

## Liturgy We Live *by Dr. Gil Haas*

Oil was used to anoint kings, prophets, and priests in the Old Testament, but it was not until the second century that Christians began using sacramental oils. Mark 6:13 mentions the use of oil for healing (aka, unction). Oil of unction is pure olive oil consecrated by a bishop and applied (usually by a priest) to the ill person's forehead in the sign of the cross. Unction to a dying person can be performed by deacons or lay persons in emergencies. Oil of chrism is a mixture of olive oil and balsam consecrated by a bishop and is used after baptism, at confirmation, and at a bishop's consecration. Oil of catechumens is pure olive oil used before baptism (to strengthen candidates before their struggle with the powers of darkness), at the ordination of priests, and the anointing of monarchs, but it is not mentioned by our BCP. The 1549 Anglican Prayer Book allowed for use of unction oil, but it was not mentioned in the 1552 Prayer Book. The use of oil of unction (but not chrism) was allowed in our 1928 BCP. The liturgical use of oil was greatly expanded in our 1979 BCP.

***If you have a liturgical question or an inquiry about anything that transpires during or around our worship service, please forward the question you would like researched to: [gghaas@aol.com](mailto:gghaas@aol.com), or drop the question in the offering basin. Please note whether we can credit you as the source of the question.***