HOLY WATER

Why water? - Water covers two-thirds of the earth's surface, and makes up almost the same proportion of the human body. No living thing can survive without it. It's fitting, then, that the Lord Jesus instituted water as essential to baptism. But the uses of water don't stop there. Once blessed by a priest, it becomes holy water. Holy water both symbolises and bestows God's grace without which nothing can exist. If used with faith, it is a powerful way of bless people, places, or objects, placing them under God's protection.

How to use Holy water? - There's always some at the entrance to a church and the most common use is to dip a couple of fingers in the holy water and make the Sign of the Cross to bless yourself. However, many Christians carry Holy water around in a small bottle or keep it at home. You can also sprinkle it on your home, your family, your work space, your car…

The effects of Holy water? - Its benefits to the soul can be remarkable. St. Teresa of Avila used to throw it at demons when they appeared to her – they were generally too horrified to come back. As the prayer used by the priest to bless water puts it: *Holy water has the power to put to flight all the powers of evil. It is an agent of divine grace that drives away evil spirits and dispels sickness. It can free from all harm all that are sprinkled with it because this water is sanctified by the dew of divine love.*

It's not magic! - So that Holy water can produce its spiritual benefits, it must be used in the right way. We must remember that God alone is the source of anything that is good and so we use Holy water *while* we call upon God with faith, love, and trust. We also say sorry for whatever wrong we have done. Holy water is a "visible prayer", so to say, and not magic!

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How to use Holy water in your everyday life:

Bless yourself - Keep some by your bed (especially if you have nightmares), or by the entrance of your home, and make a small cross with it on your forehead before going to sleep, or when you wake up, or upon leaving/arriving home.

Bless your house - Protect your home from all spiritual harm. You can sprinkle the front door or any room, asking God that (through your Guardian Angel) he would keep all harm away.

Bless your family - You can sprinkle them or make a small sign of the cross on their forehead, especially when they leave the house, or in times of difficulty and distress.

Bless your work space - As you sprinkle your work space, pray that your work may be for God's glory, for the common good, and for your own benefit.

Bless your car - Roads can be dangerous and we spend a lot of time in our car. Pray that you yourself be never reckless, aggressive, or disrespectful. Pray that God may keep you from any danger others may cause, too.

Bless the sick - Sprinkle them, their bed or room, and pray that they may find strength, consolation and, if it's God's will, healing. Leave some Holy water for them to use.

Bless your pets - Pets proclaim God's glory and goodness by being our loved companions. Bless them so that they can bring joy into your life and that they be in god health.

You can use any prayer with Holy water. Here is an example:
Lord Jesus, through this Holy water, may your grace, blessing, and protection be <u>with</u> (me, my friend N., my son, …) / be <u>on</u> (this house, car, …). Amen.

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