

# EXORCISM BLESSING FOR SALT AND WATER

Fr Richard Heilman July 12, 2015

This past week, I was blessing water. It takes a lot longer and is more work, but I now only do the traditional blessing of water. For the first half of my priesthood, I did what most priests do ... I would just make the sign of the cross over the water and that was it. Then I got "The Roman Ritual" and I was shocked by the complete blessing of water including exorcisms and adding exorcised salt to the holy water.

## RITE FROM THE ROMAN RITUAL

(Priest vests in surplice and purple stole)

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R: Who made heaven and earth.

### **Exorcism and Blessing of Salt (necessary for Exorcism of Water)**

P: O salt, creature of God, I exorcise you by the living (+) God, by the true (+) God, by the holy (+) God, by the God who ordered you to be poured into the water by Elisha the prophet, so that its life-giving powers might be restored. I exorcise you so that you may become a means of salvation for believers, that you may bring health of soul and body to all who make use of you, and that you may put to flight and drive away from the places where you are sprinkled; every apparition, villainy, turn of devilish deceit, and every unclean spirit; adjured by him who will come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire.

R: Amen.

P: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, we humbly implore you, in your immeasurable kindness and love, to bless (+) this salt which you created and gave to the use of mankind, so that it may become a source of health for the minds and bodies of all who make use of it. May it rid whatever it touches or sprinkles of all uncleanness, and protect it from every assault of evil spirits. Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

### **Exorcism and Blessing of Water**

P: O water, creature of God, I exorcise you in the name of God the Father (+) Almighty, and in the name of Jesus (+) Christ His Son, our Lord, and in the power of the Holy (+) Spirit. I exorcise you so that you may put to flight all the power of the enemy, and be able to root out and supplant that enemy

with his apostate angels, through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will come to judge the living and the dead and the world by fire.

R: Amen.

P: Let us pray. O God, for the salvation of mankind, you built your greatest mysteries on this substance, water. In your kindness, hear our prayers and pour down the power of your blessing (+) into this element, made ready for many kinds of purifications. May this, your creature, become an agent of divine grace in the service of your mysteries, to drive away evil spirits and dispel sickness, so that everything in the homes and other buildings of the faithful that is sprinkled with this water, may be rid of all uncleanness and freed from every harm. Let no breath of infection and no disease-bearing air remain in these places. May the wiles of the lurking enemy prove of no avail. Let whatever might menace the safety and peace of those who live here be put to flight by the sprinkling of this water, so that the health obtained by calling upon your holy name, may be made secure against all attack. Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

(Priest pours exorcised salt into the water, in the form of a cross)

P: May a mixture of salt and water now be made, in the name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R: Amen.

P: The Lord be with you.

R: And with your spirit.

P: Let us pray. O God, Creator unconquerable, invincible King, Victor ever-glorious, you hold in check the forces bent on dominating us. You overcome the cruelty of the raging enemy, and in your power you beat down the wicked foe. Humbly and fearfully do we pray to you, O Lord, and we ask you to look with favor on this salt and water which you created. Shine on it with the light of your kindness. Sanctify it by the dew of your love, so that, through the invocation of your holy name, wherever this water and salt is sprinkled, it may turn aside every attack of the unclean spirit, and dispel the terrors of the poisonous serpent. And wherever we may be, make the Holy Spirit present to us, who now implore your mercy. Through Christ our Lord.

R: Amen.

## Blessed Salt



Salt, with its preservative properties, had always been treasured as precious <sup>1</sup> in the ancient world, and seen as a symbol of incorruption and wisdom. Its use was commanded by God --

Leviticus 2:13-14

Whatsoever sacrifice thou offerest, thou shalt season it with salt, neither shalt thou take away the salt of the covenant of thy God from thy sacrifice. In all thy oblations thou shalt offer salt. But if thou offer a gift of the firstfruits of thy corn to the Lord, of the ears

-- and it was seen by God, as recorded by Moses, to act as a symbol for that which can't corrupt:

Numbers 18:19

All the firstfruits of the sanctuary which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to thee and to thy sons and daughters, by a perpetual ordinance. It is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord, to thee and to thy sons.

Its first recorded sacramental use was by Eliseus (Elisha) to restore waters of a well:

4 Kings 2:19-22

And the men of the city, said to Eliseus . Behold the situation of this city is very good, as thou, my lord, seest: but the waters are very bad, and the ground barren. And he said: Bring me a new vessel, and put salt into it. And when they had brought it, He went out to the spring of the waters, and cast the salt into it, and said: Thus saith the Lord: I have healed these waters, and there shall be no more in them death or barrenness. And the waters were healed unto this day, according to the word of Eliseus, which he spoke."

And, of course, there is Our Lord's calling His people "salt of the earth" and warning of salt that loses its savor (Matthew 5:13, Mark 9, Luke 14), and there is St. Paul's warning in Colossians 4:6 to "Let your speech be always in grace seasoned with salt: that you may know how you ought to answer every man."

Salt is now used sacramentally in two main ways in the Church.

First, in Baptisms: like the baptismal waters, salt is blessed and exorcised. Then it is put on the tongue of the catechumen during the Baptismal Rite.

Second, for use in the preparation of Holy Water and for the use of the faithful: regular salt is exorcised and blessed and is used in the preparation of Holy Water. It is also given to the faithful for their everyday use -- e.g., for use in cooking; for sprinkling around rooms, doorways and yards, to protect against evil, etc.

Because of its exorcism and blessing, it is a powerful sacramental in keeping away demons. To obtain blessed salt, just take ordinary salt to your priest and ask him to bless it.

A very important note: Know that the exorcism of salt is omitted in the new rite, just as it's been removed from the blessing of water.

Note: salt -- usually not blessed -- is also used to purify the priest's fingers after Unction.

### **Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> Salt was considered so valuable that Roman soldiers were paid, at least in part, by salt, or "sal" in Latin. This is the root of our word "salary." ↗

