

PRAYERS FOR THE RESPECT LIFE HOLY HOUR
December 1, 2020

OPENING PRAYER:

ALL:

*My Lord and my God, I firmly believe that You see me; that You hear me.
I adore You.
I beg pardon for my sins.
I beg for Your grace during this time of prayer.
Mary, my mother, Saint Joseph, my father, and my Guardian Angel
Pray for me.*

REFLECTION:

LEADER: Reflection by Fr. P. West

Advent is a season of waiting with Mary to celebrate the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a good time to reflect on the pregnancy of Mary as she waited in joyful expectation for the birth of her son.

We reflect during Advent that Jesus was a pre-born child. The moment of the Incarnation took place not on Christmas Day at his birth, but at the Annunciation which we celebrate on March 25 - nine months earlier. Jesus the Eternal Word took flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Spirit, after she consented to God's plan announced by the Archangel Gabriel.

Reflecting on Mary's pregnancy can teach us patience and the attitude of joyful expectation that all of us should have as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus and as we wait for his second coming in glory at the end of time. This attitude of joyful expectation should accompany the pregnancy of every woman as we await the birth of her pre-born child. Each child is made in the image and likeness of God no matter what their handicaps or circumstances of conception. Every child deserves a chance to be born and to continue to grow and develop outside the womb. Jesus identifies with the pre-born since he himself was a pre-born child. Jesus went through all the stages of development that we went through. He was a tiny zygote, an embryo, fetus, infant, child, adolescent and an adult. At no time did he become more human. He simply went through different stages of human development as we all did. When Jesus was developing in the womb he was not a potential person.

Mary also can identify with every pregnant mother in a difficult pregnancy. She did not fully understand God's plan, yet she trusted. True devotion to Mary means imitating her virtues - her faith, her trust and her willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of her son and others as she stayed with Elizabeth for three months to help Elizabeth deliver St. John the Baptist. When Mary visited St. Elizabeth John the Baptist leapt for joy within St. Elizabeth's womb as he recognized Christ's presence in Mary. Thus we see John who was a fetus recognizing Christ who was a tiny embryo. This should lead us to an even greater respect for the lives of pre-born children and inspire us to work for their protection. Jesus says "Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters that you do to me." (Mat. 25, 40)

St. Joseph cared for Mary during her pregnancy. He is an example for all men of the stewardship they are called to exercise. Men are called to respect the wonder of procreation and to care for pregnant women emotionally, materially and spiritually. During their pregnancies women become vulnerable should be able to rely on the support of their husbands and other men in their life who should respect and assist women as the mystery of life unfolds within them.

It is fitting that there are major feasts of Our Lady during the celebration of Advent – the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Mary appeared as a pregnant woman to Blessed Juan Diego in Mexico in 1531. She identified herself to be "the perpetual and perfect Virgin Mary, holy mother of the true God through whom everything lives, the Creator and Master of heaven and earth". She also proclaimed herself as Juan Diego's "merciful mother, the mother of all of you who live united in this land, and of all humankind, of all those who love me, of those who cry out to me, of those who seek me, of those who have confidence in me." Mary showed love to a people who had just escaped from the diabolical Aztec Empire in which human sacrifices were offered to false gods. Pope John Paul II proclaimed Our Lady of Guadalupe to be the Patroness of the Americas. She is also recognized as the Patroness of the Unborn.

Mary said yes to God and Jesus Christ was conceived in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life, so Mary is truly the Mother of Our Life. From the cross Jesus our Life gave Mary to us to be our mother. Mary throughout history has come to the aid of her people. As Mary put an end to the culture of death in Mexico we pray today that she will intercede for the United States. In 1846 the Bishops of the United States dedicated our nation to the Immaculate Conception. Ask Mary to intercede for us to put an end to the tragedies of abortion, euthanasia and other attacks on human life that we might lead other nations to respect the dignity and value of each and every human life from conception to natural death.

THE ANGELUS

LEADER: The Angel of the Lord declared to Mary:

ALL: *And she conceived of the Holy Spirit*

ALL: *Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

LEADER: Behold the handmaid of the Lord:

ALL: *Be it done unto me according to Thy word. Hail Mary...*

LEADER: And the Word was made Flesh:

ALL: *And dwelt among us. Hail Mary...*

LEADER: Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God:

ALL: *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Hail Mary...*

LEADER: Let us pray:

ALL: *Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection, through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen*

PERIOD OF REFLECTION AND PRIVATE PRAYER:

(Notes)

PRAYER FOR LIFE BEFORE THE PRO-LIFE ROSARY:

ALL: *Father, all life is in Your care. You have entrusted us to one another, that we may show our brothers and sisters the same love You have for us.*

We pray, then, for an increased respect for human life and for the dignity of the human person in our country and our world.

We pray in particular for the most vulnerable among us, the children in the womb. Protect them. Give new hope to their parents that they will accept and embrace the gift of their child.

We pray for the conversion of those who do not respect human life, particularly those who work at the Hillcrest facility here in our neighborhood. Help those men and women harmed by abortion to find reconciliation and peace.

We pray also for the sick, the handicapped and the elderly. May they know Your grace in their difficulties.

Inspire many more to speak up in defense of life, and give us peace and joy in serving as Your disciples. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

PRO-LIFE ROSARY INTENTIONS:

LEADER: The Agony in the Garden: Lord Jesus, as we meditate on your bitter agony in Gethsemane, we pray for those who are misled, confused, threatened, or afraid to say, 'yes' to human life from conception to natural death. Please lift us out of the darkness of confusion and fear, O Lord, and fill us with your strength and grace.

LEADER: The Scourging at the Pillar: Lord Jesus, as we meditate on your painful scourging, we pray for those who have been scourged by the devaluation of human life, especially here in Baltimore and throughout our country. Convert our culture of drugs and death to a culture of life, and grant us the grace to acknowledge the dignity of all life and to conform ourselves to Your Holy Will.

LEADER: The Crowning with Thorns: Lord Jesus, as we meditate on your humiliating coronation with thorns, we bring to you our lost and hurting human family, especially those who are involved with abortion. Let us pray for a conversion of heart for the doctors, nurses and all those persons of the medical, social and media professions who bring about death rather than life.

LEADER: The Carrying of the Cross: Lord Jesus, as we meditate on your excruciating climb to Calvary, we pray that parents facing an unexpected pregnancy will lovingly accept the precious life God has entrusted to them and that women in crisis pregnancies suffering abandonment or neglect, will be aided by compassionate individuals who come forward to offer them comfort and aid.

LEADER: The Crucifixion: Lord Jesus, as we meditate on your suffering and death on the cross and the good thief you so readily pardoned, we pray for all who commit acts of violence and sins against life and who are consequently dreadfully damaged in body and in spirit. Please fill them--and all of us--anew O Lord, with the grace of conversion, so that we may know your Love and Mercy so as to restore and heal us.

PRAYER TO ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL:

ALL: *St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen*

CLOSING PRAYER FOR OUR NATION:

ALL: *God our Father, Giver of life, we entrust the United States of America to Your loving care. You are the rock on which this nation was founded. You alone are the true source of our cherished rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Reclaim this land for Your glory and dwell among Your people.*

Send Your Spirit to touch the hearts of our nation's leaders. Open their minds to the great worth of human life and the responsibilities that accompany human freedom. Remind Your people that true happiness is rooted in seeking and doing Your will.

Through the intercession of Mary Immaculate, Patroness of our land, grant us the courage to reject the "culture of death." Lead us into a new millennium of life. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen



BENEDICTION PRAYERS:

TANTUM ERGO (BENEDICTION HYMN):

Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui:
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui:
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui

*Down in adoration falling,
This great Sacrament we hail,
Over ancient forms of worship
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail*

Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio
Amen

*To the everlasting Father,
And the Son Who reigns on high
With the Holy Ghost proceeding
Forth from Each eternally,
Be salvation, honor, blessing,
Might and endless majesty|
Amen*

PRAYER BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:

V. Panem de caelo praestitisti eis
R. *Omne delectamentum in se habentem*

(English translation):

V. You have given them bread from Heaven
R. *Having all sweetness within it*

BENEDICTION PRAYER:

ALL: *Lord Jesus Christ, You gave us the Eucharist as the memorial of Your suffering and death. May our worship of this Sacrament of Your body and blood help us to experience the salvation You won for us and the peace of the kingdom where You live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

THE DIVINE PRAISES:

ALL:

*Blessed be God
Blessed be His Holy Name
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man
Blessed be the Name of Jesus
Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart
Blessed be His Most Precious Blood
Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most Holy
Blessed be her Holy and Immaculate Conception
Blessed be her Glorious Assumption
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother
Blessed be St Joseph, her most chaste spouse
Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints*

PRAYER AFTER BENEDICTION:

ALL: *May the Heart of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament be praised, adored, and loved with grateful affection, at every moment, in all the Tabernacles of the world, even until the end of time. Amen.*