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**THE SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK  
AS A GIFT AND A TASK  
A THEOLOGICAL-MORAL STUDY**

ABSTRACT

Old age, disease, suffering and death belong to the essential dimensions of human existence. Suffering is peculiar only to a human person and affects its deepest layers. Moreover, it reaches out to the mystery of the human spirit and even surpasses it, turning towards God.

The aim of this dissertation is to present the post-Conciliar approach to the sacrament of Anointing the Sick in the perspective of God's gift and human response to this gift. An attempt was made to show in a synthetic way how to present this sacrament as a gift of a loving God who wants to be in the context of a modern approach to illness, old age and suffering. with a man in such a difficult condition for him. Obviously, this gift is obligatory, so pastoral guidelines regarding the contemporary practice of giving it are necessary.

The topic of the dissertation is presented in four chapters. The first one shows how a person experiences old age, disease, suffering and death. The influence of contemporary socio-cultural conditions on their experience is presented. In his bodily and spiritual unity, man experiences them in a biological, psychological, social and spiritual dimension. The chapter concludes with the presentation of the Christian sense of illness and suffering as an invitation to a supernatural experience of these realities.

The second chapter presents the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, which appears as a gift of Christ to suffering man. Its biblical foundations and theological meaning are shown. Its historical, legal and liturgical practice was traced, as well as its perception in terms of other Christian churches.

In Chapter 3, the Anointing of the Sick is present as a binding challenge. It concerns the minister of the sacrament, the recipient of it, the family and environment, and the Church community represented primarily by the parish community.

The last, fourth chapter of the dissertation contains pastoral recommendations concerning the contemporary practice of administering the sacrament of Anointing the Sick. He points to the need to renew the pastoral care of seniors and the sick, and emphasizes the role of other pastoral practices that express concern for suffering people. In addition, the issue of administering the Sacrament of the Sick to people who decide to euthanize was raised.

The source for the dissertation is the post-Conciliar teaching of the Church, including the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, post-conciliar popes and the Catechism of the Catholic Church and documents of Vatican congregations. In addition, theological and moral literature and other areas of theology, as well as auxiliary literature were used in the biological-medical, psychological, sociological, philosophical and historical fields. The materials were developed using a critical analysis of source texts as well as the comparative and positive lecture method. The historical method was used to test the celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick in the past, and the philological method to discuss terminological issues. The method of synthesis played a significant role, thanks to which generalizations were made and conclusions were drawn.

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