

A PRIEST'S PRAYER TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY



O Mother of Grace! O Mother of Hope! O Mother of Mercy! Mary, Immaculate, as a priest of your Son I come before you now asking the special favor of spiritual alliance with you for the sanctification of souls and for their salvation. You are Co-Redemptrix with Christ! By his words and deeds he caused the redemption of mankind; by your ceaseless prayers of intercession on our behalf you lead all people to him to be made holy and to be saved. You two are a formidable team for the establishment of God's reign – a family of love and peace and joy!

Since, by my ordination, I am the sacramental image and sign of the love of your Son's Sacred and Pierced Heart – called by the Father to preach and teach and rule the people assigned to my care – I beseech your aid and help in performing my duties in service to the royal, kingly, priestly, prophetic people of God.

Be there when the Church baptizes: lead the catechumen to the waters of life-giving freedom and membership in the family of God;

be there when the Church confirms: prepare the baptized to receive the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit that both you and your Son received for their work in building the Kingdom;

be there at each and every celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist, just as you were there at the foot of the Cross when it initially transpired – help all to appreciate the depth of the love of the heart of your Son that was truly transparent at that time, help each person who comes to celebrate this great Sacrament come with the proper disposition and joyful expectation that sorrow is always turned into joy because of what they are actually witnessing before their eyes;

be there, Most Loving Mother when a sinful soul needs the courage to come again to the Cross of Christ in the Sacrament of Penance, pray for such a soul to be open, trusting and truly contrite of heart because God and

the Church have been offended by their sin, be there as the great Sacrament of Forgiveness unfolds;

draw men to a life of service in the Church as priests, once the Father has chosen them, encourage them in their preparation studies, be there as the Holy Spirit pours into them configuring them to Christ, your Son as Priest/Victim, True Intermediary between God and his people; and True Sanctifier of the whole world – as well as giving them the extraordinary grace of true pastoral charity – to spend the love of Christ's heart of which they now participate in an intimate way for the sanctification and salvation of the flock to which they are assigned, most especially in making present in their midst and for their spiritual nourishment the very Body and Blood of Christ the Lord and Savior of all;

be there when an engaged couple commit their lives in self-sacrificial love for one another and their forthcoming family, as you were a member of the Holy Family, Blessed Mother Mary, so be with this new family to keep as their chief goal the eternal beatitude of their members, let them also be always cognizant that sacramentally they are an image and sign of Christ the Bridegroom's own love for his Bride, the Church;

and lastly, loving Mother, pray in a special way for all those who are in need of the Sacrament of Healing and Preparation for the Final Crossing, the Sacrament of the Sick, calm those who are suffering and teach them to do what you did, unite their sufferings with that of Christ Crucified: great grace and peace follows from such total surrender done with love and dignity.

In all other aspects of the Church's life and ministry, be present Mary – ever supporting and praying for and encouraging daily growth in the Spirit, growth in devotion to love of God and others, and growth in apostolic charity: loving others because we have all been loved first by God.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, so loving and so pure and so maternal!

We honor you, we love you, we promise never to forget you and the role you play in the life of the Church. Pray for us always – until we see you face to face in heaven!

Amen.

Fr. William Dinga, Jr.

Feast of Our Lady of the Snow/

The Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome

August 5, 2011