



In an age in which everything seems divided between the “sacred” and the “profane,” between the “religious” and the “ordinary,” the Catholic Church surprises us with something profoundly countercultural: **there is an official blessing for beer.**

Yes, you read that correctly.

The ancient Rituale Romanum — the traditional liturgical book that contains blessings, exorcisms, and sacramentals used for centuries — includes a specific formula *ad benedicendam cervisiam*: for blessing beer.

But this is not a folkloric curiosity or a charming anecdote for social media. It is a profound theological teaching. It is a gateway into a Christian vision of the world that we have largely forgotten: **everything created can and should be sanctified.**

Today we will rediscover what this means, why this blessing exists, what its biblical foundation is, and how it can transform the way you live even something as ordinary as drinking a beer.

1. Why Does the Church Bless Beer?

To understand this, we must begin with what is essential: **the Church does not bless “things” randomly; she blesses them because creation is good.**

From the very beginning, the Book of Genesis repeats:

“And God saw that it was good.” (Genesis 1)

Matter is not evil. The world is not a mistake. Food and drink are not enemies of the soul. On the contrary: they are gifts.

Beer, like bread or wine, is born from human labor cooperating with God’s creation: water, grain, yeast. It is the fruit of the earth and of human ingenuity. And everything that is good can be ordered toward God.

Here is where the logic of **sacramentals** enters.



2. What Is a Sacramental?

Sacramentals are not sacraments. They do not confer grace in the way Baptism or the Eucharist do, but they dispose the soul to receive grace and sanctify particular circumstances of life.

Holy water.

Medals.

Incense.

Houses.

Fields.

Animals.

Food.

And also... beer.

When a priest recites the blessing from the *Rituale Romanum*, he is not “performing magic.” He is asking God that this drink:

- Be healthy for the body.
- Not lead to excess.
- Be an occasion of ordered joy.
- Remind the Christian of God’s goodness.

It is incarnational theology.

3. Biblical Foundation: The Wine That Gladdens the Heart

Sacred Scripture does not demonize drink itself; it condemns abuse.

Psalm 104 says:

“Wine that gladdens the heart of man.” (Psalm 104:15)



And at the wedding feast of Cana, our Lord — Jesus Christ — did not turn water into mineral water. He turned it into wine. And not just any wine, but the best wine.

This reveals something crucial: **human joy is not an enemy of God when it is ordered toward Him.**

Drunkenness is sin.

Temperance is virtue.

Gratitude is holiness.

The blessing of beer becomes a practical school of temperance.

4. Monks, Beer, and Christian Civilization

It is no coincidence that many European beer traditions are linked to monasteries.

In the Middle Ages, monks — especially Benedictines and Cistercians — brewed beer:

- As nourishing sustenance during fasting periods.
- As a source of income to support the monastery.
- As hospitality for pilgrims.

Western beer culture was, to a large extent, born in monastic contexts.

It was not hedonism.

It was order.

It was discipline.

It was gratitude.

Beer formed part of a life in which manual labor, prayer, and community were integrated.

Today we have lost that integration.



5. What Exactly Does the Rituale Romanum Say?

The *Rituale Romanum* asks God to:

- Bless the drink.
- Make it healthy.
- Ward off illness.
- And grant that those who consume it do so with moderation and thanksgiving.

Notice the balance:

It does not glorify excess.

It does not condemn matter.

It orders its use.

This is the key to traditional Catholic spirituality: **to order, not to eliminate.**

6. A Lesson for Our Time

We live in extremes:

- A culture of excess and loss of control.
- Or a moralistic puritanism that suspects pleasure itself.

The Church proposes something much deeper: the virtue of temperance.

Saint Thomas Aquinas explains that temperance does not eliminate pleasure; it regulates it so that it does not dominate reason.

Applied to beer:

- Do not drink for escape.
- Do not drink from social pressure.
- Do not drink to forget.
- Drink with gratitude.
- Drink with moderation.
- Drink knowing that even this can be offered to God.



Saint Paul summarizes it this way:

“Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

Even a beer can glorify God if it is lived through virtue.

7. Practical Application: How to Live This Spirituality

1. Recover Thanksgiving

Before drinking, give thanks.

You may not have access to the Latin formula of the ritual, but a simple prayer is enough:

“Lord, thank You for this gift. May I use it with moderation and for Your glory.”

Gratitude changes the heart.

2. Practice Conscious Temperance

Ask yourself:

- Am I drinking for shared joy or for escape?
- Does this bring me closer to self-mastery or farther from it?
- Am I giving good example?

The blessing does not turn abuse into virtue.



3. Rediscover the Communal Dimension

Beer traditionally unites table and conversation.

Let your gatherings be:

- Spaces of authentic friendship.
- Occasions to speak of God without fear.
- Moments of ordered rest.

Christ shared meals.

The Church was born around a table.

The family is built at the table.

4. Live Sobriety as Witness

In a world that glorifies drunkenness, the Christian who drinks with moderation offers silent testimony of self-control.

Sobriety is countercultural.

8. Beyond Beer: A Sacramental Worldview

The blessing of beer is a symbol of something greater:

The Catholic faith does not confine God to the temple.
It recognizes Him in all reality.

- In bread.
- In wine.
- In work.
- In celebration.
- In illness.



- In rest.

Everything can be sanctified.

This is the greatness of traditional Catholicism: a vision of the world in which the material does not compete with the spiritual, but expresses it.

9. A Necessary Warning: The Sin of Excess

It would be irresponsible not to say this clearly:

Alcoholism destroys families.

It breaks vocations.

It ruins souls.

The blessing is not a license for disorder.

The Church has always condemned drunkenness as grave sin when it involves the deliberate loss of reason.

This spirituality therefore requires maturity.

If someone struggles with addiction, the path is not “more blessing,” but seeking help, spiritual direction, and professional support.

True holiness includes prudence.

10. Sanctifying the Ordinary: Today’s Challenge

Many Catholics reduce the faith to:

- Going to Mass.
- Praying at specific moments.
- Following certain rules.



But tradition invites us to something more radical:

To live everything from God.

If even beer can be blessed, what part of your life cannot be offered?

Your work.

Your rest.

Your meals.

Your conversations.

Your celebrations.

Holiness is not reserved for the cloister.

It is present at your family table.

Conclusion: When Joy Is Ordered, It Becomes Sacred

The blessing of beer in the *Rituale Romanum* is not a medieval curiosity. It is a powerful proclamation:

Creation is good.

Ordered pleasure is lawful.

Temperance is virtue.

And everything can be offered to God.

In a world that trivializes excess or demonizes enjoyment, the Catholic is called to something higher: to live joy with self-mastery.

The next time you raise a glass, remember:

“Whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God.” (1
Corinthians 10:31)

And perhaps you will discover that even this simple gesture can become prayer.



Because when gratitude enters the table, the table becomes an altar.