

Prayers of Blessing for Liturgical and Pastoral Ministers

The edition of the *Book of Blessings* produced for use in the Dioceses of the United States (and authorised by our own Bishops' Conference for interim use in England and Wales) contains rites for the blessing of liturgical and pastoral ministers.

Each set of rites exists in two forms, one to be used during Mass, the other to be used within a celebration of the Word of God.

The following texts are included:

Order of Blessing of Readers within Mass

Prayer of Blessing for Altar Servers, Sacristans, Musicians, Ushers.

Prayer of Blessing for Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service

Order of Commissioning Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion within Mass

The full text of the Orders of Commissioning are found in the *Book of Blessings*, which can be ordered from any Catholic Bookshop or direct from Columba Press, 55A Spruce Avenue, Stillorgan Industrial Park, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: 00 353 1 2942556 www.columba.ie

Order for the Blessing of Readers

Introduction

- 1827 The word of God, as proclaimed in the sacred Scripture, lies at the heart of our Christian life and is integral to all our liturgical celebrations.
- 1828 This order is not intended for the institution of lectors by the bishop, who uses the rite contained in the Roman Pontifical. Rather, this blessing is for parish readers who have the responsibility of proclaiming the Scriptures at Mass and other liturgical services. Care should be taken to see that readers are properly prepared for the exercise of their ministry before receiving this blessing. The functions of the reader are given in no. 101 of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*.
- 1829 If desired, each new reader may be presented with a lectionary or bible after the prayer of blessing.
- 1830 This blessing is given by the pastor, who may also delegate it to another priest or a deacon.
-

Order of Blessing within Mass

- 1831 *After the gospel reading, the celebrant in the homily, based on the sacred text and pertinent to the particular place and the people involved, explains the meaning of the celebration.*

General Intercessions

- 1832 *The general intercessions follow, either in the form usual at Mass or in the form provided here. The celebrant concludes the intercessions with the prayer of blessing. From the following intentions those best for the occasion may be used or adapted, or other intentions that apply to the particular circumstances may be composed.*

The celebrant says:

The word of God calls us out of darkness into the light of faith.
With the confidence of God's children
let us ask the Lord to hear our prayers and to bless these readers.

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

or

R Lord, graciously hear us.

Assisting minister

For the Church, that we may continue to respond to the word of God
which is proclaimed in our midst,
we pray to the Lord.

For all who listen as the Scriptures are proclaimed,
that God's word may find in them a fruitful field,
we pray to the Lord.

For those who have not heard the message of Christ,
that we may be willing to bring them the good news of salvation,
we pray to the Lord.

For our readers, that with deep faith and confident voice
they may announce God's saving word,
we pray to the Lord.

Prayer of Blessing

1833 *With hands extended over the new readers the celebrant says immediately:*

Everlasting God,
when he read in the synagogue at Nazareth,
your Son proclaimed
the good news of salvation
for which he would give up his life.

Bless these readers.
As they proclaim your words of life,
strengthen their faith
that they may read with conviction
and boldness,
and put into practice what they read.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Prayer of Blessing for Altar Servers, Sacristans, Musicians, Ushers.

God of Glory,
your beloved Son has shown us
that true worship comes from
humble and contrite hearts.

Bless our brothers and sisters,
who have responded to the needs of our parish
and wish to commit themselves
to your service as
(altar servers, sacristans, musicians, ushers).

Grant that their ministry may be fruitful
and our worship pleasing in your sight.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen

Prayer of Blessing for Those Who Exercise Pastoral Service

Lord God, in your loving kindness
you sent your Son to be our shepherd and guide.
Continue to send workers into your vineyard
to sustain and direct your people.

Bless N.N and N.N.
Let your Spirit uphold them always
as they take up their new responsibility
among the people of this parish.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Order of Commissioning Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

This Order is distinctive in that following the presentation of the candidates there is an examination of them, as follows:

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

R. I am

Are you resolved to administer the holy eucharist with utmost care and reverence?

R. I am.

This examination is followed by the Prayer of Blessing

Dear friends in Christ,
let us pray with confidence to the Father;
let us ask him to bestow his blessings
on our brothers and sisters,
chosen to be ministers of the eucharist.

Pause for silent prayer. The celebrant than continues:

Merciful Father, creator and guide of your family,
bless + our brothers and sisters N and N.
May they faithfully give the bread of life to your people.
Strengthened by this sacrament,
may they come at last to the banquet of heaven.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R Amen.

or

Gracious Lord,
you nourish us with the body and blood of your Son,
that we might have eternal life.

Bless + our brothers and sisters who have been chosen
to give the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation
to your faithful people.

May the saving mysteries they distribute
lead them to the joys of eternal life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

**Liturgy
Office**

**ENGLAND
& WALES**

The English translation of *Book of Blessings* © 1987, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All Rights reserved. Additional blessings ©1988, United States Catholic Conference (USCC). All rights reserved.

This edition was made available by the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. www.liturgyoffice.org.uk