

Thanksgiving (and Naming) for the Gift of a Child

This may occur before the Offertory at Mass or another suitable time. Where parents wish to recognize the role of supporting friends it may be appropriate for them to stand with the parents at the thanksgiving. One of them may present the children to the priest, and informal words may be said.

The priest says

Do you receive these children as a gift from God?

We do.

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

We do.

The priest says

God our creator,
we thank you for the wonder of new life
and for the mystery of human love.
We thank you for all whose support and skill
surround and sustain the beginning of life.
We thank you that we are known to you by name
and loved by you from all eternity.
We thank you for Jesus Christ,
who has opened to us the way of love.
We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

The priest may say for each child

What name have you given this child?

A parent or supporting friend replies

His/her name is N.

The priest may take the child.

The priest says

As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them,
so now we ask God's blessing on N.

Heavenly Father, we praise you for *his/her* birth;
surround *him/her* with your blessing
that *he/she* may know your love,
be protected from evil,
and know your goodness all *his/her* days.

When all the children have been prayed all say:

May *they* learn to love all that is true,
grow in wisdom and strength
and, in due time, come through faith and baptism
to the fullness of your grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The priest prays for the parents

May God the Father of all bless *these parents*
and give *them* grace to love and care for *their children*.
May God give *them* wisdom, patience and faith,
help *them* to provide for the *children's* needs
and, by *their* example,
reveal the love and truth that are in Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Giving of the Gospel

A copy of a Gospel is presented, with these words

Receive this book.
It is the good news of God's love.
Take it as your guide.

The priest may address the supporting friends and say

Will you do all that you can to help and support N and N in the bringing up of N?
With the help of God, we will.

The priest may address the wider family and friends and say

Will you do all that you can to help and support this family?
With the help of God, we will.

Prayers

This prayer may be said by the parents or by the whole congregation

God our creator,
we thank you for the gift of these children,
entrusted to our care.
May we be patient and understanding,
ready to guide and to forgive,
so that through our love
they may come to know your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Ending

Mass continues with the Offertory or the minister offers a suitable blessing