

BLESSING OF THROATS

on the Feast of St. Blaise, Bishop and Martyr

9. BLESSING OF THE CANDLES

After the holy water pot and sprinkler have been prepared, wearing a red stole, the priest begins:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

✠ Who made heaven and earth.

The Lord be with you.

✠ And with your spirit.

Let us pray.

He extends his hands:

God, almighty and all-mild, by your Word alone you created the manifold things in the world, and willed that that same Word by whom all things were made take flesh in order to redeem mankind; you are great and immeasurable, awesome and praiseworthy, a worker of marvels.

Hence in professing his faith in you the glorious martyr and bishop, Blaise, did not fear any manner of torment but gladly accepted the palm of martyrdom. In virtue of which you bestowed on him, among other gifts, the power to heal all ailments of the throat.

And now we implore your majesty that, overlooking our guilt and considering only his merits and intercession, it may please you to bless ✠ and sanctify ✠ and impart your grace to these candles.

Let all men of faith whose necks are touched with them be healed of every malady of the throat, and being restored in health and good spirits let them return thanks to you in your holy Church, and praise your glorious name which is blessed forever; through Christ our Lord.

✠ Amen.

The candles are sprinkled with holy water.

10. BLESSING OF THROATS

This is one of the most popular blessings. St. Blaise was bishop of Sebaste in Cappadocia, and was martyred by beheading about A.D. 316. Not much more can be affirmed of him with any degree of historical accuracy, but legends about him are numerous. One day- so goes the legend-Blaise met a poor woman whose only pig had been snatched up in the fangs of a wolf but at the command of the bishop the wolf restored the pig alive to its owner. The woman did not forget the favor, for later, when the bishop was languishing in prison, she brought him tapers to dispel the darkness and gloom. To this story may be attributed the practice of using lighted candles in bestowing the blessing of St. Blaise. While in prison he performed a wonderful cure on a boy who had a fishbone lodged in his throat and who was in danger of choking to death. From this account we have the longtime custom of invoking the Saint for all kinds of throat trouble.

After inviting those present to come forward and kneel, the priest holds two candles fastened like a cross to the throat of the person kneeling before him, and says:

By the intercession of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from every malady of the throat, and from every possible mishap; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.

℟ Amen.