

# CONTENTS

Decree of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops .....	5
Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship .....	6
Foreword .....	17
Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship .....	19
General Introduction .....	21

## PART I: BLESSINGS DIRECTLY PERTAINING TO PERSONS

### Chapter 1

Orders for the Blessing of Families and Members of Families .....	35
I. Order for the Blessing of a Family .....	36
A. Order of Blessing .....	36
B. Order of Blessing within Mass .....	42
II. Order for the Annual Blessing of Families in Their Own Homes .....	46
III. Orders for the Blessing of a Married Couple .....	54
A. Order of Blessing within Mass on the Anniversary of Marriage .....	54
B. Order of Blessing within Mass on Other Occasions .....	59
C. Order of Blessing outside Mass .....	62
D. Shorter Rite .....	70
IV. Orders for the Blessing of Children .....	73
A. Order for the Blessing of Baptized Children .....	73
B. Order for the Blessing of a Child not yet Baptized .....	80
C. Shorter Rite .....	85
V. Order for the Blessing of Sons and Daughters .....	88
VI. Order for the Blessing of an Engaged Couple .....	96
VII. Order for the Blessing of Parents before Childbirth .....	102
A. Order of Blessing .....	102
B. Shorter Rite .....	107
VIII. Orders for the Blessing of a Mother before Childbirth and after Childbirth .....	110
A. Order for the Blessing of a Mother before Childbirth .....	110
B. Shorter Rite .....	116
C. Order for the Blessing of a Mother after Childbirth .....	117
D. Shorter Rite .....	123
IX. Order for the Blessing of Parents after a Miscarriage .....	125
A. Order of Blessing .....	125
B. Shorter Rite .....	131
X. Order for the Blessing of Parents and an Adopted Child .....	133
XI. Order of Blessing on the Occasion of a Birthday .....	140
A. Order of Blessing .....	140
B. Shorter Rite .....	146

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
 <b>PART VI: BLESSINGS FOR VARIOUS NEEDS AND OCCASIONS</b>	
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
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	
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
 <b>INDICES</b>	
Alphabetical Index of Blessings .....	890
Index of Readings .....	894
Index of Psalms and Canticles .....	896

## FOREWORD

This edition of the *Book of Blessings* contains the approved English translation of *De Benedictionibus* prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), as well as the forty-two orders and prayers of blessing prepared by the Committee on the Liturgy of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America. The *Book of Blessings* and the new blessings for the United States have been given provisional or interim approval. Eventually the English translation of the Roman blessings will be revised by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, and the American blessings will be revised by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy. In both cases, the revision will be based on the comments received concerning this edition of the *Book of Blessings*.

The additional blessings contained in this volume have been inserted at the appropriate places throughout the book. As a result, the numbering of this edition differs from that of the Latin edition. The new blessings prepared and approved specifically for use in the dioceses of the United States of America are designated "USA" in the margin.

A new *Part V: Blessings Related to Feasts and Seasons* has been added to the *Book of Blessings* and, as the title indicates, it consists of blessings related to the feasts and seasons of the liturgical year. All the orders of blessing contained in this section, except the last, are newly composed for use in the United States.

Part V of the Latin edition has been renumbered as *Part VI: Blessings for Various Needs and Occasions*. Only the last two orders of blessing (Chapters 70 and 71) are found in the Latin edition of the *Book of Blessings*. The blessings contained in this section are primarily related to the parish, its pastoral and liturgical ministries, and its organizations.

The final portion of the book contains two appendices: Appendix I: Order for the Installation of a Pastor; Appendix II: Solemn Blessings and Prayers over the People. Although not properly a blessing, the Order for the Installation of a Pastor complements the blessings of Part VI and has been included for pastoral convenience. It is a new rite which has been patterned

on the various rites in use throughout the country during the past two decades. The second appendix consists of the solemn blessings and prayers over the people found in the *Sacramentary*. Since these blessings may be used to conclude the hours of the Liturgy of the Hours and other liturgical rites and services, they have been included here so that all the major blessings of the Church may be found in one convenient collection.

The *Book of Blessings* was approved by the Administrative Committee of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on 22 March 1988 and confirmed by the Apostolic See on 27 January 1989 (Prot. N. 699/88).

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

✠ Joseph P. Delaney  
Bishop of Fort Worth  
Chairman, Committee on the Liturgy  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

20 March 1989

## I. ORDER OF BLESSING

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

729 When the community has gathered at a convenient place, Psalm 67 or some other suitable song may be sung. After the singing, the celebrant says:

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

All make the sign of the cross and reply:

Amen.

730 The celebrant greets those present in the following or other suitable words, taken mainly from sacred Scripture.

**May God, the source of all wisdom, Christ the Lord, his Word incarnate, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, be with you all.**

All make the following or some other suitable reply.

And also with you.

731 In the following or similar words, the celebrant prepares those present for the blessing.

The all-knowing God, who is Lord, moves us in many ways to deepen that knowledge of him which he revealed completely when for our sake the Word was made flesh. All disciplines, sciences, and teaching about the world and about human life that we pursue must have as their final purpose to bring us to a knowledge of the truth and to the worship of the true God. Today we ask God's blessing on this center of seeking, learning, and teaching what is true. We ask that those entrusted with the education of children or young people in this institution may teach their students how to join the discoveries of human wis-

dom with the truth of the Gospel, so that they will be able to keep the true faith and to live up to it in their lives. We also ask the Lord that the students will find in their teachers the image of Christ, so that, enriched with both human and divine learning, they will in turn be able and ready to enlighten and assist others.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

732 A reader, another person present, or the celebrant reads a text of sacred Scripture.

Brothers and sisters, listen to the words of the holy gospel according to Matthew:

5:1b-2, 13-16

*You are the light of the world.*

Jesus went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father."

733 Or:

Proverbs 1:1-7—*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.*

Wisdom 7:7-20—*All good things together came to me in the company of wisdom.*

Wisdom 9:1-6, 10-18—*Give me wisdom, the attendant at your throne.*

Sirach 1:1-5, 22-25 (Greek, 1:1-5, 18-20)—*All wisdom is from the Lord.*

Sirach 51:18-29 (Greek, 51:13-21)—*Glory be to him who has given me wisdom.*

Ephesians 4:11-24—*Living by the truth and in love.*

Matthew 11:25-30—*You have hidden these things from the learned and the clever and revealed them to children.*