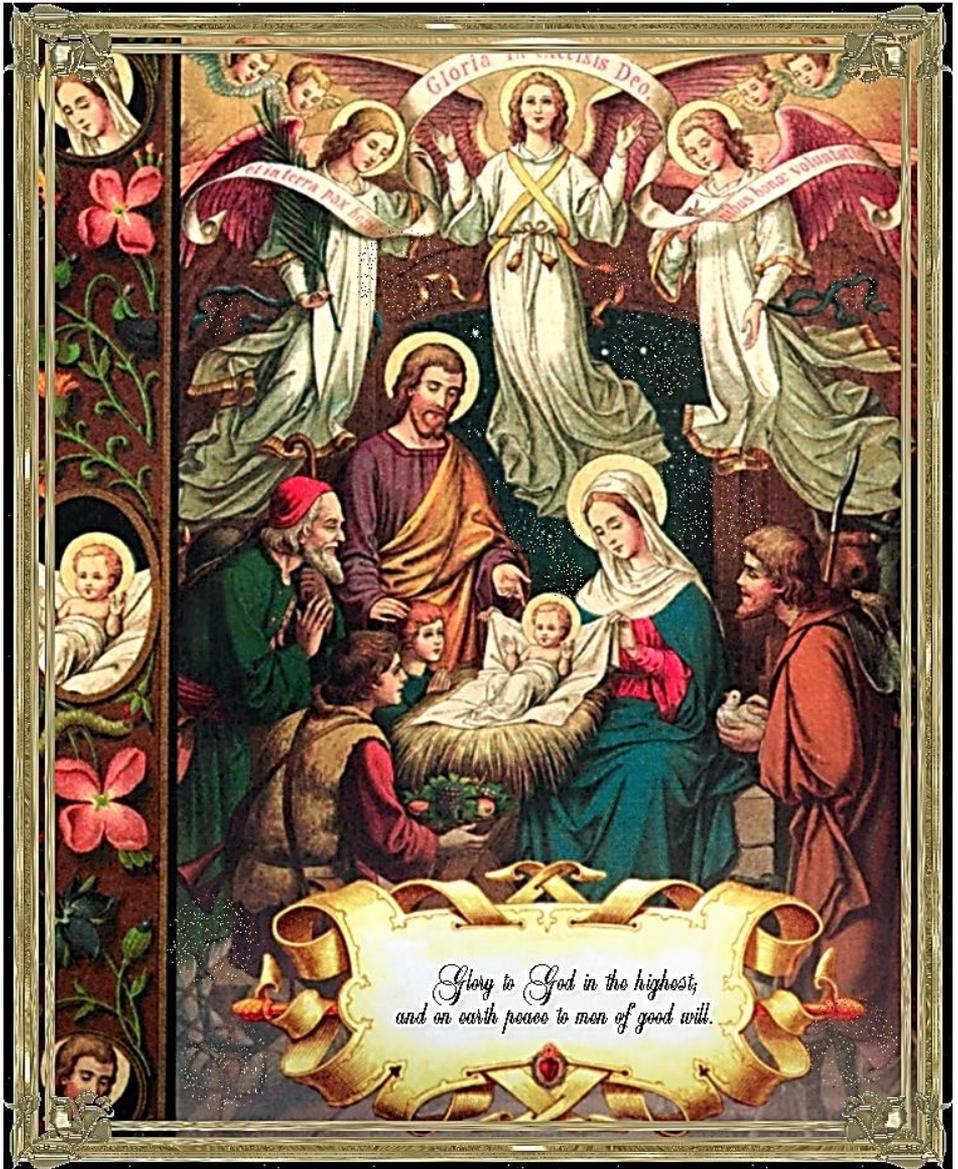


Christmastide Devotions



Devotion of Offering to Jesus, Mary and Joseph

This devotion was devised to be said on Christmas Day and on the twenty-fifth day of each month of the year. However, it is also appropriate to pray it each day throughout Christmastide and through the Octave of the Epiphany.

Act of Offering to the Most Holy Infant

O most holy Infant Jesus, in the presence of Thy Blessed Virgin Mother Mary and of St. Joseph, Thy most faithful foster-father, I, though a most unworthy sinner, desiring nevertheless to honour Thy most adorable Infancy, which was the first state upon earth to which Thou didst subject Thyself for my salvation, choose Thee this day as my King and my Lord; and I firmly purpose to love and to serve Thee always, and to honour Thee especially in this state in which Thou, O Word Eternal, Immense and Infinite, wert born a little Babe for the love of me. Ah, be pleased, O most loving Babe, to bless this my respectful offering, and give me the grace to depend henceforth wholly upon Thee, as Thou, in all things, didst depend upon Thy Virgin Mother and St. Joseph; so that I may be fit to be a servant in Thy Holy Family on earth, and then be admitted to the citizenship with the angels and Thy saints in Heaven; and therefore, do Thou bless me, save me, and help me. Amen.

Five glories in honour of the Heart of the Infant Jesus.

Act of Offering to the Most Holy Mother Mary

O Virgin and Mother, O sacred temple of the Divinity, O marvel of Heaven and earth, my great Mother Mary, it is but just that, whilst thou hast brought forth for us an Infant God, we adore in thee the most exalted dignity of the Mother of God, and should consecrate to so worthy a mother all the homage of our whole being. I therefore offer myself and give myself up wholly unto thee this day, and desire with a resolute will, to serve and love thy Holy Child Jesus, my Saviour and my God. I know that, in doing so, I shall give thee pleasure, and the homage which I pay to the Son will be also a homage paid unto the mother.

Accept, then, O most loving mother, this my offering of love, which, that it may be still more acceptable to thee, I present by the hands of the Infant Jesus. Ah! by those swathing bands in which thou didst wrap Him in the manger, bind my will, so that I may never retract the offering which I have made of myself this day to thee, and to thy Holy Infant; place me under thy most holy mantle, guard me, help me, and defend me to the last moment of my life. Amen.

Three Aves to the Immaculate Heart of the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

Act of Offering to the Patriarch St. Joseph

Most glorious Patriarch, chastest spouse of the great Mother of God, and reputed father of my Lord Jesus Christ, my loving St. Joseph; confiding in the greatness of thy holiness, and inflamed with the love which Jesus and Mary bore thee, I choose thee this day in their presence to be my especial protector, advocate and patron, and I firmly purpose to keep this devotion to thee always burning within my heart. And since I know that thou wert appointed by the Eternal Father to be the head of the Holy Family upon earth, I desire to be one of its devoted servants and friends, and I beg of thee to admit me into the number. Though an unworthy sinner, I desire, while paying my homage to the Infant Jesus and His Virgin Mother, to render it also unto thee. I beseech thee also, O my most glorious father, St. Joseph, to obtain for me, through thy great merits, and by thy most powerful intercession, the grace to imitate in my life thy most holy conversation with Jesus and Mary; so that I too, like thyself, may enjoy the assistance of Jesus and Mary at my death, and in their arms may breathe forth my soul, saying: Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul. Amen.

One Pater, one Ave and one Glory to St. Joseph.

Collect:

Let us pray.

O God, Who, by the Holy Family of the Incarnate Word, hast consecrated the whole earth, and hast, in Jesus, Mary and Joseph, given unto us the pattern of holy living: grant that we, who, by this blessed three, implore of Thee the grace of holy living, may, together with the angels, come to praise Thee in Heaven, Who livest in Thy blissful and undivided Trinity of Persons, world without end. Amen.

Litany for Christmas

The following Litany should be said on the first three days of Christmastide (25th, 26th, 27th December: Christmas Day and the Feasts of Stephen and of John) and on the Octave Day of Christmas (New Year's Day). The highest feasts respect vigils, tridua, octaves and other devout periods. For Christmas Eve, for the other days of Christmastide and for the days in the Octave of the Epiphany, use the Litany of the Infant Jesus. On the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, use the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus. The Litany of the Holy Name ranks first among all the litanies of our Lord and was approved at the same time as the Loreto Litany was approved. Only the Litany of the Saints is more ancient than those two.

Glory [incline] be to God on high.

And peace on earth to men of good will.

We [bow] praise Thee.

We bless Thee.

We adore [bow]Thee.

We glorify Thee; We give Thee [bow] thanks for Thy great glory.

Lord God, Heavenly King, Father Almighty.

Lord [bow] Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son.

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

Who takest away the sins of the world,

Hear our prayers.

Who sitteth at the right hand of the Father,

Have mercy on us.

For Thou only art holy,

Thou only art our Lord.

Thou only, O Jesus [bow] Christ, art most high,

together with the Holy Ghost, in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Blessed Jesus, true God and Man, born in the form of a helpless infant,

Praise and glory be to Thee forever.

Blessed Jesus, Who, having the Heavens for Thy throne,

didst yet choose a poor stable for Thine abode.

Praise and glory be to Thee forever.

Blessed Jesus, Who, being God incomprehensible, wast pleased, in love
to us, to be wrapped up in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

Praise and glory be to Thee forever.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel

because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people.

And hath raised up a horn of salvation to us

in the House of David, His servant.

As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets,

who are from the beginning.

Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.

To perform mercy to our fathers, and to remember His holy testament.

The oath, which he swore to Abraham our father,

that He would grant to us.

That being delivered from the hand of our enemies,

we may serve Him without fear.

In holiness and justice before Him all our days.

Through the bowels of the mercy of our God,

in which the Orient from on high hath visited us.

To enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death;

to direct our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen.

Let us pray.

O eternal God, Father Almighty, Who, in compassion to lost man, didst send Thine only Son to become his Redeemer from that unhappy state: grant, we beseech Thee, that we, who are here assembled to acknowledge the mercy of this time, may find the benefit of it in our souls, in the pardon of all our sins. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen.

Litany of the Infant Jesus

Lord, have mercy upon us. *Christ, have mercy upon us.*

Lord, have mercy upon us. Jesus, hear us. *Jesus, graciously hear us.*

God the Father of Heaven, *have mercy on us.*

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*

God the Holy Ghost, *have mercy on us.*

Holy Trinity, One God, *have mercy on us.*

Infant, Jesus Christ, *have mercy on us.*

Infant, true God, *have mercy on us.*

Infant, Son of the living God, *have mercy on us.*

Infant, Son of the Virgin Mary, &c.

Infant, strong in weakness,

Infant, powerful in tenderness,

Infant, Treasure of grace,

Infant, Fountain of love,

Infant, Renewer of the heavens,

Infant, Repairer of the evils of earth,

Infant, Head of the angels,

Infant, Root of the patriarchs,

Infant, Speech of prophets,

Infant, Desire of the Gentiles,

Infant, Joy of shepherds,

Infant, Light of the Magi,

Infant, Salvation of infants,

Infant, Expectation of the just,

Infant, Instructor of the wise,

Infant, First-fruit of all saints,

Be merciful, *spare us, O Infant Jesus.*

Be merciful, *graciously hear us, O Infant Jesus.*

From the slavery of the children of Adam, *Infant Jesus, deliver us.*

From the slavery of the devil, *Infant Jesus, deliver us.*

From the evil desires of the flesh, *Infant Jesus, deliver us.*

From the malice of the world, &c.

From the pride of life,

From the inordinate desire of knowing,

From blindness of spirit,

From an evil will,

From our sins,

Through Thy most pure Conception,
Through Thy most humble Nativity,
Through Thy tears,
Through Thy most painful Circumcision,
Through Thy most glorious Epiphany,
Through Thy most pious Presentation,
Through Thy most divine life,
Through Thy poverty,
Through Thy many sufferings,
Through Thy labours and travels,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us, O Infant Jesus.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Infant Jesus.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

✠ Jesus, Infant, hear us.

✠ *Jesus, Infant, graciously hear us.*

Let us pray.

O Lord Christ, Thou wert pleased so to humble Thyself in Thine incarnate divinity and most sacred Humanity as to be born in time and become a little child. Grant that we may acknowledge infinite wisdom in the silence of a child, power in weakness, and majesty in humiliation. Adoring Thy humiliations on earth, may we contemplate Thy glories in Heaven, Who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest forever. ✠ *Amen.*

Infant of Prague Chaplet

The Chaplet of the Infant of Prague is a circlet of twelve red beads to which a pendant is attached. The pendant terminates in a medal showing the Infant of Prague on its obverse side and an image of the Sacred Heart (the Heart alone) on the reverse side. The medal is connected to the circlet by three red beads. The three red beads represent the Holy Trinity. The twelve beads in the circlet represent the twelve years of the Childhood of our Lord, for adolescence begins on one's twelfth birthday; it also represents the Twelve Days of Christmas. The total number of fifteen beads calls to mind the Fifteen Mysteries of the Holy Rosary.

How to Pray this Chaplet

Say the Invitatory on the medal:

✠. Incline ✠ unto my aid, O God.

✠ O Lord, make haste to help me.

On the first bead, say: *And the Word was made flesh*
plus one *Pater* to honour the Almighty Father.

On the second bead, say: *And the Word was made flesh*
plus one *Pater* to honour Jesus Christ.

On the third bead, say: *And the Word was made flesh*
plus one *Pater* to honour the Holy Ghost.

On the first bead in the circlet, genuflect or bow while saying:

And the Word was made flesh / and dwelt among us plus one *Ave*.

Now say an *Ave* on each of the other beads in the circlet

while meditating on the Holy Childhood of Jesus Christ.

You may say a final *Glory* but this would be a case of a trimming:

it is not a standard part of the devotion.

On each of the three pendant beads, pray this:

"Holy Infant Jesus, bless and protect us".

End with the *Signum Crucis*.

Is devotion to the Infant of Prague connected to Christmas? The answer is firmly *yes*. This devotion is only a seventeenth-century development of the much earlier devotions to the Infant Jesus (although it is a separate devotion in its own right owing to miracles connected to a particular statue). In the Late Middle Ages, during the period of affective piety, especially during pilgrimages, ladies tended to take in their belongings a statuette--even a doll--of the Infant Jesus. They would undress and re-dress this doll in accordance with the liturgical colour of the day. Careful washing of the statuette's clothes was given priority over washing of one's own clothes so that this became a ritual way to show care and love for Jesus. The Infant of Jesus devotions were practised during Advent, Christmastide and Epiphanytide.

This devotional booklet has been prepared by the *Una Voce Vancouver Island Association (U.V.V.I.A.)*

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