First Blessing of Newly Ordained Priest

When a priest celebrates his First Mass after ordination, it is an opportunity for the faithful in attendance to gain a plenary indulgence if all the usual conditions are met (these conditions are listed here). Holy Mother Church updated this tradition by granting a plenary indulgence to all first Masses the priest celebrates. The additional first Masses are sometimes called Masses of Thanksgiving.

Although not a plenary indulgence, an additional grace may be gained from receiving the first blessing of a newly ordained priest. First blessings are customarily given when first Masses are celebrated, but they may be given up to a full year after ordination.

There is no set prayer for first blessings in the Rituale Romane, the official book of blessings for the Extraordinary Form. One common form of blessing is as follows:

*Per impositiónem mánuum meárum sacerdotálium, et per intercessiónem beátæ Mariæ semper Virgínis, et Sancti (Sanctæ)..., et ómnium Sanctórum; Benedíctio Dei Omnipoténtis, Patris, et Fílii, et Spíritus Sancti, descéndat super te et máneat semper. Amen.*

May, through the imposition of my hands and upon the intercession of Holy Mary Mother of God, St. Joseph, Sts. N. (patron saint) and N. (of the priest’s choosing), the blessing of the Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, come upon thee and remain with thee forever. Amen.

The faithful kneel at the communion rail to receive the blessing. Upon receiving it, the faithful kiss the palms of the newly ordained priest in recognition of the sacred character of his priesthood and of the hands that now hold the Eucharist and confer the sacraments.