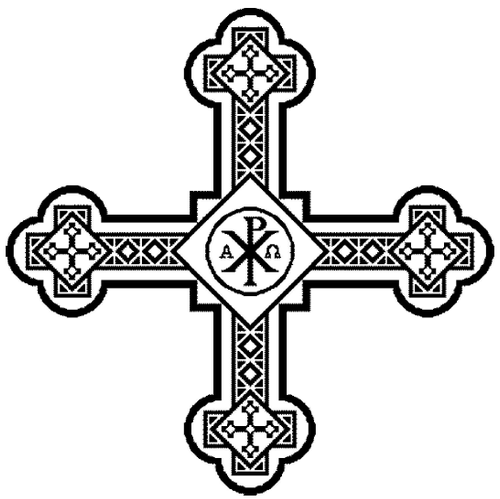
This leaflet was prepared by the Metropolitan Cantor Institute for Holy Week 2026, based on the work of the Inter-Eparchial Liturgical Commission of the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh.



The Rite of Holy Anointing for the Presanctified Liturgy of Great and Holy Wednesday

(Solemn Form)

Unblessed olive oil is placed on the tetrapod. At the end of the Litany of Peace, the usual prayer is not said, but the celebrant goes to the tetrapod where he stands facing East, with the deacon to his right. Any concelebrating priests remain in the sanctuary.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Celebrant: O Lord, through your mercy and compassion, you heal the afflictions of our souls and bodies. You, O Master, sanctify this oil that it may be for those who are anointed with it healing and release from every passion, from defilement of flesh and spirit, and from every evil. That in this, may your most holy Name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be glorified, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

The liturgy continues with the transfer of the Gifts and the chanting of the Antiphonal Psalms.

After the Gospel and the homily, the priest and deacon go to the tetrapod on which have been placed the holy gospel book and a cross. If there are concelebrating priests, they stand around the tetrapod. The following litany is intoned by the priest or deacon in place of the regular Litany of Fervent Supplication:

Deacon: Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say:

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: O Lord almighty, God of our fathers, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy us on, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: We also pray that this oil be blessed by the power, action and descent of the Holy Spirit and that our God will visit his servants and that the grace of the Holy Spirit may come upon them, let us all say:

Response: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: We also pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, God's visitation and forgiveness of sins for these servants of God, let us all say:

Response: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Deacon: That the Lord our God send down upon them the grace of deliverance and free them from all spiritual and physical illnesses and afflictions, let us all say: O Lord, hear and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy. (3)

Celebrant: O Uncreated, Eternal, Holy of Holies, you sent your only-begotten Son to heal every infirmity and every weakness of our souls and bodies. Send down your Holy Spirit and sanctify this oil, making it for your servants about to be anointed a complete deliverance from their sins and an inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. For yours are mercy and salvation, O our God, and we give glory to you, with your only-begotten Son and your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

If there are concelebrating priests, they may say an additional prayer from the Office of Holy Oil for Anointing the Sick. Each prayer is preceded by:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord, have mercy.

With hands outstretched toward the people, the celebrant then says the following prayer:

Celebrant: Holy Father, physician of souls and bodies, you sent your only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to heal every infirmity and to deliver from death. By this anointing, heal your servants of the spiritual and bodily ills which afflict them, and restore life to them by the grace of your Christ, through the prayers of our most holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and of all your saints. For you, our God, are the fountain of healing, and to you we give glory, with your only-begotten Son and your consubstantial Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

Then those who are to be anointed come forward (or the celebrant goes to them if they are unable to do so). The celebrant anoints each person on the forehead, cheeks, and the palms of the hands with the following prayer while the cantor sings the Troparia for the Mystery of Holy Oil.

The servant of God, *(name,)* is anointed for the healing of soul and body, for the forgiveness of sins, and for life everlasting. Amen.

After the anointing, the celebrant opens the Holy Gospel and holds it on high before him, with the pages facing downward (as a sign of imposition). If there are concelebrating priests, they hold the Holy Gospel in the same way, one on each side. The celebrant then says the following prayer:

Celebrant: Holy King, compassionate and most merciful Lord Jesus Christ, Son and Word of the living God, you do not desire the death of a sinner, but that he repent and live. I do not place my sinful hand on the head of those who have come to you in sins, and ask from you, through us, the forgiveness of sins; rather your strong and powerful hand which is in this holy Gospel which I (*or:* which my concelebrants) hold over the heads of your servants. (*With them,*) I pray and implore your merciful love for us which does not remember evil. God our Savior, through your prophet Nathan, you forgave the repentant David his sins, and accepted the prayer of repentance of Manasseh. In your customary love for all of us accept your servants who repent of the sins they have committed, overlooking all they have done. For you are our God, commanding us to forgive even seventy times seven those falling into sins, for as is your greatness, so is your mercy, and to you is due all glory, honor, and worship, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

When all have been anointed, the celebrant, concelebrants, and deacon return to the altar. The liturgy continues as usual with the singing of **Now the Powers of Heaven. . .**