

# **THE ROMAN RITUAL**

Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council  
and Published by Authority of Pope John Paul II

## **BOOK OF BLESSINGS**

**APPROVED FOR USE IN THE  
DIOCESES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
AND CONFIRMED BY THE APOSTOLIC SEE**

*Prepared by International Commission on English in the Liturgy  
A Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences*



CATHOLIC BOOK PUBLISHING CO.  
New York  
1989

# NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## DECREE

In accord with the norms established by decree of the Sacred Congregation of Rites in *Cum, nostra aetate* (27 January 1966), this edition of the *Book of Blessings* containing the additional proper blessings approved for use in the United States of America is declared to be the vernacular typical edition of *De Benedictionibus* in the dioceses of the United States of America, and is published by authority of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The *Book of Blessings* and the additional proper blessings for use in the United States of America were canonically approved for use *ad interim* by the Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on 22 March 1988 and were subsequently confirmed by the Apostolic See by decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship on 27 January 1989 (Prot. N. 699/88).

On 1 October 1989 the *Book of Blessings* may be published and used in the liturgy. From 3 December 1989, the First Sunday of Advent, the use of the *Book of Blessings* is mandatory in the dioceses of the United States of America. From that day forward no other English version may be used.

Given at the General Secretariat of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC, on 19 March 1989, the solemnity of Saint Joseph, Husband of Mary.

✠ John L. May  
Archbishop of Saint Louis  
President  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

Robert N. Lynch  
General Secretary

XII. Orders for the Blessing of Elderly People Confined to Their Homes .....	149
A. Order of Blessing .....	149
B. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	156
C. Order of Blessing with Communion outside Mass .....	160
D. Shorter Rite .....	161
Chapter 2	
Orders for the Blessing of the Sick .....	163
I. Orders of Blessing .....	164
A. Order for the Blessing of Adults .....	164
B. Order for the Blessing of Children .....	172
C. Shorter Rite .....	175
II. Order for the Blessing of a Person Suffering from Addiction or from Substance Abuse .....	177
A. Order of Blessing .....	177
B. Shorter Rite .....	183
III. Order for the Blessing of a Victim of Crime or Oppression .....	186
A. Order of Blessing .....	186
B. Shorter Rite .....	191
Chapter 3	
Order for the Blessing of Missionaries Sent to Proclaim the Gospel .....	193
I. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	194
II. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	201
Chapter 4	
Orders for Blessings that Pertain to Catechesis and to Communal Prayer .....	207
I. Order for the Blessing of Those Appointed as Catechists .....	207
A. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	208
B. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	213
II. Order of Blessing for a Catechetical or Prayer Meeting .....	217
III. Blessings of Catechumens .....	222
Chapter 5	
Order for the Blessing of Students and Teachers .....	227
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	227
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word .....	230
III. Shorter Rite .....	236
Chapter 6	
Orders for the Blessing of Those Gathered at a Meeting .....	239
I. Prayers for Meetings .....	239
II. Order for the Blessing of Ecumenical Groups .....	242
III. Prayers for Interfaith Gatherings .....	248



Chapter 7	
Order for the Blessing of Organizations Concerned with Public Need ....	251
Chapter 8	
Orders for the Blessing of Pilgrims .....	259
I. Order for the Blessing of Pilgrims on Their Departure .....	260
II. Order for the Blessing of Pilgrims before or after Their Return ....	265
Chapter 9	
Order for the Blessing of Travelers .....	271
I. Order of Blessing .....	271
II. Shorter Rite .....	278
<b>PART II: BLESSINGS RELATED TO BUILDINGS AND TO VARIOUS FORMS OF HUMAN ACTIVITY</b>	
Introduction .....	283
Chapter 10	
Order for the Blessing of a New Building Site .....	285
Chapter 11	
Order for the Blessing of a New Home .....	291
Chapter 12	
Order for the Blessing of a New Seminary .....	297
Chapter 13	
Order for the Blessing of a New Religious House .....	307
Chapter 14	
Order for the Blessing of a New School or University .....	317
I. Order of Blessing .....	318
II. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	324
Chapter 15	
Order for the Blessing of a New Library .....	327
Chapter 16	
Order for the Blessing of a Parish Hall or Catechetical Center .....	335
Chapter 17	
Order for the Blessing of a New Hospital or Other Facility for the Care of the Sick .....	341
Chapter 18	
Order for the Blessing of an Office, Shop, or Factory .....	349
Chapter 19	
Order for the Blessing of Centers of Social Communication .....	357

Chapter 20	
Order for the Blessing of a Gymnasium or a Field for Athletics .....	365
Chapter 21	
Order for the Blessing of the Various Means of Transportation .....	371
I. Order of Blessing .....	372
II. Shorter Rite .....	381
Chapter 22	
Order for the Blessing of Boats and Fishing Gear .....	383
I. Order of Blessing .....	383
II. Shorter Rite .....	388
Chapter 23	
Order for the Blessing of Technical Installations or Equipment .....	391
Chapter 24	
Order for the Blessing of Tools or Other Equipment for Work .....	401
I. Order of Blessing .....	402
II. Shorter Rite .....	407
Chapter 25	
Order for the Blessing of Animals .....	409
I. Order of Blessing .....	409
II. Shorter Rite .....	416
Chapter 26	
Order for the Blessing of Fields and Flocks .....	417
Chapter 27	
Order for the Blessing of Seeds at Planting Time .....	425
I. Order of Blessing .....	425
II. Shorter Rite .....	429
Chapter 28	
Order for a Blessing on the Occasion of Thanksgiving for the Harvest .....	431
Chapter 29	
Order for the Blessing of an Athletic Event .....	437
Chapter 30	
Order for the Blessing before and after Meals .....	439
First Plan .....	439
Second Plan .....	445
Third Plan .....	455
Fourth Plan .....	456



PART III: BLESSINGS OF OBJECTS THAT ARE DESIGNED OR  
ERECTED FOR USE IN CHURCHES, EITHER IN THE  
LITURGY OR IN POPULAR DEVOTIONS

Introduction .....	461
Chapter 31	
Order for the Blessing of a Baptistry or of a New Baptismal Font .....	463
I. Order of Blessing of a New Baptismal Font Joined with the Celebration of Baptism .....	466
II. Order of Blessing of a New Baptismal Font without the Celebration of Baptism .....	473
Chapter 32	
Order for the Blessing of a Repository for the Holy Oils .....	483
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	484
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	486
III. Shorter Rite .....	490
Chapter 33	
Orders for a Blessing on the Occasion of the Installation of a New Episcopal or Presidential Chair, a New Lectern, a New Tabernacle, or a New Confessional .....	493
I. Order for a Blessing on the Occasion of the Installation of a New Episcopal or Presidential Chair .....	494
A. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	494
B. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God ...	496
II. Order for the Blessing of a New Lectern .....	500
A. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	500
B. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God ...	501
III. Order for the Blessing of a New Tabernacle .....	506
IV. Order for the Blessing of a New Confessional .....	510
Chapter 34	
Order for the Blessing of New Church Doors .....	515
Chapter 35	
Order for the Blessing of a New Cross for Public Veneration .....	523
Chapter 36	
Order for the Blessing of Images for Public Veneration by the Faithful ..	533
I. Order for the Blessing of an Image of Our Lord Jesus Christ .....	535
II. Order for the Blessing of an Image of the Blessed Virgin Mary ....	543
III. Order for the Blessing of Images of the Saints .....	551

Chapter 37	
Order for the Blessing of Bells .....	559
Chapter 38	
Order for the Blessing of an Organ .....	567
Chapter 39	
Order for the Blessing of Articles for Liturgical Use .....	575
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	576
II. Shorter Rite .....	578
Chapter 40	
Order for the Blessing of a Chalice and Paten .....	581
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	582
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	586
Chapter 41	
Order for the Blessing of Holy Water outside Mass .....	593
Chapter 42	
Order for the Blessing of Stations of the Cross .....	597
Chapter 43	
Order for the Blessing of a Cemetery .....	605
 <b>PART IV: BLESSINGS OF ARTICLES MEANT TO FOSTER THE DEVOTION OF THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE</b>	
Introduction .....	615
Chapter 44	
Order for the Blessing of Religious Articles .....	617
I. Order of Blessing .....	617
II. Shorter Rite .....	623
Chapter 45	
Order for the Blessing of Rosaries .....	625
I. Order of Blessing .....	625
II. Shorter Rite .....	632
Chapter 46	
Order for the Blessing and Conferral of a Scapular .....	635



PART V: BLESSINGS RELATED TO FEASTS AND SEASONS

Introduction .....	645
Chapter 47	
Order for the Blessing of an Advent Wreath (First Sunday of Advent) ...	647
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	648
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	650
III. Shorter Rite .....	655
Chapter 48	
Order for the Blessing of a Christmas Manger or Nativity Scene .....	659
I. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	660
II. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	665
III. Shorter Rite .....	667
Chapter 49	
Order for the Blessing of a Christmas Tree .....	669
I. Order of Blessing .....	670
II. Shorter Rite .....	676
Chapter 50	
Order for the Blessing of Homes during the Christmas and Easter Seasons .....	679
I. Order of Blessing .....	679
II. Shorter Rite .....	687
Chapter 51	
Order for the Blessing of Throats on the Feast of Saint Blase (February 3) .....	691
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	692
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	695
III. Shorter Rite .....	700
Chapter 52	
Order for the Blessing and Distribution of Ashes (Ash Wednesday) .....	703
Chapter 53	
Order for the Blessing of Saint Joseph's Table (March 19) .....	713
I. Order of Blessing .....	713
II. Shorter Rite .....	719
Chapter 54	
Order for the Blessing of Food for the First Meal of Easter .....	721
I. Order of Blessing .....	722
II. Shorter Rite .....	727



## Chapter 55

Order for the Blessing of Mothers on Mother's Day (Second Sunday of May) .....	729
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

## Chapter 56

Order for the Blessing of Fathers on Father's Day (Third Sunday of June) .....	731
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

## Chapter 57

Order for Visiting a Cemetery on All Souls Day (November 2), Memorial Day, or on the Anniversary of Death or Burial .....	733
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

## Chapter 58

Order for the Blessing of Food for Thanksgiving Day (Fourth Thursday of November) .....	741
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	742
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	743
III. Shorter Rite .....	749

## Chapter 59

Order for the Blessing of Food or Drink or Other Elements Connected with Devotion .....	751
I. Order of Blessing outside Mass .....	752
II. Order of Blessing within Mass on a Feast Day .....	759

## PART VI: BLESSINGS FOR VARIOUS NEEDS AND OCCASIONS

Introduction .....	765
--------------------	-----

## Chapter 60

Order for the Blessing of Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service .....	767
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	767
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	769

## Chapter 61

Order for the Blessing of Readers .....	775
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	776
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	778

## Chapter 62

Order for the Blessing of Altar Servers, Sacristans, Musicians and Ushers .	783
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	784
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	786

Chapter 63	
Order for the Commissioning of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion .....	795
I. Order of Commissioning within Mass .....	796
II. Order of Commissioning within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	800
Chapter 64	
Order for the Blessing of a Parish Council .....	807
I. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	807
II. Order of Blessing within a Celebration of the Word of God .....	809
Chapter 65	
Order for the Blessing of Officers of Parish Societies .....	815
Chapter 66	
Order for the Welcoming of New Parishioners .....	821
Chapter 67	
Order for the Blessing of a Departing Parishioner .....	823
Chapter 68	
Order for the Blessing of Those Receiving Ecclesiastical Honors .....	825
Chapter 69	
Prayer on the Occasion of the Inauguration of a Public Official .....	831
Chapter 70	
Order for a Blessing in Thanksgiving .....	835
Chapter 71	
Order for a Blessing to Be Used in Various Circumstances .....	841

## APPENDICES

Appendix I	
Order for the Installation of a Pastor .....	855
I. Order of Installation within Mass When the Bishop Presides .....	858
II. Order of Installation within Mass When a Priest Presides .....	862
Appendix II	
Solemn Blessings and Prayers over the People .....	867
Solemn Blessings .....	869
Prayers over the People .....	883

## INDICES

Alphabetical Index of Blessings .....	890
Index of Readings .....	894
Index of Psalms and Canticles .....	896



## PRAYER OF BLESSING

111 With hands outstretched, the celebrant concludes the intercessions by saying:

Almighty and eternal God,  
you have so exalted the unbreakable bond of marriage  
that it has become the sacramental sign  
of your Son's union with the Church as his spouse.

Look with favor on **N.** and **N.**, whom you have united in  
marriage,  
as they ask for your help  
and the protection of the Virgin Mary.  
They pray that in good times and in bad  
they will grow in love for each other;  
that they will resolve to be of one heart  
in the bond of peace.

Lord, in their struggles let them rejoice  
that you are near to help them;  
in their needs let them know  
that you are there to rescue them;  
in their joys let them see  
that you are the source and completion of every happiness.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**R/.** Amen.

112 In the liturgy of the eucharist the Order of Mass is observed, with the few modifications indicated.

As circumstances suggest, the husband and wife may bring the bread and wine to the altar for the presentation of the gifts.

113 As circumstances suggest and in keeping with local custom, after the celebrant says: *The peace of the Lord be with you*, the husband and wife and all present may offer to each other some sign of peace and love.



**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

319 A minister who is a priest or deacon says the prayer of blessing with hands outstretched over the parents and child; a lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

Loving God,  
your Son has taught us  
that whoever welcomes a child in his name, welcomes  
him.

We give you thanks for N.,  
whom N. and N. have welcomed into their family.  
Bless this family.

Confirm a lively sense of your presence with them  
and grant to these parents patience and wisdom,  
that their lives may show forth the love of Christ  
as they bring N. up to love all that is good.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*R.* Amen.

As circumstances suggest, the minister in silence may sprinkle the family  
with holy water.

**CONCLUDING RITE**

320 A minister who is a priest or deacon concludes the rite by saying:

May almighty God, who has called us into the family of  
Christ,  
fill you with grace and peace,  
now and for ever.

*R.* Amen.

Then he blesses all present.

And may almighty God bless you all,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

*R.* Amen.

that, moved by your love, they may gladly devote themselves to assisting those in need and in misfortune. (For this we pray:) *R*l.

*Assisting minister:*

You willed that your Mother should also be our Mother; grant that, whenever we turn to her for protection, we will find in her a helper sent to us from heaven. (For this we pray:) *R*l.

586 When there are no intercessions, the celebrant, before the prayer of blessing and using the following or other similar words, invites those present to ask for God's help.

My brothers and sisters, let us pray that God who is love will enkindle our hearts with the fire of the Holy Spirit, to give us an ardent love for others, like Christ's love for us.

As circumstances suggest, all may then pray for a moment in silence before the prayer of blessing.

## PRAYER OF BLESSING

587 With hands outstretched, the celebrant continues with the prayer of blessing.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of mercy,  
who through your Son gave us a marvelous example of  
charity  
and the great commandment of love for one another.  
Send down your blessings on these your servants,  
who so generously devote themselves to helping others.  
When they are called on in times of need,  
let them faithfully serve you in their neighbor.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

*R*l. Amen.



*Assisting minister:*

**Savior of the world, by your redeeming power you preserved your Mother from every stain of sin; keep watch over us that we may not sin. (For this we pray:) R<sup>l</sup>.**

*Assisting minister:*

**Our Lord and Redeemer, you dwelt within the immaculate Virgin Mary and made her the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit; make us temples of the same Spirit for ever. (For this we pray:) R<sup>l</sup>.**

*Assisting minister:*

**Christ our Priest, your Mother stood at the foot of the cross; grant through her intercession that we may rejoice to share in your passion. (For this we pray:) R<sup>l</sup>.**

*Assisting minister:*

**King of Kings, you lifted up your Mother, body and soul, into heaven; help us fix our thoughts and hearts on the things above. (For this we pray:) R<sup>l</sup>.**

*Assisting minister:*

**Lord of heaven and earth, you crowned Mary and set her at your right hand as queen; make us worthy to share also in this glory. (For this we pray:) R<sup>l</sup>.**

*1285 When there are no intercessions, the celebrant, before the prayer of blessing and using the following or other similar words, invites those present to ask for God's help.*

**As we are gathered here together like the apostles with the Mother of Jesus, let us also like them offer our prayers to God.**

*As circumstances suggest, all may then pray for a moment in silence before the prayer of blessing.*



Let my soul glory in the LORD;  
the lowly will hear me and be glad. *R/.*

Glorify the LORD with me,  
let us together extol his name.  
I sought the LORD, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears. *R/.*

Look to him that you may be radiant with joy,  
and your faces may not blush with shame.  
When the afflicted man called out, the LORD heard,  
and from all his distress he saved him. *R/.*

The angel of the LORD encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.  
Taste and see how good the LORD is;  
happy the man who takes refuge in him. *R/.*

Fear the LORD, you his holy ones,  
for nought is lacking to those who fear him.  
The great grow poor and hungry;  
but those who seek the LORD want for no good thing. *R/.*

Come, children, hear me;  
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.  
Which of you desires life,  
and takes delight in prosperous days? *R/.*

Keep your tongue from evil  
and your lips from speaking guile;  
Turn from evil and do good;  
seek peace, and follow after it. *R/.*

*Psalm 27*

*R/.* (v. 14) Put your hope in the Lord; take courage and  
be strong.

1644 As circumstances suggest, the minister may give those present a  
brief explanation of the biblical text, so that they may understand through  
faith the meaning of the celebration.

**Psalm 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20**

**R.** (see John 6:58b) Whoever eats this bread will live for ever.

**1888** In the homily the minister first explains the reason for this ministry.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES**

**1889** Then he presents to the people those chosen to serve as extraordinary ministers, using these or similar words:

**Dear friends in Christ, our brothers/sisters N. and N. are to be entrusted with administering the eucharist, with taking communion to the sick, and with giving it as viaticum to the dying.**

**The minister pauses, and addresses the candidates:**

**In this ministry, you must be examples of Christian living in faith and conduct; you must strive to grow in holiness through this sacrament of unity and love. Remember that, though many, we are one body because we share the one bread and one cup.**

**As ministers of holy communion be, therefore, especially observant of the Lord's command to love your neighbor. For when he gave his body as food to his disciples, he said to them: "This is my commandment, that you should love one another as I have loved you."**

## **EXAMINATION**

**1890** After the address the candidates stand before the minister, who asks them these questions:

**Are you resolved to undertake the office of giving the body and blood of the Lord to your brothers and sisters, and so serve to build up the Church?**

**R.** I am.