

Order for the Blessing of Pro-Life Pilgrims Before Their Journey*

(Designed for use only by a priest or deacon.)

Gathering Song

Introductory Rites

Celebrant: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Assembly: Amen.

Celebrant: May God, our life, our strength, and our salvation be with you all.

Assembly: And with your spirit.

Celebrant: Brothers and sisters, as we (you) set out on this journey, let us reflect upon the reasons for this undertaking. Let our (your) desire for justice and dignity for all human life strengthen our (your) resolve. May we (you) be examples of faith, of hope, and of love, so that others may be strengthened and enriched by our (your) presence among them. May the Lord remain with us (you) and guide our (your) steps along right and peaceful ways during this journey.

Reading of the Word of God

Lector: A reading from the Book of Tobit.
(5:4-8; 6:7)

Tobiah went to look for someone acquainted with the roads who would travel with him to Media. As soon as he went out, he found the angel Raphael standing before him, though he did not know that this was an angel of God. Tobiah said to him, "Who are you, young man?" He replied, "I am an Israelite, one of your kinsmen. I have come here to work." Tobiah said, "Do you know the way to Media?" The other replied, "Yes, I have been there many times. I know the place well and I know all the routes. I have often traveled to Media; I used to stay with our kinsman Gabael, who lives at Rages in Media. It is a good two days' travel from Ecbatana to Rages, for Rages is situated at the mountains, Ecbatana

out on the plateau." Tobiah said to him, "Wait for me, young man, till I go back and tell my father; for I need you to make the journey with me. I will, of course, pay you. Raphael replied, "Very well, I will wait for you; but do not be long."

Afterward they traveled on together till they were near Media.

The Word of the Lord.

Assembly: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (91:1-2, 3-4ab, 4c-6, 10-11)

R/. The Lord has put angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways.

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
Say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

R/. The Lord has put angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways.

For he will rescue you from the snare of the fowler,
from the destroying pestilence.
With his pinions he will cover you,
and under his wings you shall take refuge.

R/. The Lord has put angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways.

His faithfulness is a buckler and a shield.
You shall not fear the terror of the night
nor the arrow that flies by day;
Nor the pestilence that roams in darkness,
nor the devastating plague at noon.

R/. The Lord has put angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways.



No evil shall befall you,
nor shall affliction come near your tent,
For to his angels he has given command about you,
that they guard you in all your ways.

R/. The Lord has put angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways.

Intercessions

Celebrant: God is the beginning and end of every road we take. In confidence we call upon him, saying:

Assembly: Lord, hear our prayer.

Celebrant: Father all-holy, of old you made yourself the guide and the way for your people as they wandered in the desert; be our protection as we begin this journey, so that we may return home again in safety. We pray to the Lord:

R/.

You have given us your only Son to be our way to you; make us follow him faithfully and unswervingly. We pray to the Lord:

R/.

You guide your pilgrim Church on earth through the Holy Spirit; may we seek you in all things and walk always in the way of your commandments.

We pray to the Lord:

R/.

You lead us along right and peaceful paths; grant that we may one day see you face to face in heaven.

We pray to the Lord:

R/.

You gave us Mary as the image and model for following Christ; grant that through her example we may live a new life. We pray to the Lord:

R/.

Prayer of Blessing

(The Celebrant and/or those of the parish community who are sending the group forth are invited to extend their hands in a gesture of blessing.)

Celebrant: All powerful God,
You always show mercy to those who love you,
and you are never far away for those who seek you.
Remain with your servants on this journey
and guide their way in accord with your will.
Shelter them with your protection by day, give
them the light of your grace by night,
and, as their companion on the journey,
bring them to their destination in safety.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Assembly: Amen.

Concluding Rite

Celebrant: May the Lord guide us (you) and direct our (your) journey in safety.

Assembly: Amen.

Celebrant: May the Lord be our (your) companion along the way.

Assembly: Amen.

Celebrant: May the Lord grant that the journey we (you) begin, will end happily through his protection.

Assembly: Amen.

(It is preferable to conclude the celebration with an appropriate song.)

*Adapted from the *Book of Blessings*, approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and confirmed by the Apostolic See. New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co. 1989. Chapter 8: Order for the Blessing of Pilgrims on their Departure. "Intercessions" and "Prayer of Blessing," [602; 603], 262-263.

