

The Consecration of Chrism

(The Consecration of Chrism is to be done by a Bishop. If other Bishops are present, they will join with the Presiding Bishop in this service. Pure virgin olive oil is prepared in a suitable vessel for the blessing.)

(The consecration of the Chrism begins with the recitation of Psalm 133)

PSALM 133

Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when brethren live together in unity!
It is like fine oil upon the head that runs down upon the beard.
Upon the beard of Aaron, and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
It is like the dew of Hermon that falls upon the hills of Zion.
For there the Lord has ordained the blessing; life for evermore.

(The Presiding Bishop alone says this invitation)

Let us pray that God our almighty Father will bless this oil so that all who are anointed with it may be inwardly transformed and come to share in eternal salvation.

(Then the Presiding Bishop will breathe over the opening of the vessel of chrism with a long breath. He may, at his discretion, breathe three times over the mouth of the vessel. With his hands extended he says the following consecratory prayer.)

God our maker, source of all growth in holiness, accept the joyful thanks and praise we offer in the name of Your Church.

In the beginning, at Your command, the earth produced fruit-bearing trees. From the fruit of the olive tree you have provided us with oil for holy chrism. The prophet David sang of the life and joy that the oil would bring us in the sacraments of Your love.

After the avenging flood, the dove returning to Noah with an olive branch announced Your gift of peace. This was a sign of a greater gift to come. Now the waters of baptism wash away the sins of men, and by the anointing with olive oil You make us radiant with Your joy.

At Your command, Aaron was washed with water and Your servant Moses, his brother, anointed him Priest. This, too, foreshadowed greater things to come. After Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, asked John for baptism in the waters of the Jordan, You sent the Spirit upon Him in the form of a dove and by the witness of Your own voice You declared Him to be Your only, well-beloved Son. In this You clearly fulfilled the prophecy of David, that Christ should be anointed with the oil of gladness beyond His fellow men.

(All the bishops present extend their right hand toward the chrism, without saying anything until the end of the prayer.)

And so Father, we ask You to bless † this oil You have created. Fill it with the power of Your Holy Spirit through Christ Your Son. It is from Him that chrism takes its name, and with chrism You have anointed for Yourself priests and kings, prophets and martyrs.

Make this chrism a sign of life and salvation for those who are to be born again in the waters of baptism. Wash away the evil they have inherited from sinful Adam, and when they are anointed with this holy oil make them temples of Your glory, radiant with the goodness of life that has its source in You. Through the sign of chrism grant them royal, priestly, and prophetic honor, and clothe them with incorruption. Let this be indeed the chrism of salvation for those who will be born again of water and the Holy Spirit. May they come to share eternal life in the glory of Your Kingdom. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!