The Catholic Mother

INSPIRATION FOR LITURGICAL LIVING



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ADVENT PREPARATION

Perpetual Light

by Kim Halloran-Fry

This month of the Holy Souls invites us to share with our children the whole vast Communion of Saints and help them learn where they fit and what role they play, even as small children. We think about beginnings as we start the St Andrew Novena and advent, and we think of our final end and what comes after this life.

The first week is part of the Octave of All Souls and is rich with indulgences and kindnesses we can perform for the dearly departed. If possible, go to mass! Have masses said, which is the most powerful prayer we can offer. Visit cemetaries and pray the Eternal Rest prayer together there for the repose of souls. Print and recite the St Gertrude prayer of release often especially in November (included). Consider reading Charity for the Suffering Souls to stir up compassion and motivation.

There are many ways we can remember our departed loved ones with our home altar. Mass cards or small photos can be displayed in playing card stands or any photo display "tree", in multi-opening collage frames, or clipped to a string and hung as a banner or garland.
We can begin the month with a black altar cloth and then change that to a purple cloth on the first Sunday of Advent. Small, impactful steps like these, done over and over each year, help to settle big concepts into the minds of small children. Indeed they help us to regulate our own hearts as we immerse ourselves in the predictable rhythms of the liturgical year and gently develop our spiritual disciplines.

Soon after the octave we have the feast of St Martin, celebrated historically as Martinmas. Inside are links full of ideas to inspire you. Our family and friends have fond traditions of bonfires and lantern walks with apple cider and donuts and a reading of Snow on Martinmas on this evening.

Nov 19th is the feast of Elizabeth of Hungary, young wife, mother, lover of the poor, and, early in life, a widow cast out by bitter in-laws. There are depths to mine there for many stages of life and situations.

It is time to begin thinking about Advent which begins Nov 29th. Do you know where your candles are? Will you be using a traditional wreath or creating a DIY project?

Have you printed the St Andrew Novena prayer which begins Nov 30th.? (included) There are also chaplets available to help track the daily prayers for this powerful practice. Gather all the things earlier vs later.

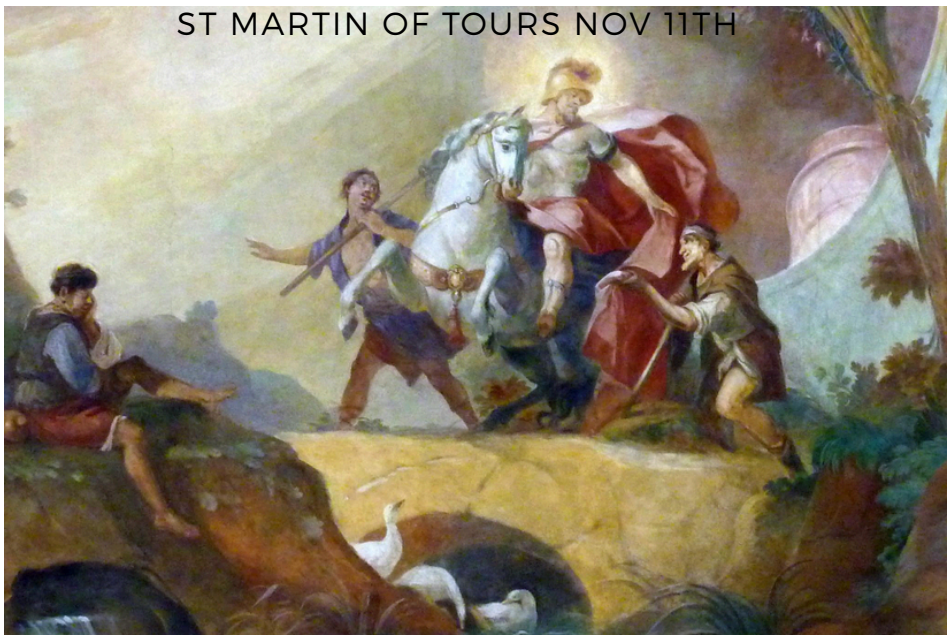
"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May they rest in peace. Amen.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God,
rest in peace. Amen."

a note about how to use this newsletter
Each month there are links to a book for mothers, video and print biographies of a saint or two, a song to learn, quotes to carry in your heart, and a few crafts to do together. There is a printable prayer for your home altar and ongoing ideas for arranging your domestic monastery and living your vocation. God bless you!

"Yet how quickly we could empty purgatory if we but really wished to."

St John Vianney

ST MARTIN OF TOURS NOV 11TH



TO MAKE AND DO:

NOVEMBER AT HOME - VINTAGE CATHOLIC PRESCHOOL
MARTINMAS CELEBRATION IDEAS
MARTINMAS LANTERNS AND HORSESHOE COOKIES
ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY MAGIC SLIDER PAPER CRAFT
HOW TO DRAW ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY
ADVENT WREATH PROJECTS
COMMUNION OF SAINTS PRINT TO FRAME
PURGATORY PRINT

TO READ:

SNOW ON MARTINMAS
ROSES IN THE SNOW
CHARITY FOR THE SUFFERING SOULS

TO SING/RECITE:

DE PROFUNDIS
DE PROFUNDIS PRAYER
ST GERTRUDE PRAYER PRINTABLE

TO WATCH:

MARTINMAS FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN
ST ELIZABETH AND THE ROSES
ADVENT WREATH STORY

CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERS RESOURCES:

Members Manual Online
Why Enroll?
Pieta Sticker
Mother Love Book
Printable Prayer Card for Confraternity Mothers





St Michael and Purgatory

You're going to want to hear this. That is what I have been telling Catholic friends since we renewed our consecration to St Michael in September. It seems that, previously, I missed a rather significant promise attached to the recitation of the Chaplet of St Michael the Archangel.

St. Michael appeared to Antonia d'Astonac, a Portuguese Carmelite nun, and asked to be honored with nine salutations to the nine Choirs of Angels. Blessed Pope Pius IX approved the chaplet in 1851. According to the account of her vision, St. Michael promised that those who practice this devotion would have an escort of an angel from each of the nine choirs when they approach Holy Communion. He also promised that those who pray it daily would have his continual help and that of the holy angels throughout life, **and after death deliverance from Purgatory for themselves and their relatives.**

This is a singular and undeserved grace we cannot afford to pass by. There are a number of video and audio recordings of the chaplet which help us to make the less than 15 minute prayer daily, for ourselves and our loved ones .

"*By the intercession of St. Michael and the celestial Choir of Angels, may the Lord grant us to be protected by them in this mortal life and conducted in the life to come to Heaven. Amen.*"

ST ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

NOVEMBER 19TH

The dear St. Elizabeth, our St. Elizabeth, as the German people like to call her, was the daughter of King Andrew II of Hungary, and was born in the year 1207. The little princess was carried to her baptism followed by a grand procession. She was most carefully trained and taught, and from her earliest childhood she loved God and the poor.

When she was barely four years old she was taken away from her parents to live among strangers. You will ask why. My dear children, in those days it was the custom to promise children in marriage at their birth or soon after. So Elizabeth was promised to Louis, the son of the landgrave of Thuringia, in Germany. With an escort of many nobles, of horsemen, and of servants, Elizabeth was taken to the Wartburg near Hisenach. Here Elizabeth and Louis were solemnly betrothed, and were then raised together.

The noisy life at the castle of the landgrave did not prevent Elizabeth from giving up her childish heart to Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and the beloved St. John. Prayer and self-denial were her constant occupations. Even in her play she kept God in mind, and the least shadow of impurity was shunned by her. She had no mind for pride of dress and display. Once on the feast of the Assumption, she was dressed in silk and crowned with a little golden crown by the Countess Sophia, who was to be her mother-in-law, and was then taken to the church at Eisenach. She knelt down before a picture of the crucified Saviour, and after a little she took the golden crown from her head and wept to think that she, a poor creature, should have appeared before our thorn crowned Redeemer in such costly attire.

In her childhood Elizabeth took particular delight in temporal and spiritual works of mercy. She always gave her pin-money to the poor, with the hope that they would say a Hail Mary for her. She gathered up the food left over from meals and gave it to the hungry. Once she went to a cemetery with her playmates. There she said to them: **“The people who are buried here were once living, as we are. Now they are dead, as we will some day be. Therefore we should love God. And now please say after me: Christ, through Thy bitter death and through Thy dear Mother Mary, deliver the souls from their sufferings in purgatory, and give us who are living Thy grace, that we may attain to the eternal joy of heaven.”**

As long as the landgrave lived, things were pleasant for Elizabeth. After his death his widow Sophia and her daughter Agnes, who were both worldly minded and lax in religious matters, made it very hard for Elizabeth. Because she liked to serve the poor, these ladies called her a servant and not a princess. Even the nobility made fun of her. She was like a lamb among wolves. They even tried to turn Louis, her promised husband, against her. They told him to send her to a convent. But in vain, for Louis valued her angelic patience and her piety.

In her fifteenth year she was married. Elizabeth was very happy with her young husband, and he, being a most God-fearing man, allowed her to go on with her pious practices. She visited the sick, helped the needy, and would spin and weave clothing for the poor with her own hands. As an angel of mercy she appeared in the humble homes which she visited. Tbe many roses blooming on the Wartburg keep the memory of the lovely miracle of roses fresh to this day. Once when Elizabeth had a basket of food for the poor under her cloak,

her husband stopped her and asked what she had there. Blushing to tell her own charity, she answered, " Roses to weave a wreath for myself." He asked to see them, and when he turned back her cloak the basket was full of roses.

A famine which desolated Thuringia in 1225 and caused great misery gave Elizabeth opportunity to increase her charity. She built two hospitals and fed nine hundred poor every day. At that time there were many lepers. Every one shrank in disgust from these poor wretches, but not Elizabeth. She loved them for Christ's sake. With her own hands she bathed them, and combed their hair, sat with them, and cheered and encouraged them to trust and hope in God.

After Elizabeth had had six years of happiness, the Lord put a heavy trial upon her. Her beloved husband died in a crusade in which he had joined with other Christian princes for the rescue of the Holy Land. His brother Henry usurped his place and turned Elizabeth with her four young children out of the Wartburg. It was in the middle of winter, and the outcast princess was not permitted to take a thing with her. The daughter of a king was poorer than the poorest beggar, for the new lord of the land had even forbidden his subjects to give her and her hungry and freezing children shelter and food. At last an innkeeper near Eisenach gave the wanderers leave to sleep in his stable. And here the princess and her children were glad to take refuge. "For shame," you think, my dear children. But not so Elizabeth. When the midnight bell of the Franciscan Church called the brothers to matins the saint went to the church and asked the brothers to sing the Te Deum in thanksgiving that she was vouchsafed to find shelter in a stable, even as Mary had been in Bethlehem.

Elizabeth went from Eisenach to Bamberg, where her uncle took her under his protection. He was the Bishop of Bamberg, and succeeded in persuading her brother-in-law to give back the city of Marburg and its revenues to Elizabeth. Elizabeth forgave her brother-in-law and never spoke a word of blame against him, but she did not want to know anything more of the world. She chose a hut outside of Marburg for her dwelling and took the habit of the Third Order of St. Francis on Good Friday of the year 1229. Her beloved children she gave up for the sake of Christ after having arranged for their right education and training, and she herself lived only for prayer, work, and the care of the sick. She gave all her income to the poor, and lived only on bread and meat cooked in water.

On the 19th of November, 1231, her pure soul, ornamented by so many merits and virtues, passed back to its Maker. She was buried in Marburg, where a beautiful church has been built in her honor.

Be charitable, is the lesson of St. Elizabeth's life. And indeed it is a most important lesson. Great blessings, temporal and spiritual, especially the grace of obtaining eternal life, are promised those who give out of Christian charity, and particularly those who do the temporal acts of mercy. Who gives to the poor will have no need, but he who despises the prayer of the needy, will himself suffer poverty. And St. Paul entreats us not to forget to be charitable, for by such things God is reconciled.

Do not say, dear children, you have nothing to give. Your bread and butter, or your apple, can be divided with a poor child. The pennies which you keep for candy and sweets may sometimes be saved to give in charity. You can wait on the sick, or give to some one thirsty and tired a glass of water. Even the drink of water given in the name of Jesus will not miss its reward.

What we do for the least of our fellow beings, if we do it for the love of God, is as though we had done it to Christ Himself. Once St. Elizabeth was asked to attend a banquet which her husband was giving in honor of some of the highest nobles in the land, and he asked that she wear her finest robes for this reason. On the way to the banquet St. Elizabeth was stopped by a beggar who was almost naked, and who did not cease from begging for clothing. She took off her cloak and gave it to him. Before she entered the bauquet-hall an unknown youth stepped up to her and handed back her cloak. Who was this youth? Perhaps an angel; perhaps even Our Lord Himself. Who knows?

Lives of the Saints for Children, Th Berthold, 1900

THE HEROIC ACT

~ "CAN YOU EXPLAIN CATHOLIC PRACTICES," IMPRIMATUR 1937 ~

The young man was a college graduate and a recent convert to the Church. During the evening instruction I noted his keen interest. When he met me later he remarked earnestly:

"The Catholic Doctrine of Purgatory is so natural and consoling. It is a beautiful thought to know that we can help those dear to us who have passed from life in God"s grace, but are not entirely free from venial sins. I read the article Purgatory in volume XII of The Catholic Encyclopedia, and I see the full force of the Church's doctrine. You spoke tonight of means of helping the Holy Souls. Your reference to the Heroic Act interested me. Father, just what is this Heroic Act?"

"It is an offer to God, for the souls in Purgatory, of all the satisfactory works which we perform during life and also of all the suffrages which may be offered for us after death." My friend was silent for a moment, thoughtfully silent.

"I understand," he replied slowly. "Then it means that I give up, out of charity, for the souls in Purgatory, all the satisfactory value of my good works in life, all the Indulgences I may gain, and even the Masses and prayers that friends may offer or may have offered for me after my death."

"That is what it means," I answered. "Now you know why it is called the Heroic Act."

"Yes. It is heroic, because in our charity we do not think of self. Yet I know that such charity must bring great reward from God, and an increase of His love. But supposing one becomes frightened at the magnitude of his sacrifice, could he not revoke it?"

"It is not a vow. It does not bind under penalty of sin and can be revoked or renewed according to one's fervor and charity."

For some minutes we walked silently up and down the path near the church; then my young friend turned to me with a smile."This is the month of November, the month of the Holy Souls. I will make the Heroic Act, Father, and trust to God alone when I am gone. The increase of merit is worth the sacrifice."

I told him that those who make the Heroic Act can gain a Plenary Indulgence as often as they receive Holy Communion, and also on any Monday they hear Mass, out of devotion to the Holy Souls, provided a visit be made to the Blessed Sacrament and some prayer be said for the intentions of the Holy Father. If one is legitimately prevented from attending Mass on Monday, the Sunday Mass may be offered instead. The sick, who cannot receive Holy Communion frequently, or attend Mass, may have other pious works substituted by their confessor. Priests who make the Heroic Act enjoy the personal favor of a privileged altar every day of the year. No set form of words is required to make the heroic offering. A mere act of the will suffices.

THE HEROIC ACT IN FAVOR OF THE SOULS IN PURGATORY:

O MY GOD! for Thy greater glory, and to imitate as closely as possible the generous Heart of Jesus, my Redeemer, and also to testify my devotion to the Blessed Virgin, my Mother, who is also the Mother of the Souls in Purgatory, I place in her hands all my satisfactory works, as well as the fruit of all those which may be offered for my intention after my death, that she may apply them to the Souls in Purgatory according to her wisdom and good pleasure. Amen.

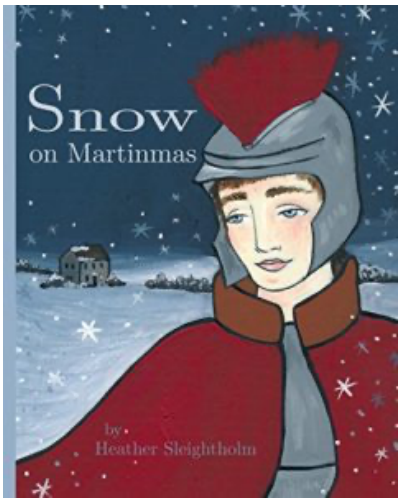
Martinmas Nov 11th

St. Martin is most famous for an event which occurred during his time as a Roman soldier. Legend tells us that upon entering the gates of Amiens (France) on a cold, snowy evening Martin happened upon a beggar clothed in nothing but rags. Without a second thought, Martin took his sword and cut his red military cloak in half and gave part of it to the beggar. That night Martin dreamt that he saw Christ wrapped in the piece of cloak, which solidified his burgeoning faith and was perhaps the catalyst for the rest of his life's work. St. Martin is associated with many other miracles, and he was instrumental in the conversion of Europe. In fact, we derive the English words "chapel" and "chaplain" from the Latin word cappella, used to describe both Martin's cloak—a sacred relic—and the sanctuary where it was kept after his death.

In much of Europe the Feast of St. Martin is celebrated with a lantern walk in the evening, and we do the same. We make beautiful lanterns with glass jars, tissue paper and Mod Podge, and process with them around our neighborhood in the dark.

Most of us have come to expect a four week-long Advent each year, starting sometime near the end of November and ending on Christmas Eve. In the past, however, Advent was observed during a seven week period in much the same manner as Lent, though with slightly less emphasis on penance. This longer Advent season earned the name "St. Martin's Lent" because it historically began on Martinmas and ended, just like today, on Christmas Eve.

Around the Year website



There are many symbols associated with Martin of Tours:

- a tree (from a legend concerning a tree that would not fall on him)
- armor (symbol for the soldier saint)
- a cloak (from the legend the story of the cloak he cut in two to clothe the beggar)
- a beggar
- a goose (from the legend that while he was hiding because he did not want to be made bishop of Tours, his pet goose kept honking and giving away his whereabouts)

Saints and Feast Days (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1985), p 43

Unit 4: Nouns

St. Martin's Cloak

Saint Martin was an officer
In the mighty ranks of Rome.
He traveled with the legions
So very far from home.

But, by and by, the Gospel
Reached this soldier's ear.
He chose Christ for his Captain,
Then laid down his spear.

One night he met a poor man
Who was cramped up with cold.
Martin took his soldier's tunic
And quickly made a fold.

He tore his warrior's cloak in two,
And gave half of it away.
The poor man wrapped it 'round him
Without a moment's delay.

Some passers-by mocked Martin;
Others blushed for shame.
But he rejoiced to suffer
For God's holy Name.

That night Martin had a vision
Of Jesus Christ the Lord.
He was wearing Martin's tunic
And spoke to him this word:

"When I was cold and naked
My son Martin to Me came.
He clothed my nakedness with love,
And took away My shame."

Martin became a hermit,
A humble man of prayer.
He preached the Holy Gospel,
Worked for souls everywhere.

He settled in the countryside
In the land of southern Gaul.
The sick and suffering sought him.
Good Martin healed them all.

Soon crowds began to hound him.
They came both day and night.
A people lost in darkness
Basked in Martin's holy light.

His cloak became a symbol
Of his Christ-like charity.
The people placed it in a church
For all the world to see.

"Capella" is the Latin word
For a man's outward cloak.
Capella became "chapelle"
In the language Martin spoke.

"Chapelle"—"chapel" in English—
In time it came to mean
"A house of prayer" like the old church
Where Martin's cloak was seen.

So when you speak of "Chapels,"
Or when you hear the word,
Recall how Martin's cloak gave
Warmth and comfort to Our Lord!

From English 2 for Young Catholics by Seton Home School Curricula



Hail and blessed be the hour and moment
in which the Son of God was born
Of the most pure Virgin Mary,
at midnight, in Bethlehem,
in the piercing cold.
In that hour vouchsafe, O my God,
to hear my prayer and grant my desires
through the merits of Our Savior Jesus
Christ, and of His blessed Mother.
Amen

recite 15 times daily between Nov 30-Dec 25

ST GERTRUDE PRAYER FOR THE POOR SOULS

"Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen."