

# Blessing of the Hands

**Welcome.** Take a moment to acknowledge all who are present. You might explain about the oil:

- *Scripture and the early church used oil for anointing. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed as a sign to the community that a person had a special role-mission, called to a purpose.*
- *Psalm 23: (God) “anoints my head with oil, and my cup overflows...”*
- *Oil in Jesus’ time was expensive, used for healing. Jesus even commanded his disciples to anoint and to heal.*
- *Oil was also used to prepare a body for burial. A woman anointed Jesus’ feet with oil in preparation for his death – and in recognition of his calling or mission of salvation for all.*
- *Pour a spot of oil on someone’s hands, and give them one of the blessings below.*
- *Oil? Special oils may be used, or vegetable oil, or even hand lotions with oil. It all works.*

**Prayer.** Blessed are you, Holy One. You hold us in your hands. Be with us in THIS day. Bless our hands, that we might hold others as dearly as you hold them. Send healing to those who are ill, comfort to those who struggle, and relief to all in pain, for the sake of Jesus. Amen.

## **More blessings.**

Blessed be the hands that touch young lives – babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Blessed be the hands that embrace others with compassion.

Blessed be the hands that administer medicine, give aspirins, bandage wounds.

Blessed be the hands that prepare meals.

Blessed be the hands that wash dishes, clean floors, arrange flowers.

Blessed be the hands that anoint the sick and offer blessings.

Blessed be the hands that grow stiff with age.

Blessed be the hands that comfort the dying and have held the dead.

Blessed be the hands that capture a memory in art and poetry and song.

Blessed be the hands that guide the young.

Blessed be the hands that greet strangers.

Blessed be the hands that learn the way of justice.

Blessed be the hands that fill out applications, write papers, carry books, send e-mails.

Blessed be the hands that receive and sort information, and hands that determine budgets.

Blessed be the hands; we hold the future in these hands.

Blessed be our hands, for they are the work of your hands, O Holy One.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Holy Hands**

We began a new way to remember and honor the workers at the hospital where I do a chaplaincy residency: a "Blessing of Hands". We take a vial of oil and a short script to either our chapel or the units and bless the hands of caregivers of all varieties.

We have blessed the hands of those in suits and scrubs, with tears and smiles, in times of tension and calm.

Nurses use their hands in so many ways to bring healing that I think they can forget how holy they are. God works through these hands, and so these hands are holy. God has given us holy hands. May God bless all of our hands as we serve others.

*This worship is offered by Deaconess/Hospital Chaplain Margy Whitsett and the Lutheran Deaconess Association. You may modify this service to fit your situation.*