known by the community. The community gives the child an identity and makes the child be integrated into the community. Naming is the official introduction of the neonate into the community rather than a mere identification of that individual person. For the Lugbara, the

[113] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 13.
[114] Micea Eliade, *Rite and Symbols of Initiation: Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (1958), 3; cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 13.
[115] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 29.

naming ceremony takes place in the morning, because "morning signals new day, fresh beginning, sign of hope, a promise that grows with the rising sun and the growth of the day."[116] Those involved in the naming are both children and adults.

Education and initiation into adulthood is the corporate responsibility of the entire lineage and clan. All the members exercise their responsibilities as is expected of them in order make the child a full member of the Lugbara society. The purpose of education and initiation into adulthood is to make the individual responsible and independent in knowing, judging, deciding and sense of belonging.

b) Marriage Practices

Among the Lugbara, marriage is a gradual process. The process includes: betrothal, dowry payment, marriage ceremony and the initiation of the newly-married bride into her own kitchen. Each of these stages have specific reasons. Each also has a constitutive element that elaborates the marriage bond. Each stage is undertaken within the frame work of the community.[117]

Among the Lugbara, the traditional method of betrothal used to be the one initiated by the parents. It started with the friendship between the parents. The father of the boy and the father of the girl developed friendship without their children knowing. When a father needed to get a wife for his son, he started to befriend a man in whose home he noticed a small girl. He would then express his intention as they meet at a "*kpete"* (local beer) drinking joint or a traditional dance. When there were promising signs of acceptance, he proceeded to the home of his friend to perform some betrothal rituals. Among these rituals were "*lemgbe adiza*" (tying of grass) and "*yee 'baza*" (placing of an arrow), presentation of *"inve*" (iron bangles),

[116] John Baptist Odama (1991), 40
[117] Cf. Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1997), 118.

"*anyafura triza*" (smearing with flour), and "*wu'baza*" (placement of arms).[118] With the several social activities, engagement and betrothal has become the responsibility of the partners themselves.

In Lugbara context, marriage ceremony is the moment when the bride moves or is transferred from the home of her parents or her lineage to the home or the lineage of the bridegroom. She moves or is transferred in order to be united with him and his clan permanently. Traditionally, on this day, the bride and five or six other girls stayed in her hut. A heap of cow dung, "*ti oroto*," was prepared and smeared on the ground to the entrance of the heart. Moved by love for his wife, the groom prostrated in the cow dung so that other girls might pass over him to start the journey of taking home his wife. They could step on him, if they wished. One member of the groom's party carried the bride on his back. In some cases, the go-between called the "*ojio*" carried the bride. Then the procession to the groom's home started. The practice of "stretching in the cow dung" has been abandoned, probably due to its humiliating nature. Instead, the relatives of the bride bring her to the home of the groom.

Marriage ceremonies are accompanied by several payments (*fetaa*). Among the payments are "*yizomanga*" (literally meaning "for crossing water") and "*jotile*" (meaning "the door"). These payments are made in terms of money or domestic animals or birds. "*Yizomanga*" is paid at the cross of every stream or a river along the way to the home of bridegrrom. The payment was considered as a symbol of love and the man's commitment to look after the bride. "*Jotile*," is a payment that allows the bride and her parents to enter the home of the groom. The payment also allows the relatives of the bride to join in the marriage celebration and the feasting, which would like two or three days. The celebration would be with eating and dancing. The dancing may be a traditional dance (*nyamgbi)* or it may be

[118] Azale Norbert, "Matrimonial Ring in the Catholic Rite of Marriage: Challenges and Opportunities for Alternative African Symbol," in *African Theological Journal for Church and Society*, Vol. 7, no. 1 (2026): 116.

dancing to music placed from electric music systems. With great honour and respect, the man would be referred to as "*ago*" (husband). However, other payments can still continue especially when the wife conceives or when funerals occur in her lineage. From the late 20th century, these payments began to be made in form of money.[119]

c) Funerary Practices

For the Lugbara, death is the moment when the "*ava"* (breath) leaves the "*rua"* (body*)* and the body becomes motionless. When a person has died the Lugbara say, "*Erima edri avi 'bo*" meaning "His/her life is lost." Breath is sometimes equated with the concept of "*orindi"* (soul). To many Lugbara people, one is truly dead when the "*ava"*, *"edri"*, and "*orindi"* simultaneously leave the body. "*Ava"* goes into the air, "*edri"* is lost and nobody knows where. "*Orindi"* may join the divinity only after all the funerary rites are performed well. Immediately after death, "*orindi"* is believed to go to God in the sky. It is later to be contacted by diviner, and brought to dwell in the shrine.[120]

One key funerary practice of the Lugbara consists of funeral dances. Funeral dance is a series of dances performed to express grief, pain and solidarity at the death of a person. This expression is done in a group or by the community from the moment of the occurrence of death to a year or so after death. The dancing community is composed of kinsmen, women and relatives of the deceased. The dance is an external and tangible manifestation of the

[119] The payments had become too numerous that it become a pastoral concern in Arua Diocese. The payments had deviated from the original intent as symbols of true love between the couple, and a sure sign of agreement between the clans. The exorbitant amounts that some relatives of the brides charged portrayed greed, extortion, corruption. The multiplication of the payments had also negatively affected the Christian celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage, as some parents would not allow the marriages of their daughters to be blessed in the Church until all payments were made. On the eve of the Great Jubilee of 2000, the Diocese held a third synod to address the abuses that had cropped into the traditional marriage system. A resolution was made by the synod to return to the symbolic nature of these payments and prepare a rite that would include the proper and symbolic nature of traditional marriage. Cf. Arua Diocese, *Third Synod of Arua Diocese*: *Declaration and Five-year Pastoral Plan, Logbari ed.* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 1999), 1.

[120] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 28-31.

development of emotion, sentiments and sorrows of the bereaved members. It recaptures and reinterprets the life of the clan and the lineage in the event of death.[121]

For the Lugbara, funeral dances serve two functions. In the first place, they serve to reform that the relationship between the living, after it has broken temporarily by death. Every person is within and woven into the web of relationship ties. His or her death disrupts the network of the web. Secondly, on a more mystical level the funeral dances serve to reestablish the continuity of the lineage, as expressed particularly in authority and fertility. Authority depended on the recognition of the proper relationship of hierarchy. Fertility depended on the proper control of the complimentary sexuality of women and men.[122] At death this authority is destabilized and continuity of fertility is cut short. Through funeral dances, these are reestablished and the life-force is made to flow freely.[123]

1.4.6.2 Religious Beliefs and Practices

Lugbara religious beliefs are examined in the context of the African Traditional Religion. Generally, Africa Traditional Religion can be described as indigenous practices and expressions of the African belief in spiritual beings and their relationships with the human beings. The expressions vary from one ethnic group to another, but the beliefs share common

[121] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 54.

[122] John Middleton, "Lugbara Death," in Mauric Block and Jonathan Parry, (ed.), *Death and Regeneration of Life* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1982): 147.

[123] There are three types of funeral dances. The first type is *auongo* (a wailing dance). It is performed as soon as the person dies. The dance lasts as long as the dead body is outside. The second type of funeral dance is "*dra ayiza"* (scattering of death) *or "dra ti opiza"* (closing the mouth of death). It is the last funeral rites. The dance symbolizes saying farewell to death and its powers. It also signifies reaffirming the continual existence of human beings despite sufferings, misery and death. The songs sung and danced are those that emphasize courage and firmness in face of death and danger. The dance of the last funeral rites may be performed from morning till 6:00 pm. The third type of funeral dance is called "*abi*" (culture). This consist of a series of dances performed by the visiting groups after the last funeral dances. Each group represents a lineage into which one of the deceased daughters has married. They come as "sisters' sons", "sisters' husbands" and "father's sisters' sons." The members of the lineage of the deceased may join them in the dance. Through this dance, there is a restoration of the temporarily broken or weakened affinial tie. If this dance is not performed, then the deceased is believed to have been insulted by the lack of respect shown to him and may send sickness or nightmares to his living kin or appear to them as a specter. Cf. John Middleton (1998), 28; John Middleton, "The Dances Among the Lugbara of Uganda," in Spencer Paul, *Society and the Dance: The Social Anthropology of Process and Performances*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1985): 168.

features. These features include: belief in a Supreme being, believe in spiritual intermediaries (divinities and spirits), veneration of ancestors, rituals and taboos, oral transmission of values, and communal dimension. African Traditional Religion permeates life all aspects, that is, social, spiritual, economic and political.[124]

The Lugbara religious beliefs regulate the relation that they have with the spiritual world. For the Lugbara, the spiritual world is inhabited spiritual beings. The spiritual beings are at two levels. At the higher level is God (*Adro*). Several attributes are given to God. The attributes derived from God's interactions with human beings at the various circumstances of life. God is creator of all people (*o'baapi*). God is all powerful (*okpo'ipi*). God is transcendent (*oru*), that is, far from human beings. This transcendent aspect of God is good (muke). God is also immanent (*enyia nyakua*). This immanent aspect of God is considered evil (*onzi*). Human beings do not like to associate with the immanent aspect.

The Lugbara believe in the existences of spirits. These spirits are called collectively "*adroanzi*" (God's children) or "*adrogoa*" (gods). The spirits are at the lower level of the spirit world. They are at the lower level because they live in visible territories, though they themselves are invisible. They may dwell in streams, bushlands, mountains, and grooves. Contrary to the good aspect of God, they are harmful and can cause sickness to whoever meets or sees them. They are said to appear in strange forms, like very tall or very short, with one leg, half-human and half-timber. Such reports of their appearance cannot be verified.

The religious world view of the Lugbara also includes fear and respect for the spirits of the dead. The dead have joined are considered be '*ba 'bua* (people in the grave). However, their spirits are said to manifest themselves to those who are still alive. Those who have left children and relatives are considered to be "ancestors." Respect shown to them forms the core

[124] Cf. John Mbiti (1989), 1.

regular religious practices of the Lugbara. The ancestors of the Lugbara received veneration and respect through the erection of the shrines.

In the Lugbara context, shrines are stones placed on the graves of the dead fathers. They were placed under granaries where the dead would normally be buried. All heads of domestic families whose fathers were dead had shrines.[125] There are two motivations for the erection of a shrine (*ori*) for ancestors. The first motivation is the need to continually remember the ancestors, and continually appease him. The Lugbara believe that an ancestor who is forgotten may strike a member of the lineage in form of sickness or drought or floods. In a typical traditional Lugbara home, one may notice stones lying under granaries. These stones are symbols of the presence of the dead abiding with the living members of the lineage. The second motivation for erection of a shrine is the standing that the ancestor had in his community, while he was alive. If he was the father of a large family, a good warrior, a famous hunter, a dancer, and so on, his spirit would be conjured to dwell in a shrine erected for him.[126]

Two religious practices take place at the shrines. These practices are: the invocation of the dead and offering of sacrifices. In the invocation, the wrath of the spirit of the dead is called upon by the living person, typically an elder against an alleged wrongdoer. The spirit of the dead is said to respond by afflicting that wrongdoer with sickness. Some of the offences or wrong that may lead to the invocation of the spirit of the dead are: incest, failure to organize funeral dance, failure to pay "*avuti*" (literally corpse cow) and disrespect or elders. Offering sacrifices may be were occasioned by cosmic and life crises. Cosmic crises may be drought, floods, lighting and invasion of locusts. Life crises may have individual dimension as in the case of death, sickness or barrenness; or they may assume a social dimension as in the case of a quarrel, a feud or a fight. [127] It is rare that Lugbara come as a single unit to offer sacrifices,

[125] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 10.
[126] Cf. Albert Titus Dalfovo (1989), 494.
[127] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 55.

though occasionally some clans come together to offer sacrifices, for example in times of community crises.

The terms used to render sacrifices or offerings are in form of verbs connected with the noun "*ori*" (shrine). The main ones are "*owi*" (to offer), "*bi*" (to daub, to coat), "*nya*" (to eat) and *li* (to cut). "*Ori owi*" refers to the act of offering the food at the shrines of "*ori*." "*Ori bi"* refers to the act of daubing the stones or the shrines with food. "*Ori nya*" signifies the ceremonial eating at the gathering. "*Ori li*" signifies the killing or cutting of the animal for the sacrifice.[128] These terms convey communal participation in act of offering the sacrifices.

In these sacrifices, the Lugbara, like other African peoples, seek to have communion and continuous encounter with the ancestors. Ambroise Kahumba observes that three-fold encounter takes place during the sacrifices. He states that:

> the encounter that takes place during the sacrifices is threefold: the encounter in unity of the living community members who offer the sacrifice; the encounter of those living members with the ancestors who, all in all, have never left them; the encounter, through the ancestors' mediation, of the living with the Supreme Being.[129]

The first is the encounter among the living. They come together in unity to offer the sacrifice. They come as a clan. The second is the encounter of the living with the ancestors who keep perpetual union with the living. The is a mediatory encounter, where the ancestors mediate between Supreme Being (*Adro*) and the living. The Lugbara believe that through the mediation of the ancestors, the crises are averted.

The Lugbara religious worldview began to have conceptions with the arrival of foreign religious groups. First among these religious groups is Islam. The encounter of the Lugbara with Islam began in the mid-19th century. The first Lugbara become Muslims were those who were captured by slave traders and enrolled them into the army of Emin Pasha. One of these

[128] Cf. Albert Titus Dalfovo (1989), 489.

[129] Ambroise Paluku Kahumba, "A Comparative Study of the Eucharistic Sacrifice and Sacrifice to Ancestors," in Peter I, Gichure, Frederick Wanjala and Nicholaus Segeja, *Challenges to Religion in Africa in Light of Vatican Council II: Essays in Honour of Charles Nyamiti* (Nairobi: CUEA Press, 2016): 221.

was Fadhal el Mula Ali (formerly Adu Anula). He returned to Lugbaraland in 1914, and was appointed chief of Aringa by the British colonial masters.[130] He began to spread Islamic religious in Lugbara, especially those in Aringa. In 1916, he converted a number that was sizeable enough to have a remarkable influence on the Lugbara at large.[131] Presently, 5 % of the Lugbara are Muslims. Others have embraced Christianity.

1.5 Background of Arua Catholic Diocese

In this section, the background of Arua Catholic Diocese is discussed. The section starts with the discussion of the Christian evangelization of the Lugbara people. It then describes the erection of Arua Catholic Diocese. The current administrative and the hierarchical structure of the Diocese is also described. This is followed by the description of the healing institutions in Arua Diocese.

1.5.1 Beginning of Evangelization of the Lugbara

The first Christian group to come Lugbaraland was the African Inland Mission (AIM), also known as the "Quakers." They came in 1917. They were followed by the Comboni Missionaries who brought the Catholic faithful. The Comboni Missionaries arrived in 1918. In the late 20th century, the Pentecostals whom the Lugbara call "*Alleluia*" or "*Abarokole*" have also made appearance among the Lugbara. The Pentecostals are more engaged in poaching from the mainstream religious groups (Islam, Anglican or Catholic). The Lugbara identify either as *Islamö* (Muslim), or *Purukati (*Protestant*),* or *Alleluia* (Pentecostal) or *Katuluki* (Catholic). To further discuss the beginning of evangelization of the Lugbara, a detailed description of two Christian groups that have had greater influence on the Lugbara is given.

[130] Cf. John Haden (2018), 10.
[131] Cf. John Haden (2018), 11.

1.5.1.1 African Inland Mission

The AIM is an interdenominational organization started by Peter Cameron Scott (1867-1896), a Scottish-American. Scott started the organization to realize his desire of establishing "a chain of mission stations stretching from coast of East Africa to Lake Chad in the central parts of Africa region."[132] The members of the AIM had no plan of establishing a mission in the Lugbaraland. They were only allowed by the British colonial government to cross the Lugbaraland on their way to Belgian Congo.

The AIM arrived into Lugbaraland in 1917. While on their way to Belgian Congo, they stopped at Vurra Ezuku (along the border with Congo) to wait for one their own who has fallen sick. As they waited, they were invited by the District Commissioner to distribute relief food for the famine-stricken Lugbara.[133] According to John Haden, AIM missionaries accepted to distribute relief food on condition that they could participate in missionary work. He narrates that:

> DC Alfred Weatherhead was struggling to deal with the effects of a major famine in West Nile. He asked the AIM group to help with the distribution of famine relief food. He asked also the Catholic Fathers to help. The AIM party realized that the people to whom they felt called, the Lugbara and the Alur, were in fact the same people they were now being asked to help. They agreed to stay in West Nile provided they could engage in Missionary activity.[134]

This was seen as an opportunity to begin to evangelize the Lugbara. AIM missionaries also linked up with the Church Missionary Society (CMS) who had their base in Ngora near Soroti in Eastern Uganda to start a deliberate evangelization of the Lugbara.[135]

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[132] Cf. Watson A.O. Omulokoli, "Foundational History of the African Inland Church, 1895-1903," in *African Journal of Evangelical Theology*, Volume 14, Issue 2 (1995): 47.

[133] The early years of the British colonial rule in West Nile witnessed famines. These famines occurred in 1917, 1930, 1936, 1943 and 1946. The British colonial government engaged in the importation and distribution of relief food so as save the starving population in their Northern province of which West Nile was part. Cf. University of Illinois, *Colonial Report-Annual, No. 1054 Uganda, Report for 1917-1918* (Urbana-Champaign: Digital Content Creation Unit, 2010), 5. Retrieved from https://www.libsysdigit.library.illnoise.edu/ilharvest/Africana/Books2011-05/4466563/4466563-1918-1919, (accessed 12/03/2025).

[134] John Haden (2018), 20.

[135] Cf. John Haden (2018), 20-21.

In 1918, the AIM missionaries at Vurra Ezuku were joined by some Baptist Church members. These were: Frank Gardner and Edith Gardner.[136] From Vurra Ezuku, the combined group of missionaries transferred to establish their mission to Mvara, where a piece of land had been given to them by a Lugbara elder, called Awudele. Mvara is about two kilometers from the center of Arua City. At Mvara, the AIM, the Baptists and the CMS fused together under the Anglican Church of Uganda. Mvara became the headquarter of the Anglican Church of Uganda among the Lugbara people. At this place stands the Emmanuel Cathedral of the Madi West Nile Diocese, which was created in 1969.[137]

1.5.1.2 Roman Catholicism

The protagonists of the spread of Catholicism in Lugbaraland were the priests of the Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus (*Missionarii Comboniani Cordis Iesu*), originally called the Sons of the Sacred Heart (*Congregatio Filiorum S. Cordis Iesu*). They were founded by Daniel Comboni (1831- 1881), in 1867 at Verona in Italy. On account of this, they are also called the Verona Fathers.[138]

i) Arrival of Comboni Priests in Lugbaraland

The Comboni priests came into the Lugbaraland in 1917.[139] They came in two groups. The first group was a one-man mission of Fr. Audisio. According Kathryn Pinkman, Fr.

[136] Cf. John Haden (2018), 21.
[137] Cf. Madi West Nile Diocese (2025).
[138] Cf. John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998), 175.
[139] The Comboni Missionaries arrived in Uganda on 2nd February, 1910. They had already been working in the Vicariate Apostolic of Central Africa (Sudan) which included part of Northern Uganda. They arrived in Northern Uganda under the headship of Father Albino Colomboroli, accompanied by Bishop Franz-Xaver Gayer, the Vicar Apostolic of the Vicariate of Central Africa. They established their mission at Omach on the eastern shores of River Nile. In 1911, they left Omach and moved to Gulu. In 1912 A.D, they moved to Palaro in Madi area. In 1916, the crossed river Nile and moved westwards to Moyo. From there, they proceeded towards the Lugbaraland. Cf. Frederick Tusingire, *The Evangelization of Uganda: Challenges and Strategies* (Kampala: Marianum Publishing Company Kisubi, 2002), 35.

Audisio came for the sake of the Alur, not the Lugbara. She states: "the first safari to Arua by a Comboni missionary was made by Fr. Audisio who went to visit some Alur Christians that had gone there to work with the British Commissioner. While there he baptized four Alur children"[140] Audisio entered Lugbaraland from southern direction.

The second group was a two-men mission of Fr. Guiseppe Zambonardi and Br. Savariano.[141] The entered Lugbaraland from northeast. Fr. Zambonardi spearheaded the deliberate work of evangelizing the Lugbara. Travelling by road through Aringa area, he reached Ediofe on 24th November, 1917. Ediofe lies on a hill west of Arua, across river Enyau. The Lugbara clans that lived here were under one chief called Adroni. [142] The first coming of Fr. Zambonardi among the Lugbara was to make observations for the possibilities for starting a mission. His permanent return to established a mission was on 14th February, 1918. He settled at Ediofe. Fr. Zambonardi worked among the Lugbara for two years. In 1920, he was transferred to Rejaf in Sudan, and replaced at Ediofe by another Comboni priest, Fr. Pietro Simoncelli.[143] Fr. Simoncelli consolidated the mission among the Lugbara.

It is notable that before the coming of the priests, lay people had already brought the Catholic faith into the Lugbaraland. These some lay people were some Alur and Baganda who came to work for the British colonial administration, and the Indian Goans who came to do business. [144] Much as there are no records of their active involvement in preaching or teaching the Christian faith, it is possible that they gave a witness of life to their Lugbara neighbours. Toni La Salandra[145] reports that some lay people were brought as catechists to address

[140] Kathyrn Pinkman, *A Centenary of Faith: Planting the Seed in Northern Uganda* (Kampala: Comboni Missionaries of the Heart of Jesus, 2010), 54.
[141] Cf. Toni La Salandra, *The History of the Catholic Faith in West Nile, Arua Uganda (1910-2000)* (Arua: Ombaci Press, 2004), 31; cf. Kathyrn Pinkman (2010), 54.
[142] Cf. Toni La Salandra (2004), 31
[143] Fr. Simoncelli Pietro (born 1891- died: 1964). He worked in Arua from 1920 until 1935. Cf. Toni La Salandra (2004), 31; cf. Kathyrn Pinkman (2010), 54.
[144] Cf. Kathyrn Pinkman (2010), 56.
[145] Fr. Toni La Salandra is Comboni Missionary who worked in Lugbaraland from 1958 to 2006. He died in 2014 at Verona in Italy.

personnel problem in evangelization. He states that: "luckily, four Acholi catechists arrived. Two of which we know the names: Cirilo from Kitgum and Giancarlo from Gulu."[146] With contribution of these catechists, the Catholic faith began to spread into the entire Lugbara territory, though in a quite slow pace.

One of the reasons for the slow spread was the hostile attitude of the people toward the colonial government. The arrival of the missionaries and colonial government agents in the same decade created suspicion among the Lugbara about the missionaries. John Middleton observes that: "Lugbara regarded missionaries as agents of the new power of the government which is in many ways antagonistic to the traditional systems of authority."[147] The missionaries also depended on the permission of government authorities to establish mission outstations for mission. Initially, the permission was refused. It was later granted by British Provincial Commissioner, Guy Eden, in 1919. The permission was given to establish mission outstations, with schools attached to them.[148]

With the permission given, the door for evangelization was wide open. Mission outstations were established in major areas in Lugbara territory, that is, Lodonga in 1920 in Aringa, in Omugo in 1922 in Terego, and Maracha in 1949.[149] In 1952, another mission was opened in Terego, at Aripea. In the opening of these mission stations, the laity remained very instrumental. Those who were brought as catechumens went to spread the faith. The Comboni Sisters also supported the priest in the mission of evangelizing the Lugbara.

ii) The Coming of Comboni Sisters

[146] Toni La Salandra (2004), 35.
[147] John Middleton (1998), 3.
[148] Cf. Toni La Salandra (2004), 32.
[149] Cf. Toni La Salandra (2004), 40.

As counter part of the Comboni priests, the Comboni Missionary Sisters (also known as Verona Sisters) arrived in Lugbaraland in 1922.[150] The institute of the Comboni Missionary Sisters was founded in 1872. It was founded under the name "*Pie Madri della Nigrizia,"* (Pious Mothers of the Nigritia). The Comboni Sisters opened a mission at Ediofe. The first Comboni Missionary Sisters who came to Ediofe were Elisa Perosini, Eugenia Berlato, Odilia Oss Bals and Natalia Baggi.[151] The sisters dedicated themselves to the care of the sick and catechumens, home visits, cooking for the male missionaries and taking care of the church. They also devoted themselves in a special way to the human and religious promotion of women and girls.[152]

The Comboni Sisters expanded their mission to several areas in Lugbaraland. Among these areas are Lodonga, Maracha, and Otumbari. In these places, the sisters were in charge of schools and medical units. Among the schools they took charge of are: Ediofe Girls' Primary School, Lodonga Girls's Primary School, and Maracha Primary School. The medical units entrusted to them were Ediofe, Lodonga, Koboko and Otumbari.[153]

By the middle of the 20th century, many mission stations had been established in Lugbaraland and entire West Nile. The catholic population had risen to approximately 200,000 Catholics, with thirteen parishes. These parishes were grouped into four deaneries: North Lugbara Deanery (Lodonga, Koboko, Otumbari), South Lugbara Deanery (Arua, Maracha, Terego, Uleppi), Alur Deanery (Angal, Nyapea, Pakwach, Warr; and Madi Deanery: Moyo,

[150] Each of the male pioneer missionary institute that evangelized Uganda had a female institute working with them. The Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) who evangelized the Buganda region worked together with Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (White Sisters), who arrived in Uganda on 15 October, 1899 under the headship of Mother Foy. The Mill Hill Missionaries who evangelized the Busoga region and the eastern part of the Uganda had the Franciscan Sisters of St. Mary's Abbey, Mill Hill. The sisters arrived on 11 January, 1903. The Comboni Sisters joined the Comboni priests to northern part of Uganda. The Comboni sisters arrived in Gulu, northern Uganda on 11 November, 1918. Cf. Fredrick Tusingire (2002), 36.

[151] Cf. Kathyrn Pinkman (2010), 56.

[152] Cf. Kathyrn Pinkman (2010), 57; cf. Toni La Salandra (2004), 38.

[153] Toni La Salandra (2004), 39.

Pakele).[154] They were all parishes belonging to Gulu Diocese,[155] until the erection of Arua Diocese.

1.5.2 Erection of Arua Catholic Diocese

Arua Catholic Diocese was erected on 23 June, 1958. The Diocese was erected by order of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fidei, during the pontificate of Pope Pius XII (pope: 2 March 1939 to 9 October 1958). It was erected out of Gulu Diocese as indicated by the Apostolic Constitution *Qui Summam*. *Qui Summam* states that: "From the large diocese of Gulu we separate that territory which is commonly called West Nile, and from it we establish a new diocese, the boundaries of which will be the same as those of the region from which it originates."[156] At its creation, the Diocese covered the entire West Nile.[157]

The Diocese is of the Latin Rite, and dependent on the Dicastery for the Evangelization of Peoples. At its creation, Arua Diocese was a suffragan Diocese of the Metropolitan See of Rubaga.[158] On January 2, 1999, when Pope John Paul II created new ecclesiastical provinces in Uganda, Arua Diocese came to be under Gulu Ecclesiastical Province (Gulu Archdiocese). For pastoral care and support, the Diocese was entrusted to Missionaries.[159]

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[154] Cf. *Arua Clergy Bulletin*, no. 1 (24 August, 1959), 3.

[155] Before becoming Gulu Diocese, the ecclesiastical territory was known as "Apostolic Prefecture of Equatorial Nile." In was erected on 12 June, 1923. It covered the entire northern Uganda (West Nile region, Acholi region, Lango region and Karamoja region). Msgr. Antonio Vignato of the Comboni Missionaries was elected as the first Prefect Apostolic of the Prefecture. On 1 December, 1950, it was renamed as Apostolic Vicariate of Gulu, with Msgr. Angelo Negri as the Bishop. On 25 March, 1953, it was promoted as the Diocese of Gulu, and became a suffragan of Rubaga Archdiocese. Cf. Uganda Episcopal Conference (2022), 135.

[156] "*Ab ampla dioecese Guluensi id territorii separamus, quod West Nile vulgo appelatur, ex eoque novam dioecesim condimus, cuius fines nembe iidem erunt ac regionis e qua fit. Quam dioecesim, a principe urbe, Aruaianam cognomnari volumus, ac Patribus e congregatione filiorum S. Cordis Iesu administrandam concredi."* Pius XII, Apostolic Constitution *Qui Summam,* in *AAS* 51(1958): 28.

[157] On 23 February, 1996, Nebbi Catholic Diocese was carved out of the southern part of Arua Diocese. This southern part includes the districts of Nebbi, Madi-Okollo, Pakwach and Zombo. The Nebbi Catholic Diocese covers an area of 5,037 sq. km. The creation of the new diocese of Nebbi was occasioned by the excessively large territory of Arua Diocese and the increase in the number of the faithful. At its creation, Nebbi Catholic Diocese was a suffragan of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Kampala. Presently, it is a suffragan of Gulu Archdiocese. Cf. John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution *Cum ad Aeternam,* in *AAS* 88 (1996): 613.

[158] Cf. *Qui Summam* (1958): 28.

[159] Cf. *Qui Summam* (1958), 28.

Arua Diocese took its name from the main town in the region. *Qui Summam* states: "We wish that diocese be called after the principal town, Arua." [160] The town was founded as the West Nile district headquarter in 1914. The site was chosen by Weatherhead apparently on the advice of the British colonial administrator for Sudan, Chauncy Hugh Stigand (died. 1919).[161] The site did not yet have any significant settlement. However, its association with the Belgians in 1890s made it to be considered. It was close to the small Belgian base in Congo. The Belgian base was called Aru,[162] which in Lugbarati means "prison" or a place of confinement. The Arua is the diminutive form of the Aru, meaning "little prison."

The diocesan headquarter is located on Ediofe hill, within Arua City. The diocesan headquarter hosts the Cathedral, curial offices and the bishop's residence. The Ediofe Cathedral stands as the most conspicuous church among the Lugbara. The cathedral was dedicated on 12 July, 1928. After a work of renovation from 2010 to 2017, it was rededicated on 25 February, 2017, by Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia.

1.5.3 Previous Bishops of Arua Diocese

The first bishop of Arua Diocese was late Angelo Tarantino, a Comboni Missionary. He was born on 8 April, 1908 at Portuguaro, Italy. He was ordained a priest on 19 March, 1932. He was chosen as the bishop of Arua on 12 February, 1959, and consecrated as bishop on 1 May, 1959 in Concordia, Italy. He took possession of the See of Arua Diocese on 13 June, 1959, having been installed by Msgr. Edastus Mojaiski Perrelli, the Delegate Apostolic of British East and West Africa. Bishop Tarantino led the Diocese up to 1984.[163]

[160] "*Quam dioecesim, a principe urbe, Aruaianam cognominasci volumus.*" Cf. *Qui Summam* (1958): 28.
[161] Cf. Mark Leopold (2005), 30.
[162] This Belgian base has developed to be the current Aru town in Ituri Province of DRC, 15 Kilometers southwest of Arua city. The inhabitants of this town are predominantly Lugbara. Cf. Mark Leopold (2005), 30.
[163] Cf. Lorenzo Gaiga, *L'Africa di Angelo: Angelo Tarantino: Vescovo d'Africa e Missionario Comboniano* (Bologna: Editrice Missionaria Italiana, 2000), 146-149; Toni La Salandra (2004), 66.

The second bishop of Arua Diocese was Frederick Drandua. He was born on 12 August, 1943. He was ordained a priest on 9 August, 1970. He led the diocese from 1984 to 1986 as a Diocesan Administrator. On 27 May, 1986, he was elected as bishop of Arua Diocese. He was consecrated on 15 August, 1986. His resignation from the see of Arua Diocese was accepted on 11 August, 2009. He died on 1 September, 2016.

1.5.4 Current Hierarchical and Administrative Structure of the Diocese

The current hierarchical and administration of Arua Diocese is headed by Rt. Rev. Sabino Ocan Odoki, who is the Bishop of Arua Diocese. Bishop Sabino was born on 8 August, 1958 at Layibi, Gulu (Uganda). He was ordained a priest on 10th September, 1983. He was elected as by Pope Benedict XVI as the Auxiliary Bishop of Gulu Archdiocese on 22 July, 2006. He received episcopal ordination on 21 October, 2006. On 19 August 2009, he was appointed as Apostolic Administrator of Arua Diocese. On 20 October, 2010, he was appointed as the Bishop of Arua Diocese. He took possession of the Diocese on 18 December, 2010.[164]

The bishop is assisted by the Vicar General, members of the Curia (Heads of Department), and the episcopal vicars. The episcopal vicars are in charge of vicariates and some special groups of people, like the Religious and Refugees and Migrants.

A vicariate is a portion of the diocese entrusted to an episcopal vicar in order to have effective governance of the diocese and provide the required pastoral care needed by the people of God.[165] Seven of these vicariates are territorial. They include: Ediofe, Vurra, Aripea, Maracha, Lodonga, Moyo and Adjumani. One vicariate is non-territorial. This is the vicariate for the Refugees and Migrants. The Refugee Vicariate was created on the 1 January, 2017, to cater for the pastoral and spiritual needs of refugees and migrants from South Sudan and

[164] Cf. Uganda Episcopal Conference (2022), 54.
[165] *Arua Diocese Pastoral Policy Book: A Pastoral Guide for Christian Communities* (Arua: Arua Diocese Printing Press, 1996), no. 900.1. Hereafter cited as "*Policy Book*."

Democratic Republic of Congo. The episcopal vicars who are in charge of the vicariates are freely appointed by the diocesan bishop. The immediate administrative structure under the vicariates are the deaneries.

The deaneries are made up of neighbouring parishes grouped together for promotion of better pastoral care.[166] There are sixteen deaneries in Arua Diocese. The deaneries are Ediofe, Arivu, Aripea, Logiri, Adumi, Ombaci, Maracha, Nyadri, Otumbari, Koboko, Lodonga, Moyo, Metu, Obongi, Adjumani, and Pakele. Each of the deaneries is headed by a dean, who is a priest.[167]

In Arua Diocese, there are sixty-eight parishes. All the parishes are territorial, that is, they include all the Christian faithful within certain territory. All the parishes and sub-parishes of Arua Diocese are territorial, that is, they include all the Christian faithful within certain territory. The pastoral, spiritual and the administration care in the parishes is provide by the parish priest. Pastoral Council and Finance Committee serve as advisory bodies in the parishes. Under the parishes there are several outstations, which are groups into zone. Zones consist of chapel grouped together for pastoral cared. In the structure of Arua Diocese, a chapel is a place of worship of certain members of the parish community in an area that is remote from the Parish Church. The place is under the care of the catechist who leads the community in the service of the Word of God.

Each chapel is divided into Small Christian Communities. Small Christian Communities are ecclesial groupings in which the Christians live and practice their faith in God in concrete or virtual locus. In such expression of their faith, the Christians, formed into small groups, meet regularly in an appointed place. They meet to share and celebrate faith life,

[166] Cf. *Policy Book*, no. 901.1
[167] Cf. *Policy Book*, no. 901.2

share and be nourished by the word of God, exercise their ministries, and discern on means for promoting integral development.[168]

In Arua Diocese, the Small Christian Communities are called "*enyati*."[169] The Lugbara term "*enyati*" is used to describe a group of people who normally feed together. The neighbourhood is so close that the people can easily call upon each other to share a meal (*enya*). This also was an important step towards inculturation, since it involved using a local terminology. It helped the Christians to live their faith, and practice commandment of love and solidarity.[170] Today in Arua Diocese, the small Christian communities are named after the saints. In the "*enyati,*" the Christians not only share food, but express their love and concern in happiness and sadness, in health and sickness, so as promote healing of the people.

1.5.5 Healing Institutions in Arua Diocese

By "healing institutions" is meant an organizational facility that is designed to offer services for promoting the overall wellbeing of individuals. These services include biomedical health services, counselling and prayers. These healing institutions employ either scientific and biomedical skills or spiritual means to remedy situations of sickness and heal. The healing institutions found in the territory of Arua Diocese fall into three categories. These categories are: Government-owned institutions, Private-Not-For-Profit Institutions, and Private-for-Profit Institutions. They are all governed by the regulations issued by the Uganda Ministry of Health.[171] Those owned by Arua Diocese are Private-Not-For-Profit Institutions. All these institutions are classified into five levels.

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[168] Cf. Emmanuel Chimombo, Joseph G. Healey, Rita Ishengoma, Febian P. Mulenga, Rose Musimba, and Alphonse C.L. Omolu, (eds.), *Strengthening the Growth of Small Christian Communities in Africa: A Training Handbook for Facilitators* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2018), 27-32.

[169] Cf. Section 1.2.2.1; Arua Diocese, *A Local Church Living Committed to Christ: Acts of the First Synod in Arua Diocese* (Kampala: Kisubi Marianum Press, 1990), 35.

[170] Arua Diocese (1990), 35.

[171] Cf. Ministry of Health, *Comprehensive Health Service Standard Manual* (Kampala: July 2021), 7-50. Retrieved from https://library.health.go.ug>download>publics, (accessed 13/06/2026).

The first level is Health Centre I or Village Health Teams (VHT). The Health Centre I is "a community based (village) structure whose members are selected by the people themselves to promote health and wellbeing of the people in their areas of residence/jurisdiction."[172] The members give information about health services, mobilize community members to accessed basic medicine and drugs. The level has not been integrated into the structure of the church. However, it is noteworthy that many of the members of the Village Health Team are Catholics.

The second level is Health Centre II. These are health facilities established at specific locations in government-based parishes. The services that they offer include: disease prevention measures, health promotion, outpatient curative services, antenatal care and immunization. In Arua Diocese, there are two institutions of Health Centre II. These are: Oluko Solidale Health Centre and Indriani Health Centre.[173] They are located within the premises of Oluko Parish and Indriani Parish respectively.

The third level is that of Health Centre III. At this level, the facilities offer health promotion geared towards disease prevention and curative services. They also provide maternity, inpatient and laboratory services.[174] There are several institutions of this level in Arua Diocese, however twelve them are owned by Arua Diocese. The institutions are: Adjumani Mission Health Centre, Oje Health Centre, Aripea Health Centre, Ediofe Health Centre, Fr. Bilbao Memorial Health Centre, Koboko Health Centre, Maryland-Kocoa Health Centre, Moyo Mission Health Centre, Otumbari Health Centre, Robidire Health Centre, St. Francis Ocodri Health Centre, and St. St. Asumpta Health Centre.

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[172] Ministry of Health, *VHT Village Health Team: Strategy and Operational Guidelines* (Kampala: March 2010), 11. Retrieved from https://library.health.go.ug/community-health/health-education/village-health-team-strategy-and-operational-guidelines, (accessed 13/06/2026).

[173]Cf. Arua Diocese, "Catholic Founded Hospital and Health Centres," (2025). Retrieved from https://dioceseofarua.org/Health.php, (accessed 14/06/2026).

[174] Cf. Ministry of Health (July 2021), 6

The fourth level is called the Health Centre IV. In addition to all that is done at Health Centre III, the Health Centre IV institutions participate theater and operation, laboratory and blood transfusion services, *et cetera*.[175] Arua Diocese owns only one of this, that is, Lodonga Health Centre IV.

At the fifth level are hospitals. Hospitals carry out general health care, in-service training, consultation, specialist treatments, teaching and research.[176] They are graded into General Hospitals, Regional Referral Hospitals, and National Referral Hospitals. In the territory of Arua Diocese, there are two Regional Referral Hospital, both of which are government-owned. These are Arua Regional Referral Hospital and Yumbe Regional Referral Hospital. There are three general hospitals. These are Maracha, Kuluva, Moyo and Adjumani. Of these, Maracha is owned by Arua Diocese.

These health institutions primarily focus on preventive and curative services. Some have departments for rehabilitation and counselling. Some of them staff in the institutions cooperate with the pastoral agents to provide pastoral and spiritual services. This synergic model promotes a holistic healing of the people.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of Arua Catholic Diocese has been discussed. Geographically, the Diocese is located in the northwestern part of Uganda. The Diocese covers an area of 4,046 square miles, accommodating a total population of approximately 3,316,2555 people. Of this 2,620,277 are Catholics, served by several pastoral agents. The population in the Diocese is composed of various ethnic groups. Among these ethnic groups are the Lugbara, Alur, Madi, Kakwa, Kebu, Gimara and Reli. There are also several other ethnic groups in the

[175] Cf. Ministry of Health (July 2021), 6
[176] Cf. Ministry of Health (July 2021), 6.

diocese, especially those the refugee population. The majority of these ethnic groups are the Lugbara.

In the same chapter, origin, social structure, political organization, economic activities of the Lugbara have also been discussed. The chapter has also expounded on their religious beliefs and cultural practices of the Lugbara have also been described. Lugbara are identified as a Central Sudanic-speaking people. Socially, the Lugbara have strong clan and kinship links among themselves. The clans form the largest political unit. The clans are heard by the clan leaders, who are assisted by the council of elders. The elders also participate as ritual leaders in the offering of sacrifices. Currently, there are efforts to bring the Lugbara under one kinship through the institution called Lugbara *Kari*. The Lugbara engage in several economic activities like, arable farming, livestock rearing, and business. Among their traditional religious beliefs is the belief in Supreme Being (*Adro*). They also believe that there are spirits of lower rank. These spirits can be malevolent to human beings, and bring sickness to people. The Lugbara hold the spirits of the dead with respect and fear. Respect because they mediate between the living and the dead. Fear because they are thought to bring sickness to the living if displeased.

Continuing with the profile of Arua Diocese, the Chapter has indicated that Arua Diocese was erected on 23 June, 1958. Currently, the diocese consists of sixty-parishes, grouped into sixteen deaneries. The diocese has eight vicariates, under episcopal vicars. There are several healing institutions in the Diocese. Sixteen of them are owned by the Diocese. They provide biomedical services where treatment from various health ailments is done. Sometimes in those healing institutions, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is celebrated. In the Sacrament, oil is used for anointing. The next chapter discusses the challenges regarding the in the Anointing of the Sick.

CHAPTER TWO

CHALLENGES REGARDING OIL IN THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK IN ARUA CATHOLIC DIOCESE

Introduction

In this Chapter, the challenges regarding the use of oil in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick are discussed. In the first section of the Chapter, the etymology of the word "oil" and its definition are given. In the second section, the classifications and general uses of oil are explained. The challenges that pertain to the perception of Oil of the Sick are explained in the third section. The fourth section dwells on the challenges of related to the custody of Oil of the Sick. In the fifth section, the use of oils in some religious groups and the challenges it causes to the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick are explained. In the sixth section of the Chapter, the challenge of deficiency in catechesis is discusses.

2.1 Etymology and Definition of Oil

Before proceeding to discuss the challenges, it is necessary to explain the meaning of oil, so that any substance is not considered to be oil. Etymologically, the term "oil" is derived from the Latin "*oleum.*"[177] Oil is defined as: "a substance that is in a viscous liquid state at or slightly above ambient temperatures, and is both hydrophobic and lipophilic."[178] Merriam-Webster defines oil as: "any substance of numerous unctuous combustible substance that are liquid or can be liquefied easily on warming, are greasy in ether but not in water, and leave a

[177] Lucian Calugar, Ioana Grozea and Monica Butnarium, "Vegetable Oils in Maintaining Health," in *Journal of Medical and Clinical Nursing Studies*, 2,2 (2024): 1. Retrieved from https://www.reseachgate.net/publication/381321238, (accessed 19/11/2025).

[178] "Oil" in *New World Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/oil, (accessed 25/6/2025).

greasy stain on paper or cloth."[179] According to this definitions, oil is a physical matter, with physical and chemical characteristics.

Physical characteristics are those which can be perceived by senses of sight, smell, touch and taste. The use of senses to perceive and assess the quality of oil is known as "organoleptic method."[180] The word "organoleptic" is an anglicized usage of the French word "*organoleptique,*" which is a combination of the Latin word "*organo,*" meaning "organ," and Greek word "*leptikos*", which means, "disposed to take or accept."[181] Hence, "organoleptic" could mean "disposed to be acceptable to the sense organs." In the organoleptic method, the colour, aroma, and physical impact from encounter with human body is considered as a criterion for perceiving or accepting a substance as oil. It is the commonest method that is used by sellers and consumers of oil.[182] The physical characteristics depend much on the chemical structure of oil.

The chemical structures give the oil its chemical characteristic. Chemical characteristics show the resultant behaviour of a substance due to the chemical reactions under different conditions such as changes in temperature and pressure. Chemical reactions can cause fundamental alterations in the physical appearance of the oil. For this reason, they are called "physicochemical properties." They determine the behavour of a substance under different

[179] "*Oil Definition and Meaning",* in Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com>dictionary>oil, (accessed 03/10/2025).

[180] William T. Brannt, *A Practical Treatise on Animal and Vegetable Fats and Oils* (Philadelphia: Henry Carrey Baird and Co., 1896), 40; cf. R. Agustina, Rahmat Fadhil and Mustaqima, "Organopletic Test Using the Hedonic and Descriptive Method to Determine the Quality of Pliek U," in *IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 644 (2021): 1-2. Retrieved from https://www.iopscience.org/article/10.1088/1755.135/644/1/012006/pdf, (accessed 25/11/2025); cf. Maryam Baharvand, Ziba Maleki, Sahar Mohamadi, Kareh Aluvi, Elnaz Jalali Moghaddam, "Assessment of Oral Malodor: A Comparison of Organoleptic Method with Sulphide Monitoring," in *The Journal Of Contemporary Dental Practice*, Volume 9, Number 5 (2008): 076. Retrieved from https://www.thejcdp.com>doi>jcdp, (accessed 25/11/2025).

[181] "Organoleptic", in *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com/word-of-the-day/organoleptic/2021-03-02, (accessed 25/11/2025).

[182] Cf. R. Agustina *et al* (2021): 2; Cf. Maryam Baharvadi *et al* (2008): 76.

conditions. The physicochemical properties of oil include: liquidity, viscosity, hydrophobicity, lipophilicity and combustibility.

Liquidity means that oil is basically liquid with the ability to flow. As a liquid, it has colour, taste and smell. The recognition of colours or taste or smell is a matter of perception or practice. Due to sensitivity to temperature, oil may solidify to become fat. Changes in the ambient or room temperatures can make oil to coagulate and become fat, and vice versa. What differentiates oil from fat is the state each of them takes at room temperature. At room temperature, oil is liquids and fat is solid material.[183] It is the same material in two different states of matter having been influenced by changes in temperature.

Viscosity makes oil to be seen and felt as thick, sticky and adhesive. Mekam Maheswar describes viscosity as resistance of the liquid matter to flow occasioned by internal friction within the liquid. He states that: "viscosity may be thought of as fluid friction."[184] Liquid, such oil, are composed of atom and molecular bonds that create friction. Viscosity is a characteristic that can be determined by sight and touch.

Hydrophobicity comes from two Greek words "*hydro*," meaning "water," and "*phobia*," which means fear. Literally, hydrophobicity means "fear of water." According to David Chandler, hydrophobicity describes a physical phenomenon where oil does not mix with water. He writes that:

> the term hydrophobic (water-fearing) is commonly used to describe substances that, like oil, do not mix with water. Although it may look as if water repels oil, in reality the separation of oil and water in ambient conditions is not due to repulsion between water and oil molecules, but to particularly favourable hydrogen bonding between water molecules. Each water molecule can participate in four such bonds, sharing its two hydrogen atoms with two neighbouring water molecules and sharing two further hydrogen atoms associated with two other neighbours.[185]

[183] Cf. Lucian Calugar, *et al* (2024): 1

[184] Mekam Maheswar, "A Review Article on Measurement of Viscosity," in *International Journal of Research in Pharmacy and Chemistry*, 8,1 (2018): 69. Retrieved from https://www.ijrp.com/file/13-01-18/08pdf, (accessed 21/11/2025); Cf. Henri Robert Hark, "Viscosity," in *Encyclopedia of Engineering Geology* (Springer, 2018): 1. Retrieved from https://www.reseachgate.net/publications/334429797-viscosity, (accessed 21/11/2025).

[185] David Chandler, "Hydrophobicity: Two Faces of Water," in *Nature* 417. 491 (2002). Retrieved from https://www.nature.com/articles/417491a, (accessed 03/10/2025).

The property of hydrophobicity is given by the chemical reaction hydrogen in the oil and the water molecule. It makes the oil to rise above the water. Hydrophobicity is perceivable by sight.

Lipophilicity presents itself as the opposite of hydrophobicity. Whereas hydrophobicity demonstrates repulsion between oil and water, lipophilicity shows attraction and ability of oil to dissolve and mix other substances. Lipophilicity come from two Greek words "*lipos*", which means "fat" and "*philos*", meaning "friendly" or "loving." Lipophilicity is the "ability of a chemical compound to dissolve in fats, oils, lipids, and non-polar solvents."[186]

Combustibility, from the Latin word *combuerere*, meaning "to burn together" is the ability to be set afire and burn. It is caused by internal heating of the oil, when exposed to fire or high temperatures.[187] Hence, oil is a combustible.

The physicochemical properties help to identify oil. Much as these characteristics may be subject to changes in temperature and location, they need to be able to withstand adverse conditions. Classifying oils and identifying areas of their use can provide a clearer illumination for ascertaining genuineness of oils.

2.2 Classifications and Uses of Oils

This section explains the classification of oils according to the various categories. The section also explains some of the general uses of oils. These classifications may overlap as the same oil can fall under different classifications and may be put to different uses.

[186] Nittala S. Sarma, "Etymology as An Aid to Understanding Chemistry Concepts," in *Journal of Chemical Education* Vol. 81, no. 10 (October 2004): 1439.

[187] Cf. Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "*Oil Definition and Meaning,"* in Merriam-Webster Dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com>dictionary>oil, (accessed 03/10/2025).

2.2.1 Classification of Oils

The primary classification of oils is based on their origin or source, that is, where they are extracted from. The secondary classifications are according to the decree of saturation and according to their edibility.

2.2.1.1 Classification According to Origins of Source

According to origins or sources, oils are classified as animal oils, plant or vegetable oils and mineral oils. Animal oils include all oils obtained from the body parts of mammals, poultry, fish and insects. They are derived from animal products like tallow, beef, pork, lard, butter and ghee.[188] At ambient temperatures they are better known as animal fats. There are several ways of extracting animal oils from the different animal body tissues, depending on the technical skills available.[189]

Plant or vegetable oils are obtained from plants. They can be extracted from all plant parts, but more especially from fruits and seeds which yield oil more than any of the parts.[190]

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[188] Cf. Kurbankul Marlankulovych Karimkulov and Azoda Abdurahmanora, "Classification of Oil Products According to the Nomenclature of Goods," in *Technical Science and Innovation*, Issue 4, Article 16 (2023): 83 81-86. Retrieved from https://www.btstu.reseachcommon.org/journey/vol2023/iss4/16, (accessed 23/11/2025; cf. Nandhini Dhanavel *et al* (2024): 117; Cf. Sudheera S. Manoj, Chittaranjan Das, Manojkumar, "Oils and Fats –A bird's Eye View," in *International Journal of Research and Analytical reviews*, Volume 6, Issue 2 (2019):944-950. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356503083_oils_and_fats_-a_bird's_eye_view, (accessed 25/11/2025); Carmen Botella-Martínez, José Ángel Pérez-Álvarez, Estrella Sayas-Barberá , Casilda Navarro Rodríguez de Vera , Juana Fernández-López and Manuel Viuda-Martos, "Healthier Oils: A New Scope in the Development of Functional Meat and Dairy Products: A Review", in *Biomolecules*, 13, 778 (2023):7. Retrieved from https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10216627/pdf/biomolecules-13-00778.pdf, (accessed 26/11/2025).

[189] For example, Nandhini Dhanavel *et al* describe the different ways of producing milk fats, rendered oil and fish oils. For the production of milk fats, "cream and non-fat milk layers are separated from milk using a centrifuge or gravity-based separator, and then cream is churned by hand or using a machine until it becomes solid. This creates friction through high agitation of the cream, which leads to the fat to separating from the buttermilk. The obtained melted fat is called butter fat." Production of rendered oils involves several key processes. First, "adispose tissues are subjected to the disintegration (shredding, grinding, or milling) process to break down the tissues into smaller pieces, making it easier to extract the oil." Secondly, through heating at high temperatures, "the tissues are allowed to melt to release the oil." Thirdly, through a process of centrifugation or filtration, the oil is separated from the solid materials that have withstood the high temperatures. Lastly, the "separated oil (tallow or lard) is then subjected to a clarification (dewaxing, de-gumming, and de-acidification) process to improve its quality." Nandhini Dhanavel *et al* (2024): 117-118.

[190] Cf. Kurbankul Marlankulovych Karimkulov *et al* (2023): 82.

There are thousands of tree species on the earth planet from which vegetable oils are extracted. The common ones spread across many parts of the world include: almond, olive, sunflower, palm, avocado, coriander, coconut, castor, linseed, *et cetera*.[191] Some of these plants may grow flourishingly in other parts of the world due to favourable climatic conditions. They may also be completely lacking in other areas. Among such is olive which is rarely or not grown in many Sub-Saharan African countries.

Some plants are treasured for their components that give them specific aromatic scents. These components are been called "essential oils."[192] Plant that give fragrance essentials oils includes rosemary, cinnamon, lemon, oranges, thyme, cumin, and parsley and coriander, among others. According to A. J. Haagen-Smit, the discovery of the essential oils has often been driven by the desire for fragrance. He states that:

> Early in the history, man evinced a great deal of interest in the fragrant exhilaration of plants, and those who were later to be called chemists occupied themselves with separating the essence of the perishable plants. It was observed that heating of the plants caused the odoriferous principle to evaporate and that upon condensation and subsequent colling, droplets united and formed a liquid consisting of two layers- water and oil.[193]

The organoleptic skill of smell has been key in determining the fragrance of the essential oils. Because of their fragrance, essential oils have become a lucrative business.

The term "mineral oils" is used mainly for the products extracted from crude petroleum that is mined from the ground.[194] James G. Speight defines mineral oils as "colourless or very

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[191] Cf. Sudheera S. Manoj, Chittaranjan Das, Manojkumar, "Oils and Fats –A bird's Eye View," in *International Journal of Research and Analytical reviews*, Volume 6, Issue 2 (2019):944-950. Retived from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356503083_oils_and_fats_-a_bird's_eye_view, (accessed 25/11/2025); Kurbankul Marlankulovych Karimkulov *et al* (2023): 82; Cf. Lucian Calugar, *et al* (2024): 1

[192] Cf. Camila Pezantes-Orellana, Fátima German Berúdez, Carman matia De la Cruz, José Luis Mantalvo and Andrea Orellana-Manzano, "Essentlal Oils: A Systematic Review on Revolutionizing health, nutrition and omics for Optimal Well-being," in *Frontiers in Medicine* 11:1337785 (2024): 1; Daniella Pinna, "Essential Oils and Cultural Heritage Conservation: Are They Safe, Environmentally Friendly, Sustainable, and Negligibly Toxic?" in *Gels* 11, 987 (2025): 1. Retrieved from https://www.mdpi.com/2310-2861/11/12/978, (accessed 11/05/2026).

[193] A.J. Haagen-Smit, "The Chemistry, Origin and Function of Essential Oils in Plant Life," in Gunther Earnest, *The Essential Oils* (New York: D Van Nostruad Company, Inc., 1948), 17.

[194] The term petroleum is a combination of a Greek word "*petra*" (rock) and Latin word "*oleum*," meaning oil. Petroleum means rock oil or "oil from the rock." James G. Speight describes petroleum as: "a naturally occurring mixture of gaseous liquids, and solid compound usually found trapped deep underground beneath

pale oil within the lubricating class as regards the carbon number and boiling range."[195] He further identifies mineral oils as belonging to two groups: medicinal oils and technical oils. Medicinal oils are thoroughly refined for medical or pharmaceutical purposes. They are refined to ensure that they do not contain any suspected toxic materials that are could dangerous to human health. Technical oils are generally used for industrial purposes, for example, in electrical industry as transformer oil, and cosmetic industry as hair dressers.[196] The minerals oils are sometimes enhanced by blending them with additives to impart particular properties for specific uses.[197] The additives consist of antioxidants and metal deactivators, detergents, dispersants and corrosives.[198]

2.2.1.2 Classification According to Drying Rate

The "Drying Rate" refers to the speed at which oils transform to become solid and form durable films. According to Sumanta Mondal, drying of oils is "a chemical process called autoxidation."[199] The process occurs when oil is exposed to air. The oil absorbs oxygen, which reacts with the hydrogen atoms in fatty acids contained in the oil, leading to the formation of hydroperoxide compounds. The hydroperoxide compounds then form new chemical bonds after reacting with other molecules of fatty acids. The new bonds link the chains of the fatty acids together into a solid network which makes oil hard.[200] The drying rate is measured in

impermeable cap rock and above lower dome of sedimentary rock such as shade; most petroleum reservoir occur in sedimentary rocks of marine, deltaic, or estuarine, origin; recoverable it in its natural state by convention oil well production methods including currently use enhance recovery techniques." James G. Speight, *Handbook of Petroleum Analysis* (New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2002), 381-382.

[195] James G. Speight (2002), 247.

[196] James G. Speight (2002), 247.

[197] Emmanuel O. Aluyor and Mudiakeoghene Ori-jesu, "Biodegradation of mineral oils – A review," in *African Journal of Biotechnology*, Vol. 8, 6 (2009): 916. Retrieved from http://www.academicjournals.org/AJB, (accessed 24/11/2025).

[198] Cf. Emmanuel O. Aluyor *et al* (2009): 916.

[199] Sumanta Mondal, "Drying Oils- Principal and Significance," in *Conference- Lecture Notes* (2025): 4. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/396895528_Drying_Oils_-Principal_and_Significance, (accessed 01/06/2026); Sudheera.

[200] Sumanta Mondal (2025): 4.

iodine value or number. The higher the iodine value, the faster the drying rate. Depending on their drying rates, oils are classified as drying oils, semi-drying oils, and non-drying oils.

Drying oils are those oils that absorb oxygen at a faster rate. They form dry, hard and transparent films. The tough films provide "protective coatings."[201] They have iodine value higher than 150 hence high degree of unsaturation. Some examples of drying oils include: linseed oil, tung oil, poppy seed oil, and perilla oil. These are plant oils.

Semi-drying oils oxidize partially because they contain moderate fatty acids. They form soft films that are slightly sticky and adhesive. Semi-drying oils have moderate iodine number, ranging between 100 and 150. Examples of semi-drying oils include: olive oil, peanut oil, rapeseed, soyabean oil, and so on.

Non-drying oils do not form film when exposed to due to their low rate of oxidation. They have with low iodine value and do not dry, although chemical changes take place gradually. Such chemical changes include hydrolysis. Hydrolysis is a process by which oils and fats split into fatty acids, glycerol and subsequent absorptions and release of oxygen and hydrogen gases respectively, leading to unpleasant smell and taste.[202] Non-drying oils have low iodine number, ranging from 9-65. Examples of non-drying oil include: shear butter, palm oil, coconut oil, et cetera.

2.2.1.3 Classification According to Intended Uses

The classification according to intended use is based on their suitability or unsuitability for human consumption, rather than industrial or cometic uses. In this perspective, oils are edible and inedible. Edible oils are generally suitable for human consumption. They are mostly extracted from plants parts like fruits and seeds. They are valued for their essential fatty acids

[201] Sudheera. S *et al* (2019): 946.
[202] Cf. Sudheera. S *et al* (2019): 946.

that provide health benefits.[203] Edible insects have been revealed as a sustainable and alternative source of nutrients, mainly proteins (trying to address human food demand), but also lipids, which are the second largest fraction and are sometimes regarded as a co-product.[204] Several insects that are considered to be a delicacy in many parts of the world are valuable sources for oil.

Inedible oils are unpalatable and considered unfit for human consumption. This may due to their bitter taste or pungent smell. Mineral oils are generally inedible as they have potential health hazard to human beings.

2.2.2 Uses of Oils

The uses of animal oils, plant or vegetable oils and mineral oils have been evident since antiquity. The uses are noticeable in domestic and industrial spheres, health and medical fields, cosmetic and aromatic practices, as well as religious circles.

In the domestic sphere, animal oils and plant oils that are edible are used for cooking. On account of this, oils have received the appellation "cooking oils." They are also used for as fuel for lighting. In the industrial arena, mineral oil products have gained prominence. They are used as lubricants and non-lubricants. Examples of lubricants include engine oils and greases, hydraulic acids, metal working fluids, food machinery lubricants and textile oils. Non-lubricants include those extender oils that are used in manufacturing of rubber and plastic.[205] In advanced technologies, animal fats have been used for industrial purposes. Studies by

[203] Cf. Nandhini Dhanavel and Meenakshi Halada Nandakrishnan, "A Review of Animal Fat: A Great Source for Industrial Applications," in *Journal of Chemical Review*, 6, 2 (2024): 117. Retrieved from https://jchemrev.com/article- _188241_05cc19e272994bfbf9fa60e8ffa47951.pdf, (accessed 25/11/2025).

[204] Cf. Carmen Botella-Martínez *et al* (2023): 8

[205] Cf. Ralph Prow, Annegret Blume, Nicole Hellwing, Matthia Herzler, Bettina Hurse, Christoph Hutzle Karla Pfaff, Hermann-Josef Therese, Tewes Tralau, Barbel Vieth and Andreas Luch, "Mineral Oil in Food, Cosmetics, and Products Regulated by Other Legislation," in *Critical Reviews in Taxicology*, Vol 49, no. 9 (2019): 743. Retrieved from https://www.tanfonline.com/doi/epdf/10.1080/10408444.2029.16948462., (accessed 23/11/2025).

Nandhini Dhanavel, *et al*, reveal that animal oils have the potential for usage as lubricants, fuel, plasticizers and paint making.[206]

In health and medical fields, essential oils are used antibacterials, antifungals, antivirals and wound disinfectants.[207] Pezantes-Orellana, *et al*, have shown that oils have been used for treating several human ailments. They state that:

> The mechanism of action of cinnamon oil alters bacterial membranes, modifies lipid profiles, and inhibits cell division, giving a potential benefit in protection against colitis. On the other hand, a significant improvement was observed in the diastolic pressure of patients with metabolic syndrome when supplementing them with cumin essential oil. The antimicrobial properties of coriander essential oil, especially its application in seafood like tilapia, demonstrate efficacy in improving health and resistance to bacterial infections. Cumin essential oil treats inflammation. Parsley essential oil is an antioxidant. Orange peel oil is antibacterial, antifungal, antiparasitic, and pro-oxidative. Lemon essential oil affects mouse intestinal microbiota. Thyme essential oil protects the colon against damage and DNA methylation. Carnosic acid in rosemary oil can reduce prostate cancer cell viability by modifying the endoplasmic reticulum function.[208]

Among the essential oils mentioned for treating human ailments are cinnamon oil, cumin oil, coriander oil, parsley oil, orange peel, lemon oil, thyme oil and rosemary oil. these oils can also be used as base to be mixed with herbs or grass and trees.

In cosmetic and aromatic practices, oils are extensively used for bathing, shining skins, massages, and hair laxation. In these cases, oils are used to enhance beauty, cleanness and pleasant body scent.

In the religious circles, oils are used for anointing people and innate objects. The word "anointing" was adopted from the French "*enoint*," which has root from the Latin word "*iungere",* which means "to smear."[209] James L. Empereur defines anointing as "touching of persons or things with a substance to achieve some effect either within the person or thing itself

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[206] Cf. Nandhini Dhanavel *et al* (2024): 124-129.

[207] Eliane Pryxtyk Jung, Raphael Cruz Alves, Leilson De Oliveira Ribeiro and Ricardo Felipe Alves Moreira, "Bauhinia Linnaeus: An Overview of The Chemistry and Bioactivity of Essential Oils," in *Boletin Latinoamericano Y Del Caribe De Plantas Medicinales Y Aromáticas*, 20, 6 (2023): 798. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.37360/blacpma.23.22.6.4, (accessed 23/11/2025).

[208] Camila Pezantes-Orellana *et al* (2024): 1.

[209] Cf. "Anoint definition and meaning" in *Collins Dictionary*. Retrieved from https://collinsdictionary.com>dictionary>anoint, (accessed 15/10/2025).

or in the way the community will later perceive that person."[210] This definition aligns with religious context. In the religious context, anointing is directed to with oil is directed producing an ontological change in the person who is anointed, for example, becomes a priest, or a king of a prophet.[211]

Still in the religious cycles, oils are used in sacrifices, burials, birth rites, marriage celebrations, and purification purification rituals. The uses of oils in these areas have been evident among ancient Greeks and Romans. [212] At sacrificial rites, oil was used poured on altar and statutes. During burial rites, oil was used to honour the dead and protect their spirits. It also served to preserved the body from decay. In marriage ceremonies, the bride and the groom could be anointed before the day of wedding, and those making the marriage preparations were also anointed. If one committed murder or sexual crime, he anointed himself with oil. Anointing with oil was a prelude to magical rites.[213]

In the Christian usage, religious use of oil is pertinent in three Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Anointing of the Sick, and Holy Orders. Oil is also used in the dedication and blessing of Churches. The challenges discussed here pertain to the use of oil in the Anointing of the Sick.

2.3 Perception of the Oil for Anointing the Sick

This section explores the challenge of perception of the oil used in the care of the sick in Arua Diocese. Perception is a belief or an opinion that people hold with regard to something

[210] James L. Empereur, "Anointing," in Peter E. Fink, *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 49; cf. Joseph L. Cunningham, "Anointing," in Joseph A. Komonchak, *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Bengaluru: Theological Publications in India, 2019):904-905.

[211] James L. Empereur (1990): 49; Joseph L. Cunningham (2019), 905.

[212] Cf. Augus Bowie, "Oil in Ancient Greece and Rome", in Dudley, Martin and Rowel, Geoffrey, *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1993): 28-31; Charles W. Gusmer, *And You Visited Me: Sacramental Ministry to the Sick and the Dying* (New York: Peublo Publishing Company, 1984), 7.

[213] Cf. Augus Bowie (1993): 28-31; Charles W. Gusmer1(984), 7.

or someone basing on how see or observes.[214] It can be positive or negative. Positively, the Oil of the Sick is considered to be a symbol of healing of the soul, comfort and presence of Christ. Others see it as a symbol of blessing of the sick and consecration. For others, it is a symbol of hope, restoration of physical and spiritual health.[215] However, several instances reveal that the Oil of the Sick is perceived negatively. The negative perception is manifested in the *moriendo* mentality, minimalistic and validistic use of the oil some priests and/or ministers, and perception that olive oil is too expensive to afford.

2.3.1 *Moriendo* Mentality

The term *moriendo* is derived from the Latin word "*mortuor*" (to die).[216] The gerundive of the word is *moriendus* (dying). The *moriendo* mentality is the attitude that the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and the Oil of the Sick are for those who are going to die. It is assumed that whoever is anointed with the Oil of the Sick is soon going to die. This connect of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick with imminent death makes many Catholics hesitant to receive the Sacrament. The connection between the two is very much rooted in the mind of many Catholics in the Diocese. When they hear a priest is going to anoint a person, they think that the individual being anointed with oil has reached his or her end. Many priests are associated with "finishing the sick person with their oil."[217] Fed by *moriendo* mentality, Oil of the Sick is perceived to be *mortifer*. *Mortifer* implies that it is seen as an element that is

[214] Cf. "Perception English meaning", in *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved from https://www.dictionary.cambridge>dictionary>oil, (accessed 29/10/2025).
[215] Fred Drandua Candia (Respondent, Ediofe Parish, 23/12/2024); Constantine Avaga, (Respondent, Lodonga Parish, 11/09/2025); Innocent Drile Akile, (Respondent, Ediofe Parish. 27/12/2024); Jimmy Apangu, (Respondent, Yumbe Parish, 15/09/2025).
[216] Peter G. W. Glare, ed., *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1120.
[217] Romano Dada, (Respondent, Ombaci Parish, 16/06/2025).

dangerous, fatal, destructive, and bringing death to whoever gets anointed with it.[218] Yet oil is supposed to be an element that preserves life, strength and energy.

The *moriendo* mentality is deeply embedded in long history of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Rinaldo Ronzani states that: "for many centuries, anointing of the sick, known as *Extreme unction* (or the Last Rites), was celebrated only for the dying, and even in some cases on the dead as long as the body was still 'warm.'"[219] This made many Christians to perceive that the Sacrament was only for those have reached the end of their earthly life. Even abuses crept in from the earliest time, as Charles Gusmer observes:

> From the early abuses of attempting to communicate the dead to the medieval postponement of anointing until the unconscious Christian was no longer capable of sinning, tradition of the sacramental ministry to the sick has been particularly vulnerable to popular misunderstandings, at time verging on the magical.[220]

Such abuses of anointing the dead were not reported in Arua Diocese during the study. The *moriendo* mentality was enshrined in the definition of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Christopher Mallia observes that the Sacrament was defined as: "a special help given to a person who is sick or about to die."[221] It was meant to help the believers to pass from earthly life to eternal life.

Some respondents held the early missionaries into the Lugbaraland responsible for such propagating the *moriendo* mentality. Fr. Peter Debo asserted that: "this was the mentality with which the missionaries introduced the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick."[222] He called it the "old missionary catechesis"[223] Among the Lugbara, especially, the Anointing of the Sick was

[218] Cf. "*Latin definitions from mortifer, mortifera, mortiferum*," in Latin Dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.latin-disctionary.net/definitioin/27289/, (accessed 19/11/2025).
[219] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 25.
[220] Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 176.
[221] Christopher Mallia (2000), 7.
[222] Peter Debo, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 20/06/2025.
[223] Peter Debo, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 20/06/2025

known by the name "*estirimasio*," and defined as "sacrament which prepared for people to die."[224] The mentality was incultated into through the catechism that was given to the people.

The local catechism used from 1970s further propounded the "*moriendo*" mentality.[225] . The catechism did, however, encourage, the Christians not wait when the sick Christian was the point of death. It exhorted them to call the priest earlier.[226] Fr. Simon Obatu lamented that: "such exhortation not was not always heeded to, as people continued to delay to call the priest. So, they wait for the person to become unconscious before calling a priest."[227] In that case, many people consider that a minimal application of the oil would be valid enough to prepare a person for the end of his or her earthly life.

2.3.2 Liturgical Minimalism

Liturgical minimalism is an attitude that the bare essentials required for the validity in the celebration of Sacraments are enough. [228] For the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick, the bare essential would be the anointing with the oil, without due preparation, adaptation to the situations and circumstances, and accompaniment after the celebration. Such an attitude does not promote and encourage efforts for participation and active involvement of the sick person, and those present.

In the liturgical praxis of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, the priests follow the rite. When it comes to the application of the oil on the recipients, some ministers are seen to use it minimally, that is, slight touch of the person with oil. Fr. Felix

[224] James Fortunate Eria, *Interviewed*, Bethany Centre, 27/07/2025; Catholic Action, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish 29/07/2025.

[225] The book of the catechism, "*Odu'ko Möke Engapi Yesu Kristo Adri Edriri ma Mva tiari*" (translated as: The Good News from the mouth of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God) in *Lugbarati* was adapted from an edition produced in 1963 by the Department of Education and Catechesis of the South African Bishops' Conference. Cf. Arua Diocese, *Odu'ko Möke Engapi Yesu Kristo Adri Edriri ma Mva tiara* (Kisubi: Marianum Press, 1970), 284.

[226] Cf. Arua Diocese (1970), 284.

[227] Simon Obatu, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 08/08/2025.

[228] Patrick C. Chibuko, *Liturgical Spirituality and Inculturation: Celebrating Easter Triduum in Africa* (Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publications-CUEA Press, 2015), 6.

Epima expressed that: “They [ministers] do not understand that the oil is to be smeared. They just touch the sick or put a few drops. Yet after anointing, people try to rub the oil on their body parts expressing that they need more of it.”[229] Some ministers are so stuck and strict to emphasizing the validity of the sacrament, that is, as long as the oil is put on the sick person while saying the words, it is enough. However, some sick people believe that the bigger the quantity of oil they are anointed with, the quicker the recover.[230] When the priest, appears with a small amount of the oil, only to touch, the Christians loose zeal and interest and faith in the power of the Sacrament.[231] Closely related to the minimalistic and validistic tendencies is the perceived high expense of the olive oil, that is used in the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick.

2.3.3 High Expense of the Olive Oil

It is generally perceived that olive oil is expensive. Those responsible for the procurement of the oils to be blessed get little quantities. Very little quantity of oil is taken to the parishes after blessing. The high cost of procuring olive oils may be a global phenomenon or at least affecting many countries in Africa south of Sahara.[232] In view of such a perception, local oils other than the olive oil are procured from the local shops and traders and prepared for blessing during Chrism Mass. It cannot be ascertained if these are plant oils or mineral oils.

[229] Felix Epima, *Interviewed,* Christus Centre, 30/05/2025.
[230] Binze Small Christian Community, *Interviewed*, Oluko Parish, 06/08/2025.
[231] Cf. James Edema, *Interviewed*, Christus Centre, 28/07/2025.
[232] Those countries that are not olive producing have had to bear the cost of exporting olive oil, even at the risk of adulterated or fake olive oil. In 2023, Cable News Network (CNN), an American news television reported that price of olive oil was set to increase and even adulterated one could be in the market due to the works of criminal gangs: “Throughout the centuries the olive branch has come to symbolize peace and prosperity, and pungent extra virgin and virgin olive oils are high-value global exports. Valued at $22.3 billion in 2022, the olive oil market is expected to increase exponentially over the next decade. But behind the most popular extra virgin olive oils in the world - produced in Italy, Spain and Greece - are equally lucrative criminal enterprises cashing in on the gold rush by selling fake liquid gold that uses sunflower, canola or even lamp oil to create a product that can retail for up to $30 a litre in the United States. Barbie Latza Nadeau, “Extra Virgin Oil is getting very expensive, and it might not even be real” (December 21, 2023). Retrieved from https://www.edition.cnn.com/travel/olive-oil-fake-crime-expensive, (accessed 05/11/2025).

However, from the office that is charged with the procurement of the oil (Pastoral Coordinator's Office), they are called "*anyu odu*" (sesame oil or simsim oil), purchased from the market within Arua City centre.[233] "*Anyu odu"* is technically sesame oil, but the term is now used to refer to cooking oil. The oil was observed that oils were clotting.[234] People get discouraged from using them in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

Some priests insist that the source of the Oil of the Sick should remain mysterious and expensive.[235] Some faithful in ability to afford it. When asked about whether they know about where the oil for anointing the sick comes from, some respondents expressed that: "it is mysterious oil from the bishop got by the priests. Only him and priests can afford it."[236] There are lay faithful who have become aware of the benefits of olive oil. They are able to afford the oil, and use it for health and cosmetic purposes. They state the olive oil moisturizes, softens and protects the sick the skin, softens the skin, and protects the skin from oxidative stress.[237] People buy olive oil from the supermarkets. Some of the respondents did reveal that they go to buy it and take it to be blessed, and use it for smearing themselves.[238] Once blessed, they claim that they already have anointing olive oil, which they even use when they feel sick.[239] Perhaps this is the kind of healing they crave for. The "mysterization" of oil of the sick and the available knowledge that the populace is getting about the olive oil is plays negatively on the reception of the sacrament. People prefer the use of olive oil outside the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

The proliferation of bottles of olive oil on the shelves of supermarkets in the major towns within Arua Diocese imply that it is affordable. As long as those responsible for

[233] Cf. Catherine Anderu, *Interviewed*, Christus Centre, 28/07/2025.
[234] Cf. Grace Eleku, *Interviewed*, Christus Centre, 28/07/2025; Agnes Akullu, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish 29/07/2025.
[235] cf. Nazareno Ajioni, *Interviewed*, Pokea Parish, 28/07/2025.
[236] Catholic Action Members, *Interviewed*, Mingoro Parish, 24/12/2025; cf. Nazareno Ajioni, *Interviewed*, Pokea Parish, 28/07/2025; Gilbert Obira, *Interviewed*, Etele Parish, 29/07/2025.
[237] Cf. Agnes Akulu, *Interviewed*, Ediofe, Parish 29/07/2025.
[238] Alejo Stella (Respondent, Yumbe Parish, 23/03/2025).
[239] Cf. James Fortunate Eria, *Interviewed*, Bethany Centre, 27/07/2025

procurement perceive that it is expensive, they will continue to buy little quantities, hence aggravating minimalistic and validistic tendencies. The reception is further reduced when it is noticed that procured and blessed oil is not accorded proper and safe custody.

2.4 Challenge of the Custody of the Oil of the Sick

This section discusses the challenge related to the custody of the Oil of the Sick. The challenge is manifested in excessive utilization of plastic bottles and indecent storage places.

2.4.1 Utilization of Plastic Bottles

The term "plastic bottles" is used to refer to narrow-necked containers made of synthetic or semi-synthetic materials. They are manufactured through the process of polymerization. Polymerization is a chemical and industrial process in which small molecules combine to make a large chain or units of molecules called polymers.[240]

It was observed that in many parishes, the sacred oils (Sacred Chrism, Oil of Catechumens and Oil of the Sick) are mostly stored in plastic containers. Such containers are called by the local people as "*korokoroa*" (cheap, light and noisy containers).[241] The Oil of the Sick is also carried for anointing the sick in the plastic bottles. After the Chrism Mass, some people fetch the oils in plastic bottles after emptying them of their original contents.[242] Such contents might have been water, alcoholic or carbonated drinks (like V & A, Uganda waragi,

[240] The most common polymers are polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polyethylene of various densities (PE: LDPE, LLDPE, HDPE), polypropylene (PP), polystyrene (PS), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), acrylonitrile butadiene styrene (ABS), polylactic acid (PLA), polyamides (PA), polycarbonate (PC), and polyurethanes (PU). Cf. Fernando J. Gomez and Simonetta Rima, "Setting the Facts Straight on Plastics," in *World Economic Forum*, October 4, 2019. Retrieved from https://www.weforum.org.stories2019/10...plastics., (accessed 21/08/2025).

[241] Luciano Victor Aria, Interview, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025.

[242] This was observed by the researcher for over ten years each time he participated in the Chrism Mass at the Diocese of Arua. After the celebration of the Mass, priests are told to go and get the oils at Christus Centre. Some priests literally empty the water contained in the bottles, and use the bottles to go and fetch the holy oils to be taken to their parishes or institutions.

minute maid and soda), or syrup obtained from drug shops or clinics. This shows the casuality with which the Oil of the Sick is treated.

Giving second-hand usage to the bottles for storing the Oil of the Sick also leads to carelessness and cheapening of the oil. The oil is considered like any other liquid that can be stored in "*korokoroa*." It is common also to see other liquids for domestic and medicinal use being kept in containers made of plastics. Sometimes juice and local oils (for example shea oil) are packaged in the plastic bottles. They are displayed for sale at road sides and streets in some town and trading centers in the Diocese. The bottles are not specially-made for this purpose, but they are "thrown-aways." The faithful do not see the oil as sacred and an instrument through which healing and restoration is conferred, but as an ordinary liquid.

There are plastic containers that have been branded specifically for storing oils, and also holy water. These are sold in many church canteens and sacramental shops. These might also be found in places outside Arua Diocese. The plastic made-containers are preferred for the packaging of oils because they are seen more durable. Gilbert Moyen Massa and Vasiliki-Maria Archodoulaki observe that they are attractive because of their "lightweight, elasticity and cheapness."[243] The cheapness of the plastic bottles and their ubiquity has made them to be seen with disdain, oils as their contents cheap and too ordinary. Many respondents complained that the practice of keeping the oil of the sick in plastic bottles is disgusting and not befitting for the storage of the sacramentals.[244]

Some priests and the parishes have the opportunities for acquiring oil stocks. Oil stocks are metal cylinders used for storing of the oils. They are considered as traditional containers for keeping and carrying the holy oils. In their common form the oil stocks consist of three-in-one, holding the Chrism, Oil of Catechumen and Oil of the Sick. They also appear in other

[243] Gilbert Moyen Massa and Vasiliki-Maria Archodoulaki, "An Imported Environment Crisis: Plastic Mismanagement in Africa," in *Sustainability* 16 (2) 672 (2024): 2. Retrieved from https://www.mdpi.com/jouural/sustainablitity, (accessed 23/08/2025).
[244] Cf. Luciano Victor Aria, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025.

shapes that are convenient for priests to carry. However, these oil stocks are considered to be expensive by some people, hence resorting to plastics.

The challenge of excessive plasticization is also to be seen in the context of the wider problem of environmental pollution. The indiscriminate disposal of plastic bottles and other disposable items (like polythene bags, locally known as "*kaveera"*) has made many homesteads and church premises untidy. The items are made of non-biodegradable materials which are hazardous. Daniel Ayisi Nyarko argues that:

> The sachets and empty bottles are usually made from non-biodegradable synthetic polyethylene (polythene), which does not decay, they can stay in the soil for more than 100 years. When they are burnt too, they produce oxides of carbon, nitrogen and sulphur which are poisonous to human health and the soil. A study by the European Union revealed that plastic waste contributes to the death of about one million sea birds and 100,000 marine mammals and large number of birds. It is emphasized that plastics are modern conveniences for carrying goods; they are responsible for the environmental and agricultural land degradation that has incidentally used up precious resources of the earth, in particular, petroleum. Excessive plastic accumulation in the soil causes problems such as blocking water penetration into the soil, contamination of ground water, poor soil aeration.[245]

The hazardous impart of the biodegradability is experienced by the human beings, the soil, birds and aquatic animals. To use the plastic and polythene bags for the storage of the sacred oils is self-defeating to the effort of the Church in the environmental care and protection. The danger to environment is even pronounced when the oils in their containers are kept in indecent locations.

2.5.2 Indecent Storage Locations

The places or locations for keeping the oils is another challenge related to the custody of sacred oils in Arua Diocese. The study found out that in many parishes, the oils are kept in cardboards located in the sacristy. They are placed together with other items for liturgical

[245] Daniel Ayisi Nyarko, "Impact of Sachet Water and Plastic Bottle Waste on Agricultural Land in the Ada East District of Ghana," in *Research Journal of Agriculture* 1(3) (2026): 4. Retrieve from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315135697, (accessed 05/11/2025).

celebrations. In some parishes, the oils are kept in the living rooms at the presbyteries. In some presbyteries, sacred oils are kept in a separate corner. While in others, sacred oils are kept together with items like television accessions (screen, remote, decoder) and vehicle keys. Other priests keep them in their mass kits which may be kept in their own rooms. Due to irregular dump dusting in some storage locations, the oils and their containers were observed to be dirty and dusty.[246]

In the architectural designs of many parish churches in the Diocese, there are no ambries or repositories for the sacred oils. An ambry is a traditionally known place for keeping the sacred oils within the church building.[247] The oils are brought to be stored there after blessing. Derived from the Latin "*armarium,"* ambry is: "a niche, usually in a wall with or without a door for storing or showing books, clothes, food, jewelry, money, precious objects, small statues, vessels." [248] Using the ambries for keeping sacred oils give prominence to both the oils and the ambries. It is only in the Ediofe Cathedral that an ambry is seen, though it is incomplete and unfurnished. A considerable ignorance about the ambry is also noted. Many people, including priests wonder what "those holes" on wall behind the altar are for.[249]

Some priests do allow the oils to be kept in the outstations, which are specially called "Eucharistic Centers." The "Eucharistic Centers" have tabernacles for the Blessed Sacrament. The bishop has granted the faculty for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament in those outstations. However, there is no evidence of such a faculty for keeping holy oils in those stations. The outstations are entrusted to extra-ordinary ministers of Eucharist who have also been given the faculty to distribute Holy Communion. Oli Parish is an example where holy oils are kept in the outstations. The oils are kept in the three outstations of the Parish. However, the

[246] Cf. Gilbert Orodriyio, *Interviewed*, Lima Parish, 27/07/2025.
[247] Cf. Dennis MacNally, "Oils, Sacred. Housing for," in Peter E. Fink, (ed.), *The Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 896.
[248] The Catholic University of America, "Ambry," in *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Washington: Gale Group Inc., 2002), 347.
[249] Altar Servers, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 28/07/2025.

way of keeping sacred oils in those outstations is not checked and monitored. Kept in outstations, the oil of the sick stands in competition with multiple oils used by in some churches, groups and religions.

2.5 Use of Oils in Different Church Groups and African Traditional Religion

This section expounds on the challenge caused by the use of oils in certain groups, churches and religions to the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. One of the groups identified in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. Their use of oil is explained. The use of oils in the Pentecostal churches is also discussed. In the last sub-section, the challenges caused by use of oils in African Traditional Religion are explained.

2.5.1 Use of Oils in Charismatic Renewal Healing Services

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) is one of the devotional and apostolic movements that are vibrant in Arua Diocese. In the "Uganda Catholic Charismatic Handbook" the movement is defined as: "an ecclesial movement of spiritual renewal and transformation in the Catholic Church that emphasizes the need for each one to make a personal commitment to Christ as Lord and Saviour and to be empowered by the Holy Spirit for the glory of God, the Father."[250] It is a world-wide movement which has been in existence for close to sixty years.

2.5.1.1 Origin of Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Most scholars, though with differing description of the details, fix the historical origin of the CCR at the Duquesne University (in United States of America) event in February 1967. Among these scholars are Clement Mawaja,[251] John Lukwata, John Bosco Asiimwe and René

[250] Uganda Episcopal Conference, *Uganda Catholic Charismatic Handbook* (Kampala: 2011), 6.

[251] Clement Majawa examines the foundational and historical sources of the Charismatic Movement. He sees the foundational sources in the meaning of the word "charismatic." He states that: "the word charismatic refers to

Laurentin. Lukwata states that the movement "was founded by a group of graduates"[252] at the mentioned university. Asiimwe gives direct reference to the year, and states the nature of the event as a spiritual retreat. He states that: "the Charismatic Renewal was introduced into the Catholic Church in February, 1967, by students who were attending a students' retreat at Duquesne University in Pittsburg, United States of America."[253] The description of René Laurentin is closest to the Duquesne event.

Laurentin reveals that the movement was initially called the "Catholic Pentecostal Movement." He states that: "the Catholic Pentecostal movement, now to be found in almost a hundred, came to existence at the beginning of 1967, at Duquesne University, a Pittsburgh foundation of the Holy Ghost Fathers."[254] Edward O'Connor confirms the description given by Laurentin. O'Connor notes that: "early in 1967, stories about newly formed 'Catholic Pentecostal prayer meeting' began to appear in the American newspapers. Even before the novelty of the thing had worn off, the "Catholic Pentecostal Movement' was firmly entranced

the gifts of the holy spirit called charism. It designates the Christian community which is leased and guided by the activities of the Holy spirit." The historical source is found in the Pentecost event (Act 2:1-14). After this key event, two other events in the late 19th century and mid-20th century prepared the ground for the inauguration of the movement. These events are: the promulgation of the encyclical letter on the Holy Spirit by Pope Leo XIII, and the Second Vatican Council. In the encyclical, the Pope regretted the fact that the Holy Spirit was little known, appreciated and experienced consciously. He therefore summoned the people to renew their devotion to the Holy Spirit, calling the universal Catholic Church to cultivate renewed interest, transformed spirituality and deep interest in the Holy Spirit.). In preparation for the Council, Pope John XXIII suggested that Christians should read Acts 2:1-14, and relive the time when the apostles were in the upper room preparing to receive the Holy Spirit on the Pentecost. In preparation for the Second Vatican Council, the Pope opened doors and windows of the church so that "fresh pneumatic air would blow in." cf. Clement C.A. Majawa, *The Holy Spirit and Charismatic Renewal in Africa and Beyond* (Nairobi: Creation Enterprises, 2007), 214-217, 220.

[252] John Lukwata (2011), 45

[253] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 111.

[254] René Laurentin, *Catholic Pentecostalism* (Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1974), 11.

and rapidly spreading."[255] These descriptions link the movement to the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, as on Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:1-13).[256]

The appellation "Charismatic" is attributed to Pope Paul VI (1962-1978). He applied the term "charismatic" when addressing the participants of the Third International Congress in Rome on 19th of May 1975.[257] The term is derived from the Greek word *charisma* which refers to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The circumstances surrounding the nomenclature were: "the spectacular reappearance of the gifts of tongues, prophecy, interpretation, healing."[258] From Duquesne, the movement spread to other states in USA, and around the world.

In Uganda, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal was introduced in 1973 by Fr. Roger LaBonte (Missionaries of Africa) in Mbarara Diocese and in the same year in Masaka Diocese

[255] The detailed descriptions of prayer meetings preceding the Duquesne event are given by Laurentin. He narrates that a series prayer meetings were spread over a month from January 6 to February, 18-19, 1967. On January 6, a meeting took place between catholic laymen and W. Lewis, an Episcopalian Priest to discuss matters pertaining to the experience of the Holy Spirit. Of the Catholic lay men were Ralph Keifer, his wife, Patrick Bursery and William Storey. On January 13, prayer meeting took place in which they discussed matters on the baptism of the Holy Spirit.[255] The climactic event was on February 18-19 when: "about thirty students and professors gathered for a weekend at Duquesne University. On Saturday evening, at the time set aside for a birthday party celebration, the rhythm of things suddenly speeded up. Paul Grey and Maryanne Springle, an engaged couple, heard about baptism in the Holy Spirit and now asked Ralph Keifer to pray with them that they might receive it. The little group went upstairs to do their praying; no one else was aware of what was going on. Paul and Maryanne experienced the same conversation and thanked God.' From the description of Laurentin, first members of the movement are identified: Ralph Keifer, his wife, Patrick Bourgeois and William Storey. The movement therefore born within the context of prayer, where the experience of "baptism in the Holy Spirit" was foundational.

The descriptions by both Laurentin and O'Connor indicate that the much talked-about event was not purely a Catholic event, involving only graduate students. It was rather a group of Catholics, Lutherans, Episcopalians, students and professors who were brought together by the desire to experience "baptism in the Holy Spirit", in a Catholic establishment. They also wanted to relive the experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as at the Pentecost two thousand and twenty-five years ago (Acts 2:1-14). The appellation "Charismatic Renewal" would be a post-reflective addition to the moment. Cf. René Laurentin (1974), 13; Edward O'Connor, *Pope Paul and the Spirit: Charisms and Church Renewal in the Teaching of Paul VI* (Indiana: Ave Maria Press, 1978), 18; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 113;

[256] Asiimwe also links origin global Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement to two separate events of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in America and Rome. These events happened in 1900. In America, a group of devoted people in a Bible school founded by Charles Parham, a Methodist minister, gathered to pray. They laid hands on one Agnes Ozman. As they prayed, she manifested gifts of tongues, and other members of the group also experienced other gifts of the Sprit the same day. At the same time, on 31st December, 1900, Pope Leo XIII prayed for the gift of the Holy Spirit and renewal. Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 111-113.

[257] Cf. René Laurentin (1974), 23-24; *Discours du Pape Paul VI aux Participants au Iiième Congrès International du Renouveau Charismatique Catholique* (19 Mai1975). Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/fr/speeches/1975/documents/hf_p-vi_spe_19750519_rinnovamento-carismatico.html, (accessed 01/06/2026).

[258] Edward O'Connor (1978), 18.

by Fr. Joseph Kamya (Missionaries of Africa).[259] By 2005, the movement had spread to most of the dioceses in Uganda. In Arua Diocese, the movement was introduced in 2000 by Fr. John Baptist Drabo, a priest of Arua Diocese. It has its headquarters at Bethany Centre. The center hosts the offices and official events of the movement.[260]

In Arua Diocese, the movement organizes several activities. Some of the activities include: annual New Dawn conferences, popular missions, prayer meetings, counselling, healing and deliverance sessions. Counselling, healing and deliverance prayers attract many people. Some people go for those prayers expecting to be healed instantly. Others expect, immediate answers and solutions to their problems.[261] Positively, the sessions and prayers conducted by the Movement and the members have led to revival of faith, conversions and devotional practices. However, many pastoral agents, especially priests, have been at odds with some of the members due to the use of oils in the healing practices.

2.5.1.2 Identity of the Oils used in CCR Healing Services

Some members in the CCR use oils in their healing services. It is a stealthy and clandestine practice, even carried out by some leaders of the movement. They buy the oils and also stealthily present them for blessing, and then anoint people with them.[262] Some of leaders to sick people with those oils.[263] The oils were seen on sale in some canteens and on the streets of urban centre within Arua Diocese, for example, at Bethany Centre. Sometimes they are sold

[259] Cf. Uganda Episcopal Conference (2011), 4.
[260] Cf. Arua Diocese, *Bethany CCR Centre*. Retrieved from https://www.dioceseofarua.org/institutions.html, (accessed 31/10/2025).
[261] Cf. John Lukwata (2011), 44.
[262] Whereas oil was used stealthily, blessed water and blessed salt are used openly during the healing prayers and even some members take them home. Holy water is blessed and sprinkled over the people for cleansing. It is given to the sick people to use by adding a drop to their batch, to drink. They can also sprinkle it in their homestead. Blessed salt is mixed with holy water. Water mixed with salt is considered to be powerful in strengthening the sick, especially those who are believed to be possessed. Salt is also spread or scattered in the house of the sick person; it can also be added to food, and sometimes the patient is told to chew it in the mouth. Sometimes, people bring the salt to be blessed at the Churches.
[263] Cf. James Eria Fortunate, *Interviewed*, Bethany Centre, 27/07/2025.

among the articles of faith during occasions that gather people together for prayer. Such occasions include New Dawn Conference and Popular Missions. The oils are labeled as "anointing oils." The common "anointing oils" observed during the study are labeled as: St. "Padre Pio Oil", "St. Michael Oil", "St. Gabriel Oil", and "Oil of St. Philomena."[264]

i) St. Padre Pio Oil

St. Padre Pio Oil" is said to contain a relic of St. Padre Pio (born: 1887- died: 1968). The oil is used by those who believe in invoking "God's loving tender mercy for the sick and to affirm communion with the saints."[265] The oil is sold at the price of Ugandan shilling 20,000 (approximately $ 9 US dollars). Whereas the brand seen in Arua Diocese is labeled "St. Padre Pio Oil," there are numerous brands with appellations related to the Saint. Among such brands are "Holy Oil-Holy Father Pio", "Devotional Holy Oil-St. Pio", "St. Padre Pio Healing Oil", "St. Pio Holy Oil", "Padre Pio Oil."[266]

ii) St. Michael Oil

"St. Michael Oil" was seen being sold in the premises of Bethany Center. The oil costs Uganda Shillings 20,000 (approximately $ 9 US dollars). The oil is also being advertised on many internet sites. A website advertising the oil of St. Michael stats that:

> St. Michael oil is a sacred blessed oil used for protection, strength and victory over obstacles. Known as powerful archangel and divine warrior, St. Michael is called upon

[264] Attributing oils to saints is an old practice in the Church in many parts of the world. The oils are believed to come from the relics or the tombs of the saints. Sometimes the oils are drawn from the lamps burning at the shrines of the saints. The devotees of those particular saints believe that the oils have curatives and healing powers. Among the famous oils are: "Walburga's Oil" which is attributed to a 9th century St. Walburga in Bavaria, Germany; "St. Nichola's Oil" drawn from the tomb of St. Nichola; "Oil of St. Charbel", a Lebanese saint. There are several of those oils, which are distributed to the devotees of respective saints in different parts of the world. Cf. Philip Kosloski, "These Miraculous Oils Continue to bring healing," in *Aleteia* (26/03/2017). Retrieved from http://www.aleteia.org/2017/03/26/, (accessed 08/07/2026).

[265] *Padre Pio Oil*. Retrieved from https://www.padrepio.us>padre>pio>blessing, (accessed 30/10/2025).

[266] Cf. *Bottled St. Pio Holy Oil*. Retrieved from https://www.padrepio.org>product>holyoil, (accessed 01/12/2025); *St. Padre Pio Healing Saint Devotional Oil*. Retrieved from https://thefransicanstore.org>product>st.padrepio-oil, (accessed 01/12/2025); *Padre Pio Oil*. Retrieved from https://www.osmm.org>store>padre-pio-oil, (accessed 01/12/2025).

> to shield against negativity, defend against spiritual attacks, and provide courage in times of struggles. Where you seek protection from harm. Guidance through challenges, or the strength to overcome adversity, this oil aligns your energy with his mighty presence.[267]

The directions stated for the use of "St. Michael Oil" emphasize its protective power and St. Michael's unwavering defense for Christians at all times. For example, people are told to use the oil in spiritual rituals, for anointing candles, their paths and doors, personal belongings, their necks, and other body parts.[268] Such descriptions indicate that anointing and the oils have become commodities to be marketed and people are induced to buy them.

iii) St. Gabriel Oil

Another oil sold in the canteens is called "St. Gabriel Oil." This oil is specifically crafted to invoke the protection, courage and strength of St. Gabriel.[269] The oil is sold at Ugandan shillings 50,000 (approximately $ 20 US dollars).

iv) Oil of St. Philomena

The Oil of St. Philomena was found to be in possession of some respondents. The could have bought it from itinerant business people who deal in trading sacramentals. They use it when they feel pain in any part of their body. Others claim that they use it to prevent attack from enemies.[270]

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[267] *Saint Michael (San Miguel) Oil*. Retrieved from http://originalbotanical.com/st.michael.magical-oi?srsltd:..., (accessed 06/11/2025).
[268] *Saint Michael (San Miguel) Oil*. Retrieved from http://originalbotanical.com/st.michael.magical-oi?srsltd:..., (accessed 06/11/2025).
[269] *Archangel Gabriel Anointing Oil* (2026). Retrieved from https://carmelitegiftshop.org/anointing-oil-archangel-gabriel/, (accessed 01/06/2026).
[270] Valentino Obida, *Interviewed*, Logiri, 02/01/2026.

2.5.1.3 Challenges Posed by Oils in Charismatic Healing Services

One major challenge posed by the use of oils in the CCR healing services is indiscriminate and clandestine anointing. Whoever is feeling slight aches or pains is called upon to get anointed with "anointing oil." Whether such anointing is sacramental or devotional is confusing to the Christians. Josaphat Ugo Umeoguego observed that some people have been creative enough to innovate "non-sacramental anointing, and they believe that not only the ordained ministers but also non-ordained faithful can administer it."[271] Other prefer to use the expression: "devotional anointing." In the devotional anointing, people asked to be anointed even when they are not sick. Some people ask to be anointed for the slightest bodily ailments or psychic disturbance. Others seek to be anointed when they are embarking of on a journey or a difficult task, for example, final examinations in a school.[272] Since the oils are also sold in supermarkets, some people can buy the oil and anoint themselves.

Connected to the indiscriminate anointing is the challenge of the minister of anointing. Most of the Christians acknowledge that the minister of Anoint of the Sick is a priest. However, with the proliferation of oils in the hands of unordained persons, a confusion is created about the proper minister for anointing. Fr. James Eria Fortunate laments that: "some of them openly discourage the sick to go and receive anointing from the priest."[273] Sometimes, they even give oils to the sick to anoint themselves.

Closely related to the challenge of the minister and indiscriminate anointing is the increasing drive for healing masses vis-à-vis Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The expression "healing masses" is used for Eucharistic celebrations where greater emphasis is placed in receiving physical, spiritual and emotional healing through the "power of God in the

[271] Josaphat Ugo Umeoguego, "Anointing in the Catholic Church: Curbing Unorthodox Practices," in *Ministerium- A Journal of Contextual Theology* Volume 10 (December 2024): 78.
[272] In November 2024, during Mass intended for the blessing of the Primary Seven pupils of Mingoro Primary School in preparation for Primary Leaving Examinations, the main celebrant anointed the candidates with oil. The type of the oil could not be established.
[273] James Eria Fortunate, *Interviewed*, Bethany Centre, 27/07/2025.

Holy Spirit."[274] The celebration follows the order laid down in the Roman Missal. No specific Missal or prayer was noted. The Mass is always prolonged with commentaries on forgiveness, healing and deliverance throughout the four parts of the Mass.[275] A prolonged healing prayer sessions take places after the post-Communion prayer. In many assemblies, this prolonged prayer is also taken to be moment of the coming of the holy Spirit. During this moment the members of healing and deliverance ministry take active part by laying hands on people who are considered to manifest possessions by evil spirits.[276] The sacramental Anointing of the Sick is shunned because those who are laid hands upon believe that they get healed. They view the Sacrament to be for those who are going to die; and the healing Masses for those who want to get healed and live. Others go for the healing services conducted by some individuals. Some go to the services of Pentecostal movement.

2.5.2 Oil Usage in the Pentecostal Movements

The term "Pentecostal Movements" is used to describe all non-Catholic Christian-affiliated groups that emphasize the experience and manifestation of the Holy Spirit as on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. These groups include the classical Pentecostals,[277]

[274] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 114.

[275] The four parts of Mass are the Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Concluding Rites. During the "healing mass", songs of praise are sung with lots of dancing at the beginning. In the introductory Rites, there is often a prolonged introduction with reference to forgiveness and healing. In the Liturgy of the Word, the healing power of the Word of God is stressed. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the healing aspect of receiving the Eucharist is also stressed. Such a structure of the "healing masses" is not only observed in Arua Diocese, but in many other parts of the world particularly Africa. Asiimwe describes a similar of "healing masses" in Witbank Diocese, South Africa. It has five parts: Invocation of saints and ancestors, the Penitential Rite in which the assembly focuses on the healing power of God's mercy, the Word of God, the Eucharist, and the Laying on of Hands. During the laying on of hands, the main celebrant anoints the individuals who want receive healing with oil. Cf. *The Roman Missal*, renewed by the Decree of the Most Holy Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican promulgated by Authority of Pope Paul VI and revised at the Direction of Pope John Paul II English Translation according to the Third Typical Edition (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2011), nos.1-146; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 114-115; *General Instruction to the Roman Missal* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2011), nos. 46-90. Hereafter cited as *GIRM*.

[276] Cf. John Bridget Asikuru, *Interviewed*, Arua Christ the King Parish, 06/08/2025.

[277] Classical Pentecostals trace their founding in 1900 in Topeka, Kansas City, by Charles Fox Parman (born: 1873- died 1929), and American evangelist and faith healer. Cf. Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 10; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 92-93.

Evangelicals, born-agains, Baptists and revivalists. The common element that these groups stress is "baptism in the Holy Spirit." [278] The "baptism in the Holy Spirit" is manifested by several signs which are considered to be gifts of the Holy Spirit. Among these are: speaking in tongues, divine healing, exorcism, preaching of the word of God and miracles of various kinds.[279] The worship services of these groups also display several common features. Among these are: congregational participation in singing and dancing, simultaneous praying, members being given opportunities to pray simultaneously and exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit, expletive responses to preacher's (like, "Amen", "Halleluya", "The Lord is good"), giving of testimonies, *et cetera.*[280] Some of the Pentecostal Churches in Arua include: Onialeku Church, Elim Pentecostal Churches, and Hope Life Ministries.

The use of oil for anointing has become a common feature in the Pentecostal Churches. The commonest oil used in them is olive oil. Its use is geared towards obtaining material favours. Such is the case not only in the Churches in Arua, but also those in major cities like Kampala. The language used to promote the oils is commercial, though spiritual favours are implied in the language. For example, in the Kakande Ministries, olive oil was being sold to raised money for building a church called "Synagogue Church of All Nations" in Kampala city. The language used to promote the use of the oil commercially crafted:

> You may anoint your shop and everything turns new. You can anoint your school and every bondage is broken. You may anoint all your life and since that time favour begins to flow in your life. You may anoint your hand, since that time you begin getting money. You may anoint your feet as the beginning of journeys abroad. No marriage in your family, anoint yourself, something will happen, the yoke will be broken. You dream bad, anoint your head. This anointing is not just blessing; blessing, favours, many things.[281]

[278] Cf. Allan Anderson (2004), 13-14; Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 93.
[279] Cf. Allan Anderson (2004), 13-14; Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 93.
[280] Cf. Allan Anderson (2004), 9.
[281] Kakande Ministries, "How to Get Your Anointing Oil Package", Retrieved from https://youtube.com/watch?v=9_OFqMKxSTm, (accessed 31/10/2025).

Such phrasing indicates that oil is advertised as a business commodity. Its use is highly being commercialized. Since the use of the Oil of the Sick in the Catholic Church is not advertised in such a manner, many people shun it.

According to Josaphat Ugo Umeoguego, this commercialization of "anointing oils" is driven by the desire to pragmatize the concept of anointing, which is also common in the charismatic and Pentecostals circles:

> In the charismatic [and Pentecostal] parlance, the term anointing is used to describe a special encounter regarded as a gained favour from God. In practice the interest is to partake of such a divine favour which has led people to endlessly seek various kinds of anointing oil from those they regard as powerful men and women of God. This attitude has led to two novelties. On the one hand, the people have developed dispositions of seeking for varieties of anointing for varieties of favours; on the other hand, those designated as powerful men and women of God are creating various anointing oils for various favours and marketing them to the people.[282]

Several oils are thus invented to communicate the favour of healing, protection, and other material blessings. They are sold to people who want experience to healing, protection, and blessings.

2.5.3 Use of Oil in African Traditional Religion

In African Traditional Religion, oil is used in various ways. It is used in some initiation rites to smear the bodies of those who are initiated.[283] Among the Lugbara, a local oil called "*kumara"* (shea oil) was used in mortuary rites.[284] Nowadays, perfumed oils purchased from markets are used to smoothen and shine the dead body. Among the Langi people of Uganda, shea oil ("*moo*" in Langi) is used in marriage rites. The elders smear the oil on bride and bridegroom to strengthen them in the establishment of their new family.[285] It is in the area of

[282] Josaphat Ugo Umeoguego (2024): 68-69.
[283] Cf. John Lukwata (2011), 160.
[284] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 52.
[285] The use of oil in marriage rites among the Langi has been incorporated into the Catholic celebration marriage in Lira Diocese, Uganda. In this "Inculturated Rite of Marriage," the hands of the bridegroom are anointed with "*moo*" (shea oil). The anointing symbolizes strengthening of the hands of the bridegroom so that he can feed and defend his family. The neck of the bride is anointed with the same oil, to strengthen her neck so as to

traditional healing that the use oil poses challenges to the Oil of the Sick and the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. In some cases, oil is administered or given as a traditional medicine.

2.5.3.1 Concept of Traditional Healing and Traditional Medicine

The most widely quoted definition of traditional healing is the one by World Health Organization (WHO). WHO defines traditional healing synonymously with traditional medicine as:

> the sum total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illnesses.[286]

The expression "sum total" means that traditional healing encompasses knowledge of the causes and remedies, skills in treatments, and practices. Knowledge of the environment of spirits, plants, and forces that impact of the life of the people is vital in the administration of spiritual healing. The definition also shows that traditional healing is not homogenous. [287] One may talk of European traditional healing, or Chinese traditional healing or African traditional healing. Neither is there homogenous African traditional healing, because there are as many healing practices in Africa as there are tribes or societies.

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carry and bear the burden of the family. Cf. Lira Diocese, *Kwer me Sacramento: Ritual in Lango* (Lira: Lira Diocese Press, 2018), 862.

[286] Earlier in 1976, WHO's Regional Office for Africa Expert Committee had defined traditional medicine "as the sum total of all knowledge and practices, whether explicable or not, used in diagnosing, preventing or eliminating a physical, mental or social disequilibrium and which rely exclusively on past experience and observation handed down from generation to generation, verbally or in writing, and health practices, approaches, knowledge, and beliefs incorporating plant, animal and mineral based, medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercise, applied singular or in combination, to treat, diagnose and prevent illness or maintain wellbeing." World Health Organization, *WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014-2023* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2013): 1. Retrieved from http://www.who.int/medicines/areas/traditional/definitions/en/, (accessed 01/10/2025); Ossy Muganga Julius Kasilo, Charles Wambebe, Jean-Baptiste Nikiema, Juliet Nabyonga-Orem, "Towards universal health coverage: advancing the development and use of traditional medicines in Africa," in *BMJ Global Health* (2019): 1. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/traditional-medicine, (accessed 01/10/2025); World Health Organization, *African Traditional Medicine: African Technical Report Series, No. 1* (Brazzaville: WHO Regional Office for Africa, 1976): 8; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 36-37.

[287] Cf. Maboe G. Mokgobi, "Understanding Traditional African Healing," in *Afr J Phys Health Recreat Dance* 2014 Sep; 20 (Suppl 2): 25.

Traditional healing is indigenous. The practices are handed to the succeeding generation, hence making them traditional. The aim of traditional healing is to attain unity and holistic wellbeing. Traditional healers place key role in traditional healing.

2.5.3.2 Traditional Healers

Traditional healers are the practitioners advocated of traditional healers. According to Maboe G. Mokgobi, the term "traditional healers" is "an umbrella concept that encompasses different types of healers with different types of training and expertise."[288] The different types include: diviners, herbalists, traditional surgeons and birth attendants. The knowledge, skills and practices which they use to provide promote holistic wellbeing are inherited from their elders. They also use materials and substance they have learned through their interaction with the environment.[289]

Traditional healers are known by some characteristics. First characteristic is recognition by the resident community. A traditional healer must be recognized by the community in which he lives as a person who is competent in providing health care by "using vegetable, animal and mineral substances''[290] This competence is further displayed by his or her of applying the skills and methods for preventing, diagnosing and treating sicknesses. This is expected to be in accordance with his social, cultural and religious background and the prevailing circumstance. The second characteristic is awareness of the causes of diseases and societal crises, and their consequences. Traditional healers are expected to provide culturally relevant way of interpreting the causes, timing and consequences of illnesses on an individual and the society.

[288] Cf. Maboe G. Mokgobi, (2014): 25.
[289] Cf. Maboe G. Mokgobi (2014): 25.
[290] World Health Organization, *The Promotion and Development of Traditional Medicine Report of a WHO Meeting, 28 November and 2 December 1977* (Geneva: WHO, 1978), 9; Engela Pretorius, *Traditional Healers* (Bloemfontein: University of the Orange Free State, 1999), 250; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 48-49.

They are to be aware of the power of universe, and express their own power by "sniffing out the sources and causes of sickness of psychological and physical nature."[291]

Among the Lugbara, traditional healers are collectively called "*ojoö*." The term "*ojoö*" includes diviners, herbalists, rain makers and anybody who is thought to be using mysterious means contrary to the common scientific and religious knowledge. Diviners use mediums to provide answers to the crises affecting the people. According to Laurenti Magesa, a diviner is both "a diagnostician" and "a therapeutician." [292] Magesa states that: "a diagnostician, when he gets concerned with spiritual causes of affliction. But also a therapeutician when he treats the physical effects of affliction."[293] Herbalists make use of herbs (grass, plants leaves and roots) to provide treatments to bodily ailments. Sometimes herbalists depend of spiritual interventions to find and prepare appropriate herbs for treating diseases.[294] The competence and awareness of herbalists is also displayed in the way they dispense plant extracts as medicine.[295] Oil is one of the substances that the traditional healers dispense as medicine. In Arua Diocese, the use of oils by the traditional healers has proven to be a challenge to use of Oil of the Sick. The challenge is in the ways and the techniques that the traditional healers use in healing practices

2.5.3.3 Traditional Healers' Use of Oils and Its Challenges

The traditional healers use oils locally made from plants and those extracted from animals.[296] Some of the oils are bought from the markets. Others are bought from the hunters.

[291] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 49
[292] Laurenti Magesa (1997), 212
[293] Laurenti Magesa (1997), 212
[294] Cf. Laurenti Magesa (1997), 212.
[295] Cf. Elizabeth F. Msoka, Sindhu Dwaranpudi, Rebecca Billings, Rebecca J. Stone, Rhodes E. Mwangeli, Autum Bearers, Blandina T. Mubaga and Lily Gutnik, "Role of Traditional Healers along the Cancer Continuum in Sub-Saharan Africa: a Scoping Review," in *Archives of Public Health*, 85: 83 (2025): 2. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1186/513690-025-01512-7, (accessed 11/11/2025).
[296] These oils will be expounded upon in Chapter Three under the title of Oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals.

In the rural areas within the territory of Arua Diocese, people go to be washed with those local oils by the traditional healers.[297] In several cases, those sick people who go to be washed by traditional healers are denied either from receiving Holy Communion or the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

The influx of commercial traditional healers into Arua Diocese, and West Nile as a whole, challenged people's faith in the healing sacraments of the Church. The commercial traditional healers have stationed in the outskirts of the major towns in the region. Their services are advertised on radios and billboards. These commercial traditional healers charge exorbitant fees for their services. Some of them sell the oils expensively to the people to anoint themselves.[298] Apart from challenging the faith of the Christians in the healing sacraments of the Church, the commercial traditional healers divert people's attention from seeking proper from the biomedical services.[299] Some of them have accused of intoxicating and molesting those who visit them for healing.[300]

The way the traditional healers conduct their healing sessions also draw people away from the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. In the first place, they always show that they are available to the sick person.[301] They give personal attention to healing and their patients. In the second place, they give assurance of quick healing. The sick people go to them because of the desire to be healed faster or quickly. The traditional healers, having noted that desire, assure the patients fast healing and immediate results.[302] They instill hope into the patients in times of pain and sorrow, helping the patients in easing the pain. In the third place, traditional healers

[297] Alejo Stella (Respondent, Yumbe Parish, 23/03/2025).
[298] Theresa Ezama Anguparu, (Respondent, Lodonga, 30/03/2025).
[299] cf. Federick Dramadri, "Terego District to arrest all Witchdoctors over diverting Malaria patients", (April 21, 2023). Retrieved from https://www.radiopacis.org/en/news/, (accessed 10/10/2025).
[300] Cf. Richard Drasimaku, "Arua Women Leaders undress two Witchdoctor" (April 21, 2013). Retrieved from https://www.newvision.co.ug/news/1217667/ , (accessed 10/10/2025).
[301] Alejo Stella (Respondent, Yumbe Parish, 23/03/2025); Emmanuel Asega, (Respondent, Pokea Seminary, 15/06/2025).
[302] Jimmy Apangu, (Respondent, Yumbe Parish, 05/09/2025); Constantine Avaga (Respondent, Lodonga Parish, 11/09/2025); David Anya'dule, (Respondent, Ediofe Parish, 02/01/2025).

always take their time to trace the root causes of the sickness. They are not quick to give treatment with seeking the causes of the individual and community crises. They try to give explanations that are in line with the cultural and traditional perspectives.[303] In the fourth place, some traditional leaders possess counselling and reconciliatory skills that attract people. The make sure that the patient is listened to, and is reconciled with the both the living and dead members of the lineage and the clan.[304] This comprehensive healing sessions conducted by the traditional healers draw people from seeking to anointed with the Oil of the Sick.

The point of convergence of traditional healing, biomedical treatment and the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is the desire for healing. At the onset of sickness, people visit the biomedical treatment centres. When the sickness persists, they go to the traditional healers, although others are carried there against their will.[305] Some Christians go to Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick as a last option. The central place of the Sacrament and the Oil of the Sick in effecting holistic healing could emphasized through deeper catechesis. Unfortunately, catechetical deficiency is another challenge hindering effective of the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick.[306]

2.6 Catechetical Deficiency on the Anointing of the Sick

This section discusses catechetical deficiency on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese. Catechetical deficiency is used to refer to a shortfall or inadequacy in instruction or teaching about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. It is manifested in limited

[303] Due to the regular visits of the patients to the traditional healers, some government bodies try to incorporate traditional healers into their health management systems and collaborate with them. According to Samuel Mundua, chairperson of the traditional healers' association in Uganda, the traditional healers give auxiliary health services alongside those received at biomedical facilities. He claims that: "the government considers them as providers of alternative medicine." Samuel Mundua, *Interviewed*, Kuluva Hospital, 02/08/2025.
[304] Cf. Jimmy Apangu, (Respondent, Yumbe Parish, 05/09/2025).
[305] Christopher Otubo, (Respondent, Ombaci Parish, 06/08/2025).
[306] Cf. Pius Yobuta, (Respondent, Arua Christ the King Parish, 08/08/2025).

catechesis and continuous use of old syllabus on the Sacrament. The catechesis is further made deficient with the incomplete translation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick.

2.6.1 Meaning of Catechesis

The term "catechesis" is derived from the Greek verb "*katechein.*" "*Katechein*" literally means "to resound or echo."[307] The word received a religious meaning when it began to be applied to the process of resounding or recounting religious instructions for effective practice of religion.[308] This is especially the New Testament, where the word is used for resounding the law (cf. Rm 2:17-21), word of God (Gal 6:6; 1 Cor 14:19), the ways and events in the life of the Lord (Acts 18:25). In this perspective, catechesis can be understood as an instruction meant to resound or recount the word of God, incarnate in Jesus Christ (cf. Jn 1:14) to the recipients. The form of the instruction is basically oral (*viva voce*).[309]

Catechesis is carried out by the Church with the aim of making the Christ-mystery resound continually and deeply in the mind, heart and spirit of the faithful.[310] The *New Directory for Catechesis*, places catechesis in the light of the new evangelization. The Directory States that:

> Catechesis is an essential part of the broader process of the renewal of the Church that is called to bring about in order to the faithful to the command of Jesus Christ to proclaim always and everywhere his Gospel (cf. Mt 28:19). Catechesis participates according to its own nature in the effort of evangelization, in order that the faith may be supports by an ongoing maturation and express itself in a way of life that must characterize the very being of the disciple.[311]

[307] cf. Catherine Dooley, "Catechesis, Catechetics," in Joseph A. Komonchak, *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Bengaluru: Theological Publications in India, 2019): 161.
[308] Cf. Jacques Audinet, "Catechesis," in Karl Rahner, (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi* (London: Burns and Oates, 1975), 173.
[309] Cf. Catherine Dooley (2019): 161; Jacques Audinet (1975), 173.
[310] Cf. Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, *New Directory for Catechesis* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2020), no. 55. Henceforth cited as *NDC*.
[311] *NDC*, no. 2

Catechesis is part of the process of evangelization. Catechesis targets those who are already members of the Church. These are those who have "received first proclamation, within whom it promotes the process of initiation, growth, and maturation of faith."[312]

The general purpose of catechesis is to develop in the recipients "a living, explicit and active faith."[313] In relation to the Anointing of the Sick, catechesis is meant to enable the Christians to understand how the healing power of Jesus is conveyed, using the material element of oil. Having understood, they celebrate the sacrament, experience and welcome its effects with explicit faith. They actively give witness to it within and outside the Church.

The specific purposes depend on the degree or the type of catechesis imparted. Jacques Audinet distinguishes three degrees of catechesis. These are: "catechesis of initiation or fundamental catechesis", "permanent catechesis," and "perfective catechesis."[314] Catechesis of initiation is instruction in faith in an elementary way to those who have responded to God's call to Christian life. The purpose of this initiatory catechesis is to prepare for Sacraments of Christian initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist), and those which follow after full initation. This type of catechesis "conveys the message of salvation in its entirety.[315]

Permanent catechesis, which could better be called "On-going catechesis," is an instruction to deepen the understanding of the essentials acquired during the period of initiation. It is mystagogical when it intends to deepen the experience of the mysteries celebrated.[316] It is purpose is "to draw out the implications of the gospel in the various situations

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[312] *NDC*, no. 56.

[313] Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church *Christus Dominus* (28 October, 1965), no. 14, in *AAS* 58 (1966): 673-696.

[314] Jacques Audinet (1975), 177.

[315] Jacques Audinet (1975), 177

[316] "Mystagogical catechesis" or "Mystagogy" is a proper terminology for the catechetical instruction given after celebration of the Sacraments, specifically the Sacraments of Christian Initiation. The word "mystagogy" word is derived from the Greek verb "*mueo*," which means "to teach a doctrine." It also means "to initiate into the mysteries." Broadly, the word "mystagogy" means explanation of the liturgical rites. This implies that it is not only the rites of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation, but also "every type of liturgical celebration, including priestly ordination and the anointing of the sick." Enrico Mazza, *Mystagogy: A Theology of Liturgy in the Patristic* Age (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1989), 1.

of life, as far as is possible and practical."[317] The context of this type of catechesis can be actual celebration of the sacraments, teachings and conferences that are conducted after the celebrations. It can be conducted to various members of the church.

Perfective catechesis, which Audinet also calls "sapiental catechesis,"[318] is a deepening of the knowledge in specific areas of Christian faith by those who are called to engage in special mission. This is type of catechesis required for priests, religious and catechists. Through perfective or mission-oriented catechesis, those "whom special mission or vocation impels" deepen their faith, wisdom, and courage to minister to the people of God. They can also be confident to help people to understand the reason of their faith and articulate the basic meaning of the Sacraments and their celebration.[319]

6.6.2 Limited Catechesis

Catechesis is said to be limited when the believers cannot see the reason for their faith, and why they must receive the Sacraments. Catechesis is also limited when the believers cannot articulate the basic meaning of the sacrament and explain the meaning symbols of faith. This is reflected in people's ignorance of the symbolism of the oil for anointing the sick. It is also reflected in the inability to differentiate between the ministers of anointing, and the purpose of the Anointing of the Sick. Hence the persistence of the *moriendo* mentality.

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[317] Jacques Audinet (1975), 177.

[318] Jacques Audinet (1975), 177

[319] According to James C. Pauley, a specific form of catechesis is discerned using two ways: sources and objectives. The primary source of catechesis is the word of God (the word inscribed in the Sacred Scriptures, lived in the Sacred tradition and interpreted by the Magisterium of the Church). The secondary sources are the celebration of the liturgy, the theology and the life of the Church witnessed by the saints and expressed in the moral values. A specific form of catechesis corresponds to the specific secondary source. With regard to the objectives, the form of catechesis is determined by the aim for which is it is inducted. However, every form of catechesis has the aim of helping and leading a person to a deeper communion with Christ. The sources are related profoundly in so far as they all draw from the word of God. Cf. James C. Pauley, *Liturgical Catechesis in the 21st Century: A School of Discipleship* (Chicago: Liturgical Training Publications, 2017), 71-72; Cf. SC, no. 109; *NDC*, no. 56.

The excessive use of the plastic bottles for oil storage and casualness in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick also reveal that perfective or mission-oriented catechesis is limited. Those responsible for the planning and celebration of the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick do not take serious measures to handle the oil diligently and reverently. Minimal celebration of the sacrament and indifference to the situations of the sick persons are also manifestations of limited catechesis. Limited catechesis is aggravated by the use of old syllabus for instruction.

2.6.3 Lack of Harmonious Syllabi for Catechesis

The key catechetical materials for instruction about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese has been the local catechism. Two versions of the local catechism in use. The first version was published in 1970. In this book, only four pages are devoted to the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. This old edition states that the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick was instituted for the encouraging the sick persons and prepare them for death.[320] The sick persons are to unite to themselves to Christ, believe in God and keep hope in resurrection. The version also outlines the duties of the priest, and those of Christ, who is present when a sick person was being anointed. The priest has two duties, that is, to exhort the sick person with prayer and anoint him or her with a holy blessed oil. Christ strengthens and gives health person, gives him health and forgives his or her sins. This old edition of the catechism tends towards the *moriendo* mentality. It only mentions in one article that many get cured after they are anointed.[321] This is a positive aspect of that old edition.

The second version was published in 2007. It is used for instructing candidates for Confirmation.[322] Out of forty-three (43) session for the instructions, only one is on sickness

[320] Cf. Arua Diocese (1970), 283
[321] Arua Diocese (1970), 284.
[322] The syllabi for catechesis on the Sacrament of Confirmation were adapted by Pastoral Coordinator's Office of Arua Diocese from different sources. Book 1, 2 and 3 were adapted from a publication of the Department of

(session 32). The aim of this session is to help the candidates know the meaning of sickness in Christian life and the how the Church ministers to sick people through the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick. Concerning the recipients of the Sacrament, this catechism states that: "The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is for people who are very ill, or who are about to undergo an operation. Today, with our knowledge of how people can suffer mentally, the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick could be celebrated with them as well."[323] Positively, death is not mentioned in this version. However, *moriendo* still mentality lingers. With poor access to the medical services in the region, it is widely conceived that those who are seriously ill have no hope of survival. Operation or surgery is greatly dreaded because a person may die there. Those who suffer mental illness roam as they like, and it is conceived that they can die any time.

The 2007 version gives a positive symbolism to the Oil of the Sick. It states that: "The priestly massages oil over on the head and hands of the sick person. This signifies healing, strengthening and presence of the Lord (…). The oil is blessed at the Mass of oils."[324] The term "the priest massages" makes people to perceive that like a secular use of oil. The candidates end up thinking the Sacrament is massaging of the sick person for placebo effect.

Many concerns have been raised that the language in the 2007 version of the catechetical books is not comprehensible to catechists, majority of whom have stopped with primary education.[325] On account of this, many of the catechists prefer to use the 1970 version of the

Catechesis of Southern Africa Bishops' Conference. The publication is entitled: "Joining the Christian Journey Pastoral Manual." Book 4 was adapted from a publication entitle: "When you are a Confirmation Sponsor," work of one Julie Anne Lytle in United States of America. Many concerns have been raised during the Diocesan Pastoral Council that the language in those catechetical books is not comprehensible to catechists, majority of whom have stopped with primary education. Cf. Arua Diocese, *Joining the Journey Books 1* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 2007), 2; Arua Diocese, *Joining the Journey Book 2* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 2007), 2; Arua Diocese, *Joining the Journey Books 3* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 2007), 2; Arua Diocese, *Joining the Journey Books 4* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 2007), 2; Arua Diocese, *Together as One* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 2001), 2.

[323] Arua Diocese, *Joining the Journey Books 3* (Arua: Arua Diocese Publications, 2007), 170.

[324] Arua Diocese (2007), 171.

[325] James Edema, *Interviewed*, Christus Centre, 27/07/2025.

catechism.[326] This presents a lack of harmony in imparting consistent teaching about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Closely related to the challenge of old syllabus is the incomplete translation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick into the vernacular languages spoken in the Arua Diocese.

2.6.4 Incomplete Translation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick

The official Rite for celebrating Anointing of the Sick among the Lugbara speaking population is the old translation of the *OUI* edition. It was published in 1980 by Arua Diocese.[327] A critical study of the Rite reveals the following loopholes. Firstly, the Rite is partially translated without the documents of promulgation and General Introduction or *Praenotanda*. This deprives the users of the edition of the rich theological explanation and ways for adapting the celebration to the needs and circumstances of the sick people.[328]

Secondly, the edition consists of the six chapters found in the *editio typica* of *OUI*. The numbering of the paragraphs begins with 42, and ends on 258. It is not clearly described where this numbering system has been drawn from. The details in the chapters are summarized instructions, rather than the prayer formulae. The instructions are given in English, with the assumption that the priests who use the Rite are those well-versed with English language. The instructions are for preparation to the anoint the sick person, giving Viaticum, and administering of sacraments for those near death (a continuous rite of Penances, Anointing and Viaticum).[329] Summarizing the instruction can lead to unguided creativity and minimal tendencies.

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[326] Faustino Omuyo, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 18/12/2025.

[327] Arua Diocese, "Rite of Anointing and Pastoral Care of the Sick," in *The Rites, Lugbari ed*. (Kampala: Marianum Press, 1980): 317-367.

[328] The Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments noted that various omissions or errors in certain vernacular translations have "impeded the progress of inculturation that should have taken place. Consequently, the Church has been prevented from laying the foundation for a fuller, healthier and more authentic renewal." Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, Fifth Instruction for the Right Implementation of The Constitution on The Sacred Liturgy of The Second Vatican Council, *Liturgiam authenticam* (28 March, 2001), no. 6, in *AAS* 93 (2001): 685-726.

[329] *The Rites, Lugbari ed*. (1980): 319-325.

Thirdly, the arrangement of the chapters is not systematic. Chapter one gives the brief prayer formulae for Communion of the Sick. The prayer formulae include those for greeting, sprinkling with holy water, penitential rite, readings, Lord's Prayer, communion, concluding prayer and blessing.[330] Chapter Two and Three are only instructions without any prayer formulae. All the formulae meant for Chapter Two and Three are condensed under Chapter Four, with title "Continuous Rites." The prayer for the blessing of oil is included in the edition, however, it is not mentioned where this oil should come from. Chapter Five contains brief prayer formulae for the Commendation of the Dying. The biblical readings given in Chapter Six.[331] In this kind of unsystematic arrangement of the Rite, keenness on the part of the minister is demended to identify the appropriate prayers and formulae to be used in each case. Some ministers have tended to only go to the section of anointing with oil without due preparation.

The Rite is out of print. Some priests have made photocopies of the Rite. It was observed that some leaflets were printed and sold out as the Rite for Anointing the Sick.[332] However, these are on leaflets that wear out easily. This kind of scenario aggravates minimalism, and impedes the ministers from giving effective catechesis on the Sacrament and the Oil of the Sick.

Conclusion

In this Chapter, the challenges affecting the use of oil in the Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese have been discussed. In the first section of the chapter, the meaning of oil, its classifications and general uses are explained. Oil is a liquid substance which is viscous, hydrophobic, lipophilic and combustuous. Primarily, oils are classified to according to their sources as animal oils, plant oils and mineral oils. Secondarily, oils are classified according to

[330] *The Rites, Lugbari ed*. (1980): 319-325.
[331] *The Rites, Lugbari ed*. (1980): 357-364.
[332] This was observed by the researcher at Christus Centre, an institution where pastoral related materials are produced and sold.

their intended usage (as edible oils or inedible oils) and drying rates (drying oils, semi-drying oils and non-drying oils). The several uses of oil are seen in domestic sphere, cosmetic and industrial circles and religious circles. In the religious usage, oils are used in initiation rites, mortuary rites, marriage celebrations and healing rites. The most visible use of oil in Catholic healing rite is in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The oil used in this referred to as the "Oil of the Sick."

There are several challenges that affect the use of the Oil of the Sick in Arua Diocese. The challenges are related to the perception of the oil, the Custody of the Oil, the use of the Oil in other religious groups, and catechetical deficiency. With regard to the perception, it is percieved that those anointed with the Oil of the Sick are destined for immediate death. The olive oil which is used for the anointing is expensive, yet there is enlightenment about its cosmetic and health benefits which have now influence the secular world most. Concerning the custody, oils were stored mostly in plastic bottles, and kept in undesignated places. Numerous oils are further observed with different symbolisms attached to them. These also presented the challenge of the confusion of the minister of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, indiscriminate anointing, increasing drive for healing masses or services *vis-a-vis* anointing of the sick, and commercialization of the oils.

These challenges are exacerbated by catechetical deficiency on the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick. Catechesis on the Sacrament and the Oil of the Sick is limited. The syllabus which could be used for catechesis is old, and does not include the new developments in the understanding of the Sacrament. Another challenge that affects the celebration is the incomplete translation of the OUI into the local languages in Arua Diocese. Addressing all these challenges necessitated a deeper study of oils used traditional healing rituals. The traditional rituals studied are those of the Lugbara people. The next Chapter presents oils that are used in the Lugbara traditional healing rituals.

CHAPTER THREE

OILS USED IN LUGBARA TRADITIONAL HEALING RITUALS

Introduction

In this chapter, the oils that are used in Lugbara traditional healing rituals are discussed. The chapter consists of four sections. In the first section, the Lugbara concept of sickness and healing is explained. In the second section, the traditional healing rituals of the Lugbara are described. The third section consists of the description of the types of the oils used the rituals. They ways of preparing the oils and using them are also described. The fourth section explains the traditional ways of ensuring safe custody for the oil that used in the traditional healing rituals.

3.1 Lugbara Concept of Sickness and Healing

Sickness is experienced by human beings of different cultures. It is one of the greatest problems troubling the human spirit.[333] The explanation of the meaning of sickness, it causes and remedies vary from culture to culture. The desire to know the mean and the causes are geared to achieve healing. In this section, the task is to discuss the concept of sickness and healing according to the Lugbara.

3.1.1 Meaning of Sickness

The term "sickness" stems from old English "*seoc*," which "means being unwell."[334] The word "*seoc*" evolved to Gothic terms "*siuche*." "*Siuche*" originates from the expression of Teutonic mythological belief that demons suck out strength, health and life out of a person,

[333] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 13.

[334] Walter Lips-Castro, "Conceptualization of the Disease and Some its Designations: The Contribution of Comparative Etymological Study," in *Gaceta Medica de Mexico*, 135 (2017): 127.

leaving him or her weak, unwell or even dead.[335] Sickness can be understood as a condition of bodily unwellness manifested in pain and weakness. The individual is prevented from exercising his or her roles in the community of society. An all-encompassing term that is commonly used for sickness in Lugbarati is "*azo*."[336] To be sick is "*azo rö.*" "*Azo*" is used to describe pain, illness and disease.

3.1.1.1 "*Azo*" as Pain

The term "*azo"* is a primary adjective that describes pain. The definition of pain given by the International Association of Studies of Pain (IASP)[337] has gained popularity and favour. IASP defines pain as: "an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with, or resembling that associated with actual or potential tissue damage."[338] As an unpleasant experience, pain can stress or annoy or cause discomfort. Pain is experience of a body that is wired up with nerves.[339] The damage of tissues in the body disrupts the unitary function of the body cells. However, there are pains that are not related to bodily tissue damage. For example,

[335] Cf. Walter Lips-Castro (2017): 127.

[336] There are dialectical variations of the word "*azo*." For the Lugbara of Aringa and Terego, the word used of sickness is "*ayani*." "To be sick" is "*ayani ro*."

[337] International Association of Studies of Pain (IASP) is a worldwide forum of clinicians, caregivers and researchers. The aim of the forum is to improve knowledge about pain, education of healthcare providers and the care of patients. The forum was founded in 1974 by John J. Bunika, a professor of anesthesiology at the University of Michigan in the United States of America. Cf. Bary J. Sesle, "Introduction and a Brief Historical Overview of the International Association for Study of Pain,"in Pain 164, 11S (2023): 1; International Association of Study of Pain, History, Mission and Vision. Retrieved from https://www.iasp.pai.org, (accessed 06/01/2026).

[338] International Association for the Studies in *Pain, IASP Announces Revised Definition of Pain* (16 July 2020). Retrieved from https://www.iasp-pain.org/publications/iasp-news/iasp-announces-revised-definition-of-pain/, (accessed 04/12/2025); cf. H Merskey, "The definition of pain." in Eur Psychiatry, 6, (1991): 158. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/ a.pdf/the-definition-of-pain.pdf, (accessed 04/12/2025).

[339] In relation to nervous system of the body, Clive Stable Lewis, quoted by John Bosco Asiimwe, identifies two senses of pain, but he does not name them. However, the two senses can be termed as neurological sense and odious sense. Neurological sense is "a particular kind of sensation probably conveyed by specialized nerve fibers and recognized by the patient as that kind of sensation whether he likes it or not." Odious sense is a dislike for the experience of the pain. Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 32; Clive Staple Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), 90.

pains of grief, humiliation and failure. Those who may not or are unable to describe their pains are not encompassed definition by IASP.[340]

The term "*azo"* is inclusive. It implies that pain is not only experienced in the body (*rua*), but also in the heart (*asi*) and mind (*omi* or *dri*) of a person. John Lukwata affirms that, whether in the body or heart or mind, it is the whole person who is affected. He says that: "The body, the mind and soul constituted a human person, and whatever the body does or undergoes affects the integrity of the whole person."[341] For the Lugbara, the specific part where pain is experienced can lead to the identification of the sickness. Bodily sickness is described as "*azo rua ri*." "*Azo asia ri*" describes a sickness that may be emotional or relational, making the "heart to ache." Mental sickness is referred to as "*Azo omia ri*" or "*azo dria ri*" (literally, "sickness of the brain" or "sickness of the head"). Pain in "*rua*" (body) may be head-ache, stomach pain, general weakness of limps and the entire body, loss of weight or excessive body weight.[342] The term "*azo,"* in relation to pain, is therefore an uncomfortable feeling that a person experiences in his body, or mind or heart.

Pain results into suffering. Suffering is denoted by the Lugbara word "*candi.*" "*Candi*," however, can also mean sadness and sorrow. When an individual in pain (*azo*) suffers, the Lugbara say "*eri candi esuu*" or "*eri candi nya*" (literally "eats suffering" or "eats sorrow"). Suffering can also be on a community level, for example, during wars, famine, drought, plague, contagious disease, natural catastrophe like earthquake and floods.[343] Pain and suffering have a causal relationship with illness and disease.

[340] Cf. Grant Duncan, "The Meanings of 'Pain' in Historical, Social and Political Context," in *The Monist*, 100 (2017): 514. Retrieved from https://doi:10.1093/monit/onx26, (accessed 04/12/2025).
[341] John Lukwata (2011), 14.
[342] Robert Wadri Aluma, *Interviewed*, Mingoro, 27/12/2025; Cf. John Middleton (1998), 31.
[343] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 33.

3.1.1.2 "*Azo*" as Illness and Disease

The term "*azo"* is also used to describe illness and or disease. The concepts of illness and disease have sometimes been used synonymously and interchangeably to describe human ailments.[344] However, definition given by Abdel-Hady El-Gilany show difference in the understanding of illness and disease, through with intricate relationship between the two. El-Gilany defines illness as: "the presence of specific disease, as well as individuals' perception and behaviour in response to the disease." [345] Illness becomes an opportunity or occasion for an expert to observe, examine determine the specific disease. Disease is "any deviation for a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being."[346] El-Gilany further disease as "a medical condition caused by a pathological process that manifests as specific signs and symptoms that may affect a specific tissues/organ or the entire body."[347] A disease interrupts or disorders the normal functioning of the body.

The relationship between illness and disease lies in the fact that disease causes a situation of an individual being anxious, fearful, in pain and suffering. These are behavours associated with illness.[348] However, it is also possible habour a disease without manifesting behaviuor and signs linked to illness.

While illness, disease and sickness may be related, they call for different. Bjørn Hofman explains what different actions are. He states that:

> Disease calls for actions by professionals with the goal of identifying, treating and handling the entities and events and to care for the person. Illness changes the self-

[344] Among such synonymous and interchangeable uses is the definition given by John Bosco Asiimwe. Asiimwe states that: "Illness is a synonym of sickness and is defined as disease of body or mind; poor health; sickness." John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 33.

[345] Abdel-Hady El-Gilany, "A mini review on disease, illness, sickness, and related terms for non-epidemiologists," in *International Journal of Epidemiological Health Scie* (2023):1. Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.5175/IJEHS.4.2023.699933, (accessed 24/09/2025).

[346] Abdel-Hady El-Gilany (2023):1.

[347] Abdel-Hady El-Gilany (2023):2.

[348] Bjørn Hofman, "Disease, Illness and Sickness," in *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Medicine (*25 October 2006): 17. Retrieved from https://www.routeledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/97813157207339.ch, (accessed 24/09/2025); Cf. Dorota Szawarska, "Curing and Healings: Two Goals of Medicine," in T. Schramme and S. Edward, eds, *Handbook of the Philosophy of Medicine*, (September 2015): 4. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate/publication/304040412, (accessed 22/01/2025).

> concept, relations, and activities of others, making the person call for help. Sickness is a determination of the social statues of the person being sick (…). Sickness determines whether a person is entitled to treatment and economic rights, exception from social duties such as work (sick leave), but also whether the person is legally accountable for his or her actions.[349]

Illness calls for upon the individual to seek a diagnosis by expert. A disease calls for a professional intervention who identifies the disease and ascribes sickness. Sickness requires treatment by the community. Each action is meant to ensuring that the ailment is eliminated, and the individual regains his or societal responsibilities.

In defining a disease and ascribing sickness, two challenges are identifiable. One is that notions of health and disease are dependent of context and culture. For example, what could be as a disease in one context may not be so in another, because of high immunity of the people in that culture or context. It is difficult to articulate what really constitutes a disease. Jackie Leach Scully observes that: "what counts as a disease also changes over historical time, partly as a result of increasing expectations, particle due to changes in diagnostic ability, but mostly for a mixture of social and economic reasons."[350] The other challenge is to distinguish between a real disease and human behaviour. For example, in the Lugbara concept of "*azo*," certain elements of human behaviour are also considered as disease. Thus, excessive extroversion or introversion would be considered as a disease. A couple that chooses long child spacing might be said to be having the sickness of "*ondo*" (reproductive inability). The causes of sickness is a concern for the sick individual, the expert and the community.

3.1.2 Causes of Sickness

The Lugbara identify four causes of sickness: trespassing of the aboard of spirits, indignation of perverted people, transgression of the social norms and grievances of the dead.

[349] Cf. Bjørn Hofman (2006): 17-18.
[350] Jackie Leach Scully, "What is a Disease?" in *Embo Reports*, Vol. 5, No. 7 (2004): 650.

Any other sickness that does not fall into these categories is considered to have been brought by outsiders who have entered into the Lugbaraland or "sickness in air" (*azo olia si ri*).[351]

3.1.2.1 Trespassing the Territory of Spirits

Sudden onset of sickness is attributed to the malevolent spirits. These spirits inflict sickness upon whoever trespasses their territory. These malevolent spirits are believed to dwell in valleys and water-bodies.[352] They are called "*yiadro"* (water spirits).[353] Sometimes they may dwell in forests or move in the air (whirlwind- "*adroria"*). The spirits are invisible, but their malevolent acts are visible in sickness that they inflict. The sickness is called "*ggu"* (fever).[354] When symptoms occur, the first question to be asked is, "where did he go?"[355] This question prompts the sick person to revisit his or her steps, and find out if he went to some places that are forbidden to be visited. With biomedical ways of diagnosing sickness, "g*uu"* can be identified as malaria or common cold.

Some people believe that the spirits move around to cause sickness on their own accord. The spirits are believed to roam around people's compound and on roads at night. They make call to people. Whoever responds become a victim of their malevolence. John Baptist Odama describes such a belief. He states that: "contrary to the goodness of the Highest Spirit, these lower spirits are harmful. Where did they derive their evilness? Why do they like moving by night, at dawn or dusk to harm people who are travelling? Why should they kill or cause misfortune to the persons who see them?"[356] Such questions might present a dose of superstition, by they present a worldview where nature is believed to be inhabitant with spirits,

[351] Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel, 10/08/2025.
[352] Cf. John Baptist Odama (1991), 25.
[353] Luciano Victor Aria, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 01/08/2025.
[354] Luciano Victor Aria, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 01/08/2025; cf. Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel, 10/08/2025.
[355] Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel, 10/08/2025.
[356] John Baptist Odama (1991), 25.

good or evil. Some people are said to tap the powers of those spirits for evil intentions. These are the perverted people.

3.1.2.2 Indignation by Perverted People

Indignation, from the Latin word "*indignatio"*, is a feeling of displeasure, annoyance or hostility, aroused by envy of jealousy. "Perversion" consists "of a range of behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that deviate from accepted norms or standards, often to an extreme or abnormal degree."[357] Perverted people are those who are thought to exhibit behavour or characters that are not normal or accepted by the people in a given society.[358] One of such behavour is indignation. In Lugbara context, indignation is denoted by the word "*ole*."

In discussing the concept of witchcraft among the Lugbara, John Middleton described "*ole*" as an envious feeling that one has at the wellbeing or prosperity of the other. He states that: "*ole*" the feeling aroused by watching a man eat rich food, with succulent vegetables, without asking one to join. It is a feeling aroused by seeing one man dancing alone at a dance to show off his agility, at seeing a man surrounded by girls while alone."[359] The people who habour indignation and cause sickness are considered as witches and sorcerers. In Lugbara society, witches and sorcerers are considered to be perverted people. In Lugbarati, a witch is called in "*oleu"* or "*ba ole 'beri"* (a person with indignation.)[360] Among the Lugbara of Ayivu clan, a witch is called "*lejoa*." "*Lejoa"* refers to a person who uses mystical means in darkness to cause sickness to others.

The details of how they cause sickness vary from one clan to another, with trivial and superfluous descriptions. For example, in some clans, it is said that they cause sickness by

[357] Union of International Associations, "Perversion," in *Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential* (19/03/2024). Retrieved from https://encycopedia.uia.org<problems>perversion, (accessed 15/10/2025).
[358] Cf. Union of International Associations (19/03/2024).
[359] John Middleton, "The Concept of 'Bewitching' Lugbara," in *Africa: Journal of International African Institute*, Volume 25, No. 3 (July 1955): 255.
[360] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 239-240.

extending a long hand over the wall plate of huts and squeezing the necks of their victims. In others, the witches are said to drop fecal matter along the doorway or path of the victim, who upon stepping on the dropping or touching it, gets sick.[361] According to some clans, witches inflict sours on children's head through touching or spitting on the heads of the children.[362] A stereotype of witches among the Lugbara is that witches harbour have ill temper. They are spiteful with a socially unapproved behaviour, and look at every good thing with evil eye. By using psychic and magic or occult power, witches cause sickness to those who are faring well in the society. [363]

Sorcerers use learned or acquired skills to cause sickness to others. It is believed that they learn skills of extracting of extracting poisonous substance from snakes or plants. They use these substances to bring sickness to their victims.[364] The substances are either spread in the air, directed to the victims, or stealthily placed in the food of the victim. The sickness attributed to sorcerers is called "*adraki"* or "*enyata*" (poisoning). Sorcerers can also touch children's head and bring sickness to them.[365] A sick person may not be responsible for the sickness inflicted upon him or her by the witches and sorcerers. However, there are sicknesses for which one is responsible, especially when he or she transgresses the social norms of the community.

3.1.2.3 Transgression of Social Norms

The Lugbara society has social norms that pertain to marital relations, brotherly relations, and participation in communal and cultural activities. A person who transgresses the social norms brings sickness upon himself or herself. Examples of transgression of social

[361] Florence Amadroru, *Interviewed*, Omugo Parish, 12/06/2025.
[362] Sunday Pariyo, *Interviewed*, Omugo Parish, 12/06/2025.
[363] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 243.
[364] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 243.
[365] Sunday Pariyo, *Interviewed*, Omugo Parish, 12/06/2025.

norms include incest, adultery, fratricide, homicide, and indifference towards cultural functions. Each of these transgressions bring consequences that are considered to be manifested in sickness. Such sicknesses are called "*bati*" (peoples' mouth) or "*inima"* (blurred vision and dumbness).[366] It is believed that the one who suffers from such a sickness does not die, but rather lives in intensive pain. His or her sickness is considered to be a punishment or lesson for his anti-social or anti-communal behaviour.[367]

Another element of transgression that causes sickness is disrespect to the lineage elders and aunties. Such sicknesses are called "*atritaa*" (curse). The victim of the sickness either grows thin or gets skin infection of leprous nature. An elder who feel disrespected induce sickness to the offender by invoking the vengeance of the dead. Such act of invoking is called "*olero* or "*roo,"* meaning, "to invoke a spirit of vengeance." Through the act, the elder address his grievance to the spirit of the dead elder, and expresses his wish to control the behavour of the disrespectful junior.[368] The invocation of dead spirits to bring sickness somehow strengthen the authority of the elders. Elders are believed to have connection with the dead who can also bring sickness to the living of their own accord, especially when aggrieved.

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[366] "*Inima"* is considered to be a consequence of incest or adultery. If the female accomplice becomes pregnant, it is believed that she will "fail to deliver," until "some cleansing" is done. Such cleansing may be through the slaughtering of a cock or a sheep. Fratricide and homicide have some of the gravest consequences. Among such consequences are is "*nyoka*." "*Nyoka"* is described as an unending trouble or disaster strikes a man and his lineage. The disaster may be in form of epidemics, a hereditary or incurable sickness, and sterility of women, livestock or crops. It is believed to be sent by God or at least approved by God. "*Nyoka"* affects the offender, his family and the entire lineage. It also depletes their wealth and prosperity. Alice Eyotaru Bada, *Interviewed,* Maracha, 28/12/2026; Cf. John Middleton (1998), 22.

[367] A drama authored by Evaline Emvikia, "*Embata Okangalika Ri*" (literally meaning, "A bitter lesson"), depicts that the key character, called Mavava, struck by an incurable sickness (with symptoms of stroke) because of committing incest. The drama is based on a true event that occurred in 2020. Mavava the transgressed the traditional customs. Moreover, he isolated himself from the people of the clans, and refused to participate in all traditional clan-related matters. The bitter complaints and curses of the people of his clan struck him as an incurable sickness. The sickness was referred to as '*bati*" ("peoples' mouth"). The sickness was, therefore, a bitter lesson, (*embata okangalika ri*) for him. Despite all the effort to treat him in local hospitals and health facilities in India, Mavava had to be taken back to have traditional rituals performed for his healing. Cf. Evaline Emvikia, *Embata Okangalika Ri* (Kampala: Panamaline Books Distributers Limited, 2025), 1-13.

[368] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 39.

3.1.2.4 Grievances of the Dead

The aggrieved spirits of the dead can bring sickness even without being invoked. It is by causing sickness that they influence the living. John Baptism Odama identifies two reasons why the dead could inflict sickness upon the living. The first reason stems from their protecting duty in the clan. John Baptist Odama states that: "the living always considered the dead as the protectors of the clans and of the morality of the lineage. Any sign of degeneration in the clan's behaviour was often considered punishable through illness, epidemics and other calamities."[369]

The second one is the failure of the living to carry out funerary rites as required by the custom. Odama reasons that: "Similarly, on the occasion of burial, if the corpses were not treated respectively or were buried in an unbefitting manner, they would also take revenge on the living. Any failure to recognized their position or honour them results in misfortune for the living.[370] The funerary rites are to be elaborately and meticulously carried out. Any failure in doing make the dead cause sicken. Such sicknesses are referred to as "*kata 'bulea dri*" (curses of the dead). They may be psychosomatic or one may experience constant aches in the various parts of the body. In such case, a Lugbara will say, "the dead person is laying badly in the grave."[371]

The causes of sickness, according to the Lugbara mentality, are spiritual and social. The causes are spiritual in as far as sickness is caused by the malevolent spirits and grievances of the dead. The causes are social when sickness is brought about by indignation of pervaded people and the transgression of societal norms. Such ways of explaining the causes of sickness are often challenged the modern scientific way of explaining disease etiology. The modern science looks at nutritional, genetic and environmental factors as the causes of disease.[372]

[369] John Baptist Odama (1991), 26.
[370] John Baptist Odama (1991), 26.
[371] Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel, 10/08/2025.
[372] Stephen J. Genius, "What's Out there Making Us Sick?" in *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, (2012): 2. Retrieved from https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC3202108/pdf/JEPH2012-605137.pdf, (accessed 04/06/2026).

However, whatever method is used to ascertain the causes of sickness, all are geared towards healing.

3.1.3 Lugbara Concept of Healing

The Lugbara concept of healing is inscribed in the verb "*atitaa."* The verb has two senses. In the first sense, "*atitaa*" means "to cease or stop." In the second sense, which is used more related to health matters, "*atitaa"* means "to recover or heal."[373] It can also mean to get cured. "*Atitaa"* encompasses concepts of curing and healing.

The word "curing" is applied in different fields, like construction, manufacturing, food preservation and medical treatment. However, "*atitaa*" captures the medical aspect. In the medical perspective, curing is a result of systematic and repeated application of medical procedures to remove a decease. The medical procedures can involves interviewing of the victim, performance of tests on him or her, and prescribing the course of action for total removal of the disease of the cause of the unwellness.[374]

Healing refers to the process of freeing a person from a disease or an ailment, so as to restore him or her to wholeness. The person to be healed in more actively involved than in curing. Szawarska Dorota opines that healing has a multidimensional nature. He states that:

> Healing can be seen as multidimensional, especially if one sees healing as achieving a balance between various dimensions of the people undergoing the healing process, namely, the physical, emotional, mental, social, or spiritual. In that respect healing is markedly different from a definite cure leading to an absence of a disease. The multidimensional aspect of healing means that the absence of disease is neither sufficient nor necessary for healing to occur. What matters is the acceptance of the status quo, coping with and integrating the demands of one's illness or disease and its aftermath.[375]

[373] Cf. John Pasquale Crazzolarra (1960), 203.
[374] Dorota Szawarska (2015), 4
[375] Dorota Szawarska (2015), 6

Healing focuses on physical wellbeing, emotional and mental stability, social and spiritual balance. In these senses, healing is holistic. The holistic view of healing is captured by Lugbara word "*atitaa*."

According to Robert Kinast, healing is needed at the three interpenetrating and complementing levels of human existence. He states that:

> the need for healing may be seen at three levels of human existence. The first is basic survival. This pertains mostly to physical wellbeing and the means for achieving it. Here the hygienic, medical and therapeutic arts are especially operative, supported by research in cognate fields. The second level is human dignity. This pertains to a person's acceptance by self and others and the ability to interacts with other people and groups. Here psychological and educational profession are most operative, supported by social institutions live government and organized religion. The third level is moral and spiritual. This pertains to a person's sense of right and wrong and attitude towards the meaning of life, especially when faced with its termination in death. Here religion and spiritual ministry is distinctively operative.[376]

These levels portray a person as an individual in his relation with the community. At personal level, is the need for survival, which is often threatened by sickness. At the community level is restoration of the person's diginity and his or her moral and spiritual integrity. "*Atitaa*" takes into account the entire person and his or her relation with the community. Such a community is both the physical community (living persons) and the mystical community. The physical community is composed of the patient (*'ba azorö ri*), the relatives (*ori 'ba*) and the clan (*suru*). The mystical community comprises the dead relatives (*'ba odraapi 'bo 'dii*) and God (*Adro*). Through the traditional healing rituals, all the members of both communities converge to make a meaning of the events and crisis that afflict the sick individual.

3.2 Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals

In this section, the traditional healing rituals of the Lugbara are discussed. In the first sub-section, the meaning of healing rituals is explained. This is preceded by giving a general

[376] Robert L. Kinast, "Healing," in Michale Downey, (ed.), *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2003), 466-467.

understanding of the term "ritual." In the second sub-section, the two types of healing rituals among the Lugbara are described.

3.2.1 Meaning of Healing Rituals

The Latin word "*ritualis,*" from which the word "ritual" is derived, denotes a formal religious observance done correctly according to the established procedures.[377] The definition of a ritual given by Margaret Mary Kelleher implies that such procedures may be laid down in a book. She writes that: "the term ritual can be used to refer to a book or a collection of rites, other than the eucharist or liturgy of hours, which are under the presidency of a priest, rather than a bishop."[378] This can in cases of established religious groups that books to guide the course of their religious rites. In traditional African societies like the Lugbara, information pertaining to rites are passed by word, and not enshrined in books or scrolls.

From a formal perspective, Mark Searley defines rituals as "a conscious and voluntary repetitious and stylized symbolic body actions that are centered on cosmic structures and or sacred presences."[379] A ritual has the characteristic of being repetitive. It involves actions that are to be performed in a correct manner according to the prescribed structures.

The functionalist definition focuses on the function or purpose of a ritual in human life or society. Lukken Gerard is one of the proponents of the functionalist definition. He defines ritual as "enactment of symbols, words and language by two or more people at meaningful intervals for the purpose of maintaining social cohesion and cultural coherence in the face of

[377] Cf. Peter G. W. Glare (2012), 1860.
[378] Margaret Mary Kelleher, "Ritual", in Joseph A. Komonchak, (ed.), *The New Dictionary of Theology* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2006): 906; cf. Joseph Mulaa Muyomi, "Rituals in the African Traditional Religions: The Cohesive Impact," in *African Ecclesial Review*, Vol. 56, no. 4 (December 2014): 354.
[379] Mark Searle, "Ritual," in Paul Bradshaw and John Mellow, (eds.), *Foundations in Ritual Studies: A Reader for Students of Christian Worship* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007): 11.

threats of different kinds."[380] He gives seven functions of a ritual. These are: palliative and channeling, mediative, ethical, invocatory, expressive, condensation, and social.[381]

Healing rituals are those repeated and structured forms of action performed to restore physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of one or more members of the society. In the healing rituals the performers diagnose the sickness that afflict a person or the society, and provided remedies for the situation.

3.2.2 Types of Healing Rituals

Among the Lugbara, two types of healing rituals are identifiable. These are diagnostic rituals and therapeutic rituals. They may be performed consecutively or simultaneously.

3.2.2.1 Diagnostic Rituals (*Azo Ndaza*)

The word "diagnostic" is derived from the Greek word *diagignoskein,* which means to "discern or distinguish."[382] The word reflects a process of distinguishing a disease or a sickness from others by its characteristic signs or test results. The diagnostic rituals are performed to determine the causes of sickness. However, the purpose goes beyond merely determining the cause. It extends to clarifying the "type, nature, and the significance of each conflict that is supposed to be the basic cause of illness."[383] In Lugbarati, diagnostic rituals are collectively referred to as "*azo ndaza*," that is "searching for the cause of sickness."[384]

In the Lugbara traditional healing practices, three diagnostic rituals feature. These are: "*buro tiza*," *"andrike/andrife"* and "*e'ya o'baza*." The English names given by John Middleton

[380] Cf. Gerard Lukken, *Per Visibilia an Invisiblia: Anthropological, Theological and Semiotic Studies on the Liturgy and Sacraments* (Kampen: Kom Pharos Publishing Houses, 1994), 105; Mark Searle (2007), 11;
[381] Cf. Gerard Lukken (1994), 105-106.
[382] *Diagnosis Definition: Tracing the Greek Roots of Medical Identification* (February 1, 2024). Retrieved from https://www.uspeaskgreek.com>science>medicin>diagnosis, (accessed 20/08/2025).
[383] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 38.
[384] Elario Bada, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 15/06/2025.

to these rituals derive from the instruments and items used in them. He refers to "*buro tiza"* as "chicken oracle" because the main item used is chicken. He calls "*andrike/andrife"* as "rubbing-stick oracle," since a stick-like instrument is used during the ritual. He translates "*e'ya o'baza"* as "poison pod oracle," because it involves use of seeds of a pod conceived to be poisonous.[385] These however do not capture the essence of the rituals in relation to the ministers and purpose. The English equivalents chosen to translate the rituals' names need to reflect the meaning, purpose and the ministers of the rituals. Hence, new equivalent names are hereby given. "*Buro tiza"* is described as "communal circumtrenching." *"Andrike/andrife"* is translated as "diviner consultation." "*E'ya o'baza"* is translated as "seed revelation."[386] The details of these rituals vary from one Lugbara clan to another, although the basic elements are the same.

i. *Buro tiza* (Communal Circumtrenching)

In the ritual of "*buro tiza*," the relatives of the sick person come together and sit around a trench to find out the agent that is responsible for causing the sickness. The ritual is performed by the elders of the clan.[387] Elders are the ministers of the ritual. Minister in this sense means a person designated to conduct a ritual ceremony on behalf of others. However, the assembly constitutes of the male relatives of the sick person's clan and those of his or her mother.[388] In

[385] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 80.

[386] Other rituals used in diagnosing sickness have become extinct, because they were not autochthonous to Lugbara. They were practiced by Lugbara who had lived outside Lugbaraland and later returned. One such ritual was called "*yi ndreza*" literally meaning, "water watching." In this ritual, some amount of water is placed in a transparent and translucent bottle, its behaviour is monitored both by the sick person and the performer of the ritual. The person responsible, dead or alive, is said to appear in the water. Cf. Priscila Waliko, *Interviewed*, Logiri Parish, 29/07/2025; Cf. Elina Nato, *Interviewed*, Logiri Parish, 29/07/2025.

[387] Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025.

[388] Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025; Elario Bada, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 15/06/2025.

some clans, the ritual takes place on the outskirts of the courtyard. In others, it takes place under "*larö"* (fig tree).[389]

"*Buro*" (trench) of about one yard in diameter and half-feet in depth is dug in the ground. The diameter, depth and angles of the hole may vary from place to place. The details of the work of digging the hole are mapped out by an expert elder. In the early 20th century, Egidio Ramponi gave a description of the making of "*buro"* as follows: "When it is finished, he smooths it all around. On the pavements around the circular wall, he excavates fourteen small holes. He pounds with his heel, and with his hands he erects a small platform. Every hole has its own name."[390] Today, the details have not changed much, except that in some places a raised platform is made. A shallow hole is dug in front of each of the elders who sit around the trench. The Lugbara use the expression "*tiza*," meaning "arrangement of holes," hence "*buro tiza*." The shallow holes are named according to the living elders or ancestors or issues at hand.[391]

A chicken (*au*) is slaughtered by having its head cut off, and left to die. The hole in which the headless chicken dies will reveal the person or the issue that is causing the sickness. "If it dies in one of the holes, it is understood that the sickness that is afflicting the victim is caused by the elder next to the hole or from the side of the clan in which he comes."[392] If it dies in the middle hole or on the plat form, the sickness is considered to have been caused by spirits or another ritual is to be carried out.

[389] The "*larö"* tree is also used for marking graves, ownership of land and locations. Since the graves are located under it, it also becomes the place for the ritual of "*ori owiza*," that is, offering of the sacrifices to appease the dead. Cf. Betty Alimaru, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025; Florence Bakhita, *Interview*, Vurra Parish, 30/05/2025.

[390] Egidio Ramponi (1937), 853.

[391] Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025; Jennet Okudinia, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025; Santina Drabezu, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Prish 30/07/2025; Elario Bada, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 15/06/2025.

[392] Jovan Olea, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025; cf. Elario Bada, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 15/06/2025;

ii. *Andrike/Andrife* (Diviner Consultation)

In the ritual of "*andrike*" or "*andrife*," dry roots of elephant grass are rubbed against sorghum stock (*ececera*).[393] Sorghum is a symbol of resilience and growth. The one to perform this ritual is called "*andrife ndriipi*" (literally meaning, "the one who rubs the stick"). "*Andrife ndriipi*" is considered to be conversant with the spirits and the issues that afflict the clan. It is believed that he is endowed with knowledge by the ancestors who have chosen him for the purpose of diagnosing problems.[394] He/she knows the skills and the art of rubbing the instruments. In most cases, they are males. However, some women were known to possess divining skills.[395] The ritual of "*andrike"* or *"andrife"* is performed in the presence of the sick person or his guardian or an elder of the clan.[396]

Those who perform the ritual (*ba "andrife ndriipi 'dii*) used to be common and could be found nearly in every clan. Today, is ritual being performed clandestinely, since it is considered as divination, done by diviners (*ojoö*). Since the beginning of evangelization of the Lugbara, diviners (*ojoö*) have been included under the category of witchdoctors. According to John Mbiti, the term "witchdoctor" is a wrong nomenclature that herbalists and the traditional doctors have suffered from the European ethnologists and some African writers. He writes that: "witchdoctor is a term which should have been buried and forgotten forever."[397] Elizabeth Storer and Constanza Torre claim that the term "was introduced by missionaries at various junctures, even, non-Christian healers including prophets, diviners, elders, herbalist, and

[393] In some places in Lugbaraland, the instruments used are varied. Some used a small stick of ebony, measuring about eight inches long. The stick is smoothened with sharp knife, both ends are designed in oval shapes. Cf. Egidio Ramponi (1937), 850; Luciano Victor Aria, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 01/01/2025; Mary Abiria, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025.
[394] Cf. Lay Apostolate Leaders, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025; Michael Boo, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish 06/08/2025.
[395] Elena Eteko, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025; Regina Ewaru, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025.
[396] Cf. Betty Alimaru, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025.
[397] John Mbiti (1990), 2; Cf. Laurenti Magesa (1997), 209.

latterly Pentecostal preachers."[398] Although the services of the diviners are widely negativized, they are rampant in Arua Diocese and they are frequented by many people.[399]

It is the duty of the sick person or the guardian to go to consult the diviner. The ritual begins with the mentioning of the name of the agent believed to be responsible for the sickness. At the mention of the name, the diviner rubs the stock or stick. When the rubbing becomes hard with chirping sound, the responsible agent is said to have been discovered.[400] However, it is quite noticeable that the performer of the ritual relies on the narrative given to him by the sick person or his/her guardian. The results of this ritual are not always accurate since they are open to the conscious decision of the performer. He may give a positive result if he chooses to implicate one of his foes, or wants to extort some material payment for this ritual. After the ritual, "*andrife ndriipi*" prescribes the ceremonies for the healing or treatment of the sickness.[401] When the sick person is not satisfied with the results or the sickness persists, the guardian may perform another diagnostic ritual.

iii. *E'ya o'baza* (Seed Revelation)

The ritual of "*e'ya o'baza*" (literally meaning "placing of seeds") involves bursting of the seeds of "*e'ya"* tree on fire. The behaviour of the seed under the pressure of heat reveals the agent responsible for the sickness. A name is given to every seed. The name represents the

[398] Elizabeth Storer and Constanza Torre, "All in good faith?" An Ethno-historical analysis of the Local faith actors' involvement in the delivery of mental health interventions in northern Uganda," in *Transcultural Psychiatry*, Vol 60, 3 (2023): 514.

[399] Frequenting the services of the traditional healers is a phenomenon that is common in Sub-Saharan Africa. There are several reasons for this phenomenon. In comparison with biomedical services, traditional medicine and healing is in the vicinity of the people and less expensive. It is also more trusted than the biomedical services. In some areas, low level of formal education and rampart beliefs and practices of witchcraft fact make people to seek the services of traditional healers. Cf. Titus Apangu, Gordon Candini, Janet Abaru, Bosco Candia, Felix J. Okoth, Linda A. Atiku. Keon S. Griffith, M.H. Hayden, Emily Zielinski-Gutierez, Amy W. Schwtch, David W. McCormick, Paul S, Mead and Kersten J. Kugeler, "Engagement with Traditional Healers for Early Detections of Plagues in Uganda," in *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*, 105, 5 (2023): 1129; Elizabeth F. Msoka, et al (2025): 2.

[400] Michael Boo, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish 06/08/2025; Betty Alimaru, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025.

[401] Santina Drabezu, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025.

person or the spirit of the dead considered to be responsible for the sickness. The seeds are placed directly on fire or in potsherd which is them placed on fire. The seeds may be placed together or one at a time, and observed. If the seed explodes, it means the agent or person represented by the seed is not responsible. When it does not explode but burns smokishly (*nyiinyi*), it means the person is responsible.[402]

The ritual is performed by a specific elder or any person whose "hand is caught by the seed" (*'ba e'ya ni dri ni bi ra ni*).[403] Such persons are members of the same clan of the sick person. Other members of the clan may come to witness the "behavour" of the seeds.

The existence of "*e'ya"* tree from which the seeds are obtained could not be verified as most of the respondents could not identify the tree. They could only say that "the tree has now dried"[404] or "the seed was brought from a far."[405] Ramponi claims that the seeds "resemble small peas."[406] However, the study found out that the said seeds were actually seeds of marijuana or cannabis, locally known as "*nzai*."[407] When the thoroughly-dried seeds are exposed to fire or excessive heat, they do burst. One respondent observed that the traditional use of marijuana seeds for the Lugbara is for the ritual of "*e'ya o'baza*."[408]

In the diagnostic rituals, anointing is not performed, since the ritual is purely meant to determine the causes of the sickness. Once the cause has been established, the elders prescribe therapeutic rituals. The diviner or the one directing the "*e'ya o'baza"* ritual can also prescribe

[402] Kasto Adia, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025.
[403] Rufina Cazo, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[404] Kasto Adia, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025.
[405] Elina Eteko, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[406] Egidio Ramponi (1937), 850.
[407] Marijuana or cannabis refers to the dried leaves, flowers, stem and seeds of the *cannabis sativa* plant which contains compounds called cannabinoids. Cannabinoids have psychoactive mind-altering effects on mood, perception and memory. Cf. World Health Organization, *The Health and Social Effects of nonmedical Cannabis Use* (Switzerland: World Health Organization, 2016), 2. Retrieved from https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/7aade0eb-9852-49e8-bdd9-0bf59ba1deb4/content, (accessed 12/02/2026).
[408] Evaline Emvikia, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.

therapeutic rituals. Such rituals can be performed within communal setup or in a private ceremony involving the sick individual.

3.2.2.2 Therapeutic Rituals (*Rua Edeza*)

The term "therapeutic" is derived from the Greek "*therapeuen"* which means "to heal, cure, and restore to health."[409] Therapeutic rituals are directed towards the treating, curing and healing of the afflicted person. In Lugbarati, therapeutic rituals are called "*rua edeza*," that is, "cleansing of the body." The entire person is the subject of the cleansing (body, heart, spirit, and mind), although the term literally refers to the body.

When the sickness is perceived to have affected many people in the clan or the family, the entire territory where the clan is settled or the entire homestead of the sick person is cleansed. In this case, the ritual is referred to as "*angu edeza"* (cleansing of the territory). The concept of cleansing and repairing are both included in the verb "*ede*." The person or the territory is cleansed of sin, and sickness, which is considered to be a consequence of sin.

Therapeutic rituals may be performed immediately after determining the causes of sickness in the same gathering. They may also be performed in a separate gathering on a different day. Four forms of the therapeutic rituals do exist: "*tusu feza"* (saliva dispensation), "'*bulea'bulea"* (intrenching), "*ggu nyaza"* (unity of meat) and "*enyata nyiza"* (washing of poison).

i. *Tusu Feza* (Saliva Dispensation)

The ritual of "*tusu feza*," translated as "saliva dispensation," exists in two forms, depending on the diagnosed cause of the sickness. If the sickness is perceived to be caused by

[409] Joe Gulick, *Examination of Critical Greek Texts of the New Testament Through the Word Study of Therapeue Honours Thesis, Paper 362* (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Carnoande, 2013), 4. Retrieved from https://www.opensiu.litsiu.edu/uhp-thesis, (accessed 20/08/2025).

"*yiadro"* (water spirits), the sick person dispenses saliva on grass or a leaf that is plucked from the valley or bank of the river or stream. The saliva-socked grass or leaf is then returned to the valley or the place where it is perceived that the sick person met the "*yiadro*."[410] The sick person is then believed to recover immediately and be healed. Any person (child or adult) can go to fetch the grass or the leaf, and return it.

If the sickness is perceived to be caused by a witch or sorcerer who is known, he or she is told to dispense saliva to be taken to the sick person. Dispensing his or her saliva is a sign of a wish for good health. The saliva would be collected in empty bean pod or "*edoobi"* (leaves of black plum tree), and taken to smear the sick person. Filomena Feku claimed that: "the people of those days were ready to take any blame upon themselves, and would be ready to give their saliva."[411] If he or she is not at home, the handle of his tools of work (like hoe, hurrow, axe or machete) is wiped. In wiping, the saliva got and delivered to the sick person.[412] The saliva smeared on the hands, feet and head of the sick person.

ii. *'Bulea'bulea* (Intrenching)

'Bulea'bulea is a ritual mostly performed when the sick person is an infant. In some case, for an adult. *"'Bule"* (tunnel or trench of half a meter) is dug and covered with "*oluo pati*" (red-hot-poker tree). For the Lugbara, *"oluo pati*," botanically called "*erythinia Abyssinia,"*[413] stands as a symbol of life and resilience. This symbolism is drawn from the

[410] Cf. Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel, 08/08/2025; cf. Luciano Victor Aria, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 01/01/2025.
[411] Filomena Feku, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025.
[412] Cf. Carolina Baku, *Interviewed*, Pokea Parish, 05/08/2025.
[413] Cf. Samuel Baker Obakiro, Ambrose Kiprop, Elizabeth Kigundu, Isaa K'Owio, Mark Peter Odero, Scholastica Manyui, Timothy Omara, Jane Namukobe, Richard Oriko Owor, Yahaya Gavamukulya and Lydia Bunalema, "Traditional Medicinal uses, Phytoconstituents, Bioactive and Toxities of Erythrina Abyssinia Lam, ex DC (Fabaceae): Systematic Review," (2021). Retrieved from https://pmc.ncbi.gov>articles>pmc7952165, (accessed 22.08.2025); *Erythina Abyssinia Papilionaceae*. Retrieved from https://appsworldagroforestry>org.pdflip>ent, (accessed 22/08/2025).

capability of the stem of the tree to sprout when cut or after being burned by wild fire. Its thorny bark makes it be seen as a symbol of protection.[414]

The upper part of the tunnel is sprinkled with the blood of chicken. The blood of chicken is considered to have appeasing effect on the spirits. Sprinkling it on the trench appeases the spirits who in turn grant healing to the sick person. The sick child is passed under this tunnel, three times if a female, and four times if a male. The child is believed to recover and be healed automatically. If the patient is an adult, he is required to pass through the tunnel from one side to another, three times if a female, and four times if a male.[415]

The numerals three (3) and four (4) are significant in the Lugbara traditional rituals. Any ritual action would be repeated three times when the subject involved is a female, and four times if it is a male. Many adults, male or female were found of stating emphatically that: *"oku a'bi na, agupi a'bu su*," literally meaning, "women have three cultures, men have four cultures."[416] "*A'bi"* or "culture" refers to numerical way of assigning symbolism to both sexes. The assignment is based on Lugbara histology. The Lugbara believe that women have three tissues, and men four tissues.[417] In the numerology of African spirituality, number three (3) stands for creativity, imagination and evolution, gateway, communication and transformation. Number four symbolizes completion and stability.[418] In order to experience holistic healing, any ritual must be performed according the cultural numeral assigned to the sex of the person involved.

[414] Isaac Riyo, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[415] Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Orugbo Chapel, 08/08/2025.
[416] Cf. Kassiano Obatre, *Interviewed*, Logiri Parish, 26/12/2025; Andrew Tiyo, *Interviewed*, Oluko Parish, 16/06/2025.
[417] Cf. Rufina Cazo, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[418] Cf. Brogan Asanee, "Numerology in African Spiriuality" (October 1, 2023). Retrieved from https://.wwwasanee.com>Blog>African-Cosmology, (accessed 02/11/2025).

iii. *Ggu Nyaza* (Unity of Meat)

The ritual of "*ggu nyaza*" involves communal eating and drinking in order to grant healing to the sick person. "*Ggu"* the Lugbara word for fever. "*Nyaza"* means "eating." Literally, "*ggu nyaza"* means "eating of the fever." In the act of eating meat, unity among the living members of the lineage is reconstructed. Communion and reconciliation are achieved. The unity between the living and the dead, who are also participants, is also reaffirmed. On this account, the ritual is referred to as "unity of meat" (*tiecita zani).*[419] Where the members are called to partake only of local alcoholic brew (*kpete*), it is called "unity of alcohol" (*tiecita ewani).*[420]

The "*ggu nyaza"* ritual has four elements. These are: presentation of the animal, ritual address, ritual smearing and communal eating. In the presentation, the animal for the slaughter is led around the sick person or his/her house.[421] It is presented to the those who are around and to the dead. The animal is led around the sick person, three or four times, depending on the sex of the person. This animal, in most cases a goat, should have been chosen from among the herds of the sick person or his/her guardian. The sick person lays his hands on it. If the sick person is impeded due to the gravity of the sickness, the elders present lay hands on the animal.[422] The act of leading the animal around the sick person brings bring the living into direct relationship with the spirits of the dead and God. During the process of being led around, when the animal defecates, it is considered a bad sign. If it urinates, it is considered that the animal has been accepted by the dead or God, and is fit for the performance of the ritual.[423]

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[419] Micheal A. Boo, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025; cf. Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel 08/08/2025.

[420] Santino Olea, *Interviewed*, Urugbo Chapel 08/08/2025.

[421] John Middleton had termed this element as consecration: "in the context of its being set aside, promised to the ghosts, and be becoming sacred (…). Consecration is in two parts: the laying on of hands by the elder and the subsequent acceptance of the beast by God and the ghosts." John Middleton (1998), 89.

[422] Cf. Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish 06/08/2025; Cf. Michael Boo, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish 08/08/2025. Cf. Jovan Olea, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, 01/08/2025; Cf. Josephine O'daru, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.

[423] Cf. Jovan Olea, *Interviewed*, Omi Chape, 01/08/2025; Josephine O'daru, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.

The animal is then slaughtered as it is held on the ground, and its throat is cut with a knife. The blood is collected in a pot. The slaughtered animal is skinned, and the carcass is carefully cut up into pieces. Elders normally stand around as the meat is being chopped into pieces. The chopped pieces of meat are arranged in three portions. The first portion is to be placed for the dead (*'ba 'bua*/ '*ba'bulea*) on their shrines. The second portion is to be cooked and consumed by members of the gathering. The third portion, which remains uncooked, is sent to far relatives who may not be present.[424] The contents of the stomach are squeezed into the pot and cooked together with the blood.[425] The cooking is done under *larö* (fig tree).[426]

As the meat is being cooked, an address is delivered to the gathering by an elder. The address presents the genealogy of the sick person and the general history of his or her lineage. It also brings out the possible words of complaints or annoyance that could have contributed to causing the sickness. In the address, the members of the congregation, particularly the youthful one, are admonished not to transgress the norms of the society.[427]

While delivering the address, the speaker holds some leaves of "*larö"* (fig tree) or "*edoo"* (black plum tree) in his hands. The Lugbara consider these leaves symbols of the spiritual and mystical powers of full adult status. They also demonstrate peoples' love for the ancestral spirits.[428] Each elder, while speaking, spits on the leaves to show that his heart is pure. Spitting on the leaves also symbolizes that he has reconciled, and desires the healing of the sick person. The leaves with the saliva are thrown away to show that the evil and the sickness have been taken away.[429] Sometimes the elder who speaks may hold his walking stick, instead of leaves. He spits on the ground to show that his heart is pure.

[424] Cf. Evelyn Emvikia, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025; Cf. John Middleton (1998), 120.
[425] This practice is more common among the Ayivu clans of the Lugbara.
[426] Cf. Betty Alimaru, Mary Abiria, and Veronica Endrecia, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 31/07/2025.
[427] Cf. Evelyn Emvikia (2025), 30.
[428] Cf. John Middleton (1998), 116.
[429] Cf. Luciano Victor Aria, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 01/08/2025.

After the address, the sick person is smeared with the blood of the animal by an elder. He or she is smeared on the face, chest and shoulders. The blood is also smeared on the thresholds of all the huts in the homestead. The smearing is followed by eating of the food as a sign of communion. Every present is expected to partake in the eating of the food. The sick person is also expected to taste the food, though his or she may sit separately from the rest of partakers.[430] The communion in the sharing of food is an essential aspect of the re-establishment of harmony that has been disrupted by sickness. At physical level, the communion is amongst the living. At mystical level, the communion is between the living and the dead (or ancestors). After the communal eating, the sick person is expected to recover.

iv. *Enyata Nyiza* (Poison Scrubbing)

In the ritual of "*enyata nyiza*," translated as "poison scrubbing," the body of the sick person is washed with herbs. The ritual is performed by women who are believed to have special knowledge of medicinal plants. They "wash" poisons (*enyata*) that are believed to be haven been thrown into the air, or along the path of the victim.[431]

There are no special words that the women say when they are scrubbing the poison. They only converse about the ordinary events and the affairs of the community.[432] These individuals are also understood to be the traditional ministers of anointing in times of sickness. It is commonly in the ritual of "*enyata nyiza*" that oils are used for anointing.[433]

[430] Cf. Carolina Bako, *Interviewed*, Pokea Parish, 05/08/2025.
[431] Cf. Adroa B. Samuel, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 08/08/2025.
[432] Cf. Regina Ewaru, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 08/08/2025.
[433] The anointing use to be done with soil. A specific type of soil called "*erakaa"* would be extracted from the river bank or streams where the sick person is believed to have contracted the sickness. Sometimes "*erakaa"* would be mixed with oil, especially in the healing rituals that involved two or few congregants. Some respondents claim that "*erakaa"* was also used to anoint children who were noted to be possessing kingly qualities. They were destined to be chiefs of Lugbara clans. This however does not have historical basis as Lugbara chiefs were an invention from outside. Cf. James Eria, *Interviewed*, Bethany Centre, 28/07/2025; Samuel B. Adroa, *Interview*, Ocodri Parish, 07/08/2025.

"Anointing" is denoted by three Lugbarati verbs. These verbs are "*efitaa*," "*o'bataa*" and "*triitaa*."[434] "*Efitaa*" means smearing, greasing or dubbing the body with a substance, for example oil or cow dung, or soap. It may be for cosmetic purposes. "O'*bataa*" means placing or dropping a substance on or in particular spots of the body, for example, in case of treatment of wound, or any infection. In the ritual of "saliva dispensation," the term commonly use is "*o'bataa,*" for example, "*tusu o'baa ruatia*", meaning, "placing saliva on body." The term is also used in medical contexts. *"Triitaa*" means "rubbing with," for example, with ochre or oil. It can also mean "scrubbing" or "curing."[435] When the subject is a human being, it is translated as "anointing." "*Triitaa*" bears religious or ceremonial connotations. It is therefore more appropriate to be used in the context where oil is used in the healing rituals.

3.3 Oils Used in the Healing Rituals

This section describes the oils that are used in the Lugbara traditional healing rituals. In Lugbarati, oil is known as "*odu*." There is no precise definition of "*odu"* in Lugbarati. However, "*odu*" is described as wet, greasy and sticky substance (*yiru, tipatipa*). Oil for anointing is described as "*odu 'ba triizö ri*." Oil is distinguished from fat (*oso).* "*Oso"* is oil which has absorbed air (*oli*) and become solidified (*oliza*). "*Odu"* is mostly used as food and fuel. However, its use features distinctly in the healing rituals of traditional nature. The oils used in the rituals are categorized as plant oils, animal oils and mineral oils.

3.3.1 Plant Oils

The plant oils are obtained from indigenous plants that are found in many areas of the Lugbaraland. Three plant oils feature prominently. These include: shea oil that is locally known

[434] The roots of these verbs are "*efii*" (meaning to smear*),* "o*'baa*" (to place or drop) and *"trii*" (to rub or cure or scrub), Cf. John Pasquale Crazzolara (1960), 230.
[435] Cf. John Pasquale Crazzolara (1960), 357.

as "*kömara*"; balanites oil, that is also known as "*lögba odu";* and castor oil also called "*olu odu*." Other oil yielding plants that are not indigenous to the Lugbara are Sesame and Sunflower. Oils extracted from them are generally called "*anyu odu"* (simsim oil).

3.3.1.1 *Kömara Odu* (Shea Oil)

"Kömara odu," also known as*"awa odu,*" is extracted from the fruits of shea tree (*kömara pati*)."[436] Shea tree is botanically called *Vitellaria Paradoxa.*[437] It is an indigenous tree growing in the grasslands of West Nile and Northern Uganda. It is also found in many countries in Sudan Savanna Zone. The Sudan Savana Zone extends from West African Countries of Guinea and Senegal to greater Sudan and to Western Ethiopia and Uganda.[438]

In Lugbaraland, the tree is found in Aringa, Arivu, Ocoko, Terego, Logiri and Madi-Okolo. The tree is known for its longevity and resilience to heat and destruction. The tree has been characterized by the World Agroforestry Centre as a "vulnerable tree species."[439] This is due to its being at the high risk of exploitation for firewood and charcoal by the people in the surrounding areas. The fruit consists of a thin and nutritious pulp that surrounds thick nutritious seed. The pulp is also a rich source of protein, especially when ripen.[440] Due to its commercial

[436] *Pati* is the word for tree. The pronunciation of the *kömura* various according to the different dialects of *Lugbarat*i. Some call it *kömara*, others *kömire*, others *kömere*. The name awa is heard among the Lugbara of Madi-Okollo. Among the Luo of northern Uganda (Langi, Alur and Acholi), it is called "*moya"*.

[437] cf. Gbèdotchitché Gwladys Azongnide, Christine Ouinsavi1, Valérien Zinsou and Bienvenu Sourou, "Scientific Knowledge on Vitellaria paradoxa, A Vulnerable Species: State of Research Works and Perceptive," in *International Journal of Research Studies in Bioscience (IJRSB)*, Volume 9, Issue. 1 (2021): 40. Retrieved from https://www.arcjournals.org, (accessed 15/08/2025).

[438] Cf. Alice Muchugi, Clement Okia, Joyce Chege and Francis Omujal, "Oils from Tress in East African Drylands," in Jan de Leeuw, Mary Njenga, Bob Wagner and Miyuki Iiyama, (eds.), *Treesilience: an Assessment of the Resilinece Provided by Trees in the Drylands in Eastern Africa* (Nairobi: The World Agroforestry Centre, 2014), 61; cf. Gbèdotchitché Gwladys Azongnide *et al* (2021): 40.

[439] World Agroforestry Centre, *Wild Foods for Healthy Diets, Healthy Landscape and Improved Incomes- FAO-ICRAF Initiative in West Nile Sub-Region, Uganda* (Kampala: World Agroforestry, 2019): 7. Retrieved from https://www.cifor-icraf.org/publications/downloads/Publications/PDFS/RP20042.pdf, (accessed 14/01/2026).

[440] The other parts of the tree like the leaves, roots and bark are used in a variety of ways. For example, they leaves are used to treat stomach pain, headache and as eyebath. The ground roots and bark are used to treat diarrhea, jaundice, stomach ache and dysentery. It is also used in the treatment of epilepsy.cf. Gbèdotchitché Gwladys Azongnide *et al* (2021): 40.

viability, many processing industries have been established in Lugbaraland for a largescale production of the shea oil.

The shea oil is characterized as an edible vegetable oil. Because of this edibility, the oil is used in cooking and preparation of dishes in many Lugbara households. John Bosco Okullu, *et al*, identify two fatty acids that make the oil nutritionally viable. They state that:

> Linoleic acid value content of 6-8% makes shea oil a moderate source of essential fatty acids in the human diet. In addition, linoleic acid can be used to synthesize arachidonic acid and other biologically important compounds in most mammals including humans (…). The fact that the oleic fatty acid values in shea oil are higher than in soya bean oil (25%) and palm oil (36%) makes shea oil a good source of poly-unsaturated fatty acids too.[441]

The fatty acids are identified are: linoleic acid and oleic. In the area of cosmetics, mothers use shea oil to smoothen the skins of the babies. Adults also use shear oil to smoothen and shine their skin, in case it is rough. In its physico-chemical characteristics, colour of shear oil ranges from "orange to orange-yellow."[442] It also has a low viscosity (iodine number of 2.4-2.8), making it a non-drying oil.

In Lugbara traditional healing, shea oil is used in the treatment of wounds, body aches, unhealthy skin conditions, eye infections, body swellings and oral herpes. Several respondents reported that shea oil is placed on wounds or burns to aid the curing and healing process.[443] Among some Lugbara in Ayivu area, an ulcerous wound called "*gbogbo*" is treated with shea oil. The application of the oil on the wound provides a cool conducive environment for quick healing process.[444] Skin infections like scabies are also treated using the shea oil. Some diviners use the "*kumara*" oil to treat dryness of skin.[445] In case of eye infections, commonly known

[441] John Bosco Okullo, Omujal F., Agea J. G., Vizi P. C, Namutebi A, Okello J. B. A, and S. A, Nyanzi, "Physico-Chemical Characterisits of Shea Butter (Vitellaria Paradoxa C. F. Guetern) Oil from the Shear Districts of Uganda," in *African Journal of food Agriculture Nutrition and Development*, Volume 10, No. 1 (January 2010): 9. Retrieved from https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajfand/article/view/51484, (accessed 14/01/2025).
[442] John Bosco Okullo et al (2010), 6.
[443] Cf. Filista Depia, Jane Bacia, Eyotaru Erita, Anguparu Erita and Sabela Avako, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.
[444] Cf. Evelyn Emvikia, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[445] Cf. Tereza Anguparu Ezama (Respondent, Lodonga Parish, 30/03/2025).

as" *wolo*," the eyes are washed with shea oil. The eye is washed three days or four days, depending on the sex of the patient.[446]

Among the Lugbara living in Madi-Okollo (Ullepi), shea oil is rubbed on the body swelling (*opipia*), to make it "rot." In the treatment of oral herpes (*e'bi azo*), the mouth is smeared with the oil. Shea oil is also used in washing body aches (*eseseva* or *awala*) that are believed to be caused by evil persons. Such evil persons are said to cause body aches by stepping on the victim's shadow. Shea oil is poured in water, and the body is washed with the water.[447]

The therapeutic and ritualistic use of shea oil is also common in the traditional washing of poisonous substances (*enyata* or *adraka*) from the body. [448] One who is infected by the substances shows symptoms of general malaise, fever and headache. The beliefs and practices of washing "*enyanyaa*" or "*adraka*" are common among the Lugbara of Terego, Aringa and Ocoko. Simon Obini describes that: "The shea oil is mixed with other herbs and smeared on the head of the body. The victim is anointed with the mixture."[449] Although the use of shea oil is a general knowledge common to many people, some people are considered to be specialists in its use for healing. These are the people designated as traditional healers. They are mainly women of above fifty years of age.[450]

The process of preparing shea oil is tedious and laborious. No special persons are designated to prepare the oil, "but whoever's hand is caught by it can prepare."[451] However, it is mostly women who collect the fallen fruits, and locally process them into oil. The process of extracting the oil begins with the gathering of the fruits which drop under the tree. The

[446] Cf. Filista Depia, Jane Bacia, Eýotaru Erita, Anguparu Erita and Sabela Avako, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.
[447] Cf. Josephine O'daru and Rofina Cazo, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[448] Simon Obini, I*nterviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[449] Cf. Simon Obini, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[450] Cf. Regina Ewaru, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025.
[451] Cf. Lydia Ayikoru, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.

process from the beginning is surrounded by superstitions. Filista Depia, who has been processing the oil for the last 60 years, habours such superstitions. She says that: "The fruits drop by themselves, and no one is to pick or pluck from the tree. Doing so will suppress the oil."[452] For some respondents, the oil is extracted when there is sunshine, and the one extracting must be alone. There must be no other person nearby, lest the process be interrupted.[453] The pulp and the kernel are removed from the collected fruits to expose the seeds. The seeds are thoroughly tried and roasted. The roasted seeds are pound and squeezed to obtain the oil. This process of preparation is so rudimentary that the quantity of the oil obtained is so small. Sometimes the oil gives purgent smell which makes its use to be resented by many people.[454]

3.3.1.2 *Lögba Odu* (Balanites Oil)

"*Lögba odu"* is obtained from the kernel of the fruit of desert dates, known by its botanical name "*Balanites Aegyptiaca*." On this account, it is dubbed as "balanites oil." The botanical name of the tree is symbolic of the healing and refreshing characteristic of the tree, its fruits and the resultant oil. "*Balanites aegyptiaca"* is composed of a Greek word "*balanos,"* and epithet "*aegyptiaca*." "*Balanos"* means "an acorn." Acorn is a symbol of fertility, growth, fresh start and new life.[455] From the seed, the tree can grow to attain a height of six to ten meters, with strong tap root. The tree can yield abundant fruits in a single season (in West Nile this season is from July to October). Hence, the seed has potential for great growth and prosperity.

The epithet *aegyptiaca* was given on account of its long history of association with Egypt. Julissa Rojas-Sandavol states that: "It has probably been cultivated in Egypt for more

[452] Filista Depia, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.
[453] Cf. Betty Adakuru, Mary Abiria, and Betty Alimaru, I*nterviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025
[454] Cf. Lydia Ayikoru, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.
[455] Cf. Maciej Waclauric, "The Symbolic Meaning of the Acorn- a Possible Interpretation," in *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 19 (December 2015): 260-261.

than 4000 years, stones of the fruits were placed on the votive offerings in the tombs of the Twelfth Dynasty."[456] This means that it also had religious uses. With its multiple branches, the tree has full foliage that enables it to flourish and survive in both tropical areas and hot or dry environments.[457]

In Lugbarati, "*Balanites Aegyptiaca*" tree is known as "*lögba"* or *"eto*." The oil is also called *"eto odu*." In Lugbaraland, the tree is found in Aringa, Terego, Ocoko and Madi-Okollo. In other parts of Uganda, the tree known by various local names: "*ecomai"* (Ateso); "*ekorete"* (N'gakarimojong); "*thoo"* (Alur); "*comiandet"* (Sebei); "*zomai"* (Lugishu), "*musongolee"* (Luganda), "*mutete"* (Runyoro), and "*ekorete"* (Ateso).[458]

The balanites oil is extracted from the outer fleshy part (mesocarp) of the fruit. The fruit contains high oil content.[459] The oil is golden-yellow in colour. In its chemical components, the oil is composed of "triglycerides with small quantities of diglycerides, phytosterols, sterolster and tocopherols."[460] The oil has several uses in the ordinary life of the people. It is used for cooking food for human consumption. It also used for cosmetic purpose by girls and women.[461] In some places, especially outside Lugbaraland, balanites oil is used as fuel in lamps.[462]

The use of "*löbga odu"* in traditional healing was reported more common among the Lugbara in the lowlands (Aringa, Terego, Rhino Camp and Madi-Okollo). The oil is used for treating stomach pain and poisonous infections. To treat stomach infections, it is administered

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[456] Julissa Rojas-Sandavol, "*Balanites aegyptiaca* (simple-thorned torchwood)," in *CABI Compendium*, 2016. Retrieved from https://www.cabidigitallibrary.ord/doi/full/10.079.compedium.8311, (accessed 20/08/2025).

[457] Cf. Haftu g. Alemayehu, "Physico-Chemical Characterization and Extraction of Oil from *Balanites Aegyptiaca* Plant (Seed)," in *World Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, Volume 4, Issue 11 (2015): 1723. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344784778, (accessed 14/01/2026).

[458] Cf. Clement A. Okia, *Balanites aegyptiaca: A resource for Improving Nutrition and Income of Dryland Communities in Uganda* (Bangor: Bangor University, 2010), 24; Haftu G. Alemayehu (2015): 1723.

[459] Cf. Alice Muchugi, et *al* (2014), 6o; Cf. Clement A. Okia (2010), 37.

[460] Clement A. Okia (2010), 37

[461] Cf. Sunday Pariyo, *Interviewed*, Omugo Parish, 12/6/2025; Cf. Elario Bada, *Interviewed*, Ombaci Parish, 15/6/2025.

[462] Cf. Clement A. Okia (2010), 37.

orally by drinking. In the ritual of "*enyata nyiza*," the oil is poured in water that is used for the washing of the sick person. It is also smeared on the face, chest, shoulders, and stomach of the person.[463]

The smearing of the specific mentioned body parts is rich in symbolism. The face is the sight of first encounter between the persons, and the first place "where the poison lands."[464] Washing the face with the oil is to remove the headache and give a clear sight to the sick person against future infections. The chest is the location and residence of the spirit or soul (*orindi*). Smearing the chest signifies strengthening of the spirit. Strong shoulders and limps are signs of strength, agility and energy. They are washed or smeared so that the sick person regains his strength and energy to participate in community activities. For the Lugbara, participation in community activities is a sign of a healthy life. No special words were reported to be said when washing or anointing the sick person, except ordinary conversations that is held between the patient and the person who anoints.

"*Lögba odu*" is also used for protecting children from evil intentions directed to them by some people who possess the ability to incite bad omen to them.[465] The children who are smeared with it are considered to be safe from malevolent attacks.

The value of the "*lögba odu"* was discovered by the missionaries who came to Lugbaraland. A Comboni missionary priest, Fr. Bernardo Sartori (1897-1983),[466] who worked in Lugbaraland, was said to have carried the "*lögba odu"* with him.[467] However, it is not clear whether he used the oil to anoint the sick persons, or used it as a comestible. Since he was

[463] Cf. Terezina Oleru Gasper, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025
[464] Rufina Cazu, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[465] Cf. Florence Amadroru, Paulina, Aluma and Onziga, *Interviewed*, Omugo Parish, 12/6/2025.
[466] Fr. Bernardo Sartori came to Arua in 1934. He worked in several places in Lugbaraland. He died at Ombaci on 3rd April, 1983. The cause for his canonization was opened in 1998. On 13th December, 2021, a decree regarding his heroic virtues was promulgated by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. Cf. La Salandra (2004), 46-47; "Promulgation of Decrees of the Congregation of Saints, 13.12.2021", in *Bolletino Sala Stampa della Santa Sede*, (2021). Retrieved from https://press.vatican.va>content>publico>2021/12/13, (accessed 15/08/2025).
[467] Cf. Sunday Pariyo, *Interviewed*, Omugo Parish, 12/6/2025.

considered to be a pious person whose prayers were answered, it is likely that he anointed some sick with "*lögba oil"* and healed them.

The processing of the balanites oil is still being done by local elderly women, using rudimentary tools. The women attach mysterious believed about it, just as do for the preparation of shea oil. They believe that one preparing it must be alone, in the bush; or must meet no one when going to prepare the oil.[468]

3.3.1.3 *Olu Odu* (Castor Oil)

"Olu odu" is derived from the seeds of castor plant, scientifically called "*ricinus communis.*" The word "*ricinus"* is a Latin word which means "tick."[469] It is named so because the pods have soft spikes resembling ticks. Upon maturity and drying, the spikes become hard. The plant belongs to species of "*communis"* (common).[470] Castor plant varies in growth habit and appearance. The foliage and the stems may present different colours ranging from "light-green to dark-red or purple."[471] Due to its explosive mode of seed dispersion, castor plant can have uneven coverages of areas.

In Lugbaraland, castor plant is common, growing in homesteads and areas where goats and cows are tethered. Other parts of the plant like the leaves were used in the protection of premature babies. This is on account of the leaves having smooth texture. Locally processed oil from the plant is sometimes uses for smearing babies.[472] Samuel Mundua claims that despite its toxicity, castor oil is the best anti-fungal oil. He argues that: "Despite it being toxic, it is considered to the best anti-fungal oil in the world. It is used for treating athletes' feet; it can

[468] Cf. Sharon Adroko, Sarah Drijaru, Alice Driciru and Loyce Candiru, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.
[469] Cf. Salihu Z. Bolaji, Gana K. Andrew, and Apeyor O. Benson, "Castor oil plant (Ricinus Communis L.): Botany, Ecology and Uses," in *International Journal of Sciences and Research*, Volume 3, Issue 5 (2014):1333.
[470] Salihu Z. Bolaji *et al* (2014): 1333.
[471] Cf. Salihu Z. Bolaji *et al* (2014): 1333.
[472] Cf. Ayikoru Lydia, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.

also be used for treating patches created by ringworms, and also for treating constipation."[473] The use of castor oil in Lugbara traditional healing rituals is not pronounced, except in a few cases where it is to "wash poison."[474]

3.3.1.4 *Anyu Odu* (Sesame Oil/Simsim Oil)

"Anyu odu" is extracted from sesame seeds, commonly known as "simsim." The Lugbara call seeds "*anyu*." Sesame is botanically called *sesamum indicum L*.[475] Sesame is one oil seed crops grown various parts of the world for thousands of years.[476] In many households of the Lugbara, sesame is grown on small scales as food crop. It is predominantly in form of paste, after grinding for cooking dishes. The "*anyu odu,"* which is purchase from the markets, is used also for cooking.

In other areas, Jane Muthoni and Hussein Shimelis have noted that the oil from sesame seeds is used cosmetics and traditional medicines.[477] The oil is considered rich in fatty acids, making it one of the optimal edible oils. The fatty acids identified in the oil are linoleic acid, oleic acid, palmitic acid and stearic acid.[478] The fatty acids are vital for human health. The has been observed to have a long-shelf life, hence it can be stored for many months.

On account of its increasing ubiquity, the "*anyu odu*" has come to be used in some Lugbara traditional healing rituals. This is in cases where shea oil or balanites oil is not at hand. It is applied on swellings on skin to aid the process of curing. During the pilot study in

[473] Samuel Mundua, *Interviewed*, Kuluva Hospital, 02/08/2025.
[474] Abinadab Drasiku, *Interviewed*, Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025; cf. Ayikoru Lydia, *Interviewed*, Ullepi Parish, 27/07/2025.
[475] Cf. Cosmas Wacal, Daniel Basalirwa, Walter Okello-Anyanga, Marius Flavian Malingumu, Caroline Namirembe, and Richard Malingumu, "Analysis of Sesame Seed Production and Export Trends: Challenges and Strategies Towards Increasing Production," in *OCL* 28, 4 (2021): 2. Retrieved from https://www.ocl-journal.org/articles/ocl/full.html/2021/01/ocl/200092.html, (accessed 10/02/2026).
[476] Cf. Jane Muthoni and Hussein Shimelis, "Production of Minor Tropical Oil Crops in Africa: Case of Sesame (Sesamum Indicum L.)," in Australian Journal of Crop Sciences, Vol 19, 9 (2025): 825. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.21475 AJCS.25.19.7, (accessed 06/06/2025).
[477] Cf. Jane Muthoni and Hussein Shimelis (2025): 817.
[478] Cf. Jane Muthoni and Hussein Shimelis (2025): 817; Cosmas Wacal *et al* (2021): 2.

December 2024, it was found out that the oil from "*ocaoca"* was used by some people in the households to anoint the sick. "*Ocaoca*" is plant oil extracted from cooking sesame paste.[479]

3.3.2 Animal Oils

The animal oils are extracted from the milk or fat of both domestic and wild animals. The animal oils that are used in Lugbara traditional healing rituals are python oil, known as "*ara odu*," and butter oil, locally called "*boota.*"

3.3.2.1 Ara Adu (Python Oil)

"Ara odu" (python oil) is liquefied fat extracted from python (*ara*). The python oil is normally obtained from the hunters who have the audacity to kill giant snake. In Lugbaraland, pythons inhabit bushy areas that are less populated like the Aringa area, and swamps along River Nile.[480] The python oil is commonly found with the Lugbara people living in those places. The hunters sell the oil to some traditional healers.[481]

In an earlier study about the Lugbara illness beliefs and sickness, Virginia Lee Barnes-Dean observed that the Lugbara use python oil in the treatment of skin rashes (*ayiribe*) and epilepsies *(edia*).[482] This was confirmed by some respondents who reported that python oil is used in treating skin rashes, burns, wounds and scabies.[483] It is rubbed on the person's body. In the treatment of epilepsies, the carcass of python is cooked, and the resultant oil or fat is

[479] Cf. Filomena Feku, *Interviewed*, 01/08/2024.
[480] Herpetologists have identified the python species inhabiting East and West Africa as "*python sebae* "or African rock python. Its habitats include arid savanna and warm forested areas, including swamps. Cf. Krystal A. Tolley and Graham J. Alexander, "Into Africa: The Biogeography of the Genus Python in Africa," in *Frontiers of Biogeography* 18 (2025): 2; Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/392568453_Into_Africa_The_biogeography_of_the_genus_Python_in_Africa, (accessed 06/06/205; Pham Thi Quyen and Le Than Tan Quoc, "Evaluation of Physicochemical and Biological Properties of Python Fat (Python bivittatus)," in *Korean Journal of Food Preservation* 30, 5 (2023): 759.
[481] Cf. Dralema Gideon (Respondent, Odravu Parish, 30/08/2025).
[482] Cf. Virginia Lee Barnes-Dean, "Lugbara Illness Beliefs and Social Change," in *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 56, no. 3 (1986): 345.
[483] Cf. Madelena Adraki (Respondent, Odravu Parish, 15/08/2025).

given to the epileptic person to drink. Other respondents reported that the python oil is drunk in order to treat some stomach complaints.[484]

3.3.2.2 *Boota* (Butter Oil)

"Boota" is Lugbara word for "butter oil," which is made from milk. The oil is also known as "*tioso*" or "*ti odu*," literally meaning "cow fat" or "cow oil." The oil is extracted by allowing the milk to ferment in earthen pot or *"kere*" for three or more days. The oil would then be decanted and stored in a separate container. The butter oil would be eaten and sometimes used in traditional healing. The use of butter oil was common when the Lugbara kept large numbers of livestock. It has virtually vanished, and milk has become a luxury.

In the Lugbara traditional healing rituals, "*boota*" is used in treating wounds. During the ritual of "*andrife*," the sorghum stock is rubbed with butter oil.[485]

3.3.3 Mineral Oils

The common mineral oils in Lugbaraland are those which have been imported for domestic and industrial use. They include: kerosene, motor oil, petrol and diesel. Some of them have been used in traditional healing rituals. Notable among those used are kerosene, called in Lugbarati as "*tara odu*," and motor oil, known locally as *"wailo*."

3.3.3.1 *Tara Odu* (Kerosene)

"*Tara odu"* or "*kaduma odu,"* literally means "lamp oil" or kerosene. "*Kaduma*" is a locally made lamp (*tara*). The lamps are made of a vessel, which can be filled with kerosene, and a wick which is lit to create lighting. Kerosene, derived from the Greek "*kerosalaion"*

[484] Cf. Rufina Cazu, *Interviewed,* Ocoko Parish, 02/08/2025.
[485] Cf. Betty Alimaru, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025; Carolina Baku, *Interviewed*, Pokea Parish, 05/08/2025; Gift Andiyo, *Interviewed*, 05/08/2025.

meaning "wax oil," is produced from petroleum through fractional distillation. Kerosene was invented by American physician and geologist Abraham Gesner (born: 1797 -died: 1864) in 1846 from coal. Later, scientists began to produce kerosene from petroleum.[486]

The use of kerosene among the Lugbara began concurrently with its introduction in other countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa. Paul G. Munro, *et al*, associate the use of kerosene on the African continent with the coming of the colonial actors. They write that: "It appears that in Africa kerosene lamps and fuel were first imported to Africa on the large scale by the colonial actors in the late 1800s" and early 1900s."[487] Today, many households in Lugbaraland still rely on the use of kerosene for their lighting needs.

Kerosene has been used in some Lugbara traditional healing rituals, although its primary use is in the households is for lighting. Among the Lugbara of Logiri, kerosene is used in the washing of "*tongotongo.*" "*Tongotongo*" is an infection believed to be caused by witches and sorcerers.[488] Leaves of some trees and plants (eucalyptus, blackjack, grass, *et cetera*) that are considered to be medicinal are gathered, and boiled. Kerosene is then poured into the concoction, and the sick person is scrubbed with it. Sometimes, after the scrubbing, the body of the sick person would be smeared with the kerosene oil.[489] The researcher observed that jigger infestation is also treated with kerosene. The oil is dropped in the body parts inhabited by jiggers.

[486] Cf. Emma Olsson and Eric Stenemo, *Environmental and Health Impact when Replacing Kerosene Lamps with Solar Lanterns: A Study on Global Warming Potential and Household Air Pollution* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 2018), 5.

[487] Paul G. Munro, Shanil Somarakoon, and Greg A. van der Horst, "African energy poverty: a moving target," in *Environment Research Letters* 15 104059 (2020): 3. Retrieved from https://www.iopscience.iop>articles, (accessed 21/08/2025).

[488] Cf. Mariana Agazu, *Interviewed*, Logiri Parish, 03/08/2025; Festus Angua'bayo, *Interviewed*, Ediofe Parish, 02/01/2026.

[489] Cf. Jino Ejua, *Interviewed*, Logiri Parish, 03/08/2025.

3.3.3.2 *Wailo* (Motor Oil)

"*Wailo*" or motor oil is a lubricant used in internal combustion engine to reduce friction and wear between moving parts. Motor oil, sometimes simply called "engine oil," typically consists of base oil, and is enhanced with additives (detergents, dispersants and viscosity improvers).[490] It not clear when the encounter of the Lugbara with motor oil started. However, mechanics who worked in the mission stations could have popularized its used for treating sicknesses.

In the Lugbara traditional healing rituals, motor oil is mixed with roots of other plants for treating poison, wounds and skin infections. This was mostly done in the early 1970s as reported by Virginia Barnes-Dean. He states that: "the roots of a tree called "*isisi"* is pound in motor oil, and rubbed on the person's body once a day for three days." [491] Barnes-Dean also reports that "motor oil mixed with *sendi aro*" would be rubbed on incisions made on "writes, shoulders, ankles and temple."[492] These could not be confirmed during the field study as those consulted expressed ignorance. It was rather observed was that "*wailo"* is used in the treatment of the fungal skin infections known as "*munu*." "*Munu*" causes reddish, itchy and ring-shaped rashes on the skin, especially around the neck and the chest. The oil is rubbed on the affected spot. Such use is being discouraged by the health experts due to the hazardous effects of motor oil on the human body and the environment. Fresh or used motor oil may cause corrosion of the skin.[493]

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[490] Cf. *Oil Compositions and Additives*. Retrieved from https://penriteoil.com.au/knowledge-centre/Oil%20Composition%20and%20Additives/44/oil-composition/168, (accessed 10/12/2025).

[491] Virginia Lee Barnes-Dean (1986): 345.

[492] Virginia Lee Barnes-Dean (1986): 345.

[493] Cf. Wasiu Olalekan Akintunde, Ojo A. Olugbenga, Ogundipe O. Olufemi, "Some Adverse Effects of Used Engine Oil (Common Waste Pollutant) On Reproduction of Male Sprague Dawley Rats," in *Open Access Macedonian Journal of Medical Sciences*, 3,1 (2025), 46-51. Retrieved from https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4877787/pdf/OAMJMS-3-46.pdf, (accessed 10/12/2025); *Used Engine Oil* (17 September, 2025). Retrieved from https://www.hse.gov.uk/mvr/topics/oil.htm, (accessed 10/12/2025).

Plant oils are dominant in the traditional rituals. Of these plant oils, "*kömara odu*" and "*lögba odu*" are mostly used. The superstitious beliefs surrounding the preparation of the oils are meant to create a sense of mystery in the preparation and the use of the oil. The oils are accorded careful and secure custody.

3.4 Traditional Custody of the Oils

In this section, the custody of the oils used in the traditional healing rituals is discussed. Custody involves preserving and protecting the oils for indefinite period of time for future use. In discussing the custody of the oils, the use of the containers and places for safe storage are considered.

3.4.1 Containers

By containers is meant material objects that are used to keep or contain the oils. They protect the oil from pouring and contamination. The traditional containers for keeping the oils used in the healing rituals are "*lu'bu"* (gourd) and "*otakua*" (pot).

3.4.1.1 *Lu'bu* (Gourd)

"Lu'bu" is the Lugbara name for a gourd. Among the Lugbara of Terego, it is called "*zukulu."* Other names are "*kere"* or "*a'du*." The commonest material for making "*lu'bu*" is the fruit of the bottle gourd plant, botanically known as "*lagenaria siceraria.*"[494] The name is derived from the Greek "*lagenos*" meaning "vase." "*Siceraria*" refers to the fruit when mature and dry. In Lugbarati, the plant is commonly known as "*kere*," or "*ojinga*." In many Lugbara

[494] Cf. Xuebo Zhao, Jingyi Yu, Bindsha Chanda, Jiantao Zhao, Shan Wu, Yi Zhenge, Honghe Sun, Amnon Leri, Khai-Shu Ling and Zhangjun Fei, "Genomic and pangenomic analyses provides inside into the Population history and genomic diversification of bottle gourd," in *New Phytologist* Volume 242, Issue 5 (2024): 2285. Retrieved from http://www.newphytologist.com, (accessed 13/08/2025); Aaron Callahan, "*Across Oceans and Millennia: Decoding the Origin and History of Bottle gourd*" (March 20, 2024). Retrieved from http://www.btiscience.org.new, (accessed 13/08/2025).

homesteads, the plant is grown as a medicine. Some also grow the plant to obtain the fruits as containers for holding liquids. The fruit is also used as materials for making decorations and musical instruments. Among the Lugbara, the musical instruments made with dry bottle gourd are trumpets (*guka* or *luru* or *mari)* and tube fiddles (*oringi*).[495]

The bottle gourd fruits exhibit variety of shapes which make them unique and artistic. The shape can be spherical with elongated necks which may be straight or bent. The elongated necks allow for easy handling. Some are cylindrical. Others can be club-shaped. The shape makes the gourd conceal and protect their content successfully. This makes them to be the preferred containers for keeping oils destined for medicinal and ritual use.

Generally, "*lu'bu*" is used for storing liquids like water, milk, porridge and honey. It has refrigerating qualities of keeping its contents cool and fresh. Most respondents reported that oils used in the traditional anointing and washing are kept in the "*lu'bu*" or "*zukulu*."[496] This gives ritual and ceremonial importance to the gourd. However, the use of "*lu'bu*" is being relegated to some elderly people and those who practice traditional healing. Making of the "*lu'bu*" requires skills, commitment and dedication, which only the elderly people demonstrate.

3.4.1.2 *Otaku*a (Pot)

"Otakua" is a small pot, generally used for cooking resins. The local Lugbara dish, called "*ocaoca"* (beans mixed with groundnut or sesame oily paste), is specially to be cooked

[495] Olufunke O. Fajinmi, *et al*, observe that bottle guard is also for used for assembling traditional musical instruments in many societies of East and Central Africa. Such instruments include: chordophones, shakers, and rattles. The instruments are to put to a variety of uses and purposes. The uses are religious, psychagogic and ceremonial. In the religious usage, gourd-made instruments are played for pleasing ancestors and accompanying cult initiation rituals. In psychagogic usage, instrument made of gourd are used for entertainments during festivals, wedding ceremonies, housewarming, recreation, intervillage competitions and healing rituals. Ceremonial usages are common during community meeting (singing praises to community leaders), coronation of kings, and royal funeral rites. Cf. Olufunke O. Fajinmi, Olaoluwa O. Olarewaju, Georgina D. Arthur, Rojer M. Coopoosamy and Kuben Naidoo, "A review of the relevance of bottle gourd in Eastern and Southern African traditional music and social life," in *Journal of Medicinal Plants for Economic Development* 6, 1 (2012): 141. Retrieved from http://doi.org/10.4102/jomped.v6iv.141, (accessed 13/08/2025).

[496] Cf. James Fortunate Eria, *Interviewed*, Bethany Centre, 28/07/2025.

in the pot.[497] The pots are made out of clay. Pot-making skills are possessed by the Lugbara in DRC, and some living among the Madi. The pots are primarily for cooking. However, they are also used for keeping oils. Some respondents reported that a pot was made as an outer cover to protect the gourd due to its fragility.[498] Others strongly emphasized that special pots were made to keep oils which were used in treating sickness.[499]

3.4.2 Places for Storing Oils

Whatever its content is, "*lu'bu"* is kept with utmost carefulness, respect and reverence. The same care also applies to the handling of the "*otakua*." "*Lu'bu*" is tied with a rope at the ceiling of the hut or the house. The Lugbara of Vurra described the ceiling of house as "*jo mile*," literally meaning, "the eye of the house." It is set at least five meters above the ground. The Lugbara of Terego describe it as "*jo karia*" (the head of the house).[500] Generally, "*jo mile*" or "*jo karia*" is a place for keeping precious items. It is symbol of ownership, security and authority.

In some cases, "*lu'bu*", with its contents, is kept at the shrines on the graves of the respected elders. The graves are located under granaries, or under "*larö"* (fig trees). "*Lu'bu"* is kept at the shrine especially when the content is believed to be medicinal.[501] When the time for the use of the content (oil) approaches, the person who does the anointing goes to pick the "*lu'bu"* with its contents. In most cases, he or she is seen going alone.

[497] Cf. Omveku Gutru, *Interviewed*, Omi Chapel, (01/01/2024); Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish 06/08/2025.
[498] Cf. Luciano Victor Aria, *Interview*, Ediofe Parish, 01/08/2025; Santina Drabezu, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025; Jennet Okudinia, *Interviewed*, Lazebu Parish, 30/07/2025.
[499] Cf. Terezina Oleru Gapser, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 06/08/2025.
[500] Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 07/08/2025.
[501] Samuel B. Adroa, *Interviewed*, Ocodri Parish, 07/08/2025.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the oils used in the Lugbara traditional healing have been described. The chapter, however, began with a discussion of the Lugbara concept of sickness and healing so as to give a clear context for the use of the oil. The term "*azo",* that is used to describe sickness, encompasses pain, illness and disease. The healing (*atitaa*) from sickness (*azo*) is accomplished through the healing rituals. The rituals are diagnostic and therapeutic. Diagnostic rituals are performed to determine the causes of the sickness. The diagnostic rituals are: "*buro tiza*" (communal circumtrenching), "*andrike*" or "*andrife*" (diviner consultation) and "*e'ya o'baza*" (seed revelation). Therapeutic rituals are aimed at bringing about healing. Four therapeutic rituals have been described. These are "*tusu feza"* (saliva dispensation), "*'bulea'bulea*" (intrencing), "*ggu nyaza"* (unity of meat) and "*enyataa*" *nyiza* (poison scrubbing). It is in the therapeutic rituals that oils are used.

The oils used are mainly plant oils, animal oils and mineral-based oil are also used. Among the plant oils, two oils stand out to be prominent. These are: "*kömara*" (shea oil) and "*lögba odu*" (balanites oil). The preparation of "*kömara*" and "*lögba odu*" is done by some elderly women, who in most cases perform the anointing with those oils. Today, modern processing methods are being employed. This avails the possibility of the getting the oils with certainty of purity and abundance. Animal oils uses are: "*boota*" (butter oil) and "*ara odu*" (python oil). "*Boota*" is difficult to obtained because most of the Lugbara do not own large number of cattle so as to produce "*boota*." "*Ara odu*" is difficult to obtain because of the risks involved in hunting the giant snake (python). Mineral oils use in the traditional healing rituals are "*tara odu*" (kerosene) and "*wailo*" (motor oil). The use of mineral oils in the healing rituals is being discourage because they are hazardous to human health.

The oils are stored in locally symbolic gourd called "*lu'bu*." In some cases, the fragility of "*lu'bu*" is protected by placing it special pots (*otakua*), which can also be used independently

for the storage of oils. The *"lu'bu*" is kept at the ceiling of a house or in one of the corners of the house or shrines (graves) of the dead. This ensures safe custody, reverence and respect for "*lu'bu*" and its contents.

In times of sickness or health challenges, many Christians in Arua Diocese take recourse to the use of the oils that are used in the traditional healing. Nonetheless, a possibility exists for incorporating these oils and their storage systems into the healing practice of the Church. Before incorporating and adopting them to be used in the Rite of Anointing of the Sick, it is necessary to present a thorough biblical, theological and historical background of the oil that is used in the care of the sick. The next chapter presents the use of oil in Sacred Scripture and the Church Tradition.

CHAPTER FOUR

OIL OF THE SICK IN SACRED SCRIPTURE AND CHURCH TRADITION

Introduction

In this chapter, the use of oil in the care of the sick in the Sacred Scripture and Church Tradition is discussed. The Chapter consists of nine sections. Section one gives the biblical concept of sickness and healing. Section two explains the sources and types of the oils used for healing in the Bible. The ways of storing and using them in healing rituals are also described. Section three discusses the use of oil in caring for the sick in the liturgical documents of the first four centuries of the Christian era. In section four, instructions and exhortations about the use of the oil in the writings of the Church Fathers are examined. Section five consists of a discussion on the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick during the Medieval Period. Section six expounds on the teaching of Councils on the Oil of the Sick. Section seven examines the understanding on the Oil of the Sick in the Post-Tridentine rituals. The section eight explores the understanding of the Anointing of the Sick and the custody of the Oil of the Sick in the first half of the 20th century. Section nine contains a consideration of the directives of the Second Vatican Council II (henceforth Vatican II) on the revision of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick.

4.1 Sickness and Healing in Sacred Scripture

This section gives the biblical understanding of sickness and healing. It focuses on sickness and healing in Old Testament and New Testament. This lays a foundation for the use of oil in the care of the sick in the Sacred Scripture.

4.1.1 Old Testament Concept of Sickness and Healing

Sickness is experienced as a weakness and flaccidity of the body, that God created with strength and agility (cf. Gn 1:27; Ps 38:11). God got involved practically in creating the human body, knitting every part with care and love (cf. Gn 2:7; cf. Ps 139:13). He surveyed it, "and he found it very good" (Gn 1:31). This optimal situation was interrupted by sickness, which disfigures the harmony in the human body.[502]

Sickness manifests as a disease. The diagnosis of the disease is limited to the observation of the visible, for example, skin conditions, wounds, fractures, fever and agitation (cf. Ps 6:34.38.39).[503] The skin conditions would be diagnosed as boils (cf. Ex 9:10) or "*tzara'ath*" (cf. Lv 13:1-46). "*Tzara'th*," though translated as "leprosy," is a general term used for various skin diseases of leprous nature.[504] Such diseases brought impurity (cf. Lev 13:3, 5) to the victim, leading to his or her isolation from the community. [505]

The causes of sickness would be old age, injury resulting from accidents, and natural inexplicable factors. However, rather than concentrate on the search for the causes of sickness, the Israelites sought to answer the fundamental question about the meaning of sickness.[506] The answer could be found in the belief that sickness was a punitive blow, striking some members of the Israel community (cf. Gn 12:17; Ex 8:12; 19:8-12).[507] As a punitive blow, sickness also

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[502] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 24; Cf. Jean Giblet and Pierre Grelot, "Malattia-Guarigione," in Xavier Leon-Dufour, (ed.), *Dizionario di Teologia Biblica* (Marieti: Casa Editrice Marietti, 1976): 630.

[503] Cf. Jean Giblet and Pierre Grelot (1976): 631.

[504] Leprosy is a disease which develops gradually over a period of many years. It develops in various forms, causing ulcerous decomposition of the body parts affected, and the normal working of the senses. The Hebrew name given for it was "*tzara'ath.*" The Septuagint (LXX) translated "*tzara'ath*" as "*aphe lepras*," and the Vulgate translated it as "*plega leprae*." These have been rendered in English as "leprosy." Cf. Richard M. Keller, Toni W. Heller, Jack M. Sasson, (eds.), "Mold: '*tsara'at,*'Leviticus, and the History of Confusion," in *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*, Volume 46, Number 4 (John Hopkins University Press, 2003): 588-591; cf. Isaac Lardman, "Leprosy," in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* Volume 6 (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1969): 610.

[505] Cf. Thomas Kazen, "Purity and Impurity in Ancient Israel and Early Judaism," in *Oxford Bibliography in Jewish Studies* (2019): 2. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331383925_Purity_and_Impurity_in_Ancient_Israel_and_Early_Judaism, (accessed 29/01/2025).

[506] Cf. Jean Giblet and Pierre Grelot (1976): 631.

[507] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 134-135.

could affect some members of the people of God (Israelites). This would be in cases where they became disobedient and unfaithful to the covenant relationship. The sickness that could a disobedient and unfaithful Israelite could be physiological or psychological. Psychological sickness would be manifested as "boils and tumor, skin diseases, itch, and blindness" (Dt 28:27). Psychological sicknesses are shown through, "madness and panic" (Dt 28:27). The understanding that sickness was a grave consequence of disobedience and unfaithfulness made the Israelites to realize that they had abandoned God.[508]

The attribution of sickness as punitive blow from God established a direct correlation between sickness, sin and suffering. It was conventionalized that a person's sins brought sickness and suffering upon himself or herself. However, the stories of Job (cf. Jb 2:1-10) and Tobit (cf. Tb 2:9-14) gave lesson that sickness and suffering are not always results of one's personal sins. Sickness and suffering may afflict a person in order to test his or her faithfulness to God. He or she who remains faithful in times sicknesses and sufferings grows into a stronger relationship with God, and receives healing.[509]

Healing, in the Old Testament, is understood as restoration of a person in body, spirit and relationship with God and the community. Confessing one's sins is necessary to be healed. This "*confessio ad sanandum*" is evident in the stories of King David and King Hezekiah. Both kings (at different times), when struck with sickness, were moved to confess their sins of breaking the covenant relationship. David's confession and admission of his quilt in conducting census led to the averting of the plaque (cf. 2 Sm 24:10-17). When Hezekiah prayed and confessed his sins, he was healed (cf. 1 Kgs 20:1-3; Is 38:1-28). The healing was corporeal, relationship and spiritual.

[508] Cf. In-Cheol Shin, "The purpose of the theological patterns in Jesus' healing stories in the Gospel of Matthew," in *HTS Teologiese Studies/ Theological Studies* 79, 2 (2023): 4. Retrieved from https://hts.org.za>article>download, (accessed 20/01/2026); Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 30; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 134.

[509] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 31-33; Jean Giblet and Pierre Grelot (1976): 631.

The healing was offered by God (cf. Ex 15:26), either directly or through his agents. The agents included the priests, prophets and physicians. The priests performed the role of diagnosing diseases, ascribing impurity (cf. Lv 13), and prescribing purification rituals (cf. Lv 14:1-20). Prophets played the role of interceding for the sick person (cf. Nm 12:13-15; 1 Kgs 17:8-16). Sometimes, prophets used material objects for treating and bring about healing. For example, Prophet Isaiah ordered poultice of figs to be smeared on the boil that was afflicting King Hezekiah (cf. Is 38:21; 2 Kgs 20:7). The healing through the prophets is also extended to those who were not Israelites (cf. 2 Kgs 5:1-14).[510]

Physicians and doctors were established by God as agents of His healing. God endowered them with wisdom and the knowledge for the exercise of the profession (cf. Sir 38:1-4,6-7). The sick person is invited to trust in the work of the physician and the doctor, and also to pray to God who heals through them. The prayer should be accompanied by a life of conversion and repentance. If the physician's efforts are in vain (as in the case of Tobit, cf. Tobit 2:2-17), the sick person is invited to trust in God's healing power (cf. Tb 3:17).[511] God is the physician par excellance.[512] Through the prophets, God proclaimed a time of holistic healing.

The prophets, in their prophecies, envisioned a time of a complete restoration of sight, hearing, speech and agility. This is the situation foreseen by Prophet Isaiah, who states that: "Then will the eyes of the blind see and the ears of the blind shall be opened; the lame leap

[510] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 33.

[511] It is narrated in the Book of Tobit that Tobit went to doctors in search for a cure for his blindness. The doctors applied ointments. However, he was not cured (cf. Tb 2:2-10). He was healed through the intervention of Raphael, who was sent to remove the white scale from Tobit's eye so that he might see "God's sunlight" (Tb 3:17). The same angel was also sent to heal Sarah, Tobit's wife of her barrenness. The name "Raphael" has been used to described the role of the angel who serves as God's agent of healing. Cf. James H. Charlesworth, (ed.), *Old Testament Pseudoepigrapha* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1985*):* 17-19; Michael D. Coogan, "Raphael," in Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan, (eds.), *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 642.

[512] Cf. Jean Giblet and Pierre Grelot (1976): 631.

shall leap like a stag and the mute tongue shall sing for joy" (Is 35:5-6). These messianic prophesies are fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus Christ as shown in the New Testament.

4.1.2 Sickness and Healing in the New Testament

At the time of Jesus, several sicknesses afflicted people. The sicknesses were physiological and also psychological. Physiological affected the normal functions of the parts of the body. The details of their causes are not given, except for the duration and the inability of the doctors to treat them. Among the psychological sicknesses are: skin diseases (cf. Mt 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-44; Lk 5:12-14), paralysis (cf. Mt 9:2-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:18-26), hemorrhage (cf. Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:21-35; Lk 8:41-56), *et cetera*. Psychological sicknesses are exhibited in violence (cf. Mk 5:1-5; Mt 8:38), dumbness or deafness (cf. Mk 9:32), epileptic behaviour (cf. Lk 9:39) and tendencies of self- destruction (cf. Mt 17:7). Their causes are understood to be demonic possession. The victims of these sickness approached Jesus directly, or through other. Sometimes, Jesus reached out to them.

Jesus' attitude on sickness and the sick people differed from that of his contemporaries. He did not subscribe to the conventional view of interpreting sickness in the retributive sense (cf. Jn 9:1-3). The retributive sense saw sickness and suffering as judgment or punishment upon wrong doers. Jesus rather looked at sickness and suffering as an evil and oppression of mankind by Satan (cf. Lk 9:2; 13:16).[513] Sickness became an occasion for Jesus to reveal the glory of God (cf. Jn 11:3-4). He granted healing to those who appeached Him.

Healing was part of Jesus's ministry of proclaiming the kingdom of God (cf. Mk 1:15). The healing miracles that He performed are signs of God's victory over sin, sickness, death and evil.[514] They manifest the presence of the kingdom of God. Jesus healed in a holistic

[513] Cf. John Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments* (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1997), 159; German Martinez (2004), 224.
[514] Cf. Joseph Martos (2001), 238.

manner. He restored those who were physically maimed to wholeness. He delivered others from demonic possession. He told those who were healed to go to spiritual leaders to confirm their bodily and spiritual renewal.

Jesus healed by touching the sick persons, and sometimes by means of word. Some of the sick people who got healed upon his touch were: a leper (cf. Mt 8:1-8; Mk 1:40-44; Lk 5:12-14), the two blind men (cf. Mt 9:27-30; 20:24-34) and Peter's mother-in-law (cf. Mk 1:29-31). Those who touched him also got healed (cf. Mt 14:34-36; Mk 6:53-56). He healed many through the means of the spoken word (cf. Mt 8:5-13; Lke1-10; Jn 4:46-53; Lk 3:1-6). Forgiveness of the sins was part of the process of healing (cf. Mt 1-8; Mk 2:3-12; Lk 5:18-26). Faith in Jesus was also part of the healing process. For example, Bartimeus regained his sight because of his faith in Jesus (cf. Mt 20:29-34); Mk 10:46-52).

In some instances, Jesus used of spittle and clay (cf. Jn 9:6-7) to heal. Jesus put spittle or saliva on the part to be restored, for example, on the eyes of the blind man (cf. Mk 8:23) and the man's sight was restored. He also put clay (which he made with his saliva) on another blind man's eyes, and after was washing, the man's sight was restored (cf. Jn 9:6-7). The use spittle (in Greek "*pytumas*") was a common therapeutic technique in the ancient world, even among the Israelites. Olugbenga Olagunju opines that the saliva of a man who was considered to be holy had a healing effect. He states that: "The ancient people believed that the anointing oil and the saliva of a holy man of God was therapeutic and had a healing effect on whomever the oil was placed or to whom the saliva was spitted upon."[515] However, oil is dominantly used in the Christian healing practices. The tradition of anointing the sick with the oil warrants investigation beginning with the Sacred Scripture.

[515] Olugbenga Olagunju, "The Use of Anointing Oil in Mark 6:13 in the African Context," in *American Journal of Biblical Theology*, Volume 15 (February 2018): 288.

4.2 Oils in the Care of the Sick in Scripture

This section discusses the oils used in the care of the sick in the Sacred Scripture. It the explores sources of the oils and their types. It also examines the healing rituals in which the oils were used. Lastly, it explains practices of the storage or custody of oil.

4.2.1 Sources of the Oils

Oils used in the treatment of everyday human ailments were mainly plant oils. Of the plant oils, olive oil was predominant. The source of olive oil was olive fruits, from the olive tree. A particular variety of the olive tree from which the oils was extracted was called the "*olea europea*" which was majorly cultivated in ancient Israel.[516] Olive trees were noted be growing in most of the lands of ancient Israel. The trees came to be identified with the land of Israel (cf. Dt 8:8; 28:4). They were regarded as a symbol of beauty, freshness, fertility, royalty and priesthood (cf., Jgs 9:8, Ps 52:1; Ps 128:3, Jer 11:6, Zec 4:12).[517] They trees were also considered as part of the assets of the king (cf. 1 Sm 8:8). Destroying them would lead to situation of desperation.[518]

The essential oils were extracted from various plants. The plants were also treasured for spices that could be obtained from them. The common plants included: aloes (Nm 24:6; Ps

[516] International Olive Oil Council estimates 139 varieties of olive trees, grown in different parts of the world where the climates are suitable. A suitable climate is that of the Mediterranean type, characterized by relatively mild winters, and hot-dry summers. Olive oil formed part of the diet and the economy of the people in the Mediterranean area. *Olea europea*, also known as Zutica, was domesticated from a wild variety known as *Olea chrysophylla Lam.* Cf. *World Olive Encyclopedia* (Madrid: International Olive Oil Council, 1996), 35.

[517] Cf. Richard E. Averbek, "Yishar," in Willem, A. VanGemeren, (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis Volume 3* (Cumbria: Paternoster Publishing, 1996): 771.

[518] Cf. David Eitam, "Olive Cultivation in Ancient Israel," in *World Olive Encyclopedia* (1996): 36; Frank S. Frick, "Oil from Flinty Rock (Deuteronomy 32:13): Olive Cultivation and Oil Processing in the Hebrew Bible-A Social-Materialistic Perspective," in *Semeiaa* Vol. 86, (Society of Biblical Literature, 1999):4-5.

45:8; Jn 19:39), balm (Gen 37:25, 43:11; Jer 8:22; Ez 27:17), cinnamon (Ex 30:23; Rev 18:13), calamus (Ex 30:23), cassia (Ex 30:24), coriander seeds (Ex 16:31; Nm 11:17), cumin (Is 28:25, 28:27; Mt 23:23), frankincense (Mt 2:11), hyssop (Ps 51:7), mustard (Mt 13:31), myrrh (Mt 2:11; Prv 7:17); rose of Sharon (Lk 11:42), rue, saffron (Lk 11:42), spikenard (Sng 4:14; Mk 14:3; Lk 7:36-38), saffron (Sng 4:14), cedarwood (Lev. 14:14), cypress (Gen 6:14), galbanum (Ex 30:34-35), and myrtle (Est 2:7; Zec 1:8, 10-11).[519]

The ointments obtained from a blend of the olive oil, essential oils and spices. The ointments were used as cosmetics (cf. Ru 3:3; Prv 27:9,16; Sng 1:3, 4:11). They were also used in funerary ceremonies to anoint dead bodies and the clothes in which they were buried (cf. Mt 26:12; Mk 14: 3, 8). Among the medicinal uses, ointments served as treatment for eye infections (cf. Is 1:6; Jer 8:22). Olive oil, essential oils and ointments were the major plant oils used in the Israel for several purposes. However, from processing of olive fruits, specific types of oils for definite uses were obtained.

4.2.2 Types of the Oils

The oils extracted from olive fruits were classified into three types: *yishar*, *shemen* and *rogah.* These stand out as the distinguished olive oils in the Old Testament, although the terms for designating them may overlap.[520] These three classes were put to different uses.

4.2.2.1 *Yishar*

The term "*yishar*" is used to described the oil pressed from the first fruits of olives. The name of the oil derives from Hebrew demonstrative verb, *yish*' (to press): "between the rows,

[519]Cf. "Ointment," in McClintock and Strong, *Biblical Cyclopedia* (2026). Retrieved from https://www.biblicalcyclopedia.com/O/ointment.html, (accessed 19/01/2026); John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 141.

[520] Cf. Roy J. Porter, "Oil in the Old Testament," in Martin Dudley and Geoffrey Rowel, (ed.), *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in Christian Tradition* (London: SPCK, 1993): 35-45; cf. Lizette Laison-Miller (2005), 37-38.

they press out the oil" (Jb 24:11). It is fresh oil the newly picked olive fruits. The Israelites considered "*yishar*" to be pure and best oil, since it is produced from one of the first olive fruits of the year (cf. Nm 18:12; Dt 18:4).[521] The Israelites also considered "*yishar*" among the blessings that the Lord bestows upon his people: "See, I will send you grain, and wine, and oil, and you shall be filled with them" (Jl 2:19). What was considered to be pure, best, choicest and a blessing was reserved for use in the service of the Lord.

The "*yishar*" was designated for use in the temple in Jerusalem, particularly for sacred lampstand (*minora*). In Exodus 27:20, an instruction is issued to Moses ensure constant supply of "*yishar*" to keep the lamps in the tent of the Lord's presence burning. Moses is instructed to command Israelites: "bring clear oil of crushed olives, to be used for the light" (Ex 27:20).[522] Still within temple usage, "*yishar*" was part of the twofold daily offering in the temple (cf. Ex 29:40; Nm 28:5). This probably was also to ensure constant fuel for the "*minora*."[523] Outside the temple use, "*yishar*" was part of an annual tribute that Solomon paid to the king of Tyre (cf. 1 Kg 5:11).[524]

The custody of "*yishar*" was the responsibility of the priests and the Levites. They used it for the service of the temple (cf. Nm 18:12; Dt 12:17, 14:23; 2 Chr 31:5). Sometimes they could eat the oil, but only within the precincts of the temple.

4.2.2.2 *Shemen*

The second type of olive oil is "*shemen.*" "*Shemen*" was obtained or produced in large quantities by repeated pressing of the olive pulp that remained after extracting the first oil. It

[521] Cf. Lizette Laison-Miller (2005), 17.
[522] Cf. Lv. 24:1-2.
[523] Zechariah 4:12 used the image of two olive trees supplying the lampstand with "*yishar*." The two olive trees are used to refer to Zerubbabel the king and Joshua the priest. Cf. Richard E. Averbek (1996): 771.
[524] Roy J. Porter (1993), 35.

was the commonest type of oil. Since it was common and fairly abundant, "*shemen*" was taken as a general term for oil. It was numbered among the chief necessitates of life (cf. Sir 39).

"*Shemen*" was put it to various uses. Domestically, it was used as ingredient in baking unleavened cakes and bread (cf. Lv 2:4-10). It was available to widows and the poor who used it even for base survival (cf. 1 Kgs 17:12-13; 2 Kgs 4:2). Cosmetically, "*shemen*" was used shining the body (cf. Ps 104:15). Closely linked to health and medicine, *shemen* was employed as a medicament for the soothing of wounds (cf. Is 1:6).[525] Wound resulting from leprous infections were cleansed using *shemen* (cf. Lv 14:15-18). *Shemen* could have evolved to be dominant olive oil used to treat sick persons among the Israelites.

"*Shemen*" was under the custody of the ordinary people. Jugs seemed to have been the common container for keeping the oil used in homes (cf. 1 Kgs 17:12-13; 2 Kings 4:2). It is not clear what these jugs were made of. Frank S. Frick observed gradual and steady evolution of the type of containers for keeping oils. This evolution was triggered by the challenges of porosity, seepage and oxidation. Frick states that:

> The most likely storage vessels during the bronze and iron age (and later periods) were clay jugs or jars, which facilitated storage of oil on site by its primary producers. The porosity of clay vessels, however was a problem, given the seepage and oxidation. With time, local potters and oil producers overcame the blackening of the oil in the middle Bronze period this involved plastered storage jars. A thick layer of calcium was added to the exterior vessel after firing. The technique was replaced in the late bronze period with the application of a thick light-colored wash on the exterior of the jar.[526]

The exterior was always designed to make it attractive. The sizes must have been varied to promote easy transportation from the production site to the utilization site. The sizes in the various homes must have also been varied.

[525] Cf. Robert J. Way, "Sĕmen," in Willem, A. VanGemeren, (ed.), *The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis Volume 4* (Cumbria: Paternoster Publishing, 1996): 174; Lizette Laison-Miller (2005), 35; Roy J. Porter (1993), 40.
[526] Frank S. Frick (1999): 10.

4.2.2.3 *Rogah*

The third type of oil obtained from olive is "*rogah*." "*Rogah*" was an oil compounded with various aromatic spices, essential oils and olive oil as the base. The aromatic spices included: myrrh, aloes, balsam, cinnamon and cassia. Moses is instructed to blend *rogah* from the spices as follows:

> Take the finest spices; five hundred shekels of free-flowing myrrh; half that amount, that is, two hundred and fifty shekels, of fragrant cinnamon; two hundred and fifty shekels of fragrant cane; five hundred shekels of cassia- all according to the standard of the sanctuary shekel; together with a hin of olive oil [*shemen*]; and blend them into sacred anointing oil, perfumed anointment expertly prepared (Ex 30:23-25).

This implies that *shemen* was mixed with the aromatic or fragrant spices to make *rogah*. The spices were free-flowing or abundant in Israel. They were of extra-ordinary quality and high prices.[527] Blending of the *rogah* was the prerogative of Moses and priests. A lay person was forbidden to make it or apply it to the human body on pains of death (cf. Ex 30:33). A standard procedure for making the *rogah* was to be strictly followed. The ingredients were to be carefully measured, as it to be **"**an anointment expertly prepared**"** (cf. Ex. 30: 25).

Rogah is described as the "anointing oil" (Lev 8:2) or the "sacred anointing oil" (cf. Ex 30:25). Its use was strictly confined for ritual purpose of anointing the head of the high priest, the sanctuary and the cultic apparatus. This special use of *rogah* is contained in the following instruction given to Moses:

> With this sacred anointing oil, you shall anoint the meeting tent and the ark of the commandments, the table and all its appurtenances, the lampstand and its appurtenances, the altar of incense and the altar of holocausts with all its appurtenances, and the laver with its base. When you have consecrated them, they shall be most sacred; whatever touches them shall be sacred. Aaron and his sons you shall anoint and consecrate as my priests (Ex 30: 29-30).

[527] Cf. Joel K.T. Biwul, "The African Church's Application of Anointing Oil: An Expression of Christian Spirituality or display of fetish ancestral religion?", in *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 77, 4, (2021): 4.

This instruction implied that "*rogah*" as "anointing oil," stood as an oil for consecrating some individuals for sacred duties in the exercise of worship. It was also used to consecrate certain items for sacred use in the worship of the Lord.

"*Rogah*" was under the custody of priests and specially chosen individuals, like Moses and Samuel. Two types of containers are mentioned for the keeping of this "sacred anointing oil." These are: flask and horns.[528] The oil that was used to anoint Saul as king was carried in flask: "Then, from a flask he had with him, Samuel poured oil on Saul's head and kissed him, saying: 'The Lord anoints you ruler over his people Israel'" (1 Sm 10:1). David was anointed king with oil that was carried in horn: "Then Samuel with the horn of oil anointed him, in the midst of his brothers" (1 Sm 16:13). Horns carried symbolize strength and divine anointing. The container holding the oil could have made of clay fashioned in shape of flasks, or horns.

Of the three types of the olive oils, *shemen* is more used in the care of the sick, and for treating human ailments. This is demonstrated in the rituals for cleansing the leprous persons who were anointed with oil as to be granted a holistic healing.

4.2.3 Oil in the Jewish Healing Rituals

The use of oil to enhance healing among the Jews is found in Leviticus 14:1-18. This pericope presents the purification ritual of a cured leper. The ritual consists of two rites: "rite of birds" and "rite of anointing," also known as a "rite of reintegration."[529] The "rite of birds" took place outside the camp where the former leprous person had been isolated. Two live and clean birds, supplied by the cured leper, were used (vs. 4). One bird would be slain and its blood mixed with water, and sprinkled on the person seven times. The live bird would be released to symbolize the removal and departure of evil spirits and their power. The presence

[528] The keeping of oils in flask is also mentioned in Matthew 25:4: "The wise virgins brought flasks of oil with lamps."

[529] Adriana Destro and Mauro Pesce, "Sacrifice: The Ritual for the Lepper in Leviticus 14," in Philip F. Esler, (ed.), *Ancient Israel: The Old Testament in Its Social Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 71.

of the evil spirits was believed to cause sickness.[530] On account of this, Adriana Destro and Mauro Pesce describe it as "the rite of the two birds."[531] This rite was completed by the cured leper washing his garments and shaving all his hair.

The "rite of anointing" took place eight days after the inauguration of the "rite of birds" (vs. 10). In the "rite of anointing," *"shemen*" oil was used. The oil is supplied by the cured leper. He or she brought a hin of oil together with two male lambs and cereal offering (vs. 10). It is called the "rite of integration" because the former leper is reintegrated into the presence of the Lord. The person is officially readmitted into the temple and the worshipping assembly.

The main presider at the ritual was the priest. According to Raymond Brown *et al*, the priest "exercised his function not as a physician (…) but as a judge and interpreter of the law."[532] However, the procedure the priest uses qualifies him to be a diagnostician, with the responsibility to identify the disease, and ascribe impurity according to the prescriptions of the law. The favourable decision of the priest was required for the performance of the ritual. His decision was also necessary for permitting re-entry into the community and the temple.

The rite was carried out in an elaborate manner with careful handling of the oil. The parts of the body where the oil is placed are specified in the following text:

> The priest shall also take a log of oil, and pour some of it onto the palm of his own left hand; then dipping his right finger in the oil on his left palm, he shall sprinkle some of it with his finger seven times before the Lord. Of the oil left in his hand the priest shall put on the lobe of the right ear, the thumb of the right hand, and the big toe of the right foot of the person being purified, over the blood of the reparation offering. The rest of the oil in his hand the priest shall put on the head of the one being purified (Lv 14:15-18).

The body parts mentioned are: "lobe of the right ear", "thumb of the right hand", "big toe of the right foot" and the "head" (Lv 14:17-18). The priest is first directed to pour the oil on the palm of his left hand. The palm of the left hand becomes a vessel for containing the oil. With

[530] Adriana Destro and Mauro Pesce (2006), 71.
[531] Adriana Destro and Mauro Pesce (2006), 71.
[532] Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Roland E. Murphy, *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc, 1968), 75.

his right forefinger, the priest first sprinkles the oil before the Lord. Raymond E. Brown *et al* consider the sprinkling of the oil before the Lord as an act of consecration of the oil.[533] There are no words prescribed while sprinkling the oil.

The oil was an instrument used for exorcising and cleansing the person from the taints of the devil. The oil is put on the body parts that were believed to be the entry points of the devil, that is, ear, hand and feet. The placing of oil on the head could suggest conveying of life to the entire person. Oil on one's head was a sign of good life. Not to have oil on one's was to a sign of mourning (cf. 2 Sm 14:2).

The minister of the entire ritual is a priest, not just an elder in the Jewish community. The parts to be anointed with the oil (*shemen*) anointed are also significant. They are the organs for hearing (ear), action (hands), movements (legs) and reasoning (head). This ritual gives an Old Testament precedent to the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, where oil is used. [534]

4.2.4 Anointing the Sick with Oil in the New Testament

Some New Testament texts reveal that oil is used both for medicinal and sanatial purposes. The medicinal usage is attested to in the parable of the good Samaritan in Luke

[533] Cf. Raymond E. Brown, *et al*, (1968), 75-76.

[534] Outside the Old Testament, the Jewish use of oil in caring for a sick or a suffering person is shown in the pseudo-epigraphical writings. Pseudo-epigraphical works, though not found in the Old Testament canon, give information about the cultic practices of the Jews. The use of oil is notable in three of the writings. These are: Apocalypse of Moses, Life of Adam and Eve, and Testament of Joseph and Aseneth.
In the Apocalypse of Moses (9:3) and also in the Life of Adam and Eve, anointing with the "paradaisal oil of mercy" is a cure of every kind of illness. Adam begs for the oil so that he could anoint himself: "Adam said to Eve, 'Arise and go with our son Seth near to Paradise (…) beseeching God, so that he might have mercy on me and send his angel into Paradise and give me, from the tree out of which oil flows, and bring it to me, and I will anoint myself and find rest.'" The tree from which the oil flows is perceived to be the olive tree. A hint is given on self-anointing. The result of the anointing is relief from all suffering. The Testament of Joseph and Aseneth tells the story of the marriage between Joseph (son of Jacob) and Aseneth (daughter of Pentephres, an Egyptian priest). Joseph and Aseneth are anointed with the "unction of incorruption" (8:5; 15:5, 10:16). The unction or oil was a vehicle for vigor, health and life. The pseudo-epigraphical writings show the olive tree to be a paradisal tree, and the olive oil having a divine connection. The effect of being anointed with olive oil is cure from every kind of sickness, rest from all suffering and a restoration of youthfulness. Cf. "Life of Adam and Eve I" in James H. Charlesworth (1985), 247-255.

10:29-37. In the parable, oil was used in the treatment of wounds inflicted on the man by the action of the robbers.[535] The oil was applied together with wine. Application of oil and wine to fresh wound seems to have been a wide-spread custom. People travelled with oil in their first aid kits for any eventuality. The explicit mention of the use of oil for anointing the sick is found in Mark 6:13 and James 5:14-15.

4.2.4.1 Anointing the Sick with Oil in Mark 6:13

Anointing the sick with oil in Mark 6:13 was done by the disciples, who had been sent out by Jesus (cf. Mk 6:7).[536] Mark 6:13 indicates that the disciples did what they were authorized to do: "They drove out many demons, and they anointed with oil many who were sick and cured them."[537] The instruction that Jesus had given to the disciples does not contain prescription to anoint with oil (*elaion* in Greek; *oleum* in Latin).[538] The disciples could have anointed in imitation of their Master, Jesus, though there is no evidence that Jesus used oil to anoint the sick. The disciples used oil because in was congruent with their religious and practices and cultural sensitivity. However, they anointed "in the name of the Lord."[539] Oil, therefore, served the sacramental purpose of imparting healing to the sick person.

The Greek term used for the sick is "*arrostous,*" which means those who are feeble or weak, ill or diseased. The Latin equivalent is "*aegrotos*" *(*Accusative plural of *aegrotus).* The Oxford Latin Dictionary provides three entries for the meaning of "*aegrotus*." Adjectivally,

[535] Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 6.

[536] The activity of the disciples' engagement in curing is also reported Lk 9:6, but without the mention of the use of oil, "Then they set out and went from village to village proclaiming the good news and curing diseases everywhere."

[537] "*Et daemonia multa eiciebant et ungebant oleo multos aegrotos et sanabant."*
Καί δαιμόνια πολλά έξέβαλλον, και ήλειφον ελαιῳ πολλους ἀρρώστους και ἐθεράπευον. Cf. *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* (Stuttgart: Gesamtherstellung Biblia-Druck, 1984), 106.

[538] "He summoned the Twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over unclean spirits. He instructed them to take nothing for the journey but a walking stick- no food, no sack, not money in their belts" (Mk 6:7-8).

[539] This aspect is explained in succeeding sub-section (4.2.4.2).

"*aegrotus*" means "physically ill, sick, diseased."[540] As a noun, it means a sick person or invalid. It can also mean being "love sick and pining."[541] This could be the feeling of a sick person who sad and upset, and longing for love. The Christian community shows this love by surrounding the sick member with their presence, and anointing him or her with oil. Daniel Harrington, a commentator on Mark, reveals that anointing the sick with oil was "a reflection of the early Christian practices."[542] Such practice of anointing is recommended by St. James.

4.2.4.2 Oil in James 5:14-15

The recommendation to anoint the sick with oil is explicitly stated in James 5:14-15. James recommends:

> Is there anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the Church, and they should pray over him and anoint (him) with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sin, he will be forgiven.[543]

James wrote to a community that could have been using oil (*elaion*) frequently, even in the care for the sick. It is not mentioned whether the oil it to be found in the house of the sick, or brought by the presbyter.

James indicates that the subject of the anointing with the oil is the sick person. Two Greek words are used designate the sick person. One word is "*asthenei"* and other word is "*kamnonta."* "*Asthenei*" can be one who is confined to bed due to physiological sickness, and therefore is unable to participate in community affairs. [544] It can also mean one suffering a general weakness of body dues to old age or a prolonged sickness (cf. Lk 13:11-12; Jn 5:5). "*Kamnonta*" is the one who is physically exhausted and spiritually fatigued. The exhaustion or

[540] Peter G. W. Glare (2012), 71.
[541] Peter G. W. Glare (2012), 71.
[542] Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2002), 192.
[543] ἀσθενειτις ἐν ὑμιν. Προσκαλεσαθω τούς πρεβυτερους τὴς εκκλησιὰς και προσευζα σθωσαν ἐπ' ανιὸν ἀλειψαντες ἐλαιῳ εν τῳ ονόματι τού κυριου. και ἡ, εὐχὴ τῆς πιστεω ϛσωσει του καμντα και εγερει αὐτον ὁ κυριου. κὰν ἀμαρτιας ᾖ πεποιηκώς, ἀφεφήσεται αὐτῷ. Cf. *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine* (1984), 597.
[544] Cf. John C. Kasza, *Understanding Sacramental Healing: Anointing and Viaticum* (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2007), 19.

the fatigue could be due to the sickness that withers. The explanation of "*asthenei"* and "*kamnein*" given by John C. Kasza emphasizes perilousity and propinquity of death. He states that: "*asthenei* refers to one who is suffering and is in danger of death (*perculose morbo laborare*), while *kamnein* is concerned with one who is at the point of death (*morti propinquum esse*). In both cases, the person is an ill, baptized member of the Christian community."[545] The text in James 5:14-15 shows that sickness needs not be mortal or grave, although in every sickness, there is danger of death.

The summoning of the presbyters (*presbyteroi*) sets the ritual in motion. The summoning (*proskalesatho*) implies that the sick person, out of faith, calls the elders of the Church to his or her bed side. The summoning may be through a caretaker, who could be a close relative. The presbyters are men associated closely with the apostles in authority (cf. Acts 15:2,4,6). As leaders of the Church, the presbyters have responsibilities "to pray over the sick and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord."[546] The summoning is also a call to the Church that one of her members is sick, and in need of healing. The arrival of the elders to the bedside of the sick person instills hope in the sick person and the caregivers.

The anointing with oil is preceded by a prayer over the sick. James does not state the words for the prayer. John Bosco Asiimwe is of the view that the invocation of the name of Jesus could have been among the expressions in the prayer. He states that:

> Anointing is always to go with prayer that is made in the name of the Lord. This means that the prayer is made 'on the order of,' or 'with the power of,' or 'because of the name of,' or 'calling upon the name of the Lord,' that is the name of Jesus glorified (cf. Mk 9:38; Lk. 10:17; Acts 3:6; 4:10).[547]

In the prayer the presbyter could have also integrated the circumstances of the sick person. No gesture is prescribed. However, the expression of "praying over" would imply extension or

[545] John C. Kasza (2007), 20
[546] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 154.
[547] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 157-158.

laying on of hands upon the sick person. This gesture, in this context, is associated with imparting of healing to the sick person.[548]

The word used for anointing is from "*aleipho*." "*Aleipho*" refers to the physical act of anointing. Anointing is done "in the name of the Lord" (*en tou onomati toú kuriou*), in the context of prayer. The anointing is not just a medical therapeutic procedure, but it is directed to achieving both spiritual and physical effects.[549]

James uses three words to express the effects of the anointing. These words are: "*sozei*" (be save), "*egerei*" (be raised), and "*aphephesetai*" (be forgiven). These words depict spiritual and physical effect. The spiritual effect is the salvation. The one who is anointed is saved in spirit and soul. The oil becomes the sacramental sign of the salvation granted to those who have faith in the word of Jesus.[550] Another spiritual effect is the forgiveness of sins (*hamartias*). This effect seems suggests a close relationship between sin and sickness. However, this connection is a conditional, not a causal one, hence the use of "if" (*kan*), "If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven" (Jas 5:15). The physical effect is the restoration of bodily vigor and agility of the person.[551]

The text in James 5:14-15 shows the existence of a community celebration. The following elements feature it the celebrations: the summoning of the presbyters, arrival of the presbyters, prayer over the sick person, anointing with oil, and prayer of faith. The elements were incorporated into the Rite that would evolve for the Anointing of the Sick in the succeeding centuries.

[548] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 41.
[549] Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 9.
[550] Cf. Silvano Fausti, *Unfolding the Gospel of Mark: A Narrative Analysis Part I* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 2012), 201.
[551] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2009), 41.

4.3 Oil of the Sick in the First Four Centuries

This section analyses the use of oil in the care of the sick as portrayed by the liturgical documents that emerged in the first four centuries. The documents are: *Traditio Apostolica* of Hippolytus, *Euchologion* of Serapio, and *Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*. The section, however, begins by examining the claim of existence of a Rite of Anointing of the Sick in the first century.

4.3.1 A Rite of Anointing of the Sick?

Commentators on the Gospel of Mark and the Letter of James have asserted that the two writers in view an existent rite, according to which the sick were anointed with oil in the during the apostolic period. Francis J. Moloney, a commentator on the Gospel of Mark, asserts that the use of oil took on the sense of anointing, which was later adopted into Christian usage. He states that: "the practice of anointing with oil was widespread in the Hellenistic world, and by the time of the writing of the Gospel of Mark, it had probably become part of the Christian practice of caring for the sick."[552] This could have evolved into the use of a rite of the anointing of the sick. In the rite, oil was integrated into the healing practice of the early Church.

The existence of the rite was brought to light in 1963 with the discovery of a silver lamina. The lamina describes a Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The lamina, dating from the last quarter of the first century (70-90), was discovered at Thecua, south of Bethlehem.[553] Louis Rogge considers the rite to be a confirmation of the important elements outlined by James. Rogge states that:

> The text preserved in it confirms all the important elements of James 5:14-16; including the expectation of spiritual as well as physical healing; moreover, the differences between the lamina and the text of James demonstrates that either depended on the other. Historically, therefore, they are two independent

[552] Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 124.
[553] Cf. Louse P. Rogge, "The Anointing of the Sick in Historical Perspective," in the *Linacre Quarterly*, Volume 42, no. 3 (1975): 208. Retrieved from https://epublications.marguette.ed/ing/vol42/iss3/7, (accessed 24/01/2026).

> witnesses attesting to the existence of a first century Christian rite of the anointing of the sick.[554]

Without an outline of the said rite, there is no basis to ascertain how the rite conforms to the important elements of James.

Stephano Parenti identifies two elements of the rite on the lamina. These are: "deprecatory prayer 'in the Name' and anointing was done with a bunch of hyssop accompanied by a sign of the cross."[555] The use of hyssop implies that the rite incorporated some elements used in the Near Eastern cultural and religious environment. Hyssop is a shrub used for medicinal and herbal purposes. It was also used in rituals of purification and apotropaic nature (cf. Ex 12:22; Lv 14:4-6, 49-52; Nm 19:18; Ps 51:7; Heb 9:19).[556] The use of the sign of the cross shows that it is a Christian prayer. However, neither Parenti nor Logge shows that oil was used in the rite. Asiimwe also observes that: "The lamina does not mention effects and therefore the healing dimension and importance of faith in the Rite of Anointing cannot be traced in the document."[557] However, the rite attests to the fact that there is an earliest witness to the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick. This is particularly in the decade of the ministry of the Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers. Further instructions on the use of the oil and symbols attached to it can be identified by examining the eucological prayers in some documents.

4.3.2 Prayer over the Oil in *Traditio Apostolica* of Hippolytus

The *Traditio Apostolica*, attributed to Hippolytus of Rome, was composed between the year 170-235.[558] It contains an instruction and a prayer to be said over the oil. The instruction

[554] Louse P. Rogge (1975): 208

[555] Stephano Parenti, "Anointing of the Sick During the First Four Centuries," in Anscar J. Chupungco, (ed.), *Handbook of Liturgical Studies Volume IV: Sacraments and Sacramentals* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000): 155-156.

[556] Micheal G. Coogan (1993), 296.

[557] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 168.

[558] The *Traditio Apostolica* of Hippolytus was originally written in Greek, but later translated into Latin. Variants of the translated document exist in Ethiopian version, Greek version and Arabic version. The various versions show the attempts to adapt the document to the various Christian communities' needs. The document

is added at the conclusion of the prayer of thanksgiving over the gifts. The prayer is to be said by the bishop. The entire instruction and the prayer reads:

> If anyone offers oil, he shall give thanks following the oblation of bread and wine; he shall not say the same words, but render thanks in a similar manner, saying: O God, sanctify this oil so that you give health to those who use it and those who receive it. As you anointed kings, priests and prophets, so may it grant comfort to all who taste it, and health to those use it.[559]

The *Traditio Apostolica* envisages a situation where the faithful present oil that they themselves have prepared in their home.[560] It is not indicated that oil was made from olive fruits. The oil is presented together with other items, like bread, wine, milk and water. It may not have been brought every time they gather for the Eucharistic celebration, hence the conditional "if" (*si*).

The oil is blessed after the consecration of the bread and wine. The instruction urges the bishop to use words different from those for consecration of bread and wine. The prayer indicates that oil was used for anointing kings, priests, and prophets (*uncixistis reges, sacerdotes, et profetas*). This alludes to a likelihood that the same oil could have been used. The prayer also acknowledges that it is God who sanctifies the oil, and through the oil, gives health to those who use it and receive it (*sanitatem untentibus, et percipientibus*). God is petitioned to make the oil be an instrument of comfort to the gustants, and health to the users.

Three words in the prayer express the ways of applying the oil: *"utentibus,"* "*percipientibus"* and *"gustantibus*." The words "*utentibus*" which means "to the users" and "*percipientibus*" which "to the receivers," do not indicate directly how use of the oil would. However, the Ethoipic version gives direct reference to anointing. The version uses the Latin

apparently preserves older second century practices which were in danger of falling to disuse. Cf. Stefano Parenti (2000): 157.

[559] *Si quis oleum offert, secundum panis oblationem et vini, et non ad sermonem dicat sed simili virtute, gratias referat dicens: - Ut oleum hoc sanctificans das deus, sanitatem utentibus, et percipientibus, unde uncixistis reges, sacerdotes, et profetas, sic et omnibus gustantibus confortationem et sanitatem untentibus illud praebeat. La Tradition Apostolic de Rome* (1984), 52; Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 168; Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 44; Bernard Botte, (ed.), *La Tradition apostolique de saint Hippolyte: Essae de reconstitution,* Liturgie- (until 1957: geschichtliche) wissenschatliche Quellen und Forschungen, Münster, 1909-1940; 1957., 39(Münster: Aschendorff, 1963):18-19.

[560] Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 12.

phrase "*eis qui unguntur*,"[561] meaning "those who are anointed." Through the anointing, the oil is received. The recipients feel the anointing through his or her skin.[562] "*Gustantibus*" suggests drinking the oil, or eating it as ingredient in food.[563] The prayer in the *Traditio Apostolica* does not state whether the faithful are to anointed themselves. It does not also state whether the faithful kept the oil in their home to be used be by an ordained minister, if he came to the sick person's home or bedside.

According to the prayer, oil confers comfort (*confortation*) and health (*sanitatio*). The Ethiopian version of the tradition adds holiness (*sanctitas*). It renders the part referring to holiness as: "*sanctifica eos quo percipiunt"* (make holy those who receive it).[564] Holiness is directly attributed to God who grants it to those who use and receive the oil through anointing.

The *Traditio Apostolica* presents the first instance of blessing the oil for anointing the sick. The oil is blessed by the bishop. After the blessing, the faithful take the oil for their use. They may use it by anointing or eating it or drinking. Since oils in the Mediterranean world were mainly obtained from olive plant, the oil could have been olive oil. Once blessed, the oil becomes a holy element that confers comfort, health and holiness. This same understanding is displayed in the documents that emerged after *Traditio Apostolica*.

4.3.3 Blessing of Oil in the Euchologion of Serapio

Euchologion of Serapio is a prayer book, attributed to bishop Serapio of Thmuis (bishop: 339-362) in Egypt.[565] Its time of composition is dated between 350 to 360.[566] The *Euchologion* contains four prayers for blessing of oil. The first prayer is for blessing the "anointing oil"

[561] The full text of the Ethiopic version reads: "*ut oleum hoc sanctificans das eis qui unguntur et percipient, in quo unxisti sacerdotes et prophetas, sic illos et omnes qui qustant conforta, et sanctifica eos qui percipunt.*" *La Tradition Apostolique de Rome* (1984), 54.
[562] "*Percipere*" can also mean "to feel."
[563] Cf. John J. Ziegler, *Let Them Anoint the Sick* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987), 37.
[564] *La Tradition Apostolique de Rome* (1984), 54; Cf. John J. Ziegler (1987), 37.
[565] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 169; Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 12; James L. Empereur, *Prophetic Anointing: God's Call to the Sick, Elderly, and the Dying* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1982), 30.
[566] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 169; Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 12; James L. Empereur (1982), 30.

(*aleima*). The oil was used for anointing those who were going to be baptized (*baptizandi*). The second prayer is for blessing chrism for anointing those who have been baptized (*chriontai*, in Latin*: baptizati*). The third prayer is a lengthy one. It is for blessing the Oil of the Sick or bread or water.[567] The fourth prayer is used for blessing oil and water which are offered. This fourth prayer is entitled: "Prayers concerning oil and water that are offered."[568] The prayer indicates that the oil could also be used by the sick people in their needs.

The third prayer, which is for the blessing of Oil of the Sick, is examined to explore the symbolism of the oil in it. In the version edited by Georg Wobbermin, translated by John Wardsworth, the prayer is entitled: "Prayer in regard to oil of the sick or water or bread." However, only oil is explicitly mentioned in the text. The text reads:

> We invoke thee who hast all authority and power, the Saviour of all men, father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and pray thee to send healing power of the only-begotten from heaven upon this oil, that it may become to those who are being anointed (with it), or are partaking of these thy creatures, for a throwing off every sickness and every infirmity, for a charm (ἀλεζιφαρμακον) against every demon, for separation (ἐκχωρισμον) of every unclean spirit for a driving out (ἀφορισμόν) of all fever and ague (ριγους), and every infirmity, for good grace and remission of sins, for a medicine of life and salvation, for health and sundress of soul, body and spirit, for perfect strengthening (ρώσιν). O master, let every Satanic energy, every demon, every device of the adversary, every plague, every scourge (μάστις), every pain, every labour or stroke (ρ'άπισμα), or shaking or evil shadowing (σκιᾳζμα), fear thy holy name which we have now invoked and the name of the only-begotten; and let them depart from inward, the outward parts of these thy servants.[569]

The prayer, also quoted by Charls Gusmer and James Empereur, is mainly concerned with the blessing of the oil.[570] However, bread and water are mentioned as "these thy creatures." The blessing is done by the bishop. Whether he blesses the oil on a special occasion is not clearly stated. It seems that the oil could be blessed whenever the need arose as indicated by John

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[567] Georg Wobbermin, (ed.), *Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book: An Egyptian Pontifical Dated Probably About A.D 350-356*, translated John Wardsworth (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1899), 74-78.

[568] "Grant healing power upon these creatures that every fever and every spirit (δαιμανιον) and every sickness may depart through drinking and anointing, and that the partaking of the creatures may be a healing medicine and a medicine of soundress, in the name of thy only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ through whom to thee (is the glory) and the strength in the holy Spirit to all ages of the ages. Amen." *Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book* (1899), 77-78.

[569] *Bishop Serapion's Prayer Book* (1899), 77-78.

[570] Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 12; James L. Empereur (1982), 30.

Wardsworth. Wardsworth states that: "This Benediction, like the two that precede it, seems to have been used *pro re nata*, and not on any special day like Maundy Thursday or at the Eucharist."[571] The phrase "of these thy servants" could imply that the oil (including bread and wine) was blessed whenever the people brought them into the Church or the venue for the community's prayer.

The prayer invokes God to send healing power of Jesus Christ upon the oil. Once infused with the healing power, the oil becomes a material means of healing and exorcism. It also becomes a bodily and spiritual medicine. The way of using the oil is by anointing.

The prayer indicates that the effects of being anointed with the oil were both physical and spiritual. Physical effects include relief from sickness and infirmity, and restoration of bodily health. Spiritual effects are exorcistic and salvific. They include: dispelling of evil spirits and demonic influences, imparting of grace and remission of sins. John Ziegler observes that the prayer makes no mention of the text of James, though it refers to the blessing of oil used in the conferral of extreme unction.[572] However, the idea of extreme unction was not yet conceived at this period.

4.3.4 Oil in the *Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*

Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi is a church order document of Syrian origin compiled either in late forth century or early firth century.[573] The document is made up of two

[571] Georg Wobbermin (1899), 4
[572] Cf. John J. Ziegler (1987), 38.
[573] Some scholars presume that the document was written in Greek. The author is unknown, but was published in Syriac in 1899, with a translation into Latin by Ignatius Ephrem Rahmam, who was the Patriarch of Syriac Catholic Church. There is no consensus as to the dating of the document. Rahmani and a few other scholars see the document reflecting Christian practices in the second century. Other scholars see its context being of the fourth or fifth centuries. Simon Corcoran and Benet Salway have observed that: "Some have thought that the *Testamentum* must pre-date the Council of Constantinople (381), perhaps being assignable to the reign of Julian or even earlier in the fourth century. Others prefer to see it as later than the Council and the Apostolic Constitutions (themselves pre-381) and indeed a dating to the fifth, or even late fifth century is currently the more popular view." While the debate is on-going, in this research, it is considered as a document complied within the first four centuries. Cf. Simon Corcoran and Benet Salway, "A Newly Identified Greek Fragment of the *Testamentum Domini*," in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, Vol. 61, pt I (April 2011):133;

books. A prayer for the blessing of the Oil of the Sick and water is found in Book One. The translator uses the word "consecration" (*De consecratione olei infirmorum et aquae*).[574] The oil is brought in a vessel by those who are sick, and consecrated by a priest. The identity of the vessel is not described.

The priest places the oil in front of the altar and consecrates it with a prayer.[575] The entire prayer reads:

> Lord God, who has granted us the Spirit Paraclete, Lord, the unchanging name (Spirit) who is hidden from the foolish, truly revealed to the wise. O Christ, who has sanctified us, who has made us, you servants, wise by your mercy, whom you have chosen with divine wisdom; who has sent to us, sinners, the knowledge of your Spirit, through that your holiness, with unto us the power of thy Spirit; who art the healer of every disease and passion; who hast given the chrism of healing to those who through thee have been made worthy of that gift, send forth upon this oil, which is the sign of thy goodness, the complement of thy beneficent compassion, that it may free the laboring, heal the sick, and sanctify those returning, when they come to thy faith; for thou art strong and glorious for ever and ever.[576]

The prayer states the relationship between God, Christ and the Holy Spirit in bring healing to the believes. The "Lord God" has granted the "Spirit Paraclete." The knowledge of the Spirit has been to the believers by Christ. Christ is the healer of every disease and suffering.Christ has "given the charism of healing to those" whom he deems worthy of the gift, that is, gift of healing.

The prayer asks Christ to send upon the oil the fullness of his beneficent compassion. The oil is a sign of Christ's goodness. Through the prayer, the oil becomes an instrument of liberation, health and sanctification. As an instrument of liberation, oil creates a soothing effect

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Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, translated by Ignatius Ephraem II Rahman, ed & trans (Moguntiae: Sumptibus Francisci Kitchhein, 1899), VI.

[574] *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, XXIV.

[575] "*Si sacerdos consecrat oleum ad sanationem eorum qui patiuntur, ponens ante altare vas illud (continens oleum).*" *Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, XXIV

[576] *Domine Deus, qui concessisti nobis Spiritus paraclitum, Dominum, nomen salutare (Spiritum) immobilem, qui absconditur a stultis revelatur vero Sapientibus. Christe, qui sanctificasti nos, qui sapientes effecisti misericordia tua, famulus tuos, quos elegisti sapeintia illa tua; qui nobis peccatoribus missisti scientiam Spiritus tui, per sanctitatem illam tuam, cum nobis virtutem Spiritus tui; qui sanator es cuiusvis morbi et passionis; qui dedisti chrisma sanationis illis, qui per te illo dono digni effecti sunt, emitte super oleum istud, quod est typus pinguedinis tuae, complementum tuae beneficae commiserationis ut liberet laborantes, sanet aegrotantes, et sanctificet redeuntes, cum ad fidem tuam accedunt, quiniam tu es fortis et gloriosus in saecula saeculorum. Testamentum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*, XXIV; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 171.

on those who labour under various kinds of burden. Those anointed with the oil receive health in body. With regard to sanctification, oil was used to anoint penitents (those returning). They are strengthened to continue with the journey of repentance.[577]

In the three documents, that is, *Traditio Apostolica* of Hippolytus, *Euchologion* of Serapio and *Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*, the formulae for blessing the oil for anointing the sick have been examined. The oil is blessed by the bishop or the priest. Once blessed, the oil is considered to be holy for the use of the sick people who may use it by anointing, eating, drinking. The custody of oil in the first four centuries is mainly in the hands of the faithful. In the succeeding centuries, instructions and exhortations for the use of oil were by the relevant Church authorities.

4.4 Oil in the Care of the Sick during the Patristic Period (5th to 7th Centuries)

This section examines the instructions and exhortations in the writings of some selected Church Fathers. These instruction and exhortations emerged during the patristic period (5th to 7th centuries). They are contained in the writings and sermons of some Church Fathers. The works of three Church Fathers are selected. These are: the letter of Pope Innocent I (c. 416), entitled *Si Instituta Ecclesiastica*; the sermons of St. Caesarius of Arles (468/470- 542); and the sermons Eligius of Noyon (Eligius of Noyon (588 -660).

4.4.1 *Si Instituta Ecclesiastica* of Pope Innocent I

Si Instituta Ecclesiastica is the letter of Pope Innocent I to Bishop Decentius of Gubio. The letter is dated 19 March, 416. The letter is the response of Innocent I to the consultation

[577] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 172.

by Decentius through deacon Celestinus.[578] It seems that among other inquiries, Ducentius had asked for an interpretation of James 5:14-15. The letter states:

> There is no doubt that this anointing ought to be interpreted or understood of the sick faithful, who can be anointed with holy chrism, which, prepared by a bishop, is permitted not only to priests, but also to all Christians for anointing in their own necessity or in the necessity of their people. Moreover, we see in addition to be superfluous; that what is undoubtedly permitted to the presbyters is questioned regarding bishops. For the presbyter was spoken of for this reason, because the bishop, hindered by other occupations, cannot go to all the sick. But if the bishop is either able or deems someone worthy to be visited by him, he can bless and touch with chrism without hesitation, whose responsibility it is to perform the Chrism. For this cannot be infused into penitents, because it is a kind of sacrament. For to those to whom the other sacraments are denied, how is it though that one kind can be granted.[579]

The following observations can be made about this text of the letter. Firstly, the text indicates that the oil is holy chrism, which is prepared by the bishop.[580] This could imply that chrism oil was being used for anointing sick people. Secondly, it is mentioned that the oil is a kind of sacrament (*quia genus est sacramentum*). It ought not to be given to those who are not permitted Those who were not permitted were mainly penitents (*nam paenitenibus istud infundi non potest*). It is to be received by those who do not have impediment to receive other sacraments.

Thirdly, the handling of the oil went hand in hand with those who could anoint. The handling of the oil of the chrism was the prerogative of the bishop. He is the principal minister of the Anointing of the sick. However, the bishop could not go to all the sick, because of other pastoral occupations. Hence, the presbyter would go to anoint, but with the oil blessed by the

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[578] Henrici Denzinger, (ed.), *Enchridion Symbolorum definitum et declaraationum de rebus fidei et morum*, (San Francisco: Ignatian Press, 2012), no. 216.

[579] *Quod non est dubium de fidelibus aegrotantibus accipi vel intelligi debere, qui sancto oleo Chrismatis perungi possunt, quod ad episcopo confectum, non solum sacerdotibus, sed et ominibus uti Christianis licet in sua aut in suorum necessitates ungendum. Ceretum illud superfluum esse videmus adiectum, ut de episcopo ambigatur quod presbyteris licere non dubium est. Nam idicirco presbyteris dictum est, quia episcopi occupationis aliis impediti ad omnes languidos ire non possunt. Caeterum si episcopus aut potest, aut dignum ducit, aliquem a se visitandum, et benedicere et tangere chrismate; sine cunctatione, potest, cuius est chrisma conficere. Name poenitentibus istud infundi non potest, quia genus est sacramentum negatur, quomodo unum genus putatur posse concede."* Henrici Denzinger (2012), no. 216; Gerald Ellard, "How Fifth-Century Roman Administered Sacraments: St. Innocent I advises an Umbrian Bishop," in *Theological Studies Journal* (2022): 10-11. Retrieved from https://theologicalstudies.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/9.1.1.pdf, (accessed 29/04/2026).

[580] The first synod of Toledo (400), had decided that only the bishop was to confect the chrism and distribute it to the dioceses, "although the custom is maintained almost everywhere that no one confects the chrism apart from the bishop, nevertheless, because in certain places or provinces priests are said to be confecting the chrism, it has been decided that from this day forward no other person but the bishop is to confect the chrism and distribute it to the diocese." Henrici Denzinger (2012), no. 187.

bishop. The faithful could also handle the oil and use it "for anointing in their own necessity or in the necessity of their people." Aimé Georges Martimort asserts that: "this could not be a 'temporary makeshift'"[581] since in the Roman Church the practice of people going home with oil had become stably established. The letter, thus, shows that both ministerial anointing (by the bishop and presbyter) and anointing by the lay faithful existed in the fourth century Roman Church. The letter can be also considered as the first papal document about the oil used for anointing the sick.

4.4.2 Sermons of St. Caesarius of Arles

St. Caesarius (468/470- 542) was the bishop of Arles in France. In some of his sermons, he urged those with infirmity to get anointed with oil instead of summoning sorcerers, seers, or magicians. He also urged them to get anointed with oil instead of hanging phylacteries or charm on themselves. Caesarius urged that:

> As soon as some infirmity overtakes him, a sick man should receive the Body and Blood of Christ, humbly and devoutly ask the presbyters for blessed oil, and anoint his body with it. Thus will be fulfilled in him what we read, 'is anyone among you sick? Let him bring in the presbyters and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil. And the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him. (…).' Let no one in any sickness dare to summon or request sorcerers or seers or magicians in wicked pleasure. No one should carry phylacteries or charm on themselves or their possession. If any one does this evil, he destroys the effect of the sacrament of Baptism unless repentance saves him. Furthermore, as often as some infirmity comes upon a man, he should hurry back to the Church. Let him receive the Body and Blood of Christ, be anointed by presbyters with consecrated oil, and ask these presbyters and deacons to prayer over him. If he does this, he will receive not only bodily health, but also forgiveness of sins.[582]

The oil is known by three names: "blessed oil", "consecrated oil" and "holy oil." The oil was kept in the Church, though the exact location for keeping it is not indicated in the Caesarius' sermon.

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[581] Aimé Georges Martimort, "Prayer for the Sick and Sacramental Anointing," in Aimé Georges Martimort, (ed.), *The Church at Prayer Volume III: The Sacrament* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987), 122; cf. Phillipe Rouillard, "The Anointing of the Sick in the West," in Anscar J. Chupungco, (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies Volume IV: Sacraments and Sacramentals* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 172.

[582] Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon*, 13:3, 19:4, in *PL* 29, Sermons 2795.

The sermon indicates that the sick person could ask for the oil and anoint himself or herself. Caesarius comments that the asking for the oil and anointing of a sick man is in fulfillment of what is stated in the Letter of St. James (cf. James 5:14-16).[583] However, the sick man was to receive the Eucharist (the Body and Blood of Christ) from the presbyter. Both the Eucharist and the oil would be taken as "ecclesiastical medicine."[584] Whereas James states that the sick person should call in the presbyters, Caesarius presents another option where the sick person hurries to the presbyters in the Church. In another sermon, Caesarius advises mothers to take their sick children to the Church and have them anointed with blessed oil.[585] Thus, the place for the anointing was the Church.[586]

The sermons indicate that the anointing is done by the presbyters. However, there is an allusion that the faithful could anoint themselves, for example, in the statement, "As soon as some infirmity overtakes him, a sick man should receive the Body and Blood of Christ, humbly and devoutly ask the presbyters for blessed oil, and anoint his body with it." The effect of being anointed with the oil is bodily health and forgiveness of sins. The anointing with this double effect "replaces and surpasses the recourse to magical remedies."[587] Whereas the prayer over the sick person is said by both the presbyters and deacons, Caesarius maintains that the anointing is reserved to the presbyter. Caesarius states that: "Let him (…) be anointed by presbyters with consecrated oil, and ask these presbyters and deacons to prayer over him."[588] In this, Caesarius emphasizes the recommendation of St. James to have only the presbyters (ordained priest) to anoint the sick.

[583] Cf. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon*, 13:3, 19:4, in *PL* 29, Sermons 2795.
[584] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 173.
[585] Cf. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 52:5, in *PL* 29, Sermons 2795.
[586] Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 184:2, in *PL* 29, Sermons 2795
[587] Phillipe Rouillard (1997), 172.
[588] Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon*, 19:4, in *PL* 29, Sermons 2795.

4.4.3 Sermon of Eligius of Noyon

Eligius was born in 588. He was the bishop of Noyon in (France) from 641 to 660. Eligius exhorted the faithful to request for the blessed oil with devotion. He states that:

> As often as any sickness shall occur, let them not seek out the sorcerers (…) but let the sick person put his trust in the mercy of God alone, so as to receive with faith and devotion the Eucharist of the body and blood of Christ, and with devotion to ask the church for blessed oil, which he may anoint his body in the name of the Lord (…) and, according to the apostle, the prayer of faith will the save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up, and he will receive not only health of the body but also of soul.[589]

Eligius follows the line of Caesarius in urging the faithful not to seek our sorcerers in times of sickness, but trust in the mercy of God. Eligius notes that the blessed oil was the custody of the Church authorities. However, laity could request for the oil and anoint themselves.[590] They were to anoint themselves "in the name of the Lord."

In these writings and sermons of the Church Fathers, oil is identified by various names: "blessed oil", "consecrated oil," "holy oil", "sacred oil," "anointing oil" and "prepared oil." The preparation and the blessing of the oil was reserved to the bishop. The anointing would be done by the bishop, presbyter and even lay faithful, who could anoint themselves. The blessing of the oil, and anointing by the bishop or the presbyter came to be done in accordance with the liturgical books that emerged in the Middle Ages or the Medieval Period.

4.5 Symbolism of the Oil of the Sick in the Medieval Period (8th to 13th Centuries)

This section has four aspects to be examined. First, the prayers for blessing of the oils in the Gelasian and Gregorian Sacramentaries. Second, some rituals for Anointing of the Sick. Third, the shift from the use of oil for anointing the sick to anointing the dead. Fourth, the treaties of the scholastic theologians on oil in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

[589] PL 40, 1172f; cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 17.
[590] Cf. Phillipe Roullard (1997), 172.

4.5.1 Blessing of the Oil in Sacramentaries

The Gelasian[591] and Gregorian[592] Sacramentaries contain a prayer for blessing *Oleum Infirmorum* (Oil of the Sick). The prayer, though with minor variations in both sacramentaries, has been quoted by some liturgical scholars as the *Emitte* Prayer,[593] since Latin edition, the prayer begins with the words "*emitte*." The Gelasian version reads:

> *Emitte, quaesmus, Domine, Spiritum Sanctum paraclitum de caelis in hac pinguedine olei, quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem mentis et corporis. Et tua sancta benedictio sit omni ungenti, gustanti, tangenti, tutamentum corporis, animae et spiritus, ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnem infirmitatem, omnem aegritudinem mentis et corporis, unde unxisti sacerdotes, et reges, et prophetes, et martyres, chrisma tuam perfectum a te, Domine benedictum, permanens in visceribus nostris, in nomine Domine, semper bona creas.* [594]

The prayer in an English translation state:

> O Lord, we beseech you, send the Holy Spirit from heaven upon this substance of oil, which you have deemed worthy to produce from the green tree for the refreshment of mind and body. And by your holy blessing, may it be a remedy of mind and body for those anointed with it, those who taste it and those who touch it. With chrism from it, you anointed priests, kings and prophets, and martyrs, with your holy blessing remaining, may it be your holy gift to drive away all pains, ever infirmity and every sickness of mind and body, in your mane O Lord, you always create good things.[595]

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[591] The Gelasian Sacramentary is a book of the Roman Rite for the celebration of the sacraments. It was given the appellation *Sacramentorium Gelasianum* (Gelasian Sacramentary) because it was thought to have been authored by Pope Gelasius I (492-496). Cf. Cassian Folsom, The Liturgical Books of the Roman Rite," in Anscar J. Chupungo, (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies Volume I: Introduction to the Liturgy* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 248; Henry Austin Wilson, (ed.), *The Gelasian Sacramentary* (Oxford: T. F. T. Clarendon Press, 1894), xvii-xviii.

[592] The Gregorian Sacramentary is attributed Pope St. Gregory the Great (590-604), who is thought to have compiled it. This claim has been debated by many scholars. However, Cassian Folsom expresses that the Gregorian contribution cannot be dismissed. He states that: "While there is not sufficient evidence to claim that Pope St. Gregory the Great himself compiled this sacramentary, it can be demonstrated that he composed orations, and that he possibly compiled an earlier, less structured versions of the text." Cassian Folsom (1997), 249.

[593] Cf. Johns Bosco Asiimwe John Bosco (2019), 174; Aimé Georges Martimort (1987): 135; Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 13.

[594] GeV, 555; Henry Austin Wilson (1894), 70.
The Latin text in the Gregorian Sacramentary reads: *Emitte, domine, Spiritum Sanctum tuum paraclitum de caelis in hanc pinguedine olivae, quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem corporis ut tua sancta benedictione sit omni ungenti, tangenti, tutamentum mentis et corporis ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnesque infirmitates, omnem egritudinem corporis unde unxisti sacerdotes, reges, prophetes, et martyres, chrisma tuum perfectum, domine a te benedictum in nomine domini Iesu Christ, per quem haec omnia, semper bona creas. Gr.H,* 333*;* Henry Austin Wilson, (ed.), *The Gregorian Sacramentary under Charles the Great* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1915), 49.

[595]Cf. Aimé Georges Martimort (1987): 121; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 174.

Whereas the Gelasian Sacramentary indicates that the oil is blessed in *Missa Chrismatis* on Holy Thursday, the Gregorian Sacramentary rubricates that the oil is blessed in *Missa in Cena Domini* by the Pope.[596] The oil was blessed at the end of the Roman Canon.[597]

The prayer indicates that the oil is a plant oil. The Gelasian version indicates that it obtained from green wood or tree (*viridi ligno*). The Gregorian version states that it is obtained from olive tree (*olive*), hence it is olive oil. The prayer also states the importance of the oil in refreshing of the mind and body. This could imply its ordinary use in soothing the human body, and the impact of that soothing upon the human mind. The prayer invokes God to send the Holy Spirit upon the oil, so that the natural soothing properties of the oil become efficacious.[598] The oil, transformed and sanctified, becomes a remedy, and an instrument for bringing about a holistic healing.

The prayer states the various modes of application of the blessed oil. The modes of application are captured by the participles: *ungenti*, *gustanti*, *tangenti* (anointing, tasting and touching).[599] The Gregorian version omits *gustanti*.[600] *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum* (*PRG*), in which the prayer also appears, only contains *tangenti*.[601] Charles Gusmer argues that the "active voice suggests that the faithful make the application."[602] However, there is no inference to this. It rather suggests self-anointing whereby a sick faithful anoints himself or

[596] Cf. Henry Austin Wilson (1894), 70; Henry Austin Wilson (1915), 49.
[597] Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 13; Henry Austin Wilson (1894), 68-69.
[598] Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 14.
[599] These various modes of application have already been discussed in section 4.3.1 Prayer over the Oil in *Traditio Apostolica* of Hippolytus
[600] "*…sit omni ungenti, tangenti, tutamentum mentis…" Gr.H,* 333*;* Henry Austin Wilson (1915), 49.
[601] *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum* (henceforth cites as *PRG*), is a tenth century liturgical book complied at St. Alban Abbey in Mainz, Germany. The *PRG* edition available for consultation to the researcher was the Vogel-Elze edition, which is a reconstruction based on that of Michael Andrieu. This edition contains various groups of prayer formulae to be used by a bishop and a priest. The prayer for blessing the oil for anointing the sick reads as follows: *Emitte, domine, Spiritum paraclitum de caelis in hanc pinguedine olive, quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem corporis, ut tua sancta benedictione sit omni tangenti,unguentam salubre medicine caelestis, tutamentum mentis et corporis ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnesque infirmitates, omnem egritudinem corporis unde unxisti sacerdotes, reges, prophetes, et martyres, chrisma tuum perfectum, domine a te benedictum in nomine domini Iesu Christ, per quem hec omnia, semper bona creas*. Cyrille Vogel ed Reinhard Elze, *Le Pontificale Romano-Germanique* Du Dixiemé siècle, Le Text II (NN. XCIX-CCLVIII), (Vaticani: Apostolica Vaticana, 1963), no. 261.
[602] Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 14.

herself. This might imply the use of the Oil of the Sick even outside the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The rites for the celebration of the Sacrament surfaced in in the succeeding centuries.

4.5.2 Oils in the Medieval Rites of Anointing of the Sick

A prominent rite for anointing the sick in during the medieval period is found in the *PRG*.[603] The rite (*Ordo ad Unguendum Infirmorum*) consists of several elements.[604] These elements can be grouped into three: pre-anointing rites, anointing, and post-anointing rites. The elements make it possible to ascertain the structure of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick.

4.5.2.1 Structure of Rite of Anointing of the Sick in *PRG*

First in the structure are the pre-anointing rites. The pre-anointing rites are meant to predispose the sick person to receive the grace of the Sacrament. In the context of the Middle Ages, the grace of the Sacrament was the forgiveness of sins and holy death.[605] The rites include confession, sprinkling with blessed salt and holy water, first set of prayers and antiphons, laying on of hands by priest[606], and second set of prayers and antiphons.[607] Confession began the rite. The first set of prayers and antiphons asked for the healing of the person. They also invite Jesus to come and give joy and comfort to the sick person. The second set requested that the sins of the sick person to be wiped away.

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[603] *PRG* has two rites in relation to the care of the Sick: *Ordo ad Visitandum* and *Ordo ad Unguendum Infirmorum.* Several prayers and Masses for the sick are also included in the *PRG*. The intention of such prayers is to pray for their health. Among such prayers and masses are: *Oratio pro redita sanitate, Missa pro infirmo, Missa pro infirmo de cuius salute desperatus.* Cf. *PRG,* CXXXVIII-CXLII.

[604] Cf. *PRG,* CXLIII.

[605] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 48.

[606] A prayer accompanied the laying on of hands. The rubric directing the priest states: *Hic imponens sacerdos manus super caput infirmi dicit:" In nomine pa+tris et fi+lii et spiritus + sancti, existinguatus in the omnis virtus dialobi per impositionem manum nostrorum, immo per invocationem omnium sanctorum angelorum, archangelorum patriarcharum, prophetarum, apostolorum, martyrum, confessorum, virginum, atque omnium simul sanctorum." PRG,* CXLXIII, 5.

[607] Cf. *PRG,* CXLIII, 1-11.

The anointing rites consisted of prayer before the anointing and the actual Rite of Anointing with oil. The prayer was said by one priest. The prayer asked that through the action of the priests, all pains and weakness may be removed from the sick person. It also asked that the sick person be restored to health and focus attention to Christ, the heavenly physician.[608] The anointing is done by the priests present, their number is not indicated.[609] This shows that the Sacrament could be concelebrated by many priests present.[610]

The instruction given for the anointing indicates that several body parts were anointed. The body parts were: neck, throat, chest, shoulders and the places where pain could be very intense. The sense organs of sight (eyes), smell (nostrils), ears (hearings) and speech (mouth or lips) were also anointed. [611] These were considered to be the "organs of sin and therefore in need of healing and forgiveness."[612] The prevalent conception at this time was to closely relate Anointing of the Sick with Penance. This relation made the administration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick to be reserved to the priest.

The post-anointing rites consisted of reciting or chanting of the hymn *Christe caelisti medicina Patris,*[613] reception Holy Communion is received as a Viaticum, Absolution, and Blessing which concluded the rite.[614]

[608] Cf. *PRG*, CXLIII, 13
[609] Cf. *PRG*, CXLIII, 12.
[610] Cf. Phillipe Roullard (1997): 175.
[611] Cf. *PRG*, CXLIII, 12.
[612] Phillipe Roullard (1997): 175.
[613] The origin of the hymn is disputed, but it appears in the hymnal for Mozarabic rite. The hymn, translated as "O Christ, heavenly medicine of the Father," recalls healing power of Christ and his victory of death. Cf. Ruth Ellis Messenger, "The Mozarabic Hymnal," in *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association,* Vol. 75 (1944): 122-123. Retrieved from https://www.jtor.org/stable/283313, (accessed 28/02/2026).
[614] Cf. *PRG*, CXLIII.

4.5.2.2 Appellations of the Oil in the *PRG*

In the formulae for the anointing, the oil is given various names.[615] For the anointing of the of the head, eyes, neck and chest, the oil is called the "sanctified oil." For the ears, shoulders and the hands, the oil is given the name "sacred liquid oil." In anointing the nose and the nostrils, the oil is called "sacred oil." "As for the lips, it called "consecrated medicinal oil." In anointing the feet, it is called "blessed oil." While anointing the throats, joints, and any other anointing on any part of the body, oil is known by the name "holy oil."

These appellations imply the various names that the oil received after it has been blessed. The blessing transforms the oil into a sanctified and sacred element. However, only one appellation depicts the oil as a medicine (*consecratum oleum medicamentum*).

4.5.3 From the "*Oleum Infirmorum*" to the "*Oleum Exeuntium*"

The Carolingian period saw a gradual shift from using the oil for "anointing the sick" to "anointing the dying." The *Oleum Infirmorum* (Oil of the Sick) became *oleum exeuntium* (oil of the dying). German Martinez observes that this shift was associated with the evolution of the rite for bodily and spiritual preparation for salvation. He states that:

> There was a gradual evolution toward a rite of bodily purification and spiritual salvation for the dying. Emphasis was placed on the rite for the dying person performed exclusively by the priest, rather than on the liturgical blessing of oil for the physical and spiritual healing.[616]

As Anointing of the Sick came to be considered as a preparation for death, oil became an instrument for purifying the body and soul for death. However, the blessing of the oil emphasized physical and bodily healing.

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[615] *"Ungo caput tuum oleo santificato," "ungo aures has [scalupas, manus] sacrati oleo liquore,""ungo nares oleo sacro, ""ungo labia ista consecrate oleo medicamento,""ungo hos pedes oleo benedicto""ungo te de oleo sancto…" PRG*, CXLIII, 14-30.

[616] German Martinez (2004), 228.

The major cause of the shift was the administration of the Anointing of the Sick alongside Penance in preparation for death, and commendation of souls.[617] The penitential effect of anointing came to be overemphasized, as many individuals sought to be sought to be reconciled at their deathbed. This was to avoid subjection to following the strict measures that were imposed in the Order of Penitents.[618] The anointing was seen to have the effect of the forgiveness of sins of the person. The body parts were anointed with the prayer that God would forgive the sins that were committed through each of them. This made anointing to be regarded as a "completion of public penance in '*extremis*.'"[619] It is from this perspective that the scholastic theologians would adopt the concept of "*extrema unctio*" (Extreme Unction).

4.5.4 *Extema Unctio* and *Oleum Infirmorum* According to Scholastic Theologians

Among the scholastic theologians, Peter Lombard (1100-1160) is considered to have been the first to call the Anointing of the Sick as "*Extreme Unction*" (last anointing done in the life time of a person). He included it among the seven sacraments. He, however, placed it to be the seventh, since it is the last to be received in a person's life. Lombard insisted that the anointing should be done only with the oil consecrated by the bishop.[620]

Albert the Great (*circa* 1200-1280) spoke generally about the sacraments where oil is used: Confirmation, Ordination and Extreme Unction. He argued that in these Sacraments, oil is the matter for essential sanctification.[621] One who is anointed with oil in these sacraments is sanctified or made holy. He or she must live a holiness of life that is required for all believers.

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[617] Cf. Aimé Georges Martimort (1987): 131.

[618] The Order of Penitents was a practice of reconciling Christians who had fallen into grave sins after their Baptism. It involved a rigorous discipline in which the penitents had to do a public penance for a longer period of time (extending for years) before being reconciled. The Order of Penitents consisted of four stages: mourners, hearers, fallers, and bystanders. Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani, *Conversion and Reconciliation: The Rite of Penance* (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 2007), 64-66; Aimé Georges Martimort (1987): 131.

[619] German Martinez (2004), 228; Cf. Joseph Martos (2001), 335.

[620] Cf. Petrus Lombardus, L. IV, dis 23; Herman Joseph Kalungi (2025), 380;

[621] Cf. Albertus Magnus, In IV, dist 23, a. 3, ad. qu. 1

Thomas Aquinas (1225- 1274) placed "*Extrema Unctio*" as the fifth sacrament. As Last Anointing, it has two effects. The first effect is the removal of the remnants of sins (*peccatorum relinquas*) which still remain after the reception of the Sacrament of Penance. The second effect preparation for final glory.[622] For Thomas, physically or bodily healing is secondary and conditional. It occurs if it is necessary for the spiritual healing of the sick person.[623] Thomas differed from Lombard on the reason for the "*ad extremum"* reception of Anointing of the Sick, arguing that the sacrament is ordered for the perfection of a person for eternal glory.[624]

4.5.5 Olive Oil as the Matter in the Anointing of the Sick

Of the scholastic theologians, it is Thomas Aquinas who expounded on the concept of matter. Matter, according to him, refers to sensible things that are required for signifying the invisible grace.[625] These sensible things "are either material elements or perceptible actions."[626] Materials elements comprise the remote matter, while perceptible actions comprise the proximate. [627] Matter, together with form, constitute a single sacramental action. Form refers to the prescribed words that are pronounced by the minister of the sacraments. Matter and form combine to give a full and complete signification in the single sacramental action.[628]

According to Aquinas, olive oil must be taken as the remote matter for the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.[629] This is because the name "oil" primarily applies to the liquid of olive. Other liquids are named "oil" only in similarity to olive. Oil has a natural characteristic

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[622] *"alia autem est restitutio valetudinis pristinae per convenientem diaetam et exercitium, et loco huius in spiritual vita est extrema unctio, quae removet peccatorum relinquas, et hominem paratum redidit ad finale gloriam."* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* Quaet LXV, art I.

[623] Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In quartum librum Sententiarum*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 2; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 183.

[624] *"Sed extrema unction inter omnia Sacramenta propinquior est untimo fini beatitudinis."* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Quaet LXV, art II.

[625] "*Res enin sensibiles requiruntur in sacramentis ad significandum*." Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, Qn. 60, art. 6.

[626] Herman J. Kalungi (2025), 86

[627] Herman J. Kalungi (2025), 87.

[628] Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, Qn. 60, art. 6.

[629] *"ideo oleum olivae etiam debet esse quod assumitur in materiam huius sacramenti.*" Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, XXIV, art. IV.

of soothing, even penetrating into the most intimate parts, and can diffuse easily into the body.[630] The proximate matter is the anointing with "sanctified oil" (*oleum sanctificatum*).[631] The "sanctified oil" is that which has been blessed by the bishop.

Aquinas gives three reasons why the oil must be sanctified oil. The first reason is to receive sacramental efficacy which descends from Christ. The second reason is because of the fullness of grace which is required to take away quilt and its remnants, and cure bodily and spiritual weakness. The third reason is that the bodily healing, that is received as the effect of the sacrament, is from Christ. The oil must be sanctified by the bishop to show that the priestly power is derived from the episcopal power. Aquinas, however, does not disregard the fact that sometimes priests can bless the oil to sanctify it. He does not mention the circumstance where priests bless the oil.

Recalling the recommendation given by St. James that presbyters of the Church be brought in, Aquinas refutes the idea that lay people and deacons can anoint. He states that: "In this sacrament there is remission of sins. But laity do not have the power of remitting sins."[632] In this, he emphasizes the medieval connection between Penance and the Anointing of the Sick. As for deacons, he argued that deacons do not have power of illumination.[633] The teachings of the scholastic theologians were confirmed by some Councils held in the medieval period.

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630 *"Oleum autem lenitivum est et penetrativum usque ad intima, et etiam diffusivum. Et ideo quantum ad utrumque praedictorum est conveniens materia huius sacramenti. Et quia oleum prinicipaliter nominator olivae liquor, cum alii liquors solum ex similitudine ad ipsum, olei nomen accipiant."* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* XXIV, art. IV. "*Eum per oleum sanctifatum intelligere material essentialem praeter rationes in corp, art. Affert, ostendit reponsio ad secundum, illa efficacia, quae est ipsa institutione sacramentum, applicator huic materia per sanctificatum.* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* Supp. Qu. *29. Art. 5.*

631 *"nam promixa est, non oleum ipsum, quantumvis benedictum, sed in unction quae fit tali oleo (…) et materia huius sacramenti est oleum sanctificatum*. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* XXIV, art. IV.

632 Thomas Aquinas, *In quartum librum sententiarum*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 1 (1874):12; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 184.

633 Thomas Aquinas (1874):12; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 184.

4.6 Council Teachings on the Oil of the Sick (14th to 16th Centuries)

This section discusses the teaching of the Councils on the oil in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The decrees of Lateran Council IV (1215), Council of Florence (1431-1449) and the Council of Trent (1543-1563) on the Anointing of the Sick are examined.

4.6.1 Care for Oils According to Lateran Council IV

The Lateran Council IV, held during the pontificate of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216), decreed that the oils be kept securely under lock and key. Whoever neglected this custody was to be punished. However, the decree mentions Chrism implying that Chrism was better known than the Oil of the Sick, which is called as "holy oil."[634] The Council also prescribed that "no sale price is to be demanded for Chrism, holy oil and burials."[635] It seems that there were some unscrupulous people who were selling oil or charging high fees for anointing the sick.

The Council acknowledged the connection between bodily infirmity and sin. In its canon 20, the Council states:

> Since the bodily infirmity is sometimes caused by sin (…), we declare that in the present decree and strictly command that when physicians of the body are called to the bedside of the sick, before all else they admonish them to call for the physician of the souls, so after spiritual health had been restored to them, the application of the bodily medicine may be of greater benefit for the cause being removed the effect will pass away.[636]

Anointing with oil was seen as administering a spiritual medicine that bestows spiritual health to the sick person. The anointing was done by priests, who were called "physicians of souls." They used oil as medicine to cure the soul of the infirmities brought about by sin. The canon also shows that Anointing of the Sick was to be administered before medical treatment. The cooperation of bodily physicians (doctors) was enlisted to ensure that anointing was done.

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[634] Norman P. Tarner, (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Volume I: Nicea I to Lateran V* (London: Sheed and Ward Limited, 1990), 202.
[635] Norman P. Tarner (1990), 202.
[636] Norman P. Tarner (1990), 202.

4.6.2 Oil in *Exsultate Deo* of the Council of Florence

The *Exsultate Deo* was the Bull of union with the Armenians written by Pope Eugene IV on 22 November, 1439 at the time of the fourth Council of Florence (1439). The Bull is also known as the "Decree to the Armenians." The Bull decrees the following about the Sacrament of Anoint of the Sick:

> The fifth sacrament is extreme unction. Its matter is olive oil blessed by the bishop. This sacrament may not be given except to a sick person whose life is feared for. He is to be anointed on these parts: on the eyes on account of sight, on the ears on account of hearing, on the nostrils on account of smelling, on the mouth on account of taste and speech, on the hands account of touch, on the feet on account of movement, on the loins on account of the pleasure seated there. The form of this sacrament is: "Through this holy anointing and his pious mercy, may the Lord pardon you for whatever offences you have committed by sight," and similarly in the other members.[637]

This decree reflects the theology of the scholastic period where there was the systemization of sacraments with their number being fixed to seven.[638] The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick oil was fixed as the fifth sacrament, and given the name "*Extrema Unctio"* (extreme unction). The matter the Sacrament is olive oil blessed by the bishop.

The decree also mentions the parts to be anointed. They are the sense organs of sight (eyes), hearing (ears), smell (nostrils), taste and speech (mouth), touch (hands), movements (feet), and concupiscence (loins). The formula anointing is also stated in the decree. It reads that: "Through this holy anointing and his pious mercy, may the Lord pardon you for whatever offences you have committed by sight." This formula is to be repeated when anointing other parts that are prescribed.

[637] Henrici Denzinger, no. 1324.

[638] The seven sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy orders and Marriage. Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Fundamental Liturgy, Volume II,* Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997), xxiiv.

4.6.3 Council of Trent on Oil of the Sick

The teaching of the Council of Trent (13 December, 1545 – 4 December, 1563) on the Oil of the Sick is enshrined in the doctrine on Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The doctrine on Anointing of the Sick was an addendum to the doctrine on Penance. [639] The doctrine came in response to protestant reformers, especially Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-1564). The reformers denied that the Anointing of the Sick was a sacrament, and has power to remit sins and confer grace.[640] In the addendum, the Council of Trent also dealt with the reasons for the institution of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the moment of its institution and promulgation, the matter of the sacrament, its effects and minister.

4.6.3.1 Institution of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

The Council of Trent affirmed the sacramentality of the Anointing of the Sick. The Council stated that: "This holy anointing of the sick was instituted as a true and proper sacrament of the New Testament by Christ our Lord, as is insinuated by Mark, recommended

[639] The Council also issued four canons anathemizing whoever said the contrary. First canon anathemized whoever denied that the last anointing was not a true and proper sacrament instituted by the Lord, but rather a rite of a human origin. The second canon condemned whoever denied that the sacrament continues to confer grace or remit sins or soothe the sick. The third canon condemned whoever asserted that the rite and the usage of the last anointing in the Roman Church does not agree with what St. James meant. The last canon anathemized whoever argued that the proper ministers are not the priests ordained by the bishop, but rather elders in any community. Cf. Henrici Denzinger, nos. 1694-1698.

[640] The denial was expressly stated by Martin Luther in his "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church." In this work, Luther denied the apostolic authority of the Letter of St. James. He also asserted that extreme unction was a rite of the early Church, and which has long ceased. With regard to the minister of the Sacrament, he argued that the prayer of faith can be made in full faith by older, graver and saintly men, and the sick man can be healed. Cf. Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church (tr.* A. T. W. Steinhäuser and revised by Frederick C. Ahrens and Abdel Ross Wentz*).* Retrieved from https://www.onthewing.org/user/Luther%20-%20Babylonian%20Captivity.pdf, (accessed 04/03/2026); Cf. Paul F. Palmer, *Sacraments and Forgiveness: Historical and Doctrinal Development of Penance, Extreme Unction and Indulgencies* (London: The Newman Press, 1959), 306-307.
John Calvin criticized the Rite of Anointing of the Sick as a "mere hypocritical stage play." He acknowledged the fact that the use of oil is mentioned by Mark and James [Mk 6:13 and Jas 5:14-15]. However, he denied any mystery associated with using oil. Cf. John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religions* IV (tr. by Beveridge, II, 636ff) (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1835), 636. Retrieved from https://www.ccel.org/ccel/c/calvin/institutes/cache/institutes.pdf, (accessed 04/03/2026); Cf. Paul F. Palmer (1959), 307-309.

and promulgated to the faithful through James the apostle and brother of the Lord."[641] The reason for the institution of the Sacrament was to munify the end of life with strong safeguard.[642]

4.6.3.2 Elements of the Sacrament

The Council of Trent decreed about the matter, the form, the official minister, and the effect of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The matter is the oil blessed by a bishop.[643] The form consists in the words that accompany the anointing. Through the anointing with oil, the grace of the Holy Spirit is fittingly conferred on the sick person. While the body is visibly anointed, the soul of the sick person is simultaneously and invisibly anointed. In this, the Council saw oil as an external symbol of the invisible anointing of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit expiates the sins of the sick person. The Holy Spirit also comforts and strengthens the soul of the sick person arousing in him or her great confidence and trust in the divine mercy.[644] The physical effect is the restoration of the bodily health when it is expedient for the salvation of the soul.[645]

The Council decreed that the proper ministers of the Sacrament are the presbyters of the Church. These presbyters are either the bishops or the priests, duly ordained by bishops through the laying on of hands of the *prebyterium*. [646] The recipients of the Sacraments are the sick, especially those who are dangerously ill (*periculose decumbunt*) that they seem near

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[641] "*Instituta est autem sacra haec unctio infirmorum tanquam vere et proprie sacramentum novi testamenti a Christo domino nostro, apud Marcum quidem insinuatum, per Iacobum autem apostolum ac Domini fratrem fidelibus commendatum ac promulgatum."* Henrici Denzinger, no. 1695; Norman P. Tanner (1990), 710.

[642] *"ita extremae unctionis sacramento finem vitae tanquam firmissimo quodam praesidio munivit."* Norman P. Tanner, (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Council: Volume II Trent to Vatican II* (London: Sheed and Ward and Georgetown University Press, 1990), 710; cf. Denzinger, no. 1694.

[643] Cf. Henrici Denzinger, no. 1695.

[644] Cf. Henrici Denzinger, no. 1696; Norman P. Tanner (1990), 710.

[645] Cf. Henrici Denzinger, no. 1696; Norman P. Tanner (1990), 710.

[646] *"Nam et ostenditur, proprios huis sacramenti ministros esse ecclesia presbyteros quo nomine eo loco non aetate seniores aut primores in populo intelligendi veniunt, set aut episcopi aut sacerdos ab ipsis rite ordinati per impositionem manum presbyterii."* Henrici Denzinger, no. 1697; Norman P. Tanner (1990), 710-711.

death.[647] In this, Council implied that the Oil of the Sick is for anointing those who are close to death.

From the doctrine of the Council of Trent, three names of the Sacrament emerge. These names are: "*Extrema Unctio"* (Last Anointing), "*Sacra Unctio Infirmorum"* (Sacred Anointing of the Sick) and "*Sacramentum Exeuntium"* (Sacrament of the Dying). In mentioning all these names, the Council "tried to direct people's attention to the real meaning of the sacrament- the anointing of the sick." [648] Since the practice of anointing the Christians on their death bed continued, the sacrament was treated more as "sacrament of the dying."[649] The Council did not state if the oil to be blessed and used for anointing was to be olive oil or oil of any other plant. In addition, the Council did not give directive about the care and storage for the blessed oil. However, that the Council recommended the issuance of a new ritual for the celebration of Sacraments.

4.7 Post-Tridentine Rituals Relating to Oil of the Sick (16th to 19th Centuries)

In this section, the conception, custody and use of the Oil of the Sick in the post-Tridentine rituals are discusses. The rituals are: *Pontificale Romanum* and *Rituale Romanum*. They contain two rites that are pertinent about *Oluem Infirmorum*. The Rites are the: "Rite of Blessing the Oil of the Sick" and the "Rite of Anointing of the Sick." However, the Catechism of the Trent, that was issued to disseminate the teaching of the Council of Trent, precedes the rituals.

[647] Henrici Denzinger, no. 1697; Norman P. Tanner (1990), 710-711.
[648] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 51.
[649] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 51.

4.7.1 Catechism of Trent

The Catechism of the Council of Trent was published in 1566, under the title: "Catechism by the Decree of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests: Issued by the order of Pius V."[650] The Catechism taught that Extreme Unction is a true sacrament instituted by Christ as a remedy for the diseases of the soul and also for those of the body. However, it is not to be administered indiscriminately to all, but only to those who are approaching death.[651]

The Catechism reiterated the teaching of the scholastic theologians and the Council of Trent on the matter of the Sacrament. It reemphasized that the matter is the oil consecrated by the bishop. The oil is to be from "olive-berries, not from any rich or fatty matter."[652] The Catechism also explained the importance of the oil to bodily health with a corresponding value in sacramental usage. The Catechism states that:

> Oil is very efficacious in soothing bodily pain and this sacrament soothes and alleviates the pain and anguish of the soul. Oil contributes to restore health and spirits, serves to give light, and refreshes fatigue; and this effect correspond with and are expressive of those produced through divine power, on the sick, by the administration of this sacrament.[653]

Since oil serves to mitigate bodily pains, it is an effective sign to convey the grace of the Sacrament. As a material sensible item, oil is endowered with the natural properties that promote health.[654] Through the divine power, invoked during the blessing of the oil, the natural properties are transformed into healing properties.[655]

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[650] "*Catechismus ex Decreto Conciliii Tridentini ad Parochos Pii V Iussu Editus."* Cf. *Catechism of the Council of Trent, Published by Command of Pope Pius the Fifth*, translated by Jeremiah Donovan (Baltimore: Lucas Brothers, 1829), 10.

[651] According the Catechism of the Council of Trent, the following are not to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick: those are not afflicted by heavy sickness, those who lack the use of reason, and children. Those with insanity may be anointed, since sometimes have lucid intervals. They also give some sign of devotion, and express a wish to be anointed with the sacred oil. Cf. *The Catechism of the Council of Trent, Sacrament of Extreme Unction, Question IX*, tr. Theodore Alois Buckley (London: George Routledge and Co., 1852), 199.

[652] *The Catechism of the Council of Trent, Sacrament of Extreme Unction, Question V*.

[653] Jeremiah Donovan (1829), 206;

[654] Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Qn. 60, Art. 6.

[655] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 191-193.

4.7.2 Blessing of the Oil of the Sick in *Pontificale Romanum*

The early post-Tridentine edition of the *Pontificale Romanum* was published in 1596 during the Pontificate of Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605). It has been revised and supplemented under several popes, like Urban III (1623-1644), Benedict XIV (1740-17560) and Leo XIII (1878-1903).[656] In this Clementine edition of the *Pontificale Romanum*, the blessing of the Oil of the Sick took place during the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, presided over by a bishop.

The *Pontificale Romanum* prescribed that before the blessing of the oil, it was to be exorcised by the bishop. This was meant to enable the oil to effect spiritual unction for strengthening the body, the temple of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:16).[657] The exorcism of the oil was followed by the blessing of the oil which the bishop also pronounced in a low voice.

The prayer for the blessing of the oil in the "Clement-Urban-Benedicto-Leo"[658] edition is the revised "*emitte"* prayer found in the Gelasian Sacramentary. The additional words given to the prayer, state what the oil is to become. The words stated that the oil through the holy anointing, "becomes a heavenly medicine for all, a comfort of mind and body, and a means for dismissing all infirmities and sicknesses of mind and body.[659] The holy anointing was to be done using a Rite.

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[656] Cf. "*Pontificalia Romana*, "in *Caeremoniale Romanorum Wszelkie pravas zastrzezone* (2026). Retrieved from https://caeremonialeromanum.com/en/pontificalia-romana-andrieu-dykmans-vogel/, (accessed 28/02/2026).

[657] *"Exorcizo te immundissime spiritus, omnisque incurso satanae, et omne phantasma. In nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti; ut recedes ab hoc oleo, ut possit effici unctionis spiritalis ad corroborandum templum Dei vivi; ut in eo possit Spiritus sanctus habitare* (…). Pontificale Romanum Clementis VIII. Ac Urbani VIII iussu editum inde verbo A Benedictor XIV (Vaticanum), 609.

[658] This phrase is coined from the names of the Popes who promulgated the subsequent editions of the *Pontifical Romanum*: Clement VIII, Urban III, Benedict XIV, and Leo XIII.

[659] *Pontificale Romanum Clementis VIII. Ac Urbani VIII iussu editum inde verbo A Benedicto XIV* (Vaticanum), 610.

4.7.2 Rite of Anointing in *Rituale Romanum* of Paul V

Pope Paul V promulgated the *Rituale Romanum* in 1614. Under the heading "*De Sacramento Extrema Unctio*," the *Rituale Romanum* repeats the doctrinal teaching of the Council of Trent on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.[660] It also lays out the Rite of Anointing the Sick with sacred oil. The oil should have been blessed by the bishop during the Mass of Lord's Supper.

The *Rituale Romanum* gives explicit direction about the custody of the oil. It directs that the parish is to have the custody of the oil in a suitable place, that is decently decorated, in a silver vessel or tin (*vase argenteo/stanneo*).[661] While being carried to the sick, it should be absorbed in cotton wool (*bombacio*) to avoid the danger of spilling over. [662] The *Rituale Romanum* added that the blessed oil should be of sufficient quantity for use in the course of the year. If it should run out during the year, unblessed oil can be poured over it to fill up to the needed quantity.[663]

In the process of anointing, the oil is placed or smeared (*liniuntur*) on the five parts of the body. More parts may be anointed at the discretion of the minister. The parts that may be anointed are the sense organs, that is, the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and hands. They are anointed on account of their participating in committing sins, that is, the sick person having used them in committing sins. The anointing is done in form of a cross (*modu Crucis*). While anointing, the formula for anointing is said, appropriating it to each of the body parts being anointed: *"Per*

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[660] Cf. *Rituale Romanum Pauli V, P. M iussu editum* (Romae: Typographia Camerae Apostolicae, MDCXVII), 72.

[661] "*Hebeat igitus parochus loco nitido, & decenter ornato, in vase argenteo, seo stanneo diligenter custodium sacrum Oleum infirmorum*(...). *Oleum porro ipsum, vel per se solum, vel in bombacio seu re simili, fervari potest sed ad evitandum effusionis periculum multo commodius ad infirmos defertur in bombacio*." *Rituale Romanum Pauli V*, 73.

[662] Cf. *Rituale Romanum Pauli V*, 73.

[663] "*Id tamen, si forte infra annum aliquo modo it deficiat ut sufficere non posse videatur, neque alius benedictum haberi queat, modico oleo non benedicto in minor quantitate super infuse, reparari potest."Rituale Romanum Pauli V*, 73.

istam sanctam unctionem & suam piisimam misercordia, indulgeat tibi Dominus, quidquid per visum, sive per auditum, & c, deliquisti."[664]

The *Rituale Romanum* of Paul V was destined to be used for over three and half centuries. It is the ritual that reached most parts of the world through the efforts of the missionaries. In Africa, south of Sahara, this ritual was brought towards the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of 20th century.

4.8 Rite of Anointing of the Sick in the 20th Century

In this section, the understanding and the practice of the Anointing of the Sick in the first half of the 20th century is discussed. Guidelines for the care and custody of the Oil of the Sick are also explained.

4.8.1 Back to *Oleum Infirmorum*

In the early 20th century, the sacrament for the sick was firmly understood to be the Extreme Unction in which anointing with blessed olive oil was considered to be the last rite. The recipients of the sacrament were those who were in the danger of death. This understanding was codified in the 1917 Code of Canon Law.[665] Canon 940 of the Code states that the subjects are those who "have come into the danger of death from infirmity or old age."[666] However, there were some efforts made to interpret the danger of death in a lenient way.

The softening of the stance on Extreme Unction and the danger of death is witnessed to in the Papal Documents of Benedict XV (1914-1922) and Pius XI (1922-1939). Pope Benedict XV chose to consider seriousness of the sickness as understanding of the danger of death. In his Apostolic Letter *Sodalitatem*, he states that anointing be administered "as soon as the

[664] *Rituale Romanum Pauli V*, 75; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 189.
[665] Cf. *The 1917 or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law in English Translation* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), CIC, cans.937, 940 & 945.
[666] The 1917 or *Pio-Benedictine Code*, CIC, can. 940.

sickness becomes more serious and one can prudently judge that there is danger of death."[667] This may not be a new interpretation because every sickness puts a person in danger of death.

Pope Pius XI clarified that the danger of death is not a necessary reason for the reception of the sacrament, but rather a sufficient reason. He corrected those who were zealous to anoint the sick with oil, while the sick were dying. In the correction, he emphasized that it is not necessary that death should follow immediately after anointing. In his letter *Explorata Res,* Pius XI states that: "For it is not necessary that the death should follow immediately [after anointing] for the sacrament to be validly and lawfully to be administered, but it is sufficient that there should be a prudent or probable judgement of the danger."[668] This was a positive pronouncement that would help to reestablish the understanding of the oil as "*Oleum Infirmorum*" (Oil of the Sick), correcting the previous conception as "*Oleum Exeuntium*" (Oil of the Dying).

Some efforts of the Liturgical Movement also contributed to correction the previous understanding of the oil. During the Liturgical Congress at Vanves (7-9 April, 1948) that focused on liturgical reform, the scholars examined Extreme Unction and suggested that the ancient Rite of Anointing of the Sick be preferred.[669] They based their suggestions on the prayer texts in the rites. For example, the prayers for the blessing of the oils reveal that the anointing would be administered with the hope of healing.[670] The scholars further confirmed that the last sacrament to be received by the faithful was Viaticum, which was "sacramental help for the dying."[671]

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[667] Benedict XI, Apostolic Letter *Sodalitatem* (May 31, 1921), in *AAS* 13 (1921), 342-345.
[668] Pius XI, Apostolic Letter *Explorata Res* (February 2, 1923), in *AAS* 15 (1923): 104-105.
[669] Cf. Cf. Joseph Cunnane, "Recent Writings on the Liturgy of the Sick," in *The Furrow*, Vol. 11, No. 9 (1960): 613. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/27657925?seq=7, (accessed 04/03/2026). Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 194-195.
[670] Cf. Bernard Botte, "L'onction de maladies," in *La Maison-Dieu, Revue de pastorale liturgique*, no. 15 (Parish: Cert, 1948): 104; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 194.
[671] Cf. Bernard Botte (1948): 104; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 194.

4.8.2 Regulations for the Custody of *Oleum Infirmorum*

The *Pontificale Romanum* and *Rituale Romanum*, which continued to be used in the first half of the 20th century, gave clear directives for the custody of the sacred oils. The *Pontificale Romanum* of 1596 had mentioned that the oils, when being blessed, are placed in "*ampulas*." The term "*ampula"* was used to describe the vessels for keeping the holy oils. The vessels were made of fired clay, metal or even glass.[672] The "*ampulas"* were covered with silk. The silk for covering the "*ampula"* with Chrism oil was white, where as the one for covering the Oil of the Sick is not mentioned. After the blessing of the oils, they were returned to the sacristy, and kept in the same container. The "*ampulas"* were to be used for keeping the oils in the cathedral churches where they are blessed.

Regulations for custody of the Oil of the Sick were recorded in canon 946 of the 1917 Code. The canon stipulated that the container for keeping the oil was to be made of silver or nickel. The container was to be clean and becomingly decorated. The oil was to be stored in an ambry under lock and key. Each parish was required to have an ambry for keeping the oils.[673] Keeping the oils outside the ambry was permitted only for exceptional reasons which the Code did not state.

The oil was carried to the sick in a vessel covered with a purple silk. This implied that the vessel for carrying the Oil of the Sick was to be separate from that of the Oil of Catechumens and Chrism. It was covered in a reverent way. The instruction first given in the 1614 *Rituale Romanum* is repeated in the 1952 Ritual of the Anointing of the Sick. The instruction states: "The priest himself reverently takes the vessel containing the oil of the sick encased in a silk cover of purple colour and bears it carefully so that it will not spill." The danger of spilling was avoided by having the sack or the purse hung from the neck.

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[672] Cf. New Advent, "Ampula," in *Catholic Encyclopedia* (2023). Retrieved from https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01439c.html, (accessed 28/02/2026).
[673] The 1917 or *Pio-Benedictine Code*, CIC, can. 946.

Writing about liturgical matters in 1959, Joseph Wuest gave specifications for the custody of oil, and construction of ambry. He actually reemphasized what was stated in the 1917 Code of Canon Law and the *Rituale Romanum*. Wuest, states that:

> Every care shall be taken lest vessels containing the sacred oils be touched by anyone who is not a priest or lest they be sacrilegiously abused. Hence all such vessels shall be kept in the church or oratory, where they shall be housed under lock and key in their own special ambry; the latter shall be respectable and clean and becomingly ornamented.[674]

This emphasis seeks to prevent the use of the oil for sacrilegious and unbecoming purposes. It also sought to promote respectful, reverent and secure handling of the oil. Accordingly, the materials for constructing ambry and the decoration of ambry should contribute to fostering the respect, reverence, and security of the Oil of the Sick, and all sacred oils. Wuest prescribed wood or marble or metal. He also prescribed silk of violent or white or green colour.[675]

In order to identify the oils and the places for keeping them, Wuest advised the used of clear inscriptions. He advised that: "an inscription '*OLEUM INFIRMORUM*' or '*OLEA SACRA*' could be engraved or otherwise written on or above the door." [676] These specifications, though not official Church regulation, promote reverent custody of the Oil of the Sick. The treatises of the scholars, like Wuest, on the custody of the oils and the work of the Liturgical Movement would bear fruit in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).

4.9 Second Vatican Council on Revision of Rite of Anointing of the Sick

The Second Vatican Council (henceforth Vatican II) decreed that the new edition of the *Rituale Romanum,* in which is found, the Rite of Anointing of the Sick be reformed.[677] In the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, Vatican II stipulated five points

[674] Joseph Wuest, *Matters Liturgical: The Collection Rerum Liturgicarum* (New York: Frederick Pustet Company, 1959), 175-176.
[675] Joseph Wuest (1959), 176.
[676] Joseph Wuest (1959), 176.
[677] Cf. *SC*, no. 63b.

for the reform of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The points were in relation to the name of the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick, the recipients of the sacrament, the interconnectedness with Penance and Eucharist, the number of the anointings, and the adaptation of the texts to the various circumstances of the sick.

With regard to the name, Vatican II emphasized that the name "Anointing of the Sick" is another name of the sacrament, and is more fitting than the name" "Extreme unction."[678] In this, the Council sought to recapture the original name of the sacrament which implied healing. The recipient is any of the faithful who "begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age" *(fidelis incipit esse in periculo mortis propter infirmitatem vel senium*).[679] Concerning the connection of the Sacrament with Penance and Eucharist, the Council stated that anointing is to be done after the sick person has made his confession and before he receives Eucharist as Viaticum.[680] This could be done in form of a Continuous Rite. The number of the anointing was to be adapted to the occasion. The prayers which belong to the Rite of Anointing were to be revised so as to correspond with the varying conditions of the sick person.[681]

The reform of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick required historical and theological investigations.[682] The investigations were to be done by a commission formed for the purpose of implementing the prescriptions of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The commission, called "*Consilium ad exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia,*"[683] was to follow the

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[678] "*Extrema Unctio", quae etiam et melius "Unctio infirmorum" vocari potest, non est Sacramentum eorum tantum qui in extremo vitae discrimine versantur. Proinde tempus opportunum eam recipiendi iam certe habetur cum fidelis incipit esse in periculo mortis propter infirmitatem vel senium.*" *SC*, no. 73.

[679] *SC*, no. 73.

[680] "*Praeter ritus seiunctos Unctionis infirmorum et Viatici, conficiatur Ordo continuus secundum quem Unctio aegroto conferatur post confessionem et ante receptionem Viatici*." SC, no. 74.

[681] *"Unctionum numerus pro opportunitate accommodetur, et orationes ad ritum Unctionis infirmorum pertinentes ita recognoscantur, ut respondeant variis condicionibus infirmorum, qui Sacramentum suscipiunt. SC*, no. 75.

[682] Cf. *SC*, no. 16, 23.

[683] "*Consilium ad exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia"* was formally established by the Motu Proprio Apostolic Letter *Sacram Liturgicam* on January 25, 1964. Cf. Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Sacram Liturgiam* (January 25, 1964), in *AAS* 56 (1965): 139-144.

principles laid down by in the same constitution.[684] These investigations were to aid, among other things, the work of reforming the *Rituale Romanum,* and coming out with a new Rite of Anointing of the Sick.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the use of oil in the care of the sick in the Bible and Church tradition has been discussed. In the Old Testament, the oil used in the care of the sick was extracted from olive tree. Of the three types of olive oils, *shemen* oil was used in curing of many health ailments. It was one of the elements in the ritual of cleansing of a leper. The minister of the entire ritual was priest. The parts to be anointed with the oil (*shemen*) anointed were the organs for hearing (ear), action (hands), movements (legs) and reasoning (head). This ritual gives an Old Testament precedent to the use of oil in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

The disciples of Jesus understood that oil was an element that expressed the goodness of creation. They used oil in anointing the sick, in a liturgical rite. The various liturgical formulae examined in the various liturgical books reveal the oil was prepared through special blessing by the bishop. The anointing would be done by the bishop, presbyter and even lay faithful. The oil was known by various names, such as "holy oil," "anointing oil", "sanctified oil", "sacred oil", and "sanctified divine oil."

In the Middle Ages, oil came to be used to anoint those who were dying, leading it become *oleum exeuntium*. Efforts of the Liturgical Movement made the oil to be reestablished as *Oleum Infirmorum.* With the implementation of the Vatican II decree on the liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium,* a current Rite of Anointing of the Sick promultated promulgated. The next Chapter examines the current Rite of the Anointing of the Sick.

[684] SC, nos. 64-66.

CHAPTER FIVE

OIL IN THE CURRENT RITE OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Introduction

In this chapter, the oil in the current Rite of Anointing of the Sick is discussed. The chapter has eight sections. The first section contains presentation of the preliminaries to the Rite. These include preparation, promulgation and the General Introduction or *Praenotanda* of the Rite. In the second section, general structure of the entire Rite is outlined. In the third section, the particular structure for to be followed for the celebration of the Sacrament described. In the fourth section, the Prayer of Blessing of the Oil is analyzed. The prayer is analyzed in order to explore the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick. In the fifth section, the various names of the Oil of the Sick in the Rite are stated. The sixth section consists of discussion on the preparation and custody of oil. In the seventh section, theological insights in the Rite are discussed. The insights are discussed in their relationship to the Oil of the Sick. The eight section contains some papal teachings on Oil of the Sick.

5.1 Preliminaries to the Current Rite

In this section, a brief history of the preparation of the Rite is presented. The two documents for promulgation of the Rite are also presented. These documents are the *Decretu*m (Decree) and the Apostolic Constitution. This is presentation is followed by an examination of the General Introduction (*Praenotanda*) to the Rite.

5.1.1 Preparation of the Rite

The Rite is a fruit of the revision of the liturgical texts sanctioned by the Vatican II. Vatican II decreed that: “texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly

the holy things which they signify."[685] The revision was not simply "drawing up." It was rather to be a comprehensive work of "correcting, improving, or updating, when necessary, the liturgical texts and the rites of the sacraments."[686] For the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the revision entailed two aspects. The first aspect was to make Anointing of the Sick to be understood as a sacrament for the Sick (*infirmis*), not of the dying (*exeuntium*). The second one was making the celebration less cumbersome and adaptive to the occasions and conditions of the sick people.[687]

The onerous task of preparation of the Rite lasted four years (from 1965 to 1969). The task involved historical and theological investigations into the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. A study group (*Coetus* 23) that was constituted for the purpose of the investigation.[688] The group worked in collaboration with other theologians, pastors and medical doctors from various countries.[689] Consultations were done through meetings and experimental use of the draft in celebrations of the Sacrament.[690] After the consultations and post-experimental revisions, the *Ordo Unctionis Infirmorum eorumque Pastoralis Curae* (henceforth *OUI*) was presented to the world as the *editio typica.*[691] Translations and adaptations were to be based on the *editio typica*. Such translations and adaptations are necessary to make the edition usable in

[685] *SC*, no. 21.
[686] Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgies of the Future: The Process and Methods of Inculturation* (Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006), 107.
[687] Cf. *SC*, no. 73 & 75.
[688] The members of the group were: Piere Marie Gy (France), Jairo Meijaia (Colombia), Jean Rabau (Belgium), Johannes Hofinger (Austria), Francois Vendenbroucke (Belgium), Antoine Chavasse (France), Bruno Lowemberg (Germany), Korbinian Ritzer (German), and Jean Didier (France). Cf. Annibale Bugnini, *The Reform of the Liturgy 1948-1975* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 942-955.
[689] Cf. Sacra Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, "Prima Congregatio Plenaria," in *Notitiae*, no. 59 (1970): 388-394. Retrieved from https://www.cultodivino.va/content/dam/cultodivino/rivista-notitiae/1970/notitiae-06-(1970)/Notitiae-059-1970.pdf, (accessed 10/03/2026); Cf. *SC*, nos. 73-75.
[690] Such experimental uses were done during the celebrations in some individual dioceses in France and United States of America. A communal celebration of the Anointing of the Sick was also done in the shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, presided over by Pope Paul VI (1962-1978). Cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 51.
[691] *Editio typica* is a Latin phrase translated as "typical edition." It refers to the official publication of a rite or a ritual. It is presented to the world from the Holy See through the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments. *Editio typica* is a model for liturgical celebrations, according to the Roman liturgy. Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco (2006), 7.

the various concrete circumstances, needs and situations of the Christian faithful.[692] It was presented with two accompanying documents: *Decretum* (Decree of promulgation) and an Apostolic Constitution.

5.1.2 *Decretum*

The *Decretum,* entitled "*Infirmis cum Ecclesia,"* was issued by the Congregation of Divine Worship on 7 December, 1972.[693] The *Decretum is* a testimony that the preparation of the *OUI* followed the required procedures. Consequently, it was authorized for carrying out the sanctifying office of the Church.

The *Decretum* affirms that the Church's care for the sick is a service to the suffering Christ. Christ suffers in the sick who are members of his mystical body, the Church. In caring for the sick, the Church obeys the command of Lord (cf. Matt 25:36).[694] Four areas are identified as avenues for the care of the sick. These are: visit to those in poor health, anointing of the Sick, communion to the Sick, and prayers for the sick and the dying.[695] This outline would determine the structure of the *OUI*.

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[692] An English translation or edition was prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) for use in the English-speaking countries. This ICEL edition was published in 1982 under the title: "Pastoral Care of the Sick." This title was later augmented to be: "Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum." The entire rite was then published in 1990 in the "Rites of the Catholic Church Volume 1", having been approved by the Holy See for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America. It is the edition that is available to the researcher for study. On 30 November, 2024, the Dicastery for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments (DWDS) confirmed a revised translation made by ICEL for the dioceses in the United States of America. The use of this revised translation became obligatory from Easter Sunday, 5 April, 2026. Cf. Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum," in *The Rites of the Catholic Church Volume I,* The Roman Ritual revised by the Decree of Second Ecumenical Council and Published by authority of Pope Paul VI (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 761-901; United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, "DDWDS Confirms English and Spanish Order of the Anointing of the Sick and of their Pastoral Care; Implementation set for Early 2026," in *NewsLetter*, Volume 61 (2025): 1. Retrieved from https://www.usccb.org/resources/newsletter-2025-01.pdf, (accessed 07/07/2026).

[693] Cf. Sacred Congregation of Divine Worship, "Decree *Infirmis cum Ecclesia*, promulgating the *editio typica* of the Rites for the Pastoral Care of the Sick, Anointing and Viaticum, 7 December 1972: *AAS* 65 (1973) 275-276; Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, *Decretum* Prot. no. 1501 (72).

[694] Cf. Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, *Decretum* Prot. no. 1501 (72).

[695] Cf. Congregatio pro Cultu Divino, *Decretum* Prot. no. 1501 (72).

The *Decretum* echoes two concerns of the Fathers of the Vatican II that the *OUI* responded to. The first concern was that the meaning of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick should be clearly and more evidently conveyed in the Rite. This is to be shown in the adaptions of the number of the anointings according to the circumstances and conditions of the sick.[696] The second concern was to respond to the sick persons' need for continuous care and accompaniment. Such a response was done through the preparation of an *Ordo Continuus* (Continuous Rite). The *Ordo Continuus* would be used for anointing after the reception of the Sacrament of Penance, and before Viaticum.[697] In the *Decretum*, there is no mention of the oil.

5.1.3 Apostolic Constitution

Alongside the *Decretum* was the Apostolic Constitution, *Sacra Unctionem Infirmorum.* The constitution was issued by Pope Paul VI on 30 November, 1972.[698] The constitution affirms the biblical and Council teachings about the sacramentality, institution and the effects of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The Constitution reiterates the teaching of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) that Anointing of the Sick is one of the seven Sacraments of the New Testament, instituted by Christ.[699]

With regard to the effects of the Sacrament, the constitution recapitulated what is stated in the decree of the Fourth Council of Florence (1439). The spiritual effects include: remission of sins and remnants of sin, arousing of confidence in the mercy of God, strengthening of the soul, assistance to bear trials and hardships of sickness and ability to resist temptations. The physical effects are: raising up of the sick person and regaining of bodily sanity, "if it is

[696] Cf. *SC*, nos. 75.
[697] Cf. *SC*, nos. 74.
[698] Paul VI, "Apostolic Constitution Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick," in *The Rites of the Catholic Church Volume I* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 771-774; cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972): 5-9;
[699] Cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972): 5.

expedient for the health of the soul."[700] The expedience implies that after the recovery, the individual should make effort to embrace a reformed life, committed to the Gospel values.

The Constitution mentions historical witnesses of the liturgical celebration of the Anointing of the Sick. These witnesses are: *Si Instituta Ecclesiatica* of Pope Innocent I, and the Gelasian and Gregorian sacramentaries. From these sacramentaries, attention is directed to the *Emitte* prayer, which has been used for blessing the Oil of the Sick. The Constitution acknowledges that: "this prayer was inserted in the eucharistic prayer and is still preserved in the Roman Pontifical."[701]

The Constitution made three pertinent changes that are inserted in the *OUI*. The first change regards the oil. The Constitution made it clear that any other plant oil can be used. The constitution states that:

> Since olive oil, which until now was prescribed for the valid conferring of the Sacrament, is not obtainable or difficult to get in some regions, we have decreed, at the request of many bishops, that, according to the circumstances, another kind of oil can also be used, provided that it is extracted from plants, and it is hence similar to oil from olive.[702]

This permission to use some other oil derived from plant was in response to the petitions of the episcopal conferences in missionary countries.[703] Positively, this is was an enrichment to the tradition of using only the olive oil. Olive oil had always been taken as obligatory matter for Anointing of the Sick and necessary for the valid celebration of the Sacrament.[704] The Constitution adds that oil derived from plant oil is similar to olive oil. This implies that no other oil (animal oil or mineral oil) is to be used, except plant oil. The persistent use of the phrase

[700] Cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972): 6; Henrici Denzinger 1324-1325.
[701] Paul VI (1990): 771; Cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972), in *AAS* 65 (1973): 5.
[702] *"Cum autem oleum olivarum, quod huiusque ad valorem Sacramenti conficiendi prescribebatur, in nonnullis regionibus deficiat vel difficile comparetur, decrevimus, petentibus pluribus Episcopis, ut, pro opportunitate, etiam aliud oleum in posterum adhiberi possit, quod tamen e plantis sit expressum, utpote oleo ex oliva similius."* Cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972): 8; Paul VI (1990): 773
[703] Cf. Aimé Georges Martimort (1987): 136; Annibale Bugnini (1990), 692.
[704] Cf. Annibale Bugnini (1990), 692.

"*pro opportunitate*" (according to circumstances), however, show some hesitance to grant complete use of any other plant oil.

The second change regards modification of the sacramental formula. The modified formula was to reflect more the words of James 5:14. The formula reads: "Through this holy anointing and his loving mercy, may the Lord help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit, in order that he saves you from sin, and graciously raises you up." [705] The statement preceding this modified formula identifies the person and the body parts to be anointed. The one to be anointed is the seriously sick person (*infirmis periculose aegrotantibus*). The body parts to be anointed are the head and the hands (*in fronte et in manibus).*

The third change is the reduction of the parts to be anointed and the number of anointings. The body parts were reduced to only two: forehead and hands. While anointing the body parts, the formula is said once. In case of a necessity, a single anointing on the forehead or another suitable body part is considered to be sufficient. This is done while the entire sacramental formula is said. Any other part of the body may be anointed depending on the particular condition of the sick person. This is done without repeating the formula. This is a shift from the number of the anointing prescribed in the 1614 *Rituale Romanum* of Paul V.[706] Whereas the reduction of the body parts and the number of anointings may make the rites simple and clear, it might lead to minimalism. One would take it that two quick touches with the tip of the thumb socked in oil would be suffice.

A question that would arise is whether a person can be anointed many times in his or her lifetime. The Constitution addressed this question by giving two conditions that may occasion repetition. The first condition is when the sick person falls sick again, after

[705] *"Per istam sanctam unctionem et suam piisimam misercordiam adiuvet te Dominus gratia spiritus Sancti, ut a peccatis liberatum te salvet atque propitius allevet." Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972): 8; Paul VI (1990): 772

[706] As shown in section 4.7.2, in the *Rituale Romanum* of Paul V, five body parts were anointed. These parts (sense organs) are: eyes, ears, nose, mouth and hands. More body parts may be anointed at discretion of the minister.

recuperation (*rursus in morbum inciderat)*. This may be sickness of another type or cause. The second condition is when during the same illness the person's condition becomes more serious (*discrimen gravius fiat*).[707] That seriousness could be evaluated on the basis of signs and symptoms of functional decline of the body organs.

The Apostolic Constitution stipulated that the use of *OUI* would be effective from 1 January, 1974. The directions stated in the Apostolic Constitution are given doctrinal expressions in the General Introduction (*Praenotanda*).

5.1.4 General Introduction

The General Introduction, which contains 41 entries, gives codes (*codices*) for a proper execution of the Rite.[708] The codes can be categorized into three. These are: "*codex credendi*", *"codex orandi*" and *"codex aptandi*."[709] "*Codex credendi*" gives an explanation of what the Church believes and teaches about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. "*Codex orandi*" states the norms directing how the celebration of the Sacrament should proceed, with the ministers exercising their roles. It also states the places for the celebration. "*Codex aptandi*"

[707] The repetition of the anointing during the same sickness was not an innovation of the Apostolic Constitution. Chupungco shows that the conciliary commission had found evidence this was being done until the thirteenth century. He states that: "The conciliar commission supported this last article [on repeating anointing during the same sickness] with historical and pastoral reasons: 'Repeating anointing during the same illness was practiced by churches until the thirteenth century. For obviously the sick, especially those with prolonged illness, more frequently need spiritual comfort.'" Anscar J. Chupungco (2006), 115.

[708] The term "codes" [*codices*] is used by Renato De Zan to describe the contents of the *praenotanda*. He states that the *praenotanda* give the theological code, rubrical code and adaptive code of the rite. Theological code is "an exposition of Church's teaching, which tells what should emerge and what a celebration ought to signify." In the rubrical code is found the norms stating how the celebration must function in order "to achieve the effects signified." De Zan does not explain what the adaptive code consists of. Cf. Renade De Zen, "Criticism and Interpretation of Liturgical Texts," in Anscar J. Chupungco, (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies Volume I: Introduction to the Liturgy* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997): 337.

[709] This expression is inspired by the liturgical paradigm "*Lex Orandi-Lex Credendi,"* attributed to Prosper of Aquitanae (390- 455). The phrase, in Proper's work *De Vocatione Omniun Gentium (circa* 450), originally read "*ut legem credendi statuat lex supplicandi"* that is "that the law of praying may establish the law of believing." It is shortened as *lex credendi, lex orandi (law of believing, law of praying).* As a hermeneutical principle, the paradigm implies that theological investigations must be based on the way people pray and how they use the rites and the rituals (*lex orandi*). People's prayer expresses their faith (*lex credendi*). Cf. Pius XII, Encyclical *Mediator Dei* (20 November, 1947*)*, nos. 46-48, in *AAS* 39 (1947):561-578.

gives ways of adapting or accommodating the elements in the Rite for the fruitful participation of those taking part in the celebration.

5.1.4.1 *Codex Credendi*

To anchor the teaching of the Church on the Sacrament, the General Instruction gives a general understanding of sickness in the mystery of salvation. Sickness is a universal experience afflicting all human beings, including Christians. Christians are to adopt Christo-ecclesial attitude towards sickness. This attitude calls upon the Christians not to regard sickness afflicting the sick person as a punishment for sin (cf. Jn 9:3). Those afflictions of the sick persons are momentary and slight when compared with the greatness of eternal glory.[710] Motivated by their faith in Christ and encouraged by his love, Christians give redemptive meaning to sickness. Those who are tormented by sickness are members of the Church, the body of Christ, who still suffers in the sick persons.[711]

The General Introduction states the purpose for the institution of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. It also states the effects of the Sacrament. The purpose is for the Lord to show his great solicitude for the sick. He strengthens those "faithful who are afflicted by illness, providing them with the strongest means of support."[712] The effect of the Sacrament is the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Through this grace, the "*totus homo"* (whole person) is helped and saved. His faith and the faith of the Church are instrumental in effecting this.[713] Sustained

[710] *Pastoral Care of the Sick* (hereafter cited as *PCS*), nos. 1-2.

[711] There are three specific aspects of the "Church as the Body of Christ." The first aspect is the unity of all her members with each other. This is a result of their union with Christ. It implies that when one member suffers through sickness, other members are also affected. The second aspect is Christ as the head of the Body. The members of the Church constitute the body. When the any member of the body is afflicted with sickness, the head suffers too. The third aspect is the Church as the bride of Christ. The suffering inflicted by sickness on any part of the bride is a cause of solicitude and concern for the bridegroom. Cf. *CCC,* no. 789; 1 Cor 12:27; Rm 12:5; Eph 4:12; Col 1:24.

[712] *Quare Christus fideles suos infirmitate laborantes unctionis sacramento munit, tamquam firmission quodam praesidio." Ordo Unctionis Infirmorum* (hereafter cited as *OUI*), no. 5; cf. *PCS*, no. 5

[713] Cf. *PCS*, no. 7; *OUI*, no. 7.

by trust in God's mercy, the sick person is strengthened to fight against the temptations, suffering and the anxiety of death.[714]

The General Introduction mentions four categories of recipients of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. All the recipients are members of the faithful of Christ. First category is of those "seriously impaired by sickness or old age" (*fidelibus qui propter infirmitatem vel senium perculose aegratant*).[715] The second category is of persons going for surgery (*sectionem chirugicam*). However, this is on condition that the reason for the surgery is perilous illness.[716] Hence, surgery itself in not a sufficient justification for being anointed with the Oil of the Sick. It should be understood in conjunction with a dangerous bodily infirmity which itself warrants a surgery.[717] Third category consists of the elderly people (*seniores*). Such elderly people should have become markedly weak (*vires multum debilitantur*).[718] In the Fourth category are sick children who "have sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by this sacrament."[719] These categories of people form those who are to be anointing with the Oil of the Sick.

5.1.4.*2 Codex Orandi*

The "*codex orandi*" states the ministers and the various ministries in the celebration of the Sacrament. The "*sacerdos*" (priest) "is the only proper minister"[720] of the Sacrament. Those who ordinarily exercise the office of "*sacerdos*" are the bishop, parish priests and validly ordained priests.[721]

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[714] Cf. *PCS*, no. 6; *OUI*, no. 6.
[715] *PCS*, no. 9; cf. *OUI*, no. 9.
[716] Cf. *PCS*, no. 10; *OUI*, no. 10.
[717] Cf. Schrader Dylan, "Anointing Before Surgery: When and Why?" in *Antiphon* 16, no. 1 (2012): 54.
[718] Cf. *PCS*, no. 11; *OUI*, no. 11.
[719] The revised 1983 Code of Canon Law states that the recipient of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is "a member of the faithful, who having reached the use of reason, begins to be in danger due to sickness or old age." The word "of death" is notably omitted. Those who are not to receive the sacrament are those already confirmed dead, and those who persevere obstinately in manifest grave sin. Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, (hereafter cited as *CIC)*, cans. 1004-1007.
[720] *PCS*, no. 16; *OUI*, no. 16.
[721] Cf. *PCS*, nos. 16; *OUI*, nos. 16-19.

There are diverse ministries and offices to be exercised in the care for the sick. In this case, ministry is understood as efforts to prolong life, care for the sick, comfort them and bring to them the blessing of good health and the healing grace of Christ.[722] The ministries are exercised in response to the exhortation of Christ to care for the sick (cf. Mt 24:44). Those who exercise the ministries are all the baptized, family members, doctors and medical personnel.[723]

5.1.4.3 *Codex Aptandi*

The "*codex aptandi"* includes the directions given for the adaptation and accommodation of the Rite.[724] Adaptation of the *OUI* is properly in the competence of the Conferences of Bishops. The Conferences of Bishops have six responsibilities in adapting the *OUI*.[725] The first responsibility is to decide on what to adapt in accordance with article 39 of the Constitution on the Liturgy.[726] The second responsibility is the discernment of the traditional and cultural elements that may be admitted into the liturgy. Such elements are be proposed to the Holy See for consent. The third responsibility requires the Conferences of Bishops to "retain elements that now exist in particular ritual, as long as they are compatible with the Constitution on the Liturgy and the contemporary needs."[727]

The fourth responsibility calls on the Bishop's Conferences to translate the liturgical texts into vernacular. The fifth responsibility is closely linked to translations. It includes adapting and enlarging the General Introduction while the texts are being translated. The sixth

[722] Cf. *PCS*, no. 32; *OUI*, no. 32.
[723] Cf. *PCS*, nos. 3-4; *OUI*, nos 3-4.
[724] In *SC*, nos. 37-43, adaptation and accommodation referred to by the terms "*aptatio* and *accomodatio*." "*Aptatio*" requires that changes which are introduced by the Conference of Bishops, when approved by the Holy See, be inserted in the ritual of the local church. "*Accomodatio*" is done by the minister during the celebration. Cf. Anscar J. Chupunco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 24.
[725] *OUI*, no. 38; *PCS*, no. 38.
[726] This article states that specifications of the adaptations to be done is in the competence of the territorial ecclesiastical authorities. The ecclesiastical authorities implied are regional or national bishops' conferences. The adaptations relate to the "administration of the sacraments, the sacramentals, processions, liturgical language, sacred music and the arts. Cf. *SC*, nos. 22 § 2, 39.
[727] *PCS*, no. 38; *OUI*, no. 38.

responsibility is to arrange the material in the *editio typica* for pastoral use in a suitable manner. This arrangement is to be carefully laid out in the adapted editions.

Accommodation is in the competence of the minister of the celebration of the Sacrament. In the course of the celebration, the minister can choose from a variety of biblical texts, prayer formulae, symbols and gestures. He is also at liberty to formulate suitable words in giving commentaries.[728] In the Anointing of the Sick, accommodation may involve shortening of the celebration depending on the condition of the sick. It may require the minister to spend more time offering love and help to the sick person. The minister may also add the number of anointings. While accommodating, the minister should be conversant with the Rite and follow its structure.[729]

5.1.4.4 Adaptation of the Oil

The General Introduction repeats the perennial theological teaching about the matter of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. It states that oil is the matter proper for the Sacrament. This oil is olive oil (*oleum olivarum*), or other oil derived from plants (*oleum e plantis expressum*).[730] This incorporates the change introduced by the Apostolic Constitution *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* where oil derived from other plants can be used.

The distinction of the matter as "remote" and "proximate," as expounded by St. Thomas Aquinas, is not given in the General Introduction.[731] However, following his exposition, it can be stated that it is not just oil which is the remote matter, but "oil blessed by the bishop," or oil blessed by the priest during the celebration of the Sacrament.[732] The anointing of the sick person with oil is the proximate matter of the Sacrament. The form of the Sacrament is the

[728] Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco (2006), 22.
[729] Cf. *PCS*, nos. 40-41; *OUI*, no. 40-41.
[730] Cf. *PCS*, no. 20; *OUI*, no. 20.
[731] Cf. Section 4.5.5.1; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, XXIV, art. IV.
[732] Cf. *PCS*, no. 21; *OUI*, no. 31; *CIC*, can. 999 § 2; Henrici Denzinger, 1324; cf. Herman Joseph Kalungi (2025), 383.

words of the formula, pronounced by the priest while anointing the sick person, "Through this holy anointing and his loving mercy, may the Lord help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit, in order that he saves you from sin, and graciously raises you up."[733]

5.2 General Structure of the Current Rite

In this section, the general structure of the Rite in *OUI* is described. *OUI* lays out the general structure in seven chapters.[734] The chapters are arranged under four headings. These headings are: Visitation and Communion to the Sick, Anointing of the Sick, Viaticum, Rites in Extraordinary Circumstances, and Biblical Readings and Alternative Prayer Formulae.

5.2.1 Visitation and Communion to the Sick

The Visitation and Communion to the Sick (*De visitatione et communion infirmati*) are described in Chapter One.[735] The major elements in these Rites are the celebration of the Word of God and Communion to the sick. Through the Rites, the solicitude and the love of Christ is

[733] Cf. *PCS*, no. 124; *OUI*, no. 76; Cf. Herman Joseph Kalungi (2025), 383.

[734] In the ICEL edition, the general structure consists of eight chapters, rearranged into three parts. An appendix on the Rite of Reconciliation of Individual Penitents is included (cf. PCS, nos. 299-305). ICEL states two reasons for the rearrangement: pastoral usability and clarity of theological presupposition. The rite was to be "as pastorally usable form as possible." Concerning the theological presumption, a particular aspect of the ministry of the Church to the sick should be manifestly clear in the actual celebration. It should either convey physical or spiritual recovery for the sick, or accompaniment to the eternal home for the dying. Cf. International Committee on English in the Liturgy, *Pastorally Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum A Commentary* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1983), 3.

Part One is entitle "Pastoral Care of the Sick." It consists of four chapters. Chapters One to Three maintain the rites for "Visit to the Sick" (cf. *PCS*, nos. 54-70) and "Communion to the Sick" (cf. *PCS*, nos. 71-96) as found in the *editio typica*. Chapter Four covers the Anointing of the Sick outside Mass, within Mass, and in a hospital or institution (cf. *PCS*, nos. 97-160).

Part Two includes various rites and prayers for ministry to the dying. It covers Chapters Five to Eight. Chapter Five contains prayers for the celebration of Viaticum, which can be within Mass or outside Mass (cf. *PCS*, nos. 175-211). Chapters Six and Seven have prayers and readings for the commendation of the dying (cf. 212-222 and for the dead (cf. *PCS*, nos. 223-231) respectively. Chapter Eight has rites for exceptional circumstances. These rites include Rites the Continuous Rites of Penance and Anointing, Rite for Emergences, and Christian Initiation of the Dying (cf. *PCS*, nos 232-296).

Part Three takes over the deposit of readings and responses given in *OUI editio typica* (cf. *PCS*, nos..297-298; *OUI*, nos. 224-229, 240-241). The part, however, leaves out those of the Passion of our Lord (Mt 26:36-46; Mk 15:33-39, 16-6; Lk 23:44-49, 24:1-6a, 13-35; Jn 20:1-10).

[735] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 42-63.

demonstrated to the sick. The sick are comforted in their anxiety, and encouraged to fight against the illness. The Rites can be celebrated by a priest or a lay person.[736]

The Ordinary Rite (*Ritus Ordinarius*) of Communion to the Sick provides for a broad celebration. This Rite consists of the greeting, penitential rite, a short scriptural text, the Lord's prayer, communion and a concluding prayer.[737] A shorter rite (*Ritus Brevior*), consisting of a short antiphon (*O Sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur*) is also provided.[738] It is to be used when Holy Communion is given to several sick people who may be confined in different rooms of the same hospital.

5.2.2 Rite of Anointing of the Sick

The Rite of Anointing of the Sick (*Ordo Unctionis Infirmi*) is described in Chapter Two of *OUI*. The two forms of the celebration of the Sacrament are given. These forms are: Anointing outside Mass and Anointing within Mass. Anointing outside Mass is the ordinary form of the celebration (*Ritus Ordinarius*).[739] The Sacrament can also be celebrated within Mass (*intra Missam*). Whether outside Mass or within Mass, the Sacrament may be celebrated with one faithful or with a great number of the faithful.

Anointing within Mass is celebrated when the condition of the sick person permits him or her to persevere for the duration of the celebration, and if he or she is able to receive Communion. Occasion for the celebration within mass may be a large gathering of the diocese, or parish occasions or a pilgrimage.[740] The celebration may take place in a church or a suitable place (a home or a hospital). During the Mass, the colour white is to be used for the vestments

[736] The ICEL edition adds rites for Visit to a Sick child. These rites basically include praying with the child and the family members. Cf. *PCS*, nos. 62-70.
[737] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 49-57.
[738] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 59-63.
[739] Deeper discussion on the ordinary form of the celebration is done in the particular structure, sub-section 5.3.
[740] Cf. *OUI*, no. 67, 80-83; *PCS*, no. 131-132.

(stole, chasuble or cope).[741] This gives festivity to the celebration, and also portrays the joy of the healing brought about by Christ.

5.2.3 Viaticum

Chapter Three of *OUI* describes the celebration of Viaticum. Celebration of Viaticum expresses the solicitude of the Church towards those who are departing through death. About this solicitude, the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that:

> In addition to the Anointing of the Sick, the Church offers to those who are about to leave this life the Eucharist as viaticum. Communion in the body and blood of Christ, received at this moment of passing over to the Father, has particular significance. It is the seed of eternal life and the power of resurrection, according to the words of the Lord: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:54).[742]

The Viaticum may be administered within Mass or outside Mass.[743] Administering Viaticum within Mass gives opportunity for the sick person to share in the Eucharist in a full, conscious and active way.[744] It also helps him or her to unite the "final moments of his life, in the Eucharistic sacrifice which proclaims the Lord's own passing through death and life."[745] The reception of Viaticum may take place at a home or a hospital or a health facility.[746]

The distinctive feature of the celebration of Viaticum (both within Mass and outside Mass) is the profession is done after a brief explanation of the Word of God (homily).[747] In the profession, the Christian renews the commitment made at the baptism, when he began his or her Christian life. The profession is done in form of question and response. The priest asks the

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[741] Cf. *The Roman Missal* (2011), 974; cf. *Ceremonial of Bishops*, revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by the Authority of Pope John Paul II (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1989), nos. 648 & 666.
[742] *CCC*, no. 1524; cf. PCS, no. 175.
[743] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 93-114; PCS, nos. 189-210.
[744] Cf, *SC*, no. 14.
[745] *PCS*, no. 177.
[746] *PCS*, no. 178
[747] Cf. *OUI*, no. 108; *PCS*, no. 190.

sick person about his or her faith in the Holy Trinity, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting.[748]

Another feature, which is at the discretion of the priest is the plenary indulgence. In the Viaticum outside Mass, the indulgence is given after the penitential rite or Sacramental Confession. Two formulae are provided for granting the indulgence. The first formulae expressed that the priest grants full pardon and the remission of all sins to the sick person at the verge of death.[749] The second formula urges God to unbind the sick person from punishments in earthly life and life to come. It also prays that God opens the gates of paradise to the person, and the person be led to eternal joy.[750]

5.2.4 Rites for Exceptional Circumstances

The Rites for Exceptional Circumstances are described in Chapters Four to Six. The exceptional circumstances are proximity of death, incomplete initiation of a sick person and actual moment or process of death. The Rites pertaining to the proximity to death (*proximo mortis periculo*) are found in Chapter Four. These Rites include: Continuous Rite of Penance, Anointing and Viaticum; Anointing without Viaticum; Anointing under Emergence.[751] These are Rites are to be celebrated when it is genuinely necessary. This may be, for example, in cases of sudden illnesses or accidents, when a faithful is "in the proximate or immediate danger of death."[752]

For the completion of Christian initiation, a Rite of Confirmation of a person who is in danger of death is given in Chapter Five. It provides a short structure with laying on of hands and anointing with the oil of Chrism.[753] The minister lays hand on the sick person while

[748] Cf. *OUI*, no. 108; *PCS*, no. 190.
[749] Cf. *OUI*, no. 106; *PCS*, nos. 195, 201.
[750] Cf. *OUI*, no. 106; *PCS*, nos. 195, 201.
[751] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 115-135; *PCS*, nos. 232-274.
[752] *PCS*, no. 232.
[753] *OUI*, nos. 136-137.

saying the prayer for the invocation of the Holy Spirit. The prayer recalled that the sick person has been freed from sin by Baptism. The Father is asked to send on him or her the Holy Spirit with the seven gifts (wisdom, understanding, right judgement, courage, knowledge, reverence and fear of God or awe in God's presence) upon the sick person.[754] The anointing with the Oil of Chrism constitutes the essential rite of Confirmation. The Confirmation is expected to be followed by Anointing of the Sick.

Chapter Six gives brief formulae for the Commendation of the Dying (*Commendatio Morientium*).[755] The formulae are meant to accompany a Christian who is in actual moment or process of dying. The Church surrounds the dying Christian and accompanies him or her with prayers.

5.2.5 Biblical Texts and Prayer Formulae

Chapter Seven contains deposit of biblical texts and alternative prayer formulae which are to be used in the celebration of Anointing of the Sick.[756] The texts from the Old Testament are drawn from the Book of Job (3:1-3.11-17.20.23; 7:1-4.6-11;7:12-21;19:23-27a), Book of Prophet Isaiah (35:1-10;52-13-53; 61;1-31), 1 Kings (19:1-8) and Book of Wisdom (9:9:9-11.13-18). Several samples for the Responsorial Psalms are also given for response and meditation after the readings. Among these are: Ps 6:2. 2-4a. 9-10; Ps 24:4-16; Ps 62:2-9, to mention but afew.[757]

The readings from the New Testament are from some epistles (Rm 8:14-39; 1 Cor 1:18-25; Col 1:22-29; Jas 5:14-16; 1 Pt 1:3-9, and Rv 22:17.20-21) and the Gospel (Mat 5:1-12; Mat 8:1-17, *et cetera*). Some Gospel readings are also taken from the Passion of the Lord (Mat

[754] Cf. *CCC*, no. 1831; Isaiah 11:2-3.
[755] *OUI*, no. 143-151.
[756] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 152-259.
[757] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 183-196.

26:36-46; Mk 15:33-39, 16:1-6; Lk 23:44-24:13-35; Jn 20:1-10).[758] Among the biblical readings that are provided, those which mention oil are explicitly missing, except James 5:14-16.

The alternative prayer formulae are provided for Anointing within Mass and Anointing outside Mass. Those that may be used within Mass are the formulae for greetings, penitential act, prayer after communion, blessings and prayer for anointing. These, however, are not limited for use within Mass.[759] They can also be used in the Anointing outside Mass. The Anointing outside Mass follows a particular structure.

5.3 Particular Structure of the Current Rite

In this section, the particular structure of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick is described. This structure is for the ordinary form of celebration. The structure has four elements. These elements are: Introductory rites, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of Anointing, and Concluding Rites.[760]

5.3.1 Introductory Rites

The Introductory Rites are preceded by a preparation on the part of the minister. Among the preparatory elements is the vestiture of the priest. The Rite states that: "appropriate vestment should be worn by the priest."[761] The colour of the vestment is not speficied

The Introductory Rites serve the purpose of forming those in the presence of the sick person into an assembly of prayer. It also prepares them to listen to the Word of God, and

[758] Cf. *OUI*, nos 224-229.
[759] Cf. *OUI*, nos 230—238.
[760] The structure of Anointing of the Sick within Mass is integrated with the structure of the Eucharistic celebration The celebration of the Eucharist has two basic parts, namely: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. These parts are closely interconnected and integral to each other that they form one single act of worship. The other parts are the Introductory rites which basically prepare for the full and active celebration of the Mass, and the Concluding Rites that send the faithful on a mission. Cf. *SC*, no. 56; cf. *GIRM*, nos. 46-90.
[761] Cf. cf. *OUI*, no. 68; *PCS*, no. 111.

witness the healing touch of Jesus to the sick person.[762] The first element to accomplish this purpose is liturgical greeting. The greeting reminds the sick person and those gathered around him or her of the peaceful presence of the Lord. The priest passes the peace of the risen Lord to the family.[763] The blessed Sacrament is brought if reception of Holy communion is to take place during the rite.[764] The presence of Jesus in the blessed Sacrament that the priest brings is to be greeted with adoration.

The greeting is followed by the *asperges*, that is, springling with blessed water. The words spoken by the priest indicate that the *asperges* is a reminder of Baptism. Through Baptism, those present are united as members of the Body of Christ who is present and active in the assembly.[765] This also reflects the relationship between the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and Sacrament of Baptism. At Baptism, the Christian was inserted into the passion and resurrection of Christ, the Redeemer.[766] During Baptism, the sick person was first anointed (Oil of Catechumen and Oil of Chrism), having been cleansed with the water of Baptism.

An instruction follows the *asperges*. The instruction is meant to lead those present into the mystery that is about to be celebrated. The instruction reminds the assembly of the presence of Christ, his healing work towards the sick, and his love that led him to embrace death on the Cross. The instruction also explains the meaning of the celebration in reference to James 5:14-15. The instruction establishes from the beginning that the sick person is commended to the "grace and power of the Lord" so that he may be saved and raised up.[767]

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[762] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 64.

[763] The words for greeting are inspired by Luke 10:5: "Peace to this house and all who live in its", or "Peace of the Lord be with you." The same words are prescribed in the Rite of Communion to the Sick. Alternative formulae in the ICEL edition are those drawn from the Roman Missal for greeting at Mass. Cf. *PCS*, no. 81; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 222.

[764] Cf. *PCS*, no. 115.

[765] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 65.

[766] Cf. *PCS*, no. 116; cf. *OUI*, no. 69.

[767] Cf. *OUI*, no. 70; *PCS*, no. 117.

The penitential rite, that may follow, is similar to the one in Mass. Other formulae for the penitential rite are also found in depository for alternative prayers.[768] The penitential rite is, however, omitted if the Sacrament of Penance is to be celebrated.[769] The penitential rite is followed by the Liturgy of the Word.

5.3.2 Liturgy of the Word

In the Liturgy of the Word, the Lord, who is present speaks, to sick person and those around him or her.[770] Their faith in the sacramental action, that is about to take place, is aroused and at the same time nourished. The celebration is placed in the context of the proclamation of the victory of Christ over sin, sickness, suffering and death.[771]

The readings may be chosen from among those given for Rite. The first option given for the readings is about the faith of the centurion who asks Jesus to cure his servant (Mt 8:5-10.13).[772] Other readings may be chosen from Chapter Seven of *OUI*. The readings may also be taken from among those proposed in the Lectionary for the Masses for the Sick.[773] A brief explanation of the reading applies it to the sick person and those caring for him or her.[774] This may also be an opportunity to explain the meaning of the use of oil in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

[768] Cf. *OUI*, no. 232-233.
[769] Cf. *OUI*, no. 71; *PCS*, no. 118.
[770] Cf. *SC*, no. 7
[771] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 75.
[772] Cf. *OUI*, no. 72.
[773] *Lectionary III: Proper of Saints, Common Ritual Masses, Masses for Various Needs and Occasions, Masses for the Dead, Proper Masses, special edition for Africa* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2019), nos. 790-795.
[774] Cf. *OUI*, no. 68; *PCS*, no. 121.

5.3.3 Liturgy of Anointing

The essential element in the Liturgy of Anointing is the anointing with oil. However, it is prepared for by the Litany of Intercession, the laying on of hands and the blessing of oil or thanksgiving over the oil.[775]

5.3.3.1 Litany of Intercession

The Litany of Intercession is the prayer of faith (*oratio fidei*) that the community raises to God for the sick person. Three alternatives are provided. They may be adapted or shortened in accordance with the condition of the sick person.[776] In the first alternative, God is asked to strengthen the sick person, and free him or her from all harm and temptation. The prayer is for the particular sick person being anointed, and also for all those who are bedridden. The intention is that they be relieved from sufferings inflicted upon them. Those present take active part in the Litany of Intercession by responding: "Lord, have mercy" or "We ask you, hear us."[777]

In the second alternative, the Risen Lord, who took away the sicknesses and sufferings of the believers (cf. Is 53:4; Mt 8:17), is asked to grant healing and comfort to the sick person.[778] The third alternative expresses petition the sick who are being anointed, their caregivers, and all the sick people wherever they may be. The Lord is petitioned to look with kindness upon the sick person and infuse him or her with strength. The Lord is also petitioned to forgive his or her sins, free him or her from all temptations, and sustain him with divine strength.[779]

The last intercession in the first and third alternatives links the Litany of Intercession with the laying on of hands. It is prayed that the sick person, upon whom hands are going to

[775] Prayer of faith, laying on of hands, and the anointing with oil give the threefold form described in the Letter of St. James 5:14-15. Cf. Lizette Larson-Miller (2005), 41.
[776] Cf. *OUI*, no. 73; *PCS*, no. 121.
[777] Cf. *OUI*, no. 73.*PCS*, no. 121.
[778] cf. *OUI*, no. 240.
[779] This third alternative for the Litany of Intercession is prescribed in the ICEL edition for Anointing within Mass. cf. *OUI*, no. 241; PCS, no. 138.

be laid, may be given life and health.[780] The last intersession in the second alternative acknowledges that the laying on of hands on the sick is a command of the Lord to the apostles (cf. Mk 16:18).[781]

5.3.3.2 Laying on of Hands

The minister lays hands on the head of the sick person in silence.[782] The silence that accompanies the laying on of the hands depicts the quietness of the Holy Spirit and His moving action.[783] This also reveals the epicletic nature of the laying on of hands. The Holy Spirit is invoked to give strength to the sick Christian. The Latin preposition "*super*" does not necessary indicate that the head of the sick person should be touched. It implies that the hands be "above" the sick person. However, sickness places a person in a situation where the person desires to be touched so as feel the presence of others. By touching, the healing closeness of Christ is experience by the sick person. The love and concern of the Christian community is also manifested through the touch of the minister of the Church.[784]

It is indicated that the hands are laid on the head (*caput*), not any other part of the body. The head serves as a visible representative of the whole person. Lizette Larson-Miller elaborated on this role of the head. She states that "the head historically, socially and ritually has signified the crown or the person or the symbolic responsible party for the psychosomatic whole."[785] The head becomes a point of physical contact during the sacramental action. The contact is made through the anointing with oil.

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[780] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 73 and 241; *PCS*, no. 138.
[781] "*Qui Apóstolis tuis mandásti, ut super aegros manus impónerent*." *OUI*, no. 240
[782] "*Tunc sacerdos manus imponit super caput infirmi, nihil dicens." OUI*, no. 74; cf. *PCS*, no. 122.
[783] Larson-Miller further explains the significance of silence that accompanies the laying on of hands in every sacramental action. She states that: "silence heightens the solemnity of the action as it grabs out attention. There is nothing that can make us more aware of each other than being together, and as the laying on of hands is mediated through the very tangible experience of human touch, human community to individual, divine to human." This also elaborates on the anthropological significance of the gesture of laying on of hands in other sacraments. Lizette Larson-Miller (2005), 33; Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 110.
[784] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 66.
[785] Lizette Larson-Miller (2005), 35.

5.3.3.3 Prayer over the Oil

The Prayer over the Oil may be a thanksgiving prayer over blessed oil or for blessing of unblessed oil.[786] The thanksgiving prayer is said over the oil that has been blessed especially by the bishop during the Chrism Mass. Through the prayer, a thanksgiving is rendered to express gratitude for the gift of creation to promote healing.

At the time of thanksgiving over the oil or blessing of the oil, focus is on the oil, although the person to be anointed are in central view. The Rite does not state where the oil is placed while the prayer is being said, or who is to hold it. Ronzani suggests that the oil is to be placed or held in a prominent position so that it is visible to all. He states that: "the full meaning of oil and its value should be expressed in a clear way. No one should try to guess what is inside the vessel."[787] After the prayer over the oil, the essential action takes place, that is, anointing.

5.3.3.4 Anointing

The anointing is done with blessed oil on the forehead and hands, with the formula said only once. The formula, however, is said in two parts. The first part, "Through this holy anointing and his loving mercy, may the Lord help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit," is said while anointing the forehead. The second part, "in order that he saves you from sin, and graciously raises you up" is said while anointing the hands.[788] Other parts may be anointed in accordance with the culture and the traditions of the people and condition of the sickness.[789]

The Rite does not indicate if the anointing is done in form of a cross. Asiimwe, in agreement with Ronzani, echoes that the anointing should express conformation to Christ. He states that:

> Consequently, through the anointing on the forehead and hands, the entire person is symbolically anointed and totally conformed to Christ. Rinaldo Ronzani feels that:

[786] Deeper analysis of the Prayer of Blessing the Oil is done in part 5.4.
[787] Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 66.
[788] Cf. *OUI*, no. 76; *PCS*, no. 124.
[789] Cf. *OUI*, no. 76; *PCS*, no. 124.

> 'The priest should anoint the forehead- by making a sign of the cross- as well as the entire palms or backs of the hands or even whole of both hands. What matters is to make the experience of anointing a fully human and prayerful experience.' [790]

Anointing in form of the cross is reminder of the redemptive suffering of Christ. The cross should be made in elaborate way, with full, conscious and prayerful involvement of the minister. It would even require the use of the whole hand for the anointing, if the human warmth is to be experienced by the sick and frail human body. Creating the prayerful experience is further manifested by the Prayer after Anointing.

5.3.3.5 Prayer after Anointing

The anointing is followed by a prayer after the anointing. Six alternatives are provided for the prayer.[791] Two alternatives are general, that is, they can be used when a sick person in any situation has been anointed. The prayers express the effects that are expected of the anointing with oil. These effects are physical, spiritual and ecclesial. The physical effects include: cure of weakness, healing from sickness and restoration to full health. The spiritual effects are: forgiveness of sins, expelling of all afflictions. The ecclesial effect is the resumption of duties by the sick person within the Christian Community. The prayers also express that the anointed person be instilled with Christian virtues of courage, patience, hope, and love.[792]

The other four alternatives, that are placed under Chapter VII, are for specific circumstances. The circumstances are indicated as advance age, terminal illness and proximity of death.[793] The minister can choose the one which rhymes with the condition of the person

[790] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 227; Ronaldo Ronzani (2007), 67.
[791] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 77, 243-246; *PCS*, no. 125.
[792] Cf. *PCS*, no. 125; cf. *OUI*, nos. 77, 243-246.
[793] The ICEL edition adds alternative prayers for the circumstances involving surgery, child, and a young person. For surgery, it is prayed that healing may be granted to the sick person "through the skills of surgeons and nurses" (*PCS*, no. 125 E). For a child, it is prayed that God the Father caresses and shelters the child, and keep him or her safe in His "tender care" (*PCS*, no. 125 F). The one for a young person asks God to restore the "health and strength of the person, and "make him/her joyful in spirit and ready to embrace your will" (PCS, no. 125 G). Oil is mentioned in the prayer after anointing a child as "oil of healing and peace" (*PCS*, no. 125). Cf. OUI, nos. 243-246.

who has been anointed. When anointing takes place within Mass, the celebration continues with the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

5.3.4 Concluding Rites

The Concluding Rites include the Lord's Prayer, and Blessing.[794] The priest invites the community gathered around the sick person to pray according to the instruction of the Lord. The Lord's Prayer may be followed by Holy Communion. However, the rubrics indicates that the reception of the Holy Communion is conditional: *"si vero infirmus communicandus sit, post orationem dominicam omnia fiunt ut in ritu Communionis infirmorum."*[795] Much as the connection between the Anointing of the Sick and the Eucharist is to be stressed, these rubrics reveal that one may receive Anointing of the Sick without Holy Communion.

The blessing of the sick person and those present brings the celebration to conclusion. Before imparting the blessing, a litany of entreaties is given. To these entreaties, those present respond with "Amen." The litanical entreaties ask for the protection, guidance, strength, and peace of the Lord for the sick person. They also express hope of restoration of health.[796] After reciting any one of these alternatives, the priest blesses the assembly using the Trinitarian formula. *OUI* silent about the dismissal of the assembly.[797] This implies that the community remains with the sick person to show the solicitude of the Church.

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[794] In the ICEL edition, the Lord's Prayer is placed in the Liturgy of Anointing, but after the post-anointing prayer. Two alternatives are given for the priest to introduce the Lord's prayer. The first alternative shows that it is a prayer that the Lord himself taught. The second alternative calls upon the community gathered around the sick person to pray with confidence. Cf. *PCS*, no. 126.

[795] "If truly the sick person is to receive Communion, after the Lord's Prayer, every this is done as in the rite of Communion of the Sick" (*OUI,* nos. 78; 55-58). ICEL edition states this rubric in a negative wording: "If the sick person does not receive communion, the rite concludes with blessing" (*PCS*, no. 126).

[796] ICEL edition provides three alternatives for these entreaties. The first and third alternatives are compositions that only appear in ICEL. The second alternative is taken and modified from the first alternative in the *editio typica* (cf. *OUI*, no. 79). The last entreaty in the third alternative in the ICEL edition points to eternal life, "May God fill your heart with peace and lead you to eternal life." This alternative is appropriate to be used when the person at the point of death has been anointed. However, it does not talk of death, but eternal life. For the blessing, ICEL edition directs that: "he may bless the sick person by making a sign of the cross with the blessed Sacrament, in silence" (*PCS*, no. 130).

[797] For Anointing within Mass, Concluding Rites include the prayers for the blessing of the sick person and all those who are present, the blessing itself and the dismissal. Three options are given for the solemn blessing.

5.4 Analysis of the Prayer for Blessing the Oil

In this section, the Prayer for Blessing the Oil is analyzed so as to explore further the symbolism of the Oil of the Sick in the current Rite. The prayer mentions the oil more explicitly that other euchological texts.[798] The section begins by methodological consideration, where the various elements of the method used for analyzing the Prayer are explained. The elements in the presented in the method form the sub-sections in the analysis. These sub-sections are: presentation, literary form, sources, theological dimensions, and translation.

5.4.1 Methodological Considerations

Different methods have been used by various scholars to analyze euchological texts. Among such scholars are Renato De Zen and John Bosco Asiimwe. A summary of each of their methods suffices before adapting and adopting one.

Renato De Zen proposes a method that consists of nine steps.[799] The first step is textual criticism. Textual criticism is done for establishing the correctness and certainty of the text. The second step is the meaning of the text. This requires a philological analysis of the Latin edition

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The first option prays that the God of consolation blesses the community, restores the sick person to health and fill their hearts with peace. It is also petitioned that hope, salvation and eternal life may be granted. The second option asks the Lord for protection, peace, guidance and strength. In the third option, simple words of invocation of God's blessings upon the sick person are given. In the words of dismissal, the deacons or the priest is to commend the sick person to the care of the community. Cf. *PCS*, no. 148.

[798] Euchological texts are those texts that are composed for use in public worship of the Church. De Zan divides euchological texts into two categories: minor euchology and major euchology. Minor euchology includes "brief and simple texts like the Collect, Prayer over Gifts, Prayer after Communion, prayers over the people and psalm prayers." Those of the major euchology are "longer and elaborated." They include: Prefaces, Eucharistic prayers and solemn blessings." Other prayers like the ordination prayers, prayer for the dedication of churches, prayers for blessing of oils and baptismal water fall under major euchology. They are long, and elaborated with biblical references. Cf. Renade De Zen (1997): 331 & 341.

[799] Before proposing his method, Renato de Zan summarized some of the methods proposed for the interpretation of the liturgical texts by various authors. In the methods proposed by these authors, the common elements are historical background of the text, literary elements of the text, unitary elements, and syntactical analysis. The literary elements are structure and style. Syntactical analysis refers to the study of the expression or phrases that are used in the text. Cf. F. Nakagaki, "Metodo Integrate. Discorso sulla Metologia nell'interpretazzione dei testi euchologia" A. Cura (ed), *Fons Vivus, Miscellanea Liturgica in Memoria di don E. M Vismara* (Zurich, 1971): 269-286; M. Auge, "Principi di Interpretazione dei Testi Liturgici" *Anamnesis* 1 (1974): 159-179; Joyce Ann Zimmermann, *Liturgy as Language of Faith: A Liturgical Methodoloy in the Mode of Paul Ricoeur's Textual Hermeneutics* (New York: Lanharm, 1988); S. Maggiani, "Interpretatione in Libro Liturgica," in *Il ministero Celebrato. Per una metologia dello studio della liturgical* (Rome, 1989): 157-192.

with attention to the individual words, grammatical expressions and syntactic constructions. The third step concerns determining the historical identity of the text (that is, the author, time and place of composition).[800]

The fourth step is the determination of the literary form of the text. The helps to establish how the text serves as a communication channel between the divine and the human planes. The fifth step is the examination of the historical evolution of the text. This is to discover how the text has assumed different functions from its creation to its final reduction. The sixth step is the identification of the primary and material sources of the text (literary identity). The primary source is the Sacred Scripture, and the material sources are liturgical and patristic texts. The seventh step is the discovery of the contextual identity of the text. In the eighth step, the text is organized into intrinsic and foundational dimensions. De Zan gives four dimensions and four foundations. The dimensions are: anamnesis, epiclesis, doxology and *koinonia*. The foundations: theandric, Christological-pneumatological, ecclesial and symbolic. The nineth and the last step is translation of the text.[801]

Building on the De Zan's methodology, Asiimwe proposes a "six-step method." He used this method for analyzing the sacramental formula of the Anointing of the Sick.[802] The first step in Asiimwe's method is the presentation of the text. The text is presented in the available official translations. The second step is the identification of the sources. The sources are primary and material, as given by De Zan. The third step is to determine the literary form and deeper literary structure. In determining the literary form, forms elements are to stand out. These are: area of the divine, amplification, petition, purposes and motive. While analyzing a deeper structure, the verbal terms, actors, addressees and object should be brought out. The fourth step involves stating of context of the text. The fifth step is determination of the

[800] Cf. Renato De Zan (1997), 342-344.
[801] Cf. Renato De Zan (1997), 342-344.
[802] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 234-243.

theological value of the text by using four "theological-interpretative keys" (anamnesis, epiclesis, theandric and human-cooperation).[803] The sixth is personal translation.

The method of De Zan is more appropriate for analysis of manuscripts and texts whose historical identities are not clear. Some steps in his method may not be used, because they may not apply for the text being analyzed. For example, he observes that textual criticism cannot be used for analyzing a text with certain and clear historical identity. He states that: "We cannot, of course, use this step in the case of contemporary euchology, since we have *editio typica*."[804] Asiimwe's method is appropriate for short formulae or a minor euchology. However, some aspects are applicable to analyzing a major euchology like the prayer for blessing the oil.

The researcher has integrated some of the steps of these scholars to come up with a sixth-step method. The first step in this "*sextagradus*"[805] method is presentation of the prayer. The version in the typical edition is presented. The second step is the analysis of the literary form of the prayer. This establishes how the prayer functions as a channel of communication. The third step consists of identification of the sources of the prayer. The phrases drawn from the primary source, that is Sacred Scripture, are identified. The phrases from secondary sources, that is liturgical books, are also identified. The fourth step is the giving of the context of the prayer. This is the ecclesial context, where the prayer is used by the Church. The fifth step is the explanation of the theological structure of the prayer. The sixth step is a personal translation of the prayer into English.

[803] John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 240.
[804] Cf. Renato De Zan (1997), 343.
[805] The term "*sextagradus*" is coined from two Latin words: "*sex*," which means "six", and "*gradus*" meaning "step" or "grade." Cf. John C. Traupman, *Latin and English Dictionary* (New York: Bantam Dell, 2007), 657, 667.

5.4.2 Presentation of the Prayer for Blessing of Oil

The Prayer for Blessing of Oil is the found in two *editiones typicae* of the post-Vatican II liturgical books. These are the *OUI* and *Ordo Benedicendi Oleum Catechumenorum et Infirmorum et Conficiendi Chrisma* (Rite of the Blessing of Holy Oils and Consecrating the Chrism).[806] In both rites, the text is as follows:

> *Deus, totius consolatiónis Pater*
> *qui per Filium tuum infirmántium languóribus medéri voluisti*
> *orationi fidei adésto propitius:*
> *emitte, quaésumus, Spiritum tuum Sanctum Paráclitum*
> *de caelis in hanc pinguédinem Olei,*
> *quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem córporis,*
> *ut tua sancta benedictione + sit omni*
> *qui hoc unguénto perungitur,*
> *tutámen córporis, ánimae ac spiritus*
> *ad evacuándos omnes dolóres, omnes infirmitátes, omnen aegritúdinem.*
> *Sit Oleum tuum sanctum, Dómine, nobis a te benedictum*
> *in nómine Dómini nostri Iesu Christi.*
> *Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saécula saeculorum*
> *Amen.*[807]

Two other prayers are provided in the *OUI* for the blessing of oil. The first alternative is metrically arranged version of the main text presented here, with a response of the people after each benediction.[808] This same metrically arranged text is inserted for giving thanks over blessed oil. The second alternative is a brief prayer for blessing oil when anointing a sick person who is dying.[809] In the prayer, God is asked to bless the oil and the sick person who is dying.

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[806] Cf. *Ordo Benedicendi Oleum Catechumenorum et Infirmorum et Conficiendi Chrisma* Pontificale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Oecumenici Concili Vaticani II Instauratum Auctoritate Pauli PP VI Promulgatum, editio typica (Cittá del Vaticano: Typis Polygolottis Vaticani, MCLXXI); "Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating Chrism," in *The Rites of the Catholic Church Volume I* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 699-713.

[807] *OUI*, no. 75*; Ordo Benedicendi Oleorum* (henceforth cited as *OBO*), no. 20.

[808] The prayer reads: "*Benedictus Deus, Pater omnipotens, qui proper nos et nostrum salute Filium tuum in mundum misisti. R/. Benedictus Deus.Benedictus Deus, Fili unigenite, qui ad humana nostra, descendes, infirmatatibus nostris mederi voluisti. R/. Benedictus Deus Benedictus Deus, Spiritus Sancte Paraclite, infirma nostril corporis virtute perpeti firmas. R/. Benedictus Deus Adesto, Domine, propitious et hoc oleum fidelium tuorum curandis angoribus, praeparatum tua benediction sanctifica, ut fidei oratione, intercedente, quotquot eo ungatur, ab omni qua detinentur infirmitate liberentur. Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.* The words of the concluding part are: "*Famulus tuus, Domine, qui hoc oleo sancto in fide linitur, in doloribus suis refici mereatur et infirmitatibus confortati. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.*" *OUI*, no. 242.

[809] The second alternative prayer for blessing oil is a brief text to be used in anointing a sick person who is dying. The text states: *"Benedic + Domine, hanc olei creaturam et ipsum etiam infirmum qui hoc lenimento perungitur"* The text is used in the Continuous Rite of Penance, Anointing and viaticum, and when anointing a person without Viaticum. Cf. *OUI*, no. 126.

5.4.3 Literary Form of the Prayer

The literary form reveals how the prayer serves as a communication between the human and divine. A prayer, though inscribed in a book, is primarily to be read aloud. The minister participates by reading it aloud. The faithful participate by listening and responding to it with faith. Through this, the prayer that is put into text becomes truly a ritual sign and a media of communication between the divine and human.[810]

First in the literary form of the prayer is the address. The address establishes a network of communication between the divine plane and the human plane. The divine is addressed by a variety of nouns, as shown in the following phrases: "*Deus, totius consolatiónis Pater*" (O God, Father of all consolation) and "*Domine*" (O Lord). The variety of names used richly expresses the relationship between the entities involved in the communication. The addresser, who is on the human plane, addresses the divine with verbs in the subjunctive mood: "*orémus"* (let us pray) and "*quaésumus*" (we beseech). These words, which are in plural, also express the ecclesial and petitionary aspects of the prayer.[811]

After the address, the deeds of God are amplified. Reference is made to what God has done for the human beings. This amplification is introduced by the relative pronoun "*qui"* (who). The phrases that amplify the deeds of God: "*qui per Filium tuum infirmántium languoribus medéri voluisti"* (who was pleased to heal the pains of the sick through your Son) and "*de viridi ligno producere dignatus es*" (deemed it worth to produce from the green wood). The amplification presents God as the actor or the protagonist of all actions.[812]

Petitions follows the amplification. The first petition urges for the presence of the divine: "*adesto propitius"* (graciously be present, or attend to, or listen to). The petition urges

[810] Cf. Consilium for Constitution on Liturgy, *Comme le Prevoit* On the Translation of Liturgical Texts for Celebration with a Congregation (January 25, 1969), no. 6, in *AAS* 62 (1970): 692-704.
[811] Cf. Kevin W. Irwin, *Context and Text: Method in Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1994), 184.
[812] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 239.

God to be present to the "*oration fidei"* (to the prayer of faith). The second petition is epiclectic. It urges God to send the Holy Spirit: "*emitte…Spiritum tuum Sanctum Paráclitum de caelis*" (send your Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, from heaven). Oil is presented as the object for the action of the Spirit: "*in hanc pinguedinem Olei, quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem corporis"* (upon this substance of oil, which you are pleased to produce from green wood).

The petition is followed by motive. The motive for petition is introduced by the purpose clause "*ut*" (so that, in order that). The phrase that expressed motive for petition is: "*ut tua sancta benedictione + sit omni qui hoc unguento perungitur, tutamem corporis, animae ac spiritus ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnes infirmatis, omnen aegritúdinem*" (so that by your holy blessing this ointment may be for all who are anointed with it a remedy of body, mind and soul for healing all pains, weakness and sickness). The motive is continued in the phrase: "*Sit oleum tuum sanctum*" (that it may to your holy oil).

The conclusion also acclaims the name of Jesus and reign of God. The phrase states: *"in nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi. Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saecula saeculorum*" (in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ our Lord. He who lives and reign with you for ever and ever). The people present give their assent of faith by responding "Amen."

5.4.4 Sources of the Component Parts of the Prayer

The key phrases found in the prayer are drawn from biblical sources and 5th -8th century liturgical books. Using the words of De Zan, the prayer can be described as a "dishomogenous text."[813] Such texts composed by blending phrases from different sources. The sources might come from different historical epochs. Once blended, they are meant to serve the entire Church. The texts are drawn from the sources either by direct quotation or by allusion.

[813] Renato De Zan (1997), 338.

The Sacred Scripture provides the key source for the major phrases in the prayer. The table below shows the biblical sources of some phrase from in the prayer.

Table 1: Scriptural Sources of the Prayer

Source	***Specific References***
Nova Vulgata	*Benedictus* ***Deus*** *et* ***Pater****, Domini nostri Iesu Christi, Pater misericordiarum et* ***Deus totius consolationis****.* 2 Cor 1:3
	Et ***oratio fidei*** *salvabit infirmum,et allevabit eum Dominus.* Jas 5:15
	Emittes Spiritum tuum*, et creabuntur et renovas faciem terrae.* Ps 104:30.
	Paraclitus *autum,* ***Spiritus Sanctus*** *quem mittet Pater in nomine meo, illi eos docebit omnia et suggeret vobis omnia quae dixi vobis.* Jn 14:26.

Other phrases appear in the prayer are drawn from Gelasian Sacramentary, Gregorian Sacramentary and *PRG*. The bolded words indicated where there is resemblance:

Deus, totius consolatiónis Pater
qui per Filium tuum infirmantium languoribus medéri voluisti
orationi fidei adesto propitius:
emitte, quaesumus, Spiritum *tuum* ***Sanctum Paraclitum***
de caelis in *hanc* ***pinguedinem Olei****,*
quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem corporis*,*
ut ***tua sancta benedictione*** *+ sit omni*
qui hoc unguento perungitur,
tutamen ***corporis****,* ***animae ac spiritus***
ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnes infirmitates, omnen aegritudinem*.*
Sit Oleum tuum sanctum, ***Domine****, nobis* ***a te benedictum***
in nomine *Domini nostri Iesu Christi.*
Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saecula saeculorum
Amen.[814]

[814] In Gelasian sacramentary: *Emitte, quaesmus, Domine, Spiritum Sanctum paraclitum de caelis in hac pinguedine olei, quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem mentis et corporis. Et tua sancta benedictione sit omni ungenti, gustanti, tangenti, tutamentum corporis, animae et spiritus, ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnem infirmitatem, omnem aegritudinem mentis et corporis, unde unxisti sacerdotes, et reges, et prophetes, et martyres, chrisma tuam perfectum a te, Domine benedictum, permanens in visceribus nostris, in nomine Domine, semper bona creas.* GeV, 555; *Gr.H*, 333; Henry Austin Wilson (1894), 70*;* Henry Austin Wilson (1915), 49.
In *PRG*: ***Emitte****, domine,* ***Spiritum paraclitum de caelis in hanc pinguedine*** *olive,* ***quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem corporis, ut tua sancta benedictione sit omni*** *tangenti, unguentam salubre medicine caelestis, tutamentum mentis et* ***corporis ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnesque infirmitates, omnem egritudinem*** *corporis unde unxisti sacerdotes, reges, prophetes, et martyres, chrisma tuum perfectum,* ***domine a te benedictum in nomine domini Iesu Christ****, per quem hec omina, semper bona creas. PRG*, no. 261.

5.4.5 Ecclesial Context of the Prayer

The ecclesial context refers to the concrete and specific moments in which the prayer is spoken aloud, especially in the liturgical assembly. In such settings, the prayer text receives a full meaning, and is made come alive.[815] The prayer has two ecclesial contexts: the Chrism Mass as the immediate context and the Liturgical Year as the larger context.

The Chrism Mass is the Eucharistic celebration during which the bishop consecrates the Oil of Chrism, and blesses the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of the Catechumens.[816] During the Mass, Oil of the Sick is blessed before the end of the Eucharist Prayer. This is in accordance with the ancient tradition of the Church.[817] The blessing normally occurs after the intercessions, but before the final doxology.[818] This means the Prayer for Blessing the oil is recited after the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Liturgical Year provides the larger context. The blessed oil is meant to be used for anointing the sick in the course of the Liturgical Year.[819] The Liturgical Year is a commemorative celebration of life, passion, death, resurrection and glorious ascension of Jesus Christ in the course of the year.

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[815] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 233.

[816] The Mass is celebrated during the Holy Week, on the morning of the Holy Thursday. When the Mass cannot be celebrated on Thursday morning, because of the difficult to assembly by the clergy and the people, the blessing of the oils may be done on "an earlier day, near Easter." Cf. Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecrating Chrism (henceforth cited as *RBOCC*), no. 1; *OBO*, no. 1; *Ceremonial of Bishops* (1989), no. 275.

[817] "*Iuxta morem in liturgia latina traditum, benedictio olei infirmorum fit ante finem Precis eucharisticre, benedictio autem olei catechumenorum et consecratio chrismatis post Communionem.*" *OBO*, no. 11-12.

[818] The General Instruction to the Roman Missal outlines the chief elements of the Eucharistic Prayer as: thanksgiving, acclamation, epiclesis, institution narrative and consecration, anamnesis, offering, intercessions and final doxology. Cf. *GIRM*, no. 79.

[819] The three oils blessed are meant to the used for the whole Liturgical Year. With the Oil of Catechumens, those preparing for baptism are anointed. The anointing with the Oil of Catechumens is meant to help the catechumens and strengthen them in their struggles against the viles of the devil. The Oil of Chrism is used for anointing the newly baptized. They are configured to Christ, the "Anointed One." They share in his *tri-munera* of priest, prophet and king. Cf. *RBOCC*, no. 1-2; "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults," no, 99, in *The Rites of the Catholic Church Volume I* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 13-356; "Rite of Baptism for Children," no. 50, in *The Rites of the Catholic Church Volume I* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990): 359-466; John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 239.

5.4.6 Theological Structure of the Prayer

The theological structure explains the progression of the prayer as a medium of the communication between the God and man. It shows how the human addresser engages God in expressing out the inspiration that builds during the engagement.[820] The inspirations spring forth from the Holy Spirit.[821] This engagement begins with invocation, then proceeds to anamnesis. It then progresses to epiclesis. The purpose epiclesis is expressed in the intercessions. The doxology and response of other participants brings the prayer to conclusion (with *amen*).

a) Invocation

Invocation from the Latin word "*invocare*" is the act of calling upon a high power, or a deity for attention or assistance. The invocation sets the prayer on a divine plan. The phrase that constitutes invocation is: "*Deus, totius consolatiónis Pater."* God is invoked as Father all compassion. God is invoked to be present to the prayers of his people: "*orationi fidei adesto propitius.*"

b) Anamnesis

Anamnesis comes from the Greek word *anameneo*, meaning "to recall." It is used to express the semitic concept of a "recalling to God of a past person or promise."[822] Cyprian Vaggagini gives a precise definition of anamnesis. He states that: "anamnesis is an action that brings into God's presence in a real manner an event that took place in the past, but in such a

[820] Cf. Berthin S. Bunga and Yane R. Maahury, "Prayer Content Analysis: Understanding Prayer Language in the Context of Ethical Decision-Making," in *Jurnal Ilnu Sosial dan Pendidikan (JISIP),* Vol. 9, No. 2, (2025): 842. Retrived from https://ejournal.mandalanursa.org/index.php/JISIP/article/viewFile/8536/5845, (accessed 05/05/2026).

[821] Cf. *CCC*, no. 2564 and 2650

[822] Jardin Grisbrooke, "Anaphora", in John Gordon Davies, (ed.), *The Westminister Dictionary of Worship* (Philadeplia: The Westminister Press, 1979): 15.

manner that its consequences work their effect to the present."[823] In the Prayer, anamnesis involves bringing into God's presence His deeds for the good of humanity.

There are two key anamnetic phrases in the Prayer. The first one is: "*qui per Filium tuum infirmantium languoribus medéri voluisti."* The second one is: *"hanc pinguedinem Olei, quam de viridi ligno producere dignatus es ad refectionem corporis.* These phrases recall God's creative and healing works. They are not only recalled, but they are also brought into his presence. He created the oil from the green wood (olive). The healing works are accomplished through the Son. God has sent his Son, the word Incarnate, to heal the world (cf. John 3:17; Psalm 107:20; Matthew 10:7-8).

c) Epiclesis:

Epiclesis comes from the Greek word *epi-kaleo*, which means to call from above. In the general sense epiclesis refers to a prayer made to call upon God to act. In a restricted sense, it means "calling upon the Holy Spirit."[824]

In the prayer, the words for epiclesis are: "*emitte, quaésumus, Spiritum tuum Sanctum Paráclitum de caelis.*" The epiclesis asks God to send the Holy Spirit, Paraclete upon the oil. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the oil is transformed into a holy instrument for the good of humanity.

d) Intercession

The intercessions are diptychal.[825] On one side, they intercession express the motive for the blessing. The oil is blessed for that it becomes a holy oil (*oleum sanctum*), a remedy of

[823] Cyprian Vaggagini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy: A General Treatise on the Theology of the Liturgy,* tran., Leonard. J. Doyle and W. A. Jurgens (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1976), 225.
[824] Paul F. Bradshaw, "Epiclesis," in Paul F. Bradshaw, (ed.), *The New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (London: SCM Press, 2002): 166.
[825] The word *diptych* derives from two Greek word: "*di"* meaning "two" and "*ptyche"* meaning "fold." A diptych refers to a single piece of art made of two flat plates attached together with a hinge. Cf. Philip Gebhardt,

body, mind and spirit: "*tua sancta benedictione + sit omni qui hoc unguento perungitur, tutamen corporis, animae ac spiritus*." By being anointed with oil, the sick are relieved of the burdens of pain, illness and weakness: *qui ad evacuandos omnes dolores, omnes infirmitates, omnen aegritudinem.*" On the other side or flank, the intercession is made for those (the sick) who use what has been blessed. It tacitly expresses the sick experience freedom from all pains, illnesses and weaknesses.

e) Doxology:

The doxology means an utterance acknowledging the power and authority of God. The phrase for doxology are: "*in nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi. Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saecula saeculorum.*" The doxology expresses that the prayer has been addressed to God in the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus shares the power and authority with God.

5.4.7 Proposed Translation of the Prayer of Blessing the Oil

Having analyzed the text, a personal translation into English is given. The purpose of making the translation is two-fold. First purpose is to present the salvific message enshrined in this prayer of the Church to the believers.[826] Secondly, to render clearly the symbolism of the oil in this prayer text. Below is the English translation:

> Let us pray:
> O God, Father of all consolation,
> you are pleased to heal our sicknesses through your Son.
> Graciously, listen to our prayer of faith;
> send the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete from heaven upon this substance of oil,
> which you have provided from the tree for the refreshment of human body,
> so that through your holy blessing + it may be
> for all those who are anointed with it a remedy of body, mind and spirit
> May it relieve all pains, illnesses and weaknesses.
> O Lord, by your blessing, may it be a holy oil for us,
> in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,

"Diptychs and Triptychs," in *Lakeside Pumphouse Arts' Association* (2015). Retrieved from https://www.grimsbylpaa.org/PDFs/Resources/PG_Triptychs.pdf, (accessed 08/04/2026).

[826] The Instruction, *Comme le prevoit*, states that the purpose of a liturgical translation is "to proclaim the message of salvation to believers and to express the prayer of the Church to the Lord." *Comme le Previot*, no. 6.

who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
R/. Amen

5.5 Names of the Oil of the Sick in the Rite

In the Rite, various names are given to described the Oil of the Sick. Such names are abundant in the ICEL edition. In the ICEL translation of the Prayer for Blessing the Oil, oil is described as: "precious oil", soothing ointment", "rich gift" and "fruit of the earth," [827] In the prayer of thanksgiving over the oil, it is called "holy oil."[828] In the prayer after anointing a child, is called: "oil of healing and peace."[829] These names depict that the oil is a natural element, which through the blessing by the bishop or the priest has been transformed for work of healing.

As a natural element, it is not human-made. Humans have only to use their intelligence, skills and abilities to extract it. In this, case it is extracted from a tree (*viridi ligno*). Hence the oil is a plant oil. This is in conformity with the reforms of the Vatican II where the term olive is left out. The use of the term "ointment" in the ICEL edition implies that the oil could be blended with other several essential oils.[830] Hence it is indeed "precious oil."

The natural oil, through the action of blessing becomes an instrument for the dispelling of pains, illness and weaknesses that afflict human beings. This is accomplished by God as expressed in the Thanksgiving over the oil, in which God is asked to "strengthen the sick person in his pains and comfort him in his sickness."[831]

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[827] The ICEL Translation of the Prayer of Blessing the Oil reads: "God of all consolation, you chose and sent your Son to heal the world. Graciously listen to our prayer of faith: send the power of your Holy Spirit, the Consoler, into this precious oil, this soothing ointment, this rich fruit, this fruit of the earth. Bless this oil + and sanctify it for our use. Make this oil a remedy for all who are anointed with it: heal them in body, in soul, and in spirit, and deliver them from every affiliation. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirt, one God, for ever and ever. R/. Amen." *PCS*, no. 123

[828] *PCS*, no. 122, 125; *OUI*, no. 75 and 75 *bis*.

[829] *PCS*, no. 125.

[830] The term "*unguento*," translated into English as "unguent," suggests that the oil is an ointment.

[831] *PCS*, no. 123; cf. *OUI*, no. 75.

5.6 Preparation and Custody of Oil of the Sick

This section consists of the discussion on the preparation and custody of the Oil of the Sick. The discussion is majorly based on *OUI* and augmented by liturgical, canonical and doctrinal documents published after the publication of *OUI.* These documents include the Book of Blessing, the Ceremonial of Bishops, the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

5.6.1 Preparation of the Oil

Preparation of the oil involves its procurement and blessing. The procurement may depend on the available means in each region or diocese. The blessing is ordinarily done by the bishop on Holy Thursday.[832] Apart from the bishop, three other persons can bless the oil. These are: a priest who has faculty to bless, an equivalent of diocesan bishop, and a priest celebrating the Sacrament.[833] The faculty to bless the oil is granted either by "the law or by special concession by the Apostolic See"[834] The equivalents of the diocesan bishop hold ordinary pastoral governance over some communities of faith, for example, territorial abbots, diocesan administrators, *et cetera*.[835]

The blessing of the oil by a priest celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is only in case of necessity. The *OUI* does not define what would constitute such a necessity. It could involve unforeseen circumstances like accidents or the when the blessed oil is finished. The faculty for the priest to bless the oil enable the priest to anoint the sick in those "urgent or unforeseen circumstances."[836] *OUI* ascribes a text for the blessing of the oil during the

[832] Cf. *PCS*, no. 21; *OUI*, no. 21.
[833] Cf. *PCS*, no. 21; *OUI*, no. 21; cf. *CIC*, can. 999.
[834] *PCS*, no. 21; *OUI*, no. 21.
[835] Whereas these can bless the oil of the Sick, the consecration of the chrism is reserved to a bishop. Cf. *CIC*, 368-371; *PCS*, no. 21; *OUI*, no. 21; cf. *CIC*, can. 999. *OBO*, no. 6; *RBOCC*, no. 6; Aime Georges Martimort, "Prayer for the Sick and Sacramental Anointing," in Aimé Georges Martimort, (ed.), *The Church at Prayer Volume III: The Sacraments* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987): 136.
[836] Cf. Annibale Bugnini (1990), 693.

celebration.[837] This shows that the act of blessing the oil should not be a discreet rite. It should be given importance and prominence.

OUI mentions two sources of the unblessed oil. First, the oil may be supplied by the priest. He may bring it with himself when he comes for the celebration of the Sacrament. Second, the oil may be supplied by the relatives or care takers of the sick person.[838] They could have made the oil themselves or bought it. Owing to the direction given in the Apostolic Constitution *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum*, this oil should have be extracted from a plant.[839]

5.6.2 Custody of the Oil

Three stages are key in the custody and handling of the oil. The first stage is during the blessing of the oil at Chrism Mass. The Rite of Blessing the Oils states that prior to the blessing, the oils in vessels (*ampulae*) are placed in the sacristy or other appropriate place.[840] The vessels are expected to be suitable and decent enough. After the blessing, the vessels with the oil are carried back to the sacristy.[841] The bishop is to "instruct the priests about the reverent and safe custody of the oil."[842] In case where the oil during the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, it is to be held in a suitable vessel (*vasculo convenienti*).[843] In such a vessel, the family of the sick person may prepare the oil to be blessed.

The second stage in the custody of the oil involves storage in the parish churches or other repositories.[844] *OUI* and the Ceremonial of the Bishops do not give explicit directions

[837] This text was mentioned in sub-section 5.4.2.
[838] Cf. *OUI*, no. 22; *PCS*, no. 22.
[839] Cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972): 6; Cf. *PCS*, no. 20.
[840] Cf. *OBO*, nos, 13 and 23; *RBOC*C, nos, 13 and 23.
[841] The oils are presented for the blessing after the Renewal of Commitment to Priest Service. Cf. *Ceremonial of Bishops* (1989), no. 275.
[842] Cf. *OBO*, no. 23; *RBOCC*, no. 23
[843] Cf. *PCS*, no. 22; cf. *OUI*, no. 22.
[844] The Roman Missal alludes to a ceremonious reception of the oils in the parish. However, it does not specify how this ceremony of reception should flow. It states that: "The reception of the Holy Oils may take place in individual parishes either before the celebration of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper or at another time that seems more appropriate." *The Roman Missal* (2011), 283.

about this. It is seemingly left to the responsibility of the pastors of souls. However, the Book of Blessing recommends that oils are to be kept in special, reverent and secure repositories. It states that: "The oils used for the celebration of the Sacrament of Initiation, Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick according to the ancient tradition are reverently reserved in a special place in the church. The repository should be secure and be protected by lock."[845] The repository is not only for the Oil of the Sick, but also all three holy oils.

The third stage is the carrying of oil to the place for celebration of Anointing of the Sick. *OUI* directs that the oil is to be brought in the vessel in which it is kept.[846] The condition of the vessel is specified. It should be made of suitable material, clean and contain sufficient amount of oil.[847] The oil is soaked in "*bombacio*" (cotton wool).[848] The socking in the "*bombacio*" is for convenience. "*Bombacio*" effectively absorbs oil and preserves it without losing viscosity.

The 1983 Code of Canon Law permits any priest to carry the Oil of the Sick with himself. The reason for this permission is that he is able to administer the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, in case of necessity.[849] However, the Canon Law does not direct in what container or bag he is to carry it. The oil stocks (metallic cylinders) serve as fairly good containers for carrying the oils. Many of the oil stocks have lebels for easy identification, for example, *OC, OI, SC* (initials of *Oleum Catechumenorum*, *Oleum Infirmorurm* and *Sacra Chrisma*). However, most of them are opaque, giving "weak symbols of the oil they bear."[850]

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[845] *Order of Blessing of Repository for the Holy Oils*, no. 1125, in *The Book of Blessings*, approved for use in the Diocese of United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1986): 417-424.

[846] Cf. *PCS*, no. 22; cf. *OUI*, no. 22.

[847] Cf. *PCS*, no. 22; cf. *OUI*, no. 22.

[848] *PCS*, no. 22; cf. *OUI*, no. 22.

[849] The permission was actually granted by Pope Paul VI on 4 March, 1964. It was granted in response to the petitions of many bishops that each and every priest be granted the ability to carry the Oil of the Sick with them especially when they carry out their duties in vehicles. However, the oil is to be duly blessed, and preserved in safe and decent custody. Cf. *CIC*, Can. 1003 §3; Sacred Congregation of Rites, *De Oleo Infirmorum* (March 4, 1964), in AAS 57 (1964): 409; cf. Reiner Kaczynski, (ed.), *Enchridion Documentorum Instaurationis Liturgicae I* (1963-1973), (Romae: Maneti, 1975), 122;

[850] Thomas G. Ryan, *The Sacristy Manual* (Chicago: Liturgical Training Publication, 1972), 67.

After the celebration of the Sacrament, the vessel containing the oil is to be "returned to the place where it is kept with proper respect."[851] While in the place, efforts are also to be made for safe keeping the oil fit for future use. This requires hygienic keeping and frequent replenishing. Such replenishing is done annually during the Chrism Mass, when the oils are blessed by the bishop. However, *OUI* allows for a more frequent blessing, if necessary (*pro-necesscitate*).[852]

5.7 Theological Dimensions of the Rite in relation to the Oil

The section discusses the theological dimensions of the Rite of Anointing of Sick in relation to the Oil of the Sick. The dimensions are categorized as Trinitarian, Christological, Pneumatolgical, Anthropological, Ecclesial, and Eschatological.

5.7.1 Trinitarian Dimension

In the Prayer for Blessing of Oil, God is acclaimed as the "*Pater totius consolatiónis*" (Father of all compassion).[853] In His compassion, He sent the Son into the world to bring healing. The compassion of the Father reveals in his merciful love (*piissima misericordia*) for the sick persons. The compassionate deeds of the Son to the sick and his healing are signs that the Father has visited his people.[854] Oil is a precious gift through which the compassion of the Father is shown to the sick. The minister, who stands in the place of the Son, anoints with oil, which has been transformed by the Holy Spirit as instrument for accomplishing the healing mission of the Son.

In the Prayer for Thanksgiving over the Oil, the Father almighty (*Pater Omnipotens*) is blessed for sending the Son to heal us from sin. The Son is also blessed taking the infirmities

[851] Cf. *PCS*, no. 22; cf. *OUI*, no. 22.
[852] *OIU*, no. 22; *PCS*, no. 122.
[853] *OIU*, no. 75; *PCS*, no. 123.
[854] *CCC*, no. 1503.

of the humanity upon himself. The Son descended to the condition of human beings in order to redeem them and heal the sick. In the Prayer after Anointing, the Son is referred to as "our Redeemer" (*Redemptor noster*).[855] The Holy Spirit is blessed for strengthening the weakness of the humanity brought about by sin and sickness.[856]

5.7.2 Christological Dimension

The oil is blessed in the name of Christ, "*in nómine Domini Iesu Christi*." The doxological part expresses that Christ shares reign and power with God in eternity, "*Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saecula saeculorum."* The Sacrament in which the oil is used in rooted in his healing ministry and in his paschal ministry. [857] The risen Christ meets the sick and touches them with oil, granting them healing, peace, comfort and strength. The sick can gain victory over their sickness, suffering and death through Christ.

The introductory rites during the celebration emphasize the presence of Christ in the celebration.[858] He is present in the minister of the Sacrament. He continues his healing ministry and his mercy. In the readings the speaks to the gathering. He has power to effect this healing by means of his word. The words suggested for Anointing within Mass emphasize the presence of Christ as "a physician and healer."[859]

5.7.3 Pneumatological Dimension

In the epiclectic part of the Prayer of Blessing the Oil, the Holy Spirit is invoked upon the Oil, "*emitte quaésumus, Spiritum tuum Sanctum Paráclitum de caelis*."[860] The Prayer of Thanksgiving over blessed Oil also acknowledges that the Holy Spirit is God, "*Benedictus*

[855] *OIU*, no. 77; *PCS*, nos. 125.
[856] Cf. *OIU*, no. 75 *bis*; *PCS*, nos. 123, 140.
[857] Cf. *PCS*, no. 7.
[858] Cf. *SC*, no. 7.
[859] Cf. *PCS*, no. 135.
[860] *OUI*, no. 75.

Deus, Spiritus Sancte Paraclite."[861] The name of the Holy Spirit is revealed as the Paraclete- from Greek "*paracleto*" which means "the counsellor", "intercessor" or "advocate."[862] As man's helper and friend, the Holy Spirit is closely associated with the healing work of Christ.

In the Sacrament, the Holy Spirit grant the grace of healing to the sick person. By this grace, the sick are holistically "helped and saved, sustained by trust in God, and strengthened against the temptations of the evil one and against anxiety over death."[863]

5.7.4 Anthropological

The oil is a creation of God to serve the needs of Man. Human beings use their intelligence, skills and abilities to extracted oil from a tree (*viridi ligno*). They use the oil to sooth their body, and also give a refreshment to their mind. Through the action of blessing, the oil becomes a remedy for dispelling of pains, illness and weaknesses that afflict human beings.

5.7.5 Ecclesial Dimension

In the Prayer for Blessing the Oil, the ecclesial dimension is depicted by the use of the pronouns of third person plural. These pronouns are: "*oremus*", "*quaésumus*", and "*nobis.*" These pronouns shows that it is the Church (*Ecclesia*) that is raising the prayer to God. The invitation "*oremus*" to the prayer shows that the minister, who blesses the oil, stands on behalf of the Church. He begs beseeches God on behalf of the Community. The oil, through the blessing of God, becomes holy for the use of the community (*nobis*), for anointing her members who are sick.

The sick person who suffers is a member of the community. By uniting himself "freely to the passion and death of Christ, the sick person contributes to the good of the people of

[861] *OUI*, no. 75 *bis.*
[862] John Paul II, Encyclical, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, no. 3, in *AAS* 78 (1986): 809-900.
[863] *PCS*, no. 6; cf. *CCC*, no. 1520; Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11.

God."[864] In his pain and suffering him or she reveals the face of suffering Christ to the rest of the community members. The Church as a "community of love" gathered prays for the restoration to health of the sick person.

The celebration of the Sacrament is to involve the entire Church: the ministers, and the relatives of the sick person, and even the doctors and the nurses and medical staff. These are to show their concern to the sick person. Following the admonition of St. James, the sacrament is to be conferred by the ministers of the Church. In the liturgy of Anointing, the prayer of faith is the prayer of the Church. The prayer is prayed by the *presbyteoi* of the Church. petition is made that this grace of healing is fruitful among the people (those who are celebrating) so that they become strong in God's service. In the concluding rite, the sick person is commended to the care of entire Church.

5.7.5 Sacramental Dimension

In the sacramental dimension, three elements intersect: blessing of oil, blessed oil, and Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick and its relationship with other sacraments. The "blessing of the oil" and "blessed oil" are sacramentals. Sacramentals are "sacred signs which bear resemblance to sacraments in so far as they signify effects, especially of spiritual kind, through the Church."[865] Sacramentals can be sacred actions, such as blessing of the oil, or sacred objects life blessed oil.[866]

The blessing of the oil as a sacred action is accompanied by prayer. Through the blessing of the oil, God is praised for the gift of creation. The prayer show that gift is tangible in the oil, "*pinguedinem Olei, quam de viridi ligbo producere dignatus est ad refectionem corporis*." God

[864] *CCC*, 1522; cf. *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11.
[865] Joseph L. Cunningham, "Sacramentals," in Joseph A. Komonchak, (ed.), *The New Dictionary of Theology*, (Bengaluru: Theological Publications in India, 2019): 922; cf. *CCC*, no. 1667; cf. *SC*, no. 60; *CIC*, can. 1166.
[866] Cf. Joseph L. Cunningham (2019): 922; Cyprian Vaggagini (1976), 86; CCC, no. 1667; *SC*, no. 60; *CIC*, can. 1166;

reveals his love, care and presence through it.[867] The prayer calls down the power of God to transform the oil into a sacred remedy.

After the blessing, the oil becomes a sacramental, for the use of the Church, "*sit Oleum tuum sanctum, Domine, nobis a te benedictum*."[868] By the action of the Church, performed through her minister, the natural oil becomes "blessed oil." The blessed oil is used in the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

The relationship between Sacraments of Christian Initiation and Anointing of the Sick is shown in the various instances in the *OUI*. The beginning of the celebration of the Sacrament is marked by *asperges*. The *asperges* is a reminder of baptism as a sharing in the paschal mystery of Christ. It was first at Baptism that the sick Christian was anointed with oil (Oil of Catechumens and Oil of Chrism). At Confirmation, the Christian receives the fullness of the Holy Spirit. This is again highlighted by the laying on of hands and the anointing with blessed oil on the forehead (with Chrism at Confirmation). He or she was strengthened to bear witness to Christ. The anointing with the Oil of the Sick reminds the recipient to continue witnessing in the time of suffering and death.

Through the Sacrament of the Holy Orders, the Church receives pastors who convey the healing power of the Lord to those who suffer. Ronzani opines that: "They become (…) instruments of the healing touch of God himself in the broken work through proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the Sacrament and the Pastoral care they offer to the People of God."[869] They touch with those who are broken by sickness with the Oil of the Sick.

[867] *Book of Blessing*, abridged edition (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), no. 13.
[868] *OUI*, no. 75.
[869] Cf. Rinaldo Ronzani (2007), 78.

5.7.6 Eschatological Dimension

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick has a profound eschatological nature. This is shown by the conclusion to the Prayer for Blessing of Oil, "*saecula saeculorum*."[870] It seeks to connect the experience of sickness and frailty to the hope of wholeness and salvation. The whole person is saved. The concept of salvation is related to the use of oil as a medicine. Suzan Wood states that: "Salvation is based on a medicinal metaphor, for the etymological root of the word '*salus*' which means 'health in Latin. '*Salus*' is related to the English word 'salve'(ointment), which is applied to wounds to heal them. In other words, to save is to be made whole and healthy."[871] Complete wholeness and lasting health are eschatological.

Anointing with oil in the context of the celebration of the Sacrament is a preparation for the final journey. This is the journey to the ultimate "*eschaton*," especially if it is given to those suffering from serious illness and infirmity, or to those at the point of departing this life. It also completes the holy anointings that mark the whole Christian life. As a last anointing, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick fortifies the earthly life, like a solid rampart for the final struggles before entering the Father's house.[872]

5.8 Papal Teachings on the Oil in the Care of the Sick

The theological dimension of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is augmented by the teaching of the Popes. Among these popes are John Paul II (1978-2005) and Benedict XVI (2005-2013) and Francis (2013-2025). In this section, overviews of these popes on the Anointing of the Sick and of use of Oil of the Sick is explained.

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[870] OUI, no. 75,

[871] Cf. Susan K. Wood, "The Paschal Mystery: The Intercession of Ecclesiology and Sacramental Theology in the Care of the Sick," in Genevieve Glen, (ed.*), Rediscovering the Riches of Anointings: A Study of the Sacrament of the Sick* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2001): 5.

[872] *CCC*, nos. 1523 & 1532.

5.8.1 John Paul II

John Paul II (whose original name was Karol Wojtyla) was born on 18 May, 1920 in Wadovice, Poland. He was elected pope on 16 October, 1978. He led the Church as Pope until 2 April, 2005, when he died. He was canonized on 27 April, 2014.[873]

The views of St. John Paul II on the Oil of the Sick are found in his homilies on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. He observed that the Anointing of the Sick is for the "benefit of the whole person."[874] The Sacrament strengthens and heals both the body and the soul. The body is healed when it is restored to health. The restoration to health is meant to bring the sick person to deeper union with God through increase of grace. The soul is healed, sins and the remnants of sin are forgiven. St. John Paul II called upon the Christians to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in "a spirit of great confidence." [875]

In this Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris,* St. John Paul II reflected on the salvific meaning of human suffering using Colossians 1:24 as the basic text. The document was issued on 11 February, 1984. In *Salvifici Doloris,* he does not mention the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. However, he appreciates the fact that sickness leads to interior maturity and spiritual greatness in suffering which is "a touching lesson to those who are healthy and normal." This maturity and greatness results from the fact and certainty that the sick cooperate with the grace of the Crucified Redeemer. [876]

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[873] Cf. *His Holiness John Paul II: Short Biography* (30 June, 2005). Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/documentazione/documents/santopadre_biografie/giovanni_paolo_ii_biografia_breve_en.html, (accessed 11/06/2026).

[874] John Paul II, *Homily of John Paul II in Southwark Cathedral on 28th May, 1982 at the Ceremony of Anointing of the Sick*. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1982/may/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19820528_cattedrale-southwark.html, (accessed 01/04/2026); cf. Charles W. Gusmer (1984), 200.

[875] John Paul II (28th May, 1982).

[876] John Paul II, Apostolic Letter on the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering *Salvifici Doloris* (February 11, 1984), no. 26, in *AAS* 79 (1984):201-250.

5.8.2 Benedict XVI

Benedict XVI was in Marktl am Inn, Germany. He was elected pope on 19 April, 2005 to succeed late John Paul II. He led the Church as Pope until 2013 when he resigned. He died on 31 December 2022.

In this book "The Spirit of the Liturgy," the then Josef Cardinal Ratzinger stated that that oil is one of the three elements which the Church has received from the Mediterranean culture. The other two gifts are bread and wine. These elements express "the goodness of creation, in which we receive the goodness of the Creator himself."[877] The gifts are taken up and "become the gift of an even higher goodness, a goodness that makes our face shine anew in likeness to the 'Anointed' God, to his beloved Son Jesus Christ."[878] Oil, in this case, becomes a higher gift to convey the healing power of God.

Benedict XVI expounded his teaching on oil as God's gift to convey healing power in his subsequent homilies and messages. In the homily during Chrism Mass on April 1, 2010, Benedict XVI expounded on how the healing is conveyed through the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.[879] He states:

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[877] Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 237; Joseph Ratzinger, *Theology of the Liturgy: The Sacramental Foundation of Christian Existence* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), 142.

[878] Joseph Ratzinger (2000), 237; Joseph Ratzinger (2014), 142.

[879] In this homily, Benedict XIV reflected on the three oils (Sacred Chrism, Oil of Catechumens and Oil of the Sick), giving Christological, pneumatological, ecclesial and sacramental perspectives of the holy oils. First, he outlines the various meanings that are attributed to olive oil: "It is nourishment, it is medicine, it gives beauty, it prepares us for battle and it gives strength. Kings and priests are anointed with oil, which is thus a sign of dignity and responsibility, and likewise of the strength that comes from God. Even the name that we bear as "Christians" contains the mystery of the oil. The word "Christians", in fact, by which Christ's disciples were known in the earliest days of Gentile Christianity, is derived from the word "Christ" (Acts 11:20-21)- the Greek translation of the word "Messiah", which means "anointed one." To be a Christian is to come from Christ, to belong to Christ, to the anointed one of God, to whom God granted kingship and priesthood. It means belonging to him whom God himself anointed- not with material oil, but with the One whom the oil represents: with his Holy Spirit. Olive oil is thus in a very particular way a symbol of the total compenetration of the man Jesus by the Holy Spirit. Finally, they point to the Garden of Olives, the scene of Jesus' inner acceptance of his Passion." Reflecting further on the anointing of priests, Benedict XVI looks at oil as a symbol of mercy, peace and a special sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit with the people of God. Explaining the ecclesial dimension, Benedict XVI emphasized that the fact of consecrating holy oils at bishop's cathedral is an expression of ecclesial unity, "guaranteed by the episcopate."

Stating the sacramental perspective, Benedict XVI observes that oil is visibly used in Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders: "Thus oil, in its different forms, accompanies us throughout our lives: beginning with the catechumenate and baptism, and continuing right up to the moment when we prepare to

> In the anointing of the sick, in which oil is offered to us, so to speak, as God's medicine- as the medicine which now assures us of his goodness, offering us strength and consolation, yet at the same time points beyond the moment of the illness towards the definitive healing, the resurrection (cf. Jas 5:14).[880]

In this reflection, Benedict XVI calls oil as God's medicine. With this medicine, God touches the sick through the minister. He also alludes to the eschatological implications.

In the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Benedict XVI describes the relationship between Eucharist and the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. He states that the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick was instituted by Christ and unites the sick person with the self-giving of Christ for the salvation of the world. Through it, the sick are united with the mystery of the communion of saints. The relationship between the sacrament and the Eucharist is seen in the celebration of Eucharist as Viaticum for those who are about to leave this life. In this, Anointing of the Sick and Eucharist form one communion act and occasion. In serving the sick, the community merits the eternal rewards promised by Christ, who is served in the least of the brethren (cf. Matthew 25:40).[881]

5.8.3 Francis

Pope Francis (originally Jorge Mario Bergolio) was born on the 17 December, 1936, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He became priest and bishop in 1969 and 1992 respectively. He was created cardinal by late Pope John Paul II in 2001, and on 13 March, 2013, he was elected Pope.

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meet God, our Judge and Saviour. Moreover, the Chrism Mass, in which the sacramental sign of oil is presented to us as part of the language of God's creation, speaks in particular to us who are priests: it speaks of Christ, whom God anointed King and Priest – of him who makes us sharers in his priesthood, in his "anointing", through our own priestly ordination." Cf. Benedict XIV, Homily at Chrism Mass (April 1, 2010). Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100401_messa-crismale.htm, (accessed 04/04/2026); cf. Benedict XVI, Message of the Holy Father on the Occasion of 20th World Day of the Sick (11 February, 2012). Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100401_messa-crismale.htm, (accessed 04/04/2026).

[880] Benedict XIV, *Homily at Chrism Mass* (April 1, 2010); Benedict XVI, *Message of the Holy Father on the Occasion of 20th World Day of the Sick* (11 February, 2012).

[881] Cf. Benedict XIV, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis* (22 February, 2007), no. 22, in *AAS* 99 (2007): 105-180.

Pope Francis, in his general audience on 26 February, 2014, outlined the importance of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. It stated the Sacrament helps us to touch God's compassion for man. It also helps us to broaden our vision to include the experience of illness and suffering within the horizon of God's mercy. The members of the Christian community, to whom the sick person is entrusted, are to bring God's mercy and salvation to the sick upon measure. The sacrament also reassures the sick persons and the aged of the closeness of Jesus to them. [882] The presence of the priest around the sick person represents the whole Church.

Francis used the biblical icon of the good Samaritan to speak about the Oil of the Sick. He stated that the oil used by the Good Samaritan to treat the wounds of the victim of robbery (Lk 10:30-35) is evokes thoughts of the Oil of the Sick that is blessed by the bishop each year during the Chrism Mass. The Oil of the Sick not only provides bodily and spiritual comfort, but it "is also a balm for listening, the closeness, the care, the tenderness of those who take care of the sick person, easing pain and making them feel better." [883] In this, Francis enriches the vocabulary for describing the symbolism of oil.

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the current Rite of the Anointing of the Sick with focus on Oil of the Sick. The Chapter has discussed the preliminaries to the Rite, analyzing the *Decretum*, Apostolic Constitution, and the General Introduction. The Chapter has also described the general structure of entire rite and the particular structure of the celebration of Anointing of the Sick. To explore the symbolism and the various names of the Oil of the Sick, the Prayer for

[882] Francis, *General Audience* St. Peter's Squire (February 26, 2014). Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140226_udienza-generale.html#:~:text, (accessed 28/04/2026).

[883] Francis, *Pope at Angelus: Health care for all is essential service* (July 11, 2021). Retrieved from https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-07/pope-francis-prays-angelus-with-faithful-from-gemelli-hospital.html#:~:text= (accessed 28/04/2026); Francis, *General Audience* (February 26, 2014).

Blessing the Oil has been analyzed. This has been followed by discussion of the theological insights in the Rite in relation to the Oil, and the views of some popes.

From the discussion, it has emerged that the Oil of the Sick is a natural element, fruit of the earth, an unguent, soothing ointment, precious oil and holy oil. Through the act of blessing, the natural oil is transformed as a holy remedy of body, mind and soul. It becomes an instrument used for the dispelling of pains, illness and weakens that afflict the sick.

The oil, duly blessed, is the matter for the celebration of the Sacrament. This oil is either olive oil or other oil derived from plants. The Apostolic Constitution, *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum,* prescribes that oil derived from other plants can be used for the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick. The identification of a particular plant from which such oil can be derived is done through investigation in the cultures and the traditions of the respective people.

The chapter also discussed about the preparation and the custody of the oil. The procurement is the concern of the local churches. The blessing is done ordinarily by the bishop and those who are equivalent of a diocesan bishop. While the priest celebrating the Sacrament can bless the oil during the celebration, oil blessed by the bishop is preferred. Much as prescriptions are given on the custody of the oil (at the time of blessing, transferring in the parishes and moment of the celebration), the details are not stated. For example, the type of the vessels, and the places for the keeping the oil are not prescribed in the current Rite. The structure of the Rite in *OUI* can been adapted to suit specific pastoral situations. The next Chapter gives recommendations for an Inculturated Rite of the Anointing of the Sick.

CHAPTER SIX

INCULTURATING THE RITE OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK IN ARUA DIOCESE

Introduction

This chapter consists of recommendations for inculturating the Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The inculturation of the Rite is in view of promoting increased reception of the Sacrament in Arua Diocese. The chapter is made up of four sections. In the first section, comparison is made between the custody of oils in *OUI* and Lugbara traditional healing rituals. In the second section, the meaning of inculturation and concept of liturgical inculturation are explained. Areas of liturgical inculturation are also identified. The third section contains recommendations for the inculturation of the custody of the Oil of the Sick. In the fourth section, recommendations for the inculturation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick are given. The recommendations are categorized as liturgical, pastoral, juridical and anthropological.

6.1 Similarities and Differences in Custody of Oil

In this section, the similarities and difference for keeping the oils in the *OUI* and Lugbara traditional healing rituals are highlighted.

6.1.1 Similarities

The first similarity concerns the containers that are used for keeping the oils. In principle, special containers are designated for keeping the oils. *OUI* advises that the containers for keeping the Oil of the Sick are to be decent and made of suitable material. They should be clean and able to contain sufficient amount of oil.[884] In Lugbara traditional healing rituals, special containers are designated for keeping the oils. These containers are considered to have

[884] Cf. *OUI*, no. 22.

special preservative and protective qualities. The vessels for indicate that the oil is a precious substance that deserves to be kept in decent vessels.

The second similarity pertains to the places for keeping the oils. Special places are designated for storing the containers with their contents. *OUI* directs that the vessel containing the Oil of the Sick is to be returned to the place where it is kept with proper respect.[885] "*Lu'bu"* and "*otakua*," that hold the oils in the Lugbara traditional healing rituals, are tied with a rope at the ceiling of the hut or the house (*jo mile* or *jo karia*), which symbolizes ownership, security and authority. They can also be kept at the shrines on the graves of the elders. Hence, the oils in both practices (*OUI* and Lugbara traditional healing rituals) are kept in places where security, carefulness, respect and reverence can be maintained.

The third similarity concerns the persons who handle and keep the oils. *OUI* presumes that it is the ministers who keep the Oil of the Sick in their vicinity. Even if the family provides the oil that is to be blessed, as in the case of the oil blessed during the celebration of the Sacrament, the minister handles it. In Lugbara traditional healing rituals, handling and keeping the oils for anointing the sick is the prerogative of the traditional healers. The healers are the persons who are often seen going to the shrines to get the oil for use in the healing.

6.1.2 Differences

The naming and the identity of the containers reveal differences. In *OUI*, the names of the vessels are not specified. It is only advised that Oil of the Sick should be kept in suitable vessel (*vasculo convenienti*). The suitability of the vessel is left to the interpretation of the users. In the Lugbara traditional healing rituals, the names and identity of the container is clearly specified. The containers are "*lubu*" (gourd) and "*otakua*" (pot).

[885] Cf. *OUI*, no. 22.

The identification also extends to the places. While the places for keeping the containers in Lugbara traditional healing rituals are clearly mentioned, *OUI* does not give explicit directions about the places for keeping the Oil of the Sick. It is left to the responsibility of the pastors of souls.

6.2 Definition of Inculturation and Liturgical Inculturation

In this section, two terms which are basic to the study are explained. The areas for inculturation are also outlined. The terms are: inculturation and liturgical inculturation. The etymology, definition, foundation and the criterion of inculturation are presented. The meaning of liturgical inculturation, its perquisites and methods are discussed. Such knowledge about the meaning and the areas for inculturation in order to carry out an authentic inculturation.

6.2.1 Concept of Inculturation

The term "inculturation" is a coinage from two Latin words, "*in*" and "*cultura*" "*In*" is preposition which means "to bring something into a system." "*Cultura*" is used to refer to that which has been cultivated. It is frequently used to refer to "culture." Pope John Paul II called the term referred to the term inculturation as a "neologism." [886] This is to state that it is a new word coined to described an existing reality. [887] Hence, the reality of inculturation is as old as

[886] John Paul II, *Ad membra Pontificiae Commissionis Biblicae, una cum Em.mo Francisco S. R. E. Cardinali Seper coram admissos* (26 Aprilis, 1979), in *AAS* 71 (1979): 606-608; John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, no. 52, in *AAS* 83 (1991): 249-340.

[887] Scholars trace the beginning of the use of the term "inculturation" in the theological and missiological discussions from the early 1960s. The earliest use of the term is attributed to Joseph Masson. Masson used the expression: "*d'un catholicisme inculturé*," in an article he authored in 1962 in the journal *Nouvelle Revenue Theologique* 84 (1962). He argued that the need for a Catholicism that is inculturated in diverse ways has become more urgent. This "inculturated Catholicism" is one that embraces people in their cultural distinctiveness of language, art, symbolism, social norms, and their general outlook of life.

In the protestant cycles, the term was used by Linwood G. Barney, a protestant missionary and a professor at Nyack Alliance Scholl of Theology (New York) in 1973. Barney used the term to express the relationship between the Gospel and the new cultures that interacted with the Gospel. He reminded his fellow missionaries to keep the essential components of the Gospel intact as they bring the Gospel into a new culture. Anscar Chupungco quotes Barney stating that: "The essential nature of these supracultural components should neither be lost nor distorted but rather secured and interpreted closely through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in 'inculturating' them into the new culture."

humanity. The reality of inculturation has been an auxiliary tool in the growth and spread of Christianity since its beginning.

Many definitions of inculturation focus on it as an attempt and a process geared towards the implantation and dissemination of the Gospel message among the people of a specific culture. John Mary Walligo, as quoted by Laurenti Magesa defines inculturation as: "an honest and serious attempt to make Christ and his message of salvation understood by the people of a given culture, locality and time."[888] In this attempt, the Christian doctrine and life are reformulated "into the very through-patterns of each people."[889] The goal of attempt is to make the Christ and his message understandable.

John Paul II refers to inculturation as "the process by which catechesis 'takes place' in various cultures."[890] He defines inculturation from a catechetical perspective. However, he acknowledges the field of inculturation is diverse, covering catechesis, theology, liturgy, devotions, sacramentals and structures.[891] Inculturation leads a mutual enriching relationship between the Gospel message and the culture. The culture and the people of the culture are elevated to a living and faithful relationship with the Holy Trinity in the Christian community.

Precisely, inculturation refers to a process based on a conscious effort to implant, disseminate and live Gospel message among people living in a given culture. The cultural

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The term began to be popularized from 1975, when it was used Jesuits in their 32nd Congregation of the Society of Jesus in the same year. They use it to replace the tern "*inculturatio*" to "enculturation." They could have used "*in*" to replace "*en*," since Latin does not have preposition "*en*." Moreover, the term "enculturation" has anthropological connotations. It is used to mean socializing or inserting a person into his or her culture so as to make him or her learn the culture. The use of the term in public interventions in attributed to Fr. Pedro Arrupe, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus from 1965 to 1983. Arrupe is said to have used the term in his intervention during the third Synod of Bishops on Evangelization in 1974. Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 25; Cf. Joseph Masson, "L'Eglise ouverte sur le monde," in *Nouvelle Revenue Theologique* 84 (1962): 1038. Retrieved from https://www.nrt.be/it/articoli/l-eglise-ouverte-sur-le-monde-1791, (accessed 03/07/2026); Rodrigo Meijia (2023), 46; cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 330.

[888] Laurenti Magesa (2004), 192; John Mary Walligo, "Making a Church that is Truly African," in *Inculturation: Its Meaning and Urgency* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1986): 58.

[889] Laurenti Magesa (2004), 192; John Mary Walligo (1986): 58.

[890] John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 59. *AAS* 88 (1996): 5-82.

[891] Cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 62.

patterns of the people become means through which the Gospel message is transmitted, lived, and radiated. In the process, the culture is transformed.

A process that is meant to make lead human being to be faithful to Christ ought to be anchored of Christ-related foundation. It cannot be a haphazard process, but it should also follow criteria. An authoritative voice about foundations and criteria is that of John Paul II. He gives three theological foundations and two criteria for inculturation. The foundations are: mystery of Incarnation, mystery of Redemption and the mystery of Pentecost. The mystery of Incarnation is a historical reality. It was concretized "in early defined circumstances of time, place and space, amidst a people with its own culture a people God has chosen and accompanied throughout the entire history of salvation, in order to show through what he did for them, what he intended to do for the whole human race."[892] Through inculturation, the Gospel is inserted into the cultures of the people and enters into a living relationship with the people and their cultures.

The mystery of redemption affirms that human beings are in need of redemption, and their cultures stand in need of transformation. John Paul II explains that: "Every culture needs to be transformed by the Gospel values in the light of the Paschal mystery."[893] The cultural values are transformed by infusing into them the values of the Gospel. Once transformed, they are inserted into Christianity, and become people's expression of Christian values.

The mystery of Pentecost acknowledges the fact that Holy Spirit draws the gifts and the talents of all the people, and unites them for proclaiming the Gospel. It bases on the story of the Pentecost event narrated in Acts 2:1-12, in which the languages of the various races are taken up to proclaim the Gospel message. John Paul II exclaims: "Thanks to the outpouring of the Spirit, who draws gifts and talents into unity, all peoples of the earth when they enter the

[892] *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 60.
[893] *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 61.

Church live a new Pentecost, profess in their own tongue the one faith in Jesus, and proclaim the marvels that the Lord has done for them."[894] The attempt and the process that seeks to bring people to proclaim those marvels in the context of worship is termed as "liturgical inculturation."

The criteria for inculturation given by John Paul II are: "compatibility with the Christian message and communion with the universal Church."[895] The Christian message has the goal drawing people and leading embrace Jesus Christ. Through Jesus Christ they enter into deep and total communion with God through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit. This ensures that inculturation does not lead formation of "a village or ethnic church but a living Church," [896] with all the elements of the universal Church.

6.2.2 Meaning of Liturgical Inculturation

Liturgical inculturation" is a term that has gained prominence in the post-Vatican II discourses. Liturgical inculturation is an integrative process by which the cultural patterns are integrated into the liturgical celebrations and devotional practices of the local Church.[897] Anscar Chupungco explains integration in two ways. First, integration means that the local culture influences the composition and proclamation of the liturgical formularies, performance of the rituals, and the artistic expression of the Gospel message. Second, integration means incorporating the "local rites, symbols, and festivals, after due critiques and reinterpretations,"[898] into the worship of the local church. These elements are used to convey

[894] *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 61.
[895] *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 62.
[896] John Lukwata, "Challenges and Opportunities of Liturgical Inculturation," in *African Christian Studies*, 3, 26, (September 2010): 75.
[897] Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco, "Liturgical Inculturation: The Future that Awaits Us," in I*nstituted of Liturgical Studies Occasional Papers*, 96 (2003): 249. Retrieved from https://www.shcholar.valpo.ed/il-papers/96, (accessed 19/04/2026); cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 327; Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 30.
[898] Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 30.

the Gospel message, and make it comprehensible to the people. They people respond in ways that are appropriate to their culture.

The process of liturgical inculturation requires an understanding of the nature of the liturgy and the cultural expression with which liturgy has evolved. By its nature, the liturgy is, in the first place, the privileged place of encounter between God, revealed by Jesus Christ, and the people. The encounter is animated by the Holy Spirit. In the second place, liturgy as a celebration of the paschal mystery of Christ, glorification of God the Father and the sanctification of mankind in the Holy spirit. In the liturgy, Christ exercises his priesthood and continues to accomplish the work of redemption, through prayers and signs that are perceptual to senses.[899] In the third place, the liturgy has ecclesial nature. It manifests the nature of the Church, that is, as an assembly convoked by the word of God, a church which is catholic and on pilgrimage to the eternal City, the Heavenly Jerusalem. [900] Participating fully, consciously and actively is a right and responsibility of the Christian people by reason of their baptism, it is also the goal of liturgical inculturation.[901] The cultural expression of the liturgy laid down in the typical editions.[902] The typical editions become the "*terminus a quo*" (point of departure) in the process of liturgical inculturation.[903]

The liturgical inculturation also requires the knowledge of the culture of the people who celebrate the liturgy. This includes knowledge of the rites, symbols, art, feasts and festivals. Such knowledge be acquired through research in the fields desired fields of those cultures.[904] In the process of liturgical inculturation, the culture of the people becomes "*terminus alter a quo*" (another point of departure). Hence, the Vatican II typical editions and the people's

[899] Cf. *SC*, no. 7.
[900] Cf. *SC*, no. 8.
[901] Cf. *SC*, no. 14.
[902] Congregation for the Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments, *Fourth Instruction for Right Application of Conciliar Constitution (nos. 37-40) Varietates Legitimae* (January 25, 1994), no. 21-43, in *AAS* 87 (1995): 288-314.
[903] Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 32.
[904] Cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 62.

cultural patterns form two points of departure. They meet in "a literal sense, in literal, not idiomatic sense,"[905] and influence each other to lead the people to participate in the worship of God.

At the point of meeting, integration takes place. The integration comes through dialogue and reflection. By integrating the culturation patterns, the celebration is enriched, and the people are helped to celebrate, meet God and pray. What is integrated should be truly significant and relevant in the life and tradition of the people.[906] The result of the integration is new expression of worship using the cultural elements of the local people, without lapse into syncretism.[907] The new expression of worship maintains the "substantial unity of the Roman Rite,"[908] and preserves the integrity of the content of faith, which is "important for ecclesial communion."[909] The new expression is a "point of arrival" (*terminus ad quem*).[910] However, it is not an end in itself, but a new point of departure (*novus terminus a quo*), leading to glorification and sanctification.

The arduous process of liturgical inculturation follows methods. Scholars have given three main methods. These are: dynamic equivalence, creative assimilation and organic progression. Dynamic equivalence involves "replacing an element of Roman Liturgy with something in the culture that has an equal meaning and value."[911] Such elements are linguistic, ritual and symbolic. Those elements of the Roman Rite are expressed in language, symbols and rites that relate to the community's life, values, and rites. Dynamic equivalence is more employed in the translation of the typical editions into the vernacular languages.

[905] Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 32.
[906] Cf. *Varietates Legitimae*, no. 43.
[907] Cf. *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 62.
[908] *SC*, no. 38.
[909] *NDC*, no. 397.
[910] Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 32.
[911] Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 37.

Creative assimilation involves bringing into the liturgy those practices, rites and linguistic expressions from the social and religious traditions of the people who have embraced Christianity. The elements are given Christian meaning, and incorporated into the worship of the Church. This is motivated by the desire to express the Christian message using those elements. Magesa argues that creative assimilation is "based on the conviction that the spark of divine creativity animates every culture and the God can be encountered and worshiped in myriad ways, many of which have not yet been realized by Christians brought up in the Western tradition."[912] Such elements may be included in the Introductory Rites, Explanatory Rites and Concluding Rites. This method is important in developing particular rituals to be used in particular Churches.[913]

Organic progression refers to giving new forms and expression from the existing ones, in the spirit of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 23. The article states that: "care must be taken that any new form adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing." This allows some creativity and novelty, but as long as it is "supplementing and completing the shape of the liturgy."[914] Organic procession involves reading and interpreting the typical editions for fruitful adaptation into the cultural environment. In the process of adapting, a new shape given to the liturgy, while complying with the basic intentions of the typical editions.[915]

Having defined liturgical inculturation, and given the prerequisites for liturgical inculturation and the methods for liturgical inculturation, areas of inculturation are identified.

6.2.3 Areas for Inculturation

The areas for inculturation have featured from the discussions in the previous chapter of this work. In the beginning of the research, it was hypothesized that: "Perhaps the custody

[912] Laurenti Magesa (2004), 195.
[913] Cf. *SC*, no. 63; Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 37.
[914] Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 37.
[915] Cf. Anscar J. Chupungco (1992), 37.

of the oil in a culturally relevant vessel, in a well-designed section of the church building can elicit faith and desire to be anointed with the oil, and promote frequent reception of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick." Hence, one of the key areas for inculturation is the custody of the Oil of the Sick. The element to be considered for inculturation in this area are the vessels for keeping the Oil of the Sick and the place for storing it.

The second areas for inculturation follows from the third hypothesis. The third hypothesis stated that: "Probably detailed study of the oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals may increase the reception of the Sacrament from its proper ministers." One of the oils, identified during the study, could be incorporated into the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese. This area of inculturation is supported by the fact that another plant oil can be used for the Anointing of the Sick. Using oil that had significance towards healing can promote the reception of the Sacrament.

Another area for inculturation is the translation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick into Lugbarati. The translation model of inculturation has been the prevalent liturgical inculturation in the Arua Diocese. The liturgical books have been translated into the local languages. It was noted in the study that that the existing official ritual for celebration of Anointing of the Sick used among the Lugbara-speaking population has several omissions. What are omitted are vital for catechesis about the Anointing of the Sick, and contributes to inculturation. The researcher therefore proposes that translation be revised.[916] It is necessary that the entire Ritual be translated, with the inclusion of the full entries of the General Introduction.

[916] Translation is a delicate task that has to be carried out a committee of experts and competent people, lest the beauty and the riches of the *OUI* be lost and betrayed. The criteria laid down in the Instruction *Inter Oecumenici* for vernacular translations still stand valid in this regard. The Instruction states that: "the basis of all translations is the Latin Liturgical text and the work of the translation should involve institutes of the liturgy and persons who are experts in Scripture, liturgy and biblical languages. Congregation of Rites, Instruction on Implementing Liturgical Norms *Inter Oecumenici*, in *AAS* 56 (1964):885; cf. Anscar J. Chupungco, "The Translation of Liturgical Texts," in Anscar J. Chupungco, (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies Volume I: Introduction to* Liturgy (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997), 386.

Inculturating the Rite of Anointing of the Sick goes hand in hand with the inculturation of catechesis on the Sacrament. Catechesis is therefore identified as another area for inculturation. In the inculturation of catechesis, traditional concepts and values about good health and care for the sick can form part of the teaching of the people.

6.3 An Inculturated Custody of the Oil

This section contains recommendations for inculturating the custody of the Oil of the Sick. Inculturating the custody of the oil requires the use of containers and places that are culturally relevant. In relation to the custody of Oil of the Sick, cultural relevance implies that the vessels or containers and the places that are used for the storage of the oil, and carrying it should reflect, respect and accommodate the artistic traditions and skills of the people.[917] The vessels may be produced by skilled people within the local community, using materials of worthy and proven integrity.

6.3.1 *Lu'bu* as Container for the Oil of the Sick

"*Lubu*" (gourd) is a vessel that relates to the art, traditional and religious sentiments of the Lugbara people. It is proposed for keeping the Oil of the Sick and carrying the oil for the celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. In the Lugbari version of the Bible, the term "*lu'bu*" is used to translate "flask," "a jug" and "jar" (1 Kg 17:12, 16 and Mt 26:7). However, in the actual make up, "*lubu*" is different from a flask or a jug. "*Lu'bu*" serves evokes cultural symbolism, and Christian symbolism. It also evokes faith in the healing power of Christ conveyed through the Oil of the Sick. The challenge of the fragility of the material for

[917] Cf. Yi-Huang Shih, "An Analysis of the Benefits of Incorporating Cultural Relevance in Curriculum Development," in *International Journal in Latest Research in Humanities and Social Sciences (IJLRHSS)*, Volume 7, Issue 09 (2024):4. Retrieved from https://www.ijlrhss.org, (accessed 20/05/2026).

making "*lu'bu*" can be addressed by using metals or ceramics. Whereas the design may be kept, the make-up can be of another material.

6.3.2 Construction of Ambries in Shape of "*Otakua*"

The vessels or containers need to be kept in safe and decent place, preferably in a specific section of the Church building. Safe and decent custody necessities the provision of infrastructure. This entails deliberate allocation and commitment of resources and space for constructing ambries in which holy oils are kept.

For a decent and proper custody of oils, it is recommended that ambries should be constructed in the Churches in Arua Diocese. Inculturated ambries for the custody can take the shape of "*otakua*" (pot). It can be located next to the tabernacle, but in lower position, so that the prominence of the Blessed Sacrament is maintained.[918] The vicinity between the tabernacle and the ambry reminds the faithful of God's compassion towards the sick through Christ present in Blessed Sacrament.

6.4 An Inculturated Rite of Anointing of the Sick

In this section, recommendations for an inculturated Rite of Anointing of the Sick are given. The recommendations are liturgical, pastoral, juridical and anthropological.

[918] Tabernacle is the place for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. Canonical regulation requires that the place for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament is be truly prominent, and suitable for private prayer. It should be in an immovable and solid tabernacle, opaque and locked so as to provide every possible security against the danger of profanation or desecration. A special lamp or light is placed in near the tabernacle to indicated the presence of Christ. The primary and original reason for the reservation of the Eucharist outside Mass is the administration of viaticum. The secondary reason is the adoration of Jesus present in this Blessed Sacrament. Cf. *CIC*, canons 938, 940*; GIRM*, nos. 314-317.

6.4.1 Liturgical Recommendations

Among the liturgical recommendations, the introduction of a "table of the oil", "green *aspergillum*", and the inclusion of the biblical readings that mention oil are to be included. In the liturgy of Anointing, the number of anointings could be increased. These recommendations can be incorporated in the revised version of the local rituals.

6.4.1.1 Introduction of *Mensula Olei*

In order to direct attention to the oil during the celebration, it is recommended that a small table be introduced for placing the Oil of the Sick. This could be called the "*Mensula Olei*" (small table of the Oil). The oil should then be placed on the "*mensula*" (a small table), in view of everybody. In case the Blessed Sacrament has been brought, the oil could be placed on the right-side top of the table, if a separate table cannot be got. The Blessed Sacrament should take the central place.[919] However, it is better if separate tables could be provided for both, bigger one (*mensa*) for Blessed Sacrament and smaller one (*mensula*) for the oil.

While placing the Blessed Sacrament and the Oil of the Sick on the tables, the priest could say some words to help the sick person and the faithful to recollect themselves.[920] He could announce the presence of the Lord, after the greeting, in the following way:

> Placing the Blessed Sacrament at the center of the table, he says:
> **Christ has come to this house. May his peace be with all of you in this house.**
> Placing the Oil on the right side of the top of the table, or on a lower table, he says:
> **He comes to heal N. by anointing him with this oil.**
> The faithful respond: **Welcome Jesus with your healing power.**

These proposed words draw attention to the oil that the priest is going to use for anointing the sick person.

[919] The centrality is due to the fact that in the Blessed Sacrament is due to the fact that Christ is present substantially.

[920] According to *ICEL* edition, the priest places the Blessed Sacrament on the table silently, and all the faithful present join in adoration. Cf. *PCS*, no. 114.

6.4.1.2 Use of "Green *Aspergillum"*

"Apsergillum" (sprinkler) is the vessel that is used for sprinkling holy water during the act of blessing people and objects.[921] In most cases, it is metallic, although those made of plastic are also available. "Green *aspergillum*" means that fresh and green plant leaves are used for springling the holy water. It is recommended that "*laröbi*" (leaves of fig tree) be used as "*aspergillum.*" These plants are ubiquitous in Lugbara homesteads. During the research, it was found out that these leaves are used during the therapeutic ritual of "*ggu nyaza*" (unity of meat). The elder holds the leaves delivering an address.[922] In relation to sickness, holding the leaves symbolizes, removal of curses, purity of heart, reconciliation, and desire for healing.

6.4.1.3 Inclusion of Biblical Readings that Mention Oil

In the selection of the readings that are provided for the Liturgy of the Word, *OUI* gives only one biblical reading that mentions oil, that is James 5:14-16. It is therefore recommended that other biblical readings that explicitly mention the use of oil in the care of the sick be included when revising the translations for use in Arua Diocese.

Among such readings are: Leviticus 14:10-18; Psalm 23, and Mark 7:7-13. Leviticus 14:10-18 shows the use of oil in the healing and cleansing rituals of the Israelite community. It provides biblical backing for gestures of the priest while anointing. He places the oil on the palm of his left hand. He then uses his right hand to anoint the sick person on the ear, hands, feet and head. Psalm 23 that describes God's loving care for his people, especially with the act of anointing: "You anoint my head with oil" (Ps 23:5). For the Gospel reading, Mark 6:7-13 would be appropriate because shows what the disciples that the disciples anointed the sick with

[921] Cf. James T. Bretzke, *Consecrated Phrases: A Latin Theological Dictionary* (Collegeville; The Liturgical Press, 1998), 12.
[922] Cf. Chapter Three, Section 3.2.2.2, iii.

oil. The sick got cured. The pericope could be included to emphasize that the anointing with the Oil of the Sick is for healing of the sick persons.

6.4.1.4 Recommendations in the Liturgy of Anointing

In the Liturgy of Anointing, two recommendations are given. The first one is the revision of the Prayer for Blessing of Oil. The second one is increasing the number of anointing to four. The personal English translation of the Prayer of Blessing of Oil is hereby proposed and translated in Lugbarati. However, the version of the Prayer in the current Lugbari edition (1980) is stated together with an English translation so as to indicated the difference with the proposed version.

Table III: Prayer for Blessing of Oil in Current Lugbari Version (1980)

English (translated by researcher)	**Lugbarati**[923]
Lord God, Father of all consolation, you will to healed the sick through your Son Jesus Christ. In your mercy, hear our prayers of faith. Send the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete from heaven, to bless + the people anointed with this oil; may they not experience pain of body, so that they be free from all sickness; may they also be free from pain, and may they regain their health in body and spirit. Father, bless this Holy Oil for us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever." Amen.	*Opi Adro, Ata 'ba dria asi omiipiri la,* *Ile andra 'ba azorö 'dii ma rua atii, mi Mvi Yezu Kristo ru si,* *Aza minirisi, Mi eri ezitaa amani ezile a'itaa si 'dii.* *Mi epe Orindi mini Alari 'ba asi ondriipiri ti engazö 'bua, tusu cozö + 'ba trile odö 'di si 'dii ma dria;* *ei ma rua ma su kö, ma ovö vini azö kokorö,* *eima rua ma ovö asi pie möke dika.* *Ata, ico amani tusu miniri Odö Ala di dria,* *Ama Opi Yezu Kristo ru si,* *Eri edriipi vini kari nyaapi 'dani'dani asi kokorö.* *Amen.*

Table IV: Proposed Prayer for Blessing of Oil

Current Version	**Proposed Adaptations**
Let us pray: O God, Father of all consolation, you are pleased to heal our sicknesses through your Son.	*Ama ezi:* *Adro, Ata asiomiza woro driri la* *mi ovö ayiko si azo ama dri 'dii ati zö mi Mvi ru si.*

[923] Arua Diocese (1980), 27.

Graciously, listen to our prayer of faith; send the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete from heaven upon this substance of oil, which you have provided from the tree for the refreshment of human body, so that through your holy blessing + it may be for all those who are anointed with it a remedy of body, mind and spirit May it relieve all pains, illnesses and weaknesses. O Lord, by your blessing, may it be a holy oil for us, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. R/. Amen	*Ama a'i mi ezitaa amani ezii aitaa si 'di erizö.* *Mi epe Orindi Ala, Ekaapi mati 'bua 'dale ri si, odö mi ni efele engazö pati ma rua, 'ba atizö 'di ma dria,* *Tusu ala co + drinia 'disi, ma ovö ani feta ala 'ba woro 'bani trii ani 'dii atiipi ri rö.* *Ma fe eini avaliza azo vini okpoako woro ma alea ri si.* *Opi, tusu mini risi, odö di ma eca amani alarö.* *Mi mva ama Opi Yezu Kristo ru si, eri edriipi vini kari nyaapi, 'dani 'dani asikoko ru.* *R/. Amen.*

The number of anointing could also be increased to four. This is in accordance with the rubric that suggests that the number of anointing may be increased depending on the local culture and tradition.[924] Apart from the head and the hand, other parts to be anointed can be the neck or chest and legs. This will align well with the local sentiments, and promote generous use of the Oil of the Sick.[925] No repetition of the formula may be done as guided by the Rite.

6.4.2 Pastoral Recommendations

In the areas of pastoral recommendations, catechesis of liturgical nature is proposed. This precisely means deeper liturgical catechesis. The areas and occasions for the catechesis are pastoral in nature. Secondly, to enhance catechesis, the local catechism is to be updated.

6.4.2.1 Deeper Liturgical Catechesis

"*Catechesi liturgica*"[926] or Liturgical catechesis is instruction, induction and formation of the faithful into a deeper understanding of mysteries celebrated and lived in the

[924] Cf. *OUI*, nos. 24; *PCS*, no. 24.
[925] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 334.
[926] The term "*catechesi liturgica*" is used in the Constitution on the Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) in relation to the period of Lent. The Constitution mentions that through the liturgy and liturgy catechesis, the two-fold

Community.[927] The instruction and induction are basically preparations for the celebrations of the sacrament. They are meant to make the faithful understand the meaning of the sacraments.[928] In the words of Timothy O. Malley, it is done "through the act of worship, not just by passing of knowledge, or information."[929] The "*catechizandi*" are immersed into the paschal mystery through symbols and signs. The symbols, signs, gestures, together with the Word of God constituted the sources of liturgical catechesis. In the course of celebration, their meanings are explained, so that the faithful can be drawn to active participation, meditation and silent contemplation.[930] Through liturgical catechesis, the faithful are prepared to dispose their mind, heart and soul for authentic encounter and union with God through Christ in the Holy Spirit.[931]

"Deeper liturgical catechesis" refers to a deliberate, organized and conscious endeavour to deepen the understanding of the essential matters to be believed (*lex credendi*) about the mysteries celebrated. The purpose it as to lead the faithful to participate fully and consciously in the celebrations (*lex orandi*), be empowered for a more realistic and authentic Christian life (*lex vivendi*).[932] In living the Christian life, the faithful should be able to see a reason for their faith, and why they must receive the sacraments, and actually receive the Sacraments. The first

character of lent, that is remembrance of baptism or preparation for it and penance, are more fully explained. The constitutioin states that: "*Duplex indoles temporis quadragesimalis, quod praesertim per memoriam vel praeparationem Baptismi et per paenitentiam fideles, instantius verbum Dei audientes et orationi vacantes, componit ad celebrandum paschale mysterium, tam in liturgia quam in* ***catechesi liturgica*** *pleniore in luce ponatur.*" *SC*, no. 109.

[927] Cf. James C. Pauley (2017), 73.

[928] Catechesis and sacraments are intrinsically related. This relationship is well brought out by John Paul II in *Catechesi Tradendae*. John Paul II states that: "In any case, catechesis always has reference to the sacraments. On the one hand, the catechesis that prepares for the sacraments is an eminent kind, and every form of catechesis necessarily leads to the sacraments of faith. On the other hand, authentic practice of the sacraments is bound to have catechetical aspect. In other words, sacramental life is improved and very soon turns into hollow ritualism if it is not based on serious knowledge of the meaning of the sacraments, and catechesis becomes intellectualized if it fails to come alive in sacramental practice." John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (16/10/1979), no. 23, in AAS 88 (1979): 1277-1340; cf. Francis, Apostolic Letter *Desiderio Desideravi* (29/06/2022), no. 36, in *AAS* 114, no. 7 (*2022*): 857-888.

[929] Timothy P. O'Malley, "Liturgical Catechesis: Liturgy and New Evangelization," in *Evangelization and Catechesis* (September, 2020). Retrieved from https://www.usccb.org., (accessed 26/03/2026).

[930] Cf. Congregation for Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (August 15, 1997), (Vatican City, 1997), no. 71. Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2009), 350; Cf. *SC*, 11; James C. Pauley (2017), 71-72.

[931] Cf. *SC*, 11; *NDC*, no. 74.

[932] Cf. John Bosco Asiimwe (2019), 352.

hypothesis advocated that clergy, religious men and women, and the laity should be the recipients of liturgical catechesis.

i) Recipients of Deeper Liturgical Catechesis

Every baptized person is a recipient of deeper liturgical catechesis. Such a deeper liturgical catechesis is on-going catechesis and mystagogical, that is, a deepening of the experience of the mysteries celebrated. It can also be perfective or "sapiental catechesis,"[933] that is, to deepen the knowledge on those called to minister to the people of God in specific areas. It involves not only deepening their knowledge, but also their faith, wisdom, and courage. In this area, the clergy and the religious are to be recipients of the catechesis.

The bishops and the presbyters are the ministers of Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.[934] However, deeper liturgical catechesis is also to be extended to the deacons.[935] It is recommended for them to deepen their understanding of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, so that they can celebrate it in a conscious and fruitful. This can be done through on-going formation seminars. They, who are catechists need to be catechized, so that they can serve as effective agents of liturgical catechesis.

In Arua Diocese, several religious men and women engage in pastoral care of the Sick in health facilities. Like the Clergy, they have received basic information about the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in their houses of formation. However, it is also recommended that they deepen their knowledge and faith in the Sacrament.

Liturgical catechesis for the laity should be considered of paramount importance. Such catechesis should include more and deeper information about the oil used in the care of the

[933] Jacques Audinet (1975), 177
[934] Cf. CCC, no. 1516; *CIC*, can 1003.
[935] Deacons participate in the ministry of charity. This ministry of charity extends also to the sick. The deacons are also called upon to preach to the sick. Through their presence and preaching, they show Christ's love and compassion to the sick people in the community. Cf. *CCC*, no. 1571; *NDC*, no. 115.

sick. Among the laity who need catechesis are the medical persons, especially those who work in the church-founded health institutions of the Diocese. Their ministry entails not only looking after the physical but also the spiritual and emotional needs of the sick. They need to be helped to appreciate the importance of their service and carry it with faith, joy and commitment. This can be done through celebration of the Eucharist with them. It can also be down through retreats and recollections that are organized for them. Through the word of God and catechetical lessons on the Anointing of the Sick, they are nourished.

An adequate catechetical and liturgical formation of future priests is also required. This should be in the area of full, conscious and active celebration and participation. They should grow in the passion for the proclamation of the Gospel; ability in catechizing the faithful; capacity to dialogue with culture; spirit of discernment; wiliness to from lay catechists and to work with them; creativity in designing course of education in the faith."[936] Areas to be paid attention to are: love for the sick, lavish and generous use of the oil of the sick, care and custody for the oil.

ii) Areas for Deeper Liturgical Catechesis

The Policy Book of Arua Diocese mentions some of the areas where the catechesis sound focus: meaning of the sacrament, its names and effects.[937] This content needs to be broadened. Areas to be included for broadening can be sickness and healing. This requires reading of the Catechism of the Catholic Church and explain about sickness and healing in Christian perspective.[938] It also reading and explanation of important documents of the church about sickness and suffering. An example of such documents is the Apostolic Letter *Salvifici Doloris* of Pope John Paul II.[939]

[936] *NDC* no. 151.
[937] *Policy Book,* nos. 106.1- 106.6.
[938] Cf. *CCC*, no. 1501-1503; Mk 5:34.36; 9:23.
[939] Cf. Rindaldo Ronzani (2007), 119.

In the catechesis, the positive conception of the Oil of the Sick should be strengthened. Positively, the Oil of the Sick is understood to be a symbol of healing of the soul, a source of comfort and healing presence of Christ. It is also understood as a sign of blessing and consecration of the sick person, and restoration to health. This can be broadened by presenting a theology of the oil emanating from biblical, Conciliar and Papal teachings. Catechesis should emphasize and urge the priests for a generous use of the oil in the anointing of the sick. Catechesis should also emphasize dignified custody of the oil.

iii) Moments for Liturgical Catechesis

The celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is primary moment for the liturgical catechesis. The catechesis begins at the preparation for the celebration. The preparation includes inquiries about the sick person's conditions, acquittance with the caretakers or relatives, and selection of appropriate readings and the prayers.[940] In the celebration, catechesis can also be done through the commentaries. The priest, while exercising his role as the presider, can give commentaries about the nature of celebration and the meaning of the oil of the Sick. The catechizing commentaries can be given after the after the *asperges*, before the Litany of Intercession, before blessing of the oil of the thanksgiving over blessed oil, before the anointing, and before the final blessing. The homily provides another important moment for liturgical catechesis about the oil. The catechesis becomes effective when they are clearly and eloquently explained.[941]

In the life of the Christian communities in Arua Diocese, certain moments stand out as provident for deeper liturgical catechesis. These moments should be fruitfully used to impart liturgical catechesis about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, and the Oil of the Sick.

[940] Cf. *OUI*, no. 112.
[941] Cf. Charles Gusmer (1984), 184.

These moments are: Small Christian Community Prayers and days dedicated to pray for the Sick.

a) Small Christian Community Prayers

The prayer meetings of the Small Christian Communities in Arua Diocese take place at the convivence of the members. The prayers often involve recitation of the Rosary, sharing of the word of God, and Holy Mass. Some of these moments can also be those for celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing of the sick. They can also be used for educating the people about the Oil of the Sick. They can also be used for sensitizing them about the oils from various sources that are used by Pentecostals, some members of members of Catholic Charismatic renewal, and traditional healers. During the prayer meetings the, the care for the sick can be emphasized.

b) Days Dedicated for the Sick

The days dedicated to pray for the sick are special occasions for catechesis. Among these days are the World Day of Prayer for the Sick and the "Fr. Benardo Sartori Day." The World Day of Prayer for the Sick was instituted by St. John Paul II on 13 May, 1993. It is celebrated on February 11, the liturgical memorial of Our Lady of Lourdes.[942] The day is to be celebrated by instructing the people of God about the care for the sick and the value of sickness. The catechesis should lead them to love, appreciate and long for the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. For a fruitful celebration of the Day, it is recommended that the priests,

[942] In a letter, addressed to Cardinal Fiorenza Angelini, for instituting the World Day of Prayer for the Sick, Pope John Paul II emphasized the catechetical purpose of the day. This involves sensitizing the Christians, health care workers and civil servants about provision of best possible wholistic care for the sick. It also involves: "helping the sick to appreciate suffering, both humanly and above all supernaturally; involving diocese, Christian communities, religious families in the pastoral care of health care; encouraging the increasing of valuable commitment of volunteers; of highlighting the importance of the spiritual and moral formation of health cares, and finally of fostering a greater understanding of the importance of religious care of the sick by diocesan and regular priests, as well as by all who live and work alongside those who suffer." John Paul II, *Letter to Cardinal Fiorenza Angelini for Institution of the World Day of the Sick* (May 13, 1992). Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/JohnPaul-ii/it/letter/1992/documents-hf-ii-let-13051992-world-day-of-sick-html, (accessed 07/05/2026).

men and women religious and other pastoral agents in Arua Diocese should make deliberated effort to give instruct the faithful about the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. However, there should be caution against indiscriminate anointing anybody. It is not a day to call everybody to come for anointing.

Another suitable day for liturgical catechesis in Arua Diocese is the "Fr. Benardo Sartori Day." The day is celebrated on Easter Monday. The celebration of the day on Easter Sunday is due to the fact that the Servant of God, Fr. Bernardo Sartori, died on Easter Monday, April 3, 1983, in the chapel of St. Joseph's Ombaci College. He is buried at the cemetery of Holy Cross Ombaci Parish. Due to the intensity of the Easter Triduum and Easter Octave, the "Fr. Benardo Sartori Day" can be celebrated on a chosen day after the Easter Monday. At present, the day is celebrated with Eucharistic Adoration in all parishes and churches were Fr. Sartori worked. These parishes include: Lodonga, Arivu, Otumbari and Koboko. Apart from Holy Mass, Eucharistic adoration, Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation are celebrated. Special prayers are also offered for the sick, who are also encouraged to go and pray for healing at the tomb of Fr. Benardo Sartori. To promote, catechesis on the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the celebration of the day can be extended to the entire Diocese. The celebration of the Sacrament should also be part of the celebration. In the celebration, catechesis should pay particular attention to the Oil of the Sick.

6.4.2.2 Updating and Harmonizing the Local Catechism

For overall catechesis about the Anointing of the Sick, it is recommended that the local catechism use in Arua Diocese be updated and harmonized with current Church teaching about the Sacrament. The local catechism serves as an effective instrument for communicating the Good News of Christ in the place and the culture of the recipient.[943] It is recommended that the

[943] *NDC*, no. 401.

local catechism used for instructing candidates for first Holy Communion, Confirmation and ongoing Christian formation be updated.

6.4.3 Juridical Recommendations

Juridical recommendations include authoritative and canonical intervention by the local Church authority in Arua Diocese. This is within the competence of the bishop of the diocese, as stipulated by Canon 838, which states that: "Within the limits of his competence, it belongs to the diocesan bishop to lay down in the Church entrusted to his care, liturgical guidelines which are binding to all."[944] In this perspective, two recommendations are given. The first one is statement on the colour of vestment, and second one is a directive banning the use of second-hand plastic bottles for keeping holy oils.

6.4.3.1 Directive on the Colour of the Vestment

It is recommended that the vestment colour for the celebration of Sacrament could be white in the territory of Arua Diocese. The colour is already prescribed for the celebration of Anointing of the Sick within Mass. The white is a symbol of healing, resurrection and presence of the Lord. Concerning the vestments, it is specified that the priest should vest in an alb or a cassock and a white stole. The stole is the most necessary vestment for the ordained. It is a mark of authority at liturgical functions.

6.4.3.2 Banning the Use of Plastic Bottles for Holy Oils

An authoritative statement from the diocesan authority of Arua Diocese should pro**hit** the use of second-hand bottles known as "*koroko*." Priest and catechesis should be encouraged to use decent and presentable container made inform of *lu'bu* for the custody of oils.

[944] *CIC*, can. 838 § 4.

6.4.4 Anthropological Recommendations

The third hypothesis spelt the need for detailed study of the oils in used in Lugbara traditional healing rituals. After the study, one or two of the oils could be incorporated for celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. This could lead to increase of the reception of the Sacrament from its proper ministers. However, the study has found out that the reason for the use of another plant oil is motivated by the difficulty in obtaining olive oil.[945] Such a difficulty too exists in Arua Diocese. Four plant oils have been identified in Lugbara Traditional healing rituals. These are: "*kömara odu*" (shea oil), "*logba odu*" (*balanites* oil), "*olu odu*" (castor oil) and "*anyu odu*" (sesame or simsim oil). Of these oils, "*logba odu*" (balanites oil) is proposed as a viable option for anointing the sick in Arua Diocese. This is based on the fact that the oil is symbolic and its organoleptic characteristics are similar to olive oil.

In the Sacred Scripture, the *balanite* oil is associated with "Jericho Balsam" or "Balm of Gilead" (Jer 8:22).[946] Balsam and balm are versatile substances that are secreted from the *balanites aegyptiaca* tree. The resin and the oil produced from the fruit of the tree are reputed for their medicinal properties (cf. Jer 46:11, 51:8).[947] The oil was noted to be effective in the treatment of wounds.

The symbolic force of the *balanite*s oil extends to a wider part of the world. In this book "The Spirit of the Liturgy," Joseph Ratzinger, has raised objection against using elements that

[945] Cf. *Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum* (November 30, 1972).

[946] Cf. Harold N. Moldenke, "The Economic Plants of the Bible," in *Economic Botany,* Vol. 8, No. 2 (1954):161. Retrived from https://www.jstor.org/stable/4287805, (accessed 12/05/2026); Komaketch Richard and Omujal Francis, "Herbs and Plants, Balanites Aegyptiaca: A Multi-purpose Tree" (December 4. 2025). Retrieved from https://www.combonimissionaries.co.uk/index.php/2025/12/04/herbs-plants-aegyptiaca-a-multipurpose-tree, (accessed 12/05/2026).

[947] Cf. R. K. Harrison, "Gilead, Balm of," in George Arthur Bultrick (ed), The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia E-J (Tenessee, Abingdon Press, 1962): 398; R. K. Harrison, "Balm," in George Arthur Bultrick (ed), The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia A-D (Tennessee, Abingdon Press, 1962): 344; Efraim Lev and Zohar Amar, "The Turning point of an Archaic Arab medical systemn to an early Modern European System in Jerusalem according to the Swiss Physician Titus Tobler (1806-77)," *in CMBH/Bcmh*, Vol. 21, 1 (2004): 166-168.

are not connected with the Mediterranean world, that is, "olive oil, wheaten bread and wine."[948] He argued that: "in the interplay of culture and history, history has priority. God has acted in history and, through history, given the gifts of the earth their significance. The elements become sacraments through connection with the unique history of God in relation to man in Jesus Christ."[949] According to this argument, only olive oil would suffice for use in sacraments. However, this study has established that *balanites* oil also has connection with the Mediterranean world (especially in Egypt). It is also used in other parts of the world for religious purposes. Where it is difficult to get olive oil, as is the case in Arua Diocese, *balanites* oil (*löbga odu*) it stands as a viable plant oil for us in the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick.

Conclusion

In this chapter, recommendations and suggestions have been given for inculturating the Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The chapter begins by outlining the similarities and differences in the custody of oil in OUI and the Lugbara traditional healing rituals. In both oil is to be kept in decent and clean containers that are large enough to contained sufficient number of oils. The oils are kept in secure places. To inculturate the custody of the oil, the traditionally made container known as "*lu'bu*" is proposed for the custody of oil. Construction of ambries is also recommended in the church buildings of Arua Diocese for the custody of the holy oils. The ambries can be designed in the shape of "*otakua*" (pot).

Recommendations for inculturation the Rite are categorized as liturgical, pastoral, juridical and anthropological. Four liturgical recommendations are given to inculturate the Rite. These are: introduction of *mensula olei* (a small table for placing the Oil of the Sick), "green *aspergillum*", inclusion of other biblical readings, translation of Prayer for Blessing of Oil and

[948] Joseph Ratzinger (2000), 238.
[949] Joseph Ratzinger (2000), 238.

increasing the number of anointing to from two to four. Two pastoral recommendations are given. These are: deeper liturgical catechesis and the updating of the local catechism. Two juridical recommendations are also given: these are a directive on the vestment for the celebration of the Anointing of the Sick and a directive to ban the use of plastic bottles (*korokoro*) for keeping holy oils. One of the oils identified during the study is also suggested for use during the celebration of the Sacrament. This is the "*lögba odu*" (*balanites* oil). The next section of the study is the General Conclusion.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The Dissertation is entitled: **Oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals: Inculturation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, Uganda.** The purpose of the study has been to study the oils used in the Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals so as to inculturate the Rite of the Anointing of the Sick. The study is divided into six chapters.

In Chapter One, the background of Arua Diocese has been presented. The Diocese located in the northwestern part of Uganda. The Diocese was established on 23 June, 1958. Demographically the Diocese has a population of approximately 3,316,255 people of whom 2,620,277 are estimated to be Catholics. The Diocese is multiethnic, with over nine ethics groups. Of these the Lugbara are dominant in population. The background of the Lugbara has also been described in the chapter. The traditional healing rituals of the Lugbara have been selected for study on account of the researcher being well versed with their customs and traditions.

In Chapter Two, the challenges related to the use of Oil of the Sick in the care of the sick in Arua Diocese have been discussed. The challenges have been categorized into four: Poor perception of the Oil of the Sick, custody in undignified contained and undesignated places, competition from oils used in other religious groups, and deficient catechesis. These challenges have led to low reception of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. These challenges necessitated, among others, a deeper study of the oils used in the Lugbara traditions rituals.

Chapter Three contains a description of the oils used in Lugbara traditional healing rituals. The oils are of three primary categories. These are: plant oils, animal oils, and minerals oils. Plant oils include: shear oil (*kömara odu*), *balanites* oil (*lögba odu*), castor oil (*olu odu*) and sesame oi (*anyu odu*). Of these, *balanites oil* (*lögba odu*) is more used in the healing rituals. The animal oils include: butter oil (*boota or tiodu/tioso*) and python oil (*ara odu*). Among the

mineral oils are: motor oil (*wailo*) and paraffin (*tara odu*). The oils are stored in special containers. These containers are: gourd (*lu'bu*) and pot (*otakua).* These containers are made from the local materials: guard fruit and clay. These materials are fragile.

In Chapter Four, oil in the care of the sick in the Bible and Church Tradition has been discussed. The oil used in the care of the sick was extracted from olive. Of the three grades of olive oil (*yishar, shemen and rogah*), *shemen* was mostly used on account of its abundance. It was especially used in the ritual was in the cleanings of a leper (cf. Lev 14:1-18). The use of oil for anointing the sick in the early church is recorded in Mark 6:13 and James 5:14-15. The various liturgical, conciliary and papal documents reveal that the use of oil in the care of the sick developed in a Rite of Anointing of the Sick.

In Chapter Five, the researcher discussed oil in the current Rite of Anointing of the Sick. The promulgation documents (*Decretum* and the Apostolic Constitution) has been analyzed. The general structure and the particular structure have been described. This is followed by the analysis of the Prayer for Blessing the Oil. In this discussion, it has been found that the Oil of the Sick is a natural element, fruit of the earth, an unguent, soothing ointment, precious oil and holy oil. Through the act of blessing, the natural oil is transformed as a holy remedy of body, mind and soul. It becomes an instrument used for the dispelling of pains, illness and weakens that afflict the sick. In the Rite, it is also clarified that the oil duly blessed, is the matter for the celebration of the Sacrament. The oil can be either olive oil or other oil derived from plants. In the same chapter, the researcher has also discussed the preparation and the custody of the oil. The procurement is the concern of the local churches. The blessing is done ordinarily by the bishop and those who are equivalent of a diocesan bishop. The oil can also be blessed by the priest celebrating the Sacrament, if the oil has not been blessed.

In Chapter Six, the researcher has given recommendations and suggestions for inculturating Rite of the Anointing of the Sick. The first section of recommendations for

inculturating the custody of the Oil of the Sick. To inculturate the custody of the oil, the traditionally made container known as "*lu'bu*" is proposed for the custody of oil. Construction of ambries is also recommended in the church buildings of Arua Diocese for the custody of the holy oils. The ambries can be designed in the shape of "*otakua*" (pot). Recommendations for inculturating the Rite are categorized as liturgical, pastoral, juridical and anthropological. Liturgical recommendations include: introduction of *mensula olei* (a small table for placing the Oil of the Sick), "green *aspergillum*", inclusion of other biblical readings, translation of Prayer for Blessing of Oil and increasing the number of anointing to from two to four. Pastoral recommendations include deeper liturgical catechesis and the updating of the local catechism. These recommendations can be backed by a directive of juridical nature from the Bishop of the Diocese. The directive should specify that, in Arua Diocese, white is the liturgical coulour to be used for celebration of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. The directive should also ban the use of plastic bottles (*korokoro*) for keeping holy oils. One of the oils identified during the study is also suggested for use during the celebration of the Sacrament. This is the "*lögba odu*" (*balanites* oil).

Of these recommendations, liturgical catechesis is paramount. Once the liturgical catechesis is implemented, the reception of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick will increase in Arua Diocese. Integral health care must never be lacking in Church. Integral health care includes efforts to care for bodily, spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing of persons. Achieving integral health care should be the combined work of health care workers and pastoral agents. The health care workers are called upon to respect the human and the Christian dignity of the sick persons.

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LIST OF INFORMANTS

Interviews and Questionnaires

s/n	Name	Place	Date Interviewed/ Questionnaire Date
1.	Abiria Fred	Ullepi	27/07/2025
2.	Abiria Mary	Lazebu	30/07/2025
3.	Acidri Aquilino (Fr.)	Maracha	30/06/2025
4.	Aciro Josephine (Sr.)	Ediofe	08/08/2025
5.	Adakuru Betty	Lazebu	30/07/2025
6.	Adraki Madelena	Odravu	15/08/2025
7.	Adrapiru Doreen	Pokea	20/06/2025
8.	Adroa B. Samuel	Ocodri	06/08/2025
9.	Adroa Kazimiro	Ombaci	15/06/2025
10.	Adroko Jilda	Christ the King Arua	07/08/2025
11.	Adroko Sharon	Ullepi	27/07/2025
12.	Agazu Mariana	Logiri	03/08/2025
13.	Ajionzi Nazareno (Fr.)	Pokea	28/07/2025
14.	Ajuga Stephen	Yumbe	04/02/2025

15.	Akullu Agnes (Sr.)	Ediofe	29/09/2025
16.	Alejo Stella	Ediofe	23/03/2025
17.	Alimaru Betty	Lazebu	30/07/2025
18.	Aluma John	Omugo	12/06/2025
19.	Aluma Wadri Robert (Fr.)	Mingoro	27/06/2025
20.	Amadrodru Florence	Omugo	12/06/2025
21.	Amajoru Grace	Lodonga	23/03/2025
22.	Amaku Felix (Br.)	Ombaci	08/08/2025
23.	Amandu Brian Ronald	Yumbe	24/03/2025
24.	Amule Florence (Sr.)	Ediofe	08/08/2025
25.	Andiyo Gift	Pokea	05/08/2028
26.	Andresile Junior Kizito	Ombaci	08/08/2025
27.	Andrua Alex Free (Fr.)	Ediofe	04/06/2025
28.	Angua'bayo Festus	Bethany Centre	02/01/2026
29.	Anguparu Erita	Ullepi	27/07/2025
30.	Anguparu Ezama Theresa	Lodonga	30/03/2025
31.	Anyadule David	Ediofe	02/03/2025
32.	Apangu Jimmy (Fr.)	Yumbe	05/09/2025
33.	Apangu Moses (Fr.)	Lodogna	20/08/2025
34.	Aria Victor Luciano	Ediofe	01/08/2025
35.	Asega Emmanuel (Fr.)	Ombaci	15/06/2025
36.	Asikuru John Bridget	Christ the King Arua	06/08/2025
37.	Asiteru Patience	Rhino Camp	03/04/2025

38.	Avaga B. Constantine (Fr.)	Yumbe	11/09/2025
39.	Avako Sabela	Ullepi	27/07/2025
40.	Awua Kandi Francis	Logiri	25/12/2025
41.	Ayakaka Mary (Sr.)	Adumi	25/05/2025
42.	Ayikoru Jane Peter	Lodonga	02/08/2025
43.	Ayikoru Lydia (Sr.)	Ullepi	27/07/2025
44.	Baku Carolina	Pokea	05/08/2025
45.	Bacia Jane	Ullepi	27/07/2025
46.	Bada Albert	Pokea	05/08/2025
47.	Bada Elario	Ombaci	15/06/2025
48.	Bakhita Florence (Sr.)	Vurra	01/06/2025
49.	Caca Charles	Christ the King Arua	06/08/2025
50.	Candia Drandua Fred (Fr.)	Ediofe	23/12/2024
51.	Candia Paulina	Omugo	12/06/2025
52.	Candini Camillas (Fr.)	Arua House	25/05/2025
53.	Candiru Loyce	Ullepi	27/07/2025
54.	Cazu Rofina	Ocoko	02/08/2025
55.	Charles Lwanga (Fr.)	Logiri	05/08/2025
56.	Dada Romano (Fr.)	Ombaci	16/06/2025
57.	Depia Filista	Ullepi	27/07/2025
58.	Diku Sabino (Fr.)	Ocoko	02/08/2025
59.	Dralema Gideon	Lodonga	30/08/2025

60.	Draleru Clemetina	Addu	06/08/2025
61.	Draniga Moses	Yumbe	07/07/2025
62.	Drapiru Mary	Ocodri	06/08/2025
63.	Drasiku Abinadab	Ocoko	02/08/2025
64.	Driciru Alice	Ullepi	27/07/2025
65.	Driciru Paula	Ocoko	02/08/2025
66.	Drijaru Annet	Christ the King Arua	07/08/2025
67.	Drijaru Mary	Oluko	16/06/2025
68.	Drijaru Sarah	Ullepi	27/07/2025
69.	Drile Akile Innocent (Fr.)	Ediofe	27/12/2024
70.	Edema Henry	Odravu	07/07/2025
71.	Ejua Jino	Logiri	03/08/2025
72.	Eleku Grace	Ediofe	28/07/2025
73.	Emieribeya Winnie	Ediofe	27/12/2024
74.	Emvikia Evelyn	Ocoko	02/08/2025
75.	Endrecia Veronica	Lazebu	30/07/2025
76.	Eteko Lina	Ocoko	02/08/2025
77.	Etumide Hillary	Ombaci	07/08/2025
78.	Eyaru Mary	Logiri	03/08/2025
79.	Eyotaru Erita	Ullepi	27/07/2025
80.	Ewaru Regina	Ocodri	27/07/2025
81.	Feku Philomena	Omi	01/08/2025
82.	Felix Epima (Fr.)	Ediofe	30/05/2025
83.	Geria John	Ombaci	15/06/2025

84.	Orodriyo Gilbert (Fr.)	Lima	01/08/2025
85.	Gutru Eta	Oluko	16/06/2025
86.	Gutru Omveku	Omi	01/08/025
87.	Isaaac Feni (Fr.)	Adumi	25/05/2025
88.	Jame Eria Fortunate (Fr.)	Bethany Centre	27/07/2025
89.	Kasto Adia	Omi	01/08/2025
90.	Kulume Mary (Sr.)	Ediofe	04/05/2025
91.	Luciano Victor Aria	Ediofe	01/08/2025
92.	Mukili James	Yumbe	31/07/2025
93.	Mundua Samuel	Kuluva Hospital	02/08/2025
94.	Nakuru Tesia	Yumbe	02/06/2025
95.	Nana William Tolbert	Ombaci	16/06/2025
96.	Ndaru Hellen	Ocoko	02/08/2025
97.	Ndebu Luka	Ombaci	16/06/2025
98.	O'daru Josephine	Ocoko	02/08/2025
99.	Obatre Kassiano	Logiri	26/12/2025
100.	Obira Gilbert (Fr.)	Etele	29/07/2025
101.	Ondogo Samson (Dn.)	Lira Diocese	04/05/2025
102.	Okudinia Janet	Lazebu	30/07/2025
103.	Olea Jovan	Omi	01/08/2025
104.	Olea Santino	Urugbo	10/08/2025
105.	Oleru Gasper Terezina	Ocodri	06/08/2025
106.	Omuyo Faustino	Ediofe	18//12/2025
107.	Ondoru Zila	Ocoko	02/08/2025

108.	Onziga Collins John	Odravu	15/05/2025
109.	Onziga Philip	Omugo	12/06/2025
110.	Onzima Celestino (Fr.)	Ezoo	30/07/2025
111.	Orodriyo Brian	Ocoko	02/08/2025
112.	Otubo Christopher	Ombaci	06/08/2025
113.	Pariyo Sunday	Omugo	12/06/2025
114.	Pius Yobuta (Fr.)	Christ the King Arua	08/08/2025
115.	Santina Drabezu	Lazebu	30/07/2025
116.	Simon Obatu Tovi (Fr.)	Ocodri	06/08/2025
117.	Simon Obini	Ocoko	02/08/205
118.	Tiperu Esther	Odravu	05/05/2025
119.	Tiyo George	Oluko	16/06/2025
120.	Tiyo Lawrence	Logiri	24/12/2025
121.	Trizi Jeremiah	Logiri	26/12/2025
122.	Valentino Matua (Fr.)	Logiri	05/08/2025
123.	Waliko Priscila	Logiri	29/07/2025
124.	Wasema Viola	Christ the King Arua	09/08/2025
125.	Yuma Moses (Dn)	Ocodri	06/08/2025
126.	Boo A. Michael	Ocodri	06/08/2025
127.	Debo Peter (Fr.)	Ombaci	10/06/2025
128.	James Edema (Fr.)	Christus Centre	28/07/2025
129.	Riyo Isaac (Fr.)	Ocoko	02/08/2025
130.	Anderu Catherine	Christus Centre	28/07/2025
131.	Adrapi David	Logiri	25/12/2025

132.	Majede Godwin	Kampala Market	30/01/2026
133.	Omvitibo George	Lazebu	30/07/2025
134.	Bako Leza	Kampala Market	30/01/2026
135.	Azabo Ferdinand	Logiri	05/08/2025
136.	Amaga Atrilio	Logiri	05/08/2025
137.	Adriko Felix	Christ the King Arua	06/08/2025
138.	Alter Servers	Ediofe	03/01/2025
139.	Catholic Action	Ediofe Chapel	03/01/2025
140.	Catholic Action	Mingoro Chapel	27/12/2025
141.	Lay Apostolate Leaders	Ocoko Parish	02/08/2025

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Questionnaire/ Interview Format

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RELIGIOUS AND LAITY

Dear Rev. Sr./Rev. Br./ Sir/Madam,

I am **Fr. Norbert Azale,** a student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi. I am carrying out research on the topic is: **Oil in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals: Inculturation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, Uganda**. I humbly request you to respond to the following questions. The information your give shall be used only for academic purpose and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Name:……Date:…….

Parish:……Deanery:……

Vicariate:……

Section A. Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

Write your response in the space provided.

1. What is the oil of the sick?
2. In what kind of containers are oils kept and brought for the celebration of the sacrament?
3. Can you accept to be anointed when you are sick? If yes, why? If no, why?

4. Do people like to be anointed with the oil of the sick? If yes, why? If no, why?
5. What causes a delay in asking calling a priest to anoint a sick person?

Section B: Anointing by Lay People

Tick in the appropriate box and write your response in the space provided

1. Do you buy oils to anoint yourself?

   Yes [ ] Why? No [ ] Why?
2. What are they names of some of the anointing oils you know or have ever seen?
3. Can you keep the oil of the sick with yourself?

   Yes [ ] Why? No [ ] Why?
4. Have you ever anointed yourself when you were sick? Yes [ ] No [ ].
5. If yes (Qn. 4), what is the name of the oil with which you anointed yourself?
6. Where did you get the oil?
7. Which parts of your body did you anoint?
8. What words did you say when you were anointing yourself?

Section C: Traditional Healing Rituals

Write your response in the space provided.

1. Are there traditional healers in your area?
2. How do they treat people?
3. What causes people to go to the traditional healers in your area or far from your area?
4. What kinds of oils do the traditional healers use for anointing those who go to them?
5. Where do they get the oils from?
6. What challenges does going to the traditional healers present to your faith?

7. What elements in the traditional healing rituals are good and could be incorporated in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

Thank you so much for taking your time to fill this questionnaire. May God bless you!

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIESTS

Dear Rev. Fr.,

I am **Fr. Norbert Azale**, a student at the Catholic University of Eastern African, Nairobi. I am carrying out research in fulfillment of the requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Theology with Specialization in Sacred Liturgy. The research topic is: **Oil in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals: Inculturation of the Rite of Anointing of the Sick in Arua Diocese, Uganda**. I humbly request you to respond to the following questions. The information your give shall be used only for academic purpose and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Name:……Date:……..

Parish:……Deanery:……

Vicariate:……

Section A. Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

Write your response in the space provided.

1. Where is the oil of the sick kept in your Parish?
2. In what kind of containers is the oil kept and carried for anointing the Sick?
3. Where do you get the containers?
4. What does the oil for anointing the sick symbolize?

5. When the oil gets finished, what do you do?
6. What is your assessment of the reception of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick in your parish or institution?
7. What according to you causes a delay in asking calling a priest to anoint the sick person?
8. Does Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick adequately correspond to the needs of the people in your place of apostolate? If yes, why? If no, why?
9. What areas of the rite of Anointing of the Sick need to be improved?

Section B. Anointing by Lay People

Tick in the appropriate box and write your response in the space provided

1. Do you accept oils presented by lay people for anointing?

   Yes [ ] Why? No [ ] Why?
2. Can you give the oil of the Sick to a lay person to keep in their homes for to anoint themselves?

   Yes [ ] Why? No [ ] Why?
3. Can you yourself accept to be anointed by a lay person when you are sick?

   Yes [ ] Why? No [ ] Why?

Section C: Traditional Healing Rituals

Write your response in the space provided.

8. What causes Catholic Christians to go to the traditional healers in your area or far from your area?
9. What kinds of oils do they use for anointing those who go to them?
10. Where do they get the oils from?

11. What challenges does going to the traditional healers present to the reception of the Sacrament of the anointing of the Sick?
12. What elements in the traditional healing rituals are good and could be incorporated in the celebration of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

Thank you so much for taking your time to fill this questionnaire. May God bless you!

APPENDIX II: Trees from which Oils are extracted

Lögba tree in Lugbara homestead



Seeds of Lugba tree from which oils are extracted



Kumara Tree in Parish Compound





APPENDIX III: Containers for Custody of Oils in Lugbara Traditional Healing Rituals