

HOLY WATER

Holy water, through a priest or deacon, is blessed by God in virtue of Christ's baptism. The Catholic Church possesses enormous power in being able to impart sacramental grace—and holy water as a sacramental receives its power through the prayer and authority of the Church.

The rite of blessing said over water by a priest or deacon to make it holy contains prayers of exorcism. It can heal the sick, provide unwarranted grace to us and banish evil—yet most of the time we cross ourselves with this water without even thinking about how holy it really is.

The fact of the matter is that holy water is a powerful sacramental and we ought to use it daily. To prevent us from using it without thinking, we should consciously find ways to use it more. Holy water can be used to bless people, places, and things that are used by humans in their goal of glorifying God with their lives.

Here are some ways to use holy water in your everyday life:

Bless yourself. You can never have too much grace or blessing in your life. Use holy water daily. Keeping a holy water font in the home is a great idea so that you, your family, and guests can be blessed in the comings and goings from your home. Keep the font right by the front door to ensure you never leave home without it.

Bless your house. If you haven't taken the time to bless your house with holy water, then no time is better than the present. Your home is the domestic Church and is in need of spiritual protection. You can sprinkle holy water in your home yourself, or have a priest or deacon formally bless your home using holy water as part of the house blessing ceremony.

Bless your family. Use holy water to pray and make the Sign of the Cross over your spouse and children before they go to sleep at night. Bonding the family to each other and to God in this way is a great family tradition to adopt. Keep a holy water bottle by the bedside for this purpose.

Bless your workspace. Sprinkling your workspace with holy water is a great idea, not only for spiritual protection on the work front, but also as to sanctify your daily work for the glory of God.

Bless the sick. If you know of any sick friends or family, then blessing them with holy water probably counts as a corporeal and a spiritual work of mercy. If you visit the sick in a hospital or nursing home, bless their living space with holy water and leave a holy water bottle with them as a comfort in their time of need.

Here is a simple prayer to say when using holy water:

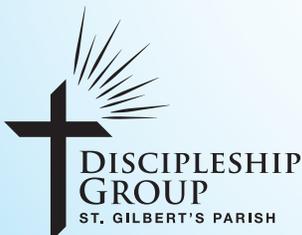
"By this holy water and by Your Precious Blood, wash away all my sins, O Lord. Amen."

There is no specific prayer to pray when using holy water, other than making the Sign of the Cross: "In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." You can also pray an Our Father or even the St. Michael Prayer when using holy water.

Holy water is one of those beautiful gifts (and weapons) from God to keep us sanctified and holy in our daily lives and to keep the things we regularly use sanctified and holy. (Some parents even use holy water to bless things their children regularly use such as bicycles and school books). If we stop and think about what a generous gift holy water is, we will use it more frequently, thoughtfully, and gratefully!

Edited from 8 Ways to Use Holy Water by Gretchen Filz

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We hope you enjoy this gift of Holy Water from the Discipleship Group at St. Gilbert. May you and your loved ones be blessed!