

OUR SPIRITUAL SERVICE TO THE SICK AND DYING
Annotated Sections By Rev. Edwin G. Kaiser

LAST BLESSING AND INDULGENCES

The priest who administers the sacraments to the dying will usually give the **Last Blessing**, which carries with it a Plenary Indulgence. A **Plenary Indulgence** is the complete remission of punishment due to sins already forgiven. After gaining such an indulgence we are truly ready for immediate admission to the blessed vision of God. Of course, all of our sins must first be sacramentally forgiven and all affection for sin removed. We have ample means to affect this by receiving very devoutly the **Sacrament of Penance** and **Holy Communion**. The Plenary Indulgence that is given by the Last Blessing has one advantage over all the others, namely it takes effect not when the blessing is given, but in the very last moment of life.

The following gain a plenary Indulgence at the hour of death:

1. All who in life used the beautiful greeting **“Praise be Jesus Christ”** or the response **“Forever Amen”** as well as those who frequently invoked the name of **Jesus** provided they repeat His name in the hour of death with their lips or if in their hearts.
2. Those who frequently in life made use of the prayer **“Angel of God my Guardian Dear...”** if they die well prepared:

Angel of God my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light, to guard, to rule, to guide. Amen.

3. Members of certain confraternities such as the scapular, The Precious Blood, etc.
4. Those who frequently in life made **Acts of Faith, Hope, Love:**

ACT OF FAITH

O my God! I firmly believe that Thou art one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; I believe that Thy Divine Son became man, and died for our sins, and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, Who canst neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

ACT OF HOPE

O my God! Relying on Thy almighty power and infinite mercy and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Thy grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer. Amen.

ACT OF CHARITY

O my God! I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because Thou art all good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for love of Thee. I forgive all who have injured me and ask pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen

5. All who once in their life recited the **Prayer of Resignation:**

My Lord God, even now resignedly and willingly, I accept at Thy hand, with all its anxieties, pains and sufferings, whatever kind of death it shall please Thee to be mine. Amen.

6. All those who possess an article crucifix metal etc. to which the **Apostolic Blessing** has been attached. This article must be kept in the room of the sick person and remain there until his death. It need not be held nor kissed. It need not be his own property, nor is the indulgence lost after his death, and it may be used by many persons without being re-Blessed, unless it is sold.

We can gain for ourselves only one **Plenary Indulgence** but since we are never sure that we have been so fortunate as to have gained it, we should try to gain as many as possible. If we gain more than one fully, we can do a great work of mercy for the souls in purgatory. Happy the thought for the sick person, *“I can help those who may be my companions in purgatory.”*

