

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5: 3

BLESSINGS

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I. INTRODUCTION

A blessing recognizes that God looks favorably upon persons or things. The source from whom every good gift comes is God, who is above all blessed forever (*Roman Missal*, “Solemn Blessing,” 3).

The Church has instituted sacramentals (sacred signs) for the sanctification of certain ministries of the church, certain states of life, a great variety of circumstances in Christian life, and the use of many things helpful to humankind (see *CCC*, 1668).

II. OFFICE AND MINISTERS

BL 1. Priests may celebrate all blessings except those reserved to the Pope and Bishops (see *CIC*, c.1169 §2). Priests preside especially at those blessings that involve the community they are appointed to serve. The more a blessing concerns ecclesial and sacramental life, the more its administration is reserved to the ordained ministry of bishops, priests, deacons (see *CCC*, 1669).

BL 2. “A deacon can impart only those blessings expressly permitted by law.” (*CIC*, c.1169 §3)

These include:

- Liturgy of Hours;
- Baptism;
- Marriage;
- Holy communion and Viaticum outside of Mass;
- Eucharistic benediction and non-sacramental penance services.

BL 3. Laypersons may preside at certain blessings of objects, animals, harvests, before and after meals, and favors received as outlined in the *Book of Blessings* for use in the United States.

BL 4. Parents (guardians) may use the *Book of Blessings* to bless their children and to perform other household blessings.

III. CELEBRATION OF A BLESSING

BL 5. While priests may bless with or without the use of a rite, it is normative to celebrate a blessing as found in the *Book of Blessings* for the United States.