



### Intercessors for Life

Between October and Christmas the Church commemorates the heroic lives of many saints who, from heaven, are powerful intercessors for the Gospel of Life. The following brief readings and prayers may be used to beg their intercession for the unborn, the poor and those who are old or dying.

|       |   |       |  |
|-------|---|-------|--|
| 10-1  | <a href="#">St. Therese of the Child Jesus</a>          | 12-7  | <a href="#">St. Ambrose</a>                            |
| 10-2  | <a href="#">Guardian Angels</a>                         | 12-8  | <a href="#">Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception</a> |
| 10-4  | <a href="#">St. Francis of Assisi</a>                   | 12-11 | <a href="#">St. Damasus I</a>                          |
| 10-6  | <a href="#">St. Bruno</a>                               | 12-12 | <a href="#">Our Lady of Guadalupe</a>                  |
| 10-9  | <a href="#">St. Denis</a>                               | 12-13 | <a href="#">St. Lucy</a>                               |
| 10-15 | <a href="#">St. Teresa of Avila</a>                     | 12-14 | <a href="#">St. John of the Cross</a>                  |
| 10-16 | <a href="#">St. Hedwig</a>                              | 12-26 | <a href="#">St. Stephen</a>                            |
| 10-17 | <a href="#">St. Ignatius of Antioch</a>                 | 12-27 | <a href="#">St. John the Apostle</a>                   |
| 10-18 | <a href="#">St. Luke the Evangelist</a>                 | 12-28 | <a href="#">Holy Innocents</a>                         |
| 10-19 | <a href="#">Sts. Isaac Jogues &amp; John de Brebeuf</a> | 12-29 | <a href="#">St. Thomas Becket</a>                      |
| 10-20 | <a href="#">St. Paul of the Cross</a>                   | 12-31 | <a href="#">St. Sylvester</a>                          |
| 10-23 | <a href="#">St. John of Capistrano</a>                  |       |  |
| 10-24 | <a href="#">St. Anthony Mary Claret</a>                 |       |  |
| 11-3  | <a href="#">St. Martin De Porres</a>                    |       |  |
| 11-10 | <a href="#">St. Leo the Great</a>                       |       |  |
| 11-12 | <a href="#">St. Josaphat</a>                            |       |  |
| 11-13 | <a href="#">St. Frances Xavier Cabrini</a>              |       |  |
| 11-14 | <a href="#">St. Albert the Great</a>                    |       |  |
| 11-16 | <a href="#">St. Gertrude the Great</a>                  |       |  |
| 11-17 | <a href="#">St. Elizabeth of Hungary</a>                |       |  |
| 11-22 | <a href="#">St. Cecilia</a>                             |       |  |
| 11-23 | <a href="#">Blessed Miguel Agustin Pro</a>              |       |  |
| 11-30 | <a href="#">St. Andrew, apostle</a>                     |       |  |
| 12-3  | <a href="#">St. Francis Xavier</a>                      |       |  |
| 12-4  | <a href="#">St. John Damascus</a>                       |       |  |

#### October 1<sup>st</sup>

#### Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, virgin and doctor of the Church

Saint Thérèse once wrote: "Just as the sun shines simultaneously on the tall cedars and on each little flower as though it were alone on earth, so Our Lord is occupied particularly with each soul as though there were no others like it."

O gentle Jesus,

through whom all life came to be,  
hear our prayers for all men and women.

Hear our prayers for the great and powerful  
Hear our prayers for the weak and broken  
Hear our prayers for the littlest and most innocent  
Hear our prayer for tall human cedars  
and the very littlest of human flowers.

May all see in each the souls so precious to you,  
and through the intercession of Saint Thérèse  
may each of them be kept saved and loved.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **October 2<sup>nd</sup>** **Guardian Angels**

Recall the prayer you prayed as a child: "Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love entrusts me here: Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide."

Heavenly Father,  
who does love us with such care  
that you send angels to keep us safe.

Send strong angels to protect those most in danger.  
Those whose lives would be taken,  
in the womb or in their sickness,  
in retribution or in fear.

Send gentle angels to give comfort,  
to all who suffer from injustice  
and all who are afraid  
of the forces of darkness which surround them.

Send angels to be with us  
and give us the grace to sing with them  
to the glory of your Holy Name,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **October 4<sup>th</sup>** **Saint Francis of Assisi, religious**

Recall the famous prayer of Saint Francis: "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is darkness, light; Where there is sadness, joy.

Gentle Jesus,  
our Savior and brother,  
cleanse us with the pure love  
you first gave to Saint Francis.

Help us to cherish your creation  
and to love every creature.  
May we use all to the glory of your Name,  
for you are God, forever and ever. Amen.

**October 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Bruno, priest**

Saint Bruno once wrote: "Rejoice, my dearest brothers, because you are blessed and because of the bountiful hand of God's grace upon you. Rejoice, because you have escaped the various dangers and shipwrecks of the stormy world. Rejoice because you have reached the quiet and safe anchorage of a secret harbor. Many wish to come into this port, and many make great efforts to do so, yet do not achieve it. Indeed many, after reaching it, have been thrust out, since it was not granted them from above."

Lord,  
hear our thankful prayers,  
for you have watched over and preserved us,  
all the days of our lives.

Hear our prayers for those who are tossed by life's storms.  
For the unmarried mother and the teen mother,  
for the father who is not yet a husband,  
for the old man and the very sick woman,  
for those who would care for them  
and for their families and friends.

Hear our prayers for the man on death row,  
and for all who have sent him there.

Bless them, guide them,  
and gently lead them to you by ways which are sure and smooth,  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**October 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Denis, bishop and martyr**

The responsory from today's feast reads: "These saints of God underwent a great struggle; passing through fire and water, they were saved and received crowns of glory."

Father,  
hear our prayer for those who share in the passion of your son.  
For the littlest of children,  
for those who are old and sick  
and for all who are forgotten.

Keep them in the shadow of your care  
and preserve them with your love.  
For you are God, forever and ever. Amen.

**October 15th**  
**Saint Teresa of Avila, virgin and doctor of the Church**

Saint Teresa once wrote: "Whenever we think of Christ we should recall the love that led him to bestow on us so many graces and favors and also the great love God showed in giving us in Christ a pledge of his love: for love calls for love in return. Let us strive to keep this always before our eyes and to rouse ourselves to love him. For at some time the Lord should grant us the grace of impressing his love on our hearts, all will become easy for us and we shall accomplish great things quickly and without effort."

May the infinite love of Christ  
fill the lives of his most innocent brothers and sisters  
with the strength, hope and love of the Gospel of Christ,  
who is Lord, forever and ever. Amen.

**October 16th**  
**Saint Hedwig, religious**

Despite her wealth and power, Saint Hedwig spent much of her life in a troubled marriage. Yet she was patient, strove to do what was right and was renowned for her charity to the sick and the poor.

Ever faithful God,  
give us the grace of patience  
toward all whom you call us to love.

Help us to love in the model of your Son,  
who came to serve and not to be served.  
Through the intercession of Saint Hedwig,  
fill us with a love  
for all those whom others have forgotten.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**October 17th**  
**Saint Ignatius of Antioch, bishop and martyr**

Shortly before he gave his life for his faith in Christ, Saint Ignatius wrote in a letter to the Romans: "I am writing to all the churches to let it be known that I will gladly die for God. ... No earthly pleasures, no kingdoms of this world can benefit me in any way. I prefer death in Christ Jesus to power over the farthest limits of the earth. He who died in place of us is the one object of my quest. He who rose for our sakes is my one desire."

A Prayer for Grace

When I am powerful, give me the gift of weakness.  
When I am strong, give me the gift of suffering.  
When I am arrogant, give me the gift of littleness.  
When I am the victor, give me the gift of compassion.

When I am confident, give me the gift of trust.  
When I am certain, give me the gift of faith.  
At all times, give me love of the little ones,  
care for the persecuted, defense of the innocent.  
Give me your grace, O Lord.

**October 18th**  
**Saint Luke, evangelist**

In the Acts of the Apostles, Saint Luke wrote: "The word of God continued to increase and spread everywhere and all who were destined for eternal life believed in it. The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 12: 24, 13: 48, 52)

Lord,  
help us to rejoice  
in the gift of life with which you have graced us.  
May we cherish each moment  
and rejoice in your infinite goodness,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**October 19th**  
**Saints Isaac Jogues and John de Brébeuf, priests and martyrs, and their companions, martyrs**

Saint Isaac Jogues once wrote: "My confidence is placed in God who does not need our help for accomplishing his designs. Our single endeavor should be to give ourselves to the work and to be faithful to him, and not to spoil his work by our shortcomings."

Ever patient God,  
bear with me in my foolishness.  
Help me to trust not in my own strength,  
for I am very weak.

Give me, rather, the strength of your Son,  
who emptied himself on the cross  
and won for us salvation.

Help me to trust not in my own wisdom,  
for my foolishness overwhelms me.  
Give me, rather, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit,  
through whom the day and night recur  
and all creation is held together.

Help me to trust not in my own love,  
for I am remarkably selfish,  
Give me rather, a share in your love,  
which made me out of nothing  
and keeps all men and women  
from the little child in the womb  
to the old woman in her bed  
in your gentle, protecting embrace.

I ask this Father, through the merits of your Son,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**October 20th**  
**Saint Paul of the Cross, priest**

Saint Paul once wrote in a letter: "It is very good and holy to consider the passion of our Lord, and to meditate on it, for by this sacred path we reach union with God. Therefore, be constant in practicing every virtue, and especially in imitating the patience of our dear Jesus, for this is the summit of pure love. Live in such a way that all may know that you bear outwardly as well as inwardly the image of Christ crucified, the model of all gentleness and mercy."

Jesus, Lord,  
crucified for me and for all sinners.  
Hear my prayer for those who suffer  
in pains of aging body and soul.  
When they are lonely, give them my ear.  
When they are frightened, give them my hand.  
When they are confused, give them my calming voice.  
When they are forgotten, give them your love through me.  
Preserve and protect them Lord, and teach me how to do your will.  
For you are God, for ever and ever. Amen

**October 23rd**  
**Saint John of Capistrano, priest**

Saint John once wrote: "Those who are called to the table of the Lord must glow with the brightness that comes from the good example of a praiseworthy and blameless life. They must completely remove from their lives the filth and uncleanness of vice. ... By the brightness of their holiness they must bring light and serenity to all who gaze upon them. They have been placed here to care for others. Their own lives should be an example to others, showing how they must live in the house of the Lord."

Christ,  
you are the light of the world.  
Help us to bear your light to others.

For in the darkness, our sister aborts her child,  
our brother executes his prisoner,  
and our friends forget the parents who gave them life.  
In pain, lives are taken  
and few are cherished, as you cherish us.

Give us the serenity of your light,  
and remove the fear from our hearts.  
Then we will trust in your ways  
and all who live will be consecrated to you  
and protected by your presence.

For you are God, living and true, for ever and ever. Amen.

**October 24th**  
**Saint Anthony Mary Claret, bishop**

In an extended treatise, Saint Anthony wrote: "The man who burns with the fire of divine love is a son of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and wherever he goes, he enkindles that flame; he deserves and works with all this strength to inflame all men with the fire of God's love. Nothing deters him: he rejoices in poverty; he labors strenuously; he welcomes hardships; he laughs off false accusations; he rejoices in anguish. He thinks only of how he might follow Jesus Christ and imitate him by his prayers, his labors, his sufferings, and by caring always and only for the glory of God and the salvation of souls."

Blessed Lord,  
who through your Precious Blood has saved all mankind,  
Join us to your Sacred Heart,  
and through the Immaculate Heart of your Blessed Mother,  
help us to live as children of the Father of Life.  
May we rejoice in our poverty  
and give our every ounce of strength  
in defense of the littlest and most forgotten,  
that their lives may give praise to you,  
who gave your life for us.

For you are Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

**November 3rd**  
**Saint Martin de Porres, religious**

At the Canonization of Saint Martin de Porres, Pope John XXIII preached the following homily: "He did not blame others for their shortcomings. Certain that he deserved more severe punishment for his sins than others did, he would overlook their worst offenses. He was tireless in his efforts to reform the criminal, and he would sit up with the sick to bring them comfort. For the poor he would provide food, clothing and medicine. He did all he could to care for poor farmhands, blacks, and mulattoes who were looked down upon as slaves, the dregs of society in their time. Common people responded by calling him, 'Martin the charitable.' He excused the faults of others. He forgave the bitterest injuries, convinced that he deserved much severer punishments on account of his own sins."

Heavenly Father,  
inspired by Saint Martin,  
give us a love for those  
whom everyone else has forgotten.  
Give us understanding to help the pregnant teen,  
conviction to protect the unborn child,  
dedication to save the life of condemned prisoners,  
and compassion to help those who have grown and sick  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 10th**  
**Saint Leo the Great, pope and doctor of the Church**

For all, regenerated in Christ, are made kings by the sign of the cross. They are consecrated priests by the oil of the Holy Spirit, so that beyond the special service of our ministry as priests, all spiritual and mature Christians know that they are a royal race and are sharers in the office of the priesthood. For what is more king-like than to find yourself ruler over your body after having surrendered your soul to God? And what is more priestly than to promise the Lord a pure conscience and to offer him in love unblemished victims on the altar of one's heart?

Father,  
you have called us to be a priestly people  
and made our bodies temples of the Holy Spirit.  
Give us the courage to rejoice in the life  
you first breathed into every human being  
and to cherish the dignity  
with which you endowed your Sons and Daughters.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 12th****Saint Josaphat, bishop and martyr**

From the responsory for this feast: "Jesus said: Holy Father, protect those you have given me with the power of your name that they may be perfectly one; then the world will know that it was you who sent me."

Through the intercession of Saint Josaphat,  
protect all unborn children, Lord.  
May they mature and thrive under your divine protection,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 13th****Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, virgin**

At the canonization of this Saint, Pope Pius XII said of Saint Frances Cabrini: "She welcomed delinquent youths into safe houses and taught them to live upright and holy lives. She consoled those who were in prison and recalled to them the hope of eternal life. She encouraged prisoners to reform themselves and to live honest lives. She comforted the sick and the infirm in the hospitals and diligently cared for them. She extended a friendly and helping hand especially to immigrants and provided to them necessary shelter and relief, for having left their homeland behind, they were wandering about in a foreign land with no place to turn for help. Because of their condition she saw that they were in danger of deserting the practice of Christian virtues and their Catholic faith."

Heavenly Father,  
Saint Frances loved those who were forgotten.  
Help us to seek out all who are lost,  
afraid, or alone.  
Help us to love them with the heart of Your Son,  
who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

**November 15th****Saint Albert the Great, bishop and doctor of the Church**

Saint Albert taught that "It is by the path of love, which is charity, that God draws near to man, and man to God. But where charity is not found, God cannot dwell. If, then, we possess charity, we possess God, for 'God is Charity' (1 John 4:8)."

Lord,  
You made Saint Albert a model of charity and love.  
Make me a model of Christ your Son,  
through whose death upon the cross,  
we have learned to cherish the life  
which you have given to each of us  
as your most precious gift.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 16th**  
**Saint Gertrude the Great, virgin**

Saint Gertrude once wrote: "May my soul bless you, O Lord God my Creator, may my soul bless you. ... I praise and glorify your great patience which bore with me even though, from my infancy and childhood, adolescence and early womanhood, until I was nearly 26, I was always so blindly irresponsible. Looking back I see that but for your protecting hand I would have been quite without conscience in thought, word or deed. But you came to my aid by giving me a natural dislike of evil and a natural delight in what is good, and provided me with necessary correction from those among whom I lived."

God of endless ages,  
each day of our lives you guide and protect us,  
nurturing the gift of life,  
that we might grow in your sight  
and glorify your holy name.

Guide and protect the lives of each of our children,  
nourish and nurture them with you truth,  
that from the womb unto the last natural breath,  
each man and woman might know you,  
the one true God,  
and praise you for the gift of life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 17th**  
**Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, religious**

Always a friend of the poor, Saint Elizabeth renovated one of her castles to serve as a hospital, generously gave alms to the needy far and wide. Ultimately, she sold all she had and gave it to the poor. Each morning and evening she would care for those who were sick and take care of their needs. Her spiritual director once wrote: "Before her death I heard her confession. When I asked what should be done about her goods and possessions, she replied that anything which seemed to be hers belonged to the poor. She asked me to distribute everything except one worn-out dress in which she wished to be buried. When all this had been decided, she received the body of our Lord. Afterward, until vespers, she spoke often of the holiest things she had heard in sermons. Then, she devoutly commended to God all who were sitting near her, and as if falling into a gentle sleep, she died."

Father,  
your only Son gave his very life,  
that we might live with you for ever.

Through the intercession of Saint Elizabeth,  
teach us to love those whom others have forgotten,  
to accept your holy will,  
and to cherish the Gospel of life,  
preached from wood of the cross.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Saint Cecilia, virgin and martyr**

The Acts of Cecilia includes the following: "While the profane music of her wedding was heard, Cecilia was singing in her heart a hymn of love for Jesus, her true spouse."

Lord Jesus,  
Saint Cecilia loved you above all.  
Transform our hearts to be like hers,  
that we might love your will above our own,  
and sing the Gospel of life  
as a hymn of praise to Christ,  
who died that we might live.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**November 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Blessed Miguel Agustín Pro, priest and martyr**

Blessed Miguel once wrote: "Does our life become from day to day more painful, more oppressive, more replete with sufferings? Blessed be He a thousand times who desires it so. If life be harder, love makes it also stronger, and only this love, grounded on suffering, can carry the Cross of my Lord, Jesus Christ."

Lord Jesus,  
may we never love anything so much  
as your holy and glorious cross.  
May we love those whom you call  
to share in your sufferings,  
through sick and pain and old age,  
through persecution or suffering or imprisonment.  
May we love and defend and protect all those  
for whom you suffered and died and won salvation.  
By the merits of your glorious cross, for ever and ever. Amen.

**November 30<sup>th</sup>**

**Saint Andrew, apostle**

From the responsory for this feast: "As soon as Andrew heard the Lord preaching, he left the nets which were his livelihood and way of life, and followed the Lord who gives eternal life. This is the man who endured suffering for the love of Christ and his law."

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you called Saint Andrew to follow you  
to the wood of the cross.  
May we see in the suffering of all who are ill,  
a sharing in the sacrifice of your Son,  
who is Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Saint Francis Xavier, priest**

From a letter of Saint Francis to Saint Ignatius: "I have not stopped since the day I arrived. I conscientiously made the rounds of the villages. I bathed in the sacred waters all the children who had not yet been baptized. This means that I have purified a very large number of children so young that, as the saying goes, they could not tell their left hand from their right. The older children would not let me say my Office or eat or sleep until I taught them one prayer or another. Then I began to understand: 'The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'"

Hear our prayer for all children, Lord,  
and through the intercession of Saint Francis,  
may we protect the innocent,  
save the condemned,  
and cherish those who have grown old and afraid.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**December 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Saint John of Damascus, priest and doctor of the Church**

In his Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, Saint John wrote, "The saints must be honored as friends of Christ and children and heirs of God, as John the theologian and evangelist says: 'But as many as received him, he gave them the power to be made the sons of God. ... 'Let us carefully observe the manner of life of all the apostles, martyrs, ascetics and just men who announced the coming of the Lord. And let us emulate their faith, charity, hope, zeal, life, patience under suffering, and perseverance unto death, so that we may also share their crowns of glory.'"

Father,  
through the sacrifice of Christ your Son  
you have made us your children.  
Give us the zeal to protect the innocent,

the patience to endure all suffering,  
and the charity to love those who share  
in the sufferings of your Son.  
We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

**December 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Ambrose, bishop and doctor of the Church**

Responsory from the feast of Saint Ambrose, based upon his words: "Proclaim the message, in season and out of season; refute falsehood, correct error, call to obedience."

Lord Jesus Christ,  
You are the way, the truth and the life.  
Through the prayers of Saint Ambrose,  
may we defend what is true in season and out.  
May the Gospel of life define what we say and do,  
for you are Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

**December 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**

From a sermon by Saint Anselm: "Lady, full and overflowing with grace, all creation receives new life from your abundance. Virgin, blessed above all creatures, through your blessing all creation is blessed, not only creation from its Creator, but the Creator himself has been blessed by creation."

|                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Holy Mary,                      | Pray for all Children.             |
| Mother of God,                  | Pray for all mothers.              |
| Mother of the Word Incarnate,   | Pray for those yet unborn.         |
| Mother of grace,                | Pray for those who have grown old. |
| Mother of the Author of Life,   | Pray for those condemned to die.   |
| Mother of the Divine Physician, | Pray for the mortally ill.         |
| Mother of the Source of Life,   | Pray for those grown old.          |
| Mother of Eternal Life,         | Pray those about to die.           |
| Mother of all mercies,          | Pray for us.                       |

**December 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Damasus I, pope**

Responsory for the Feast of Saint Damasus: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones; their very bones are dear to him, not one of them shall be broken. The Lord clothes them with gladness."

Hear our prayers, Gentle Lord,  
for all who are broken, afraid, or alone.  
Protect and heal them,  
sustain and shepherd them,

that they may know the joy of your glory.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**December 12<sup>th</sup>**  
**Our Lady of Guadalupe**

Saint Sophronius once wrote of the Blessed Virgin Mary: "Enclosed within your womb is God himself. He makes his abode in you and comes forth from you like a bridegroom, winning joy for and bestowing God's light on all."

Hail, ever Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe!  
As you brought faith in Christ your Son  
to the lands of America,  
so make this a just and faithful nation,  
where liberty finds meaning in truth,  
and justice is fulfilled in your will.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**December 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Lucy, virgin and martyr**

Antiphon of the Canticle of Zechariah from the Feast of Saint Lucy: "I am the Lord's poor servant; to him alone, the living God, I have offered all in sacrifice; I have nothing else to give; I offer him myself."

Saint Lucy,  
patron of light and truth,  
pray for us,  
that we might defend the Gospel of life,  
and protect all whom the world has forgotten!

**December 14<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church**

From a Canticle by Saint John of the Cross: "We must dig deeply in Christ. He is like a rich mine with many pockets containing treasures: however deep we dig we will never find their end or their limit. Indeed, in every pocket new seams of fresh riches are discovered on all sides."

Through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the intercession of Saint John,  
may we treasure the gifts of life which God have given us!

**December 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Stephen, first martyr**

First Antiphon for Morning Prayer on the Feast of Saint Stephen: "Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father."

As Saint Stephen died for Christ,  
so may we live for him whose cross brings us life eternal!

**December 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint John, apostle and evangelist**

Saint John begins his first epistle by writing, "Our message is the Word of life. We announce what existed from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our own eyes, what we have touched with our own hands."

Lord Jesus Christ,  
through whom all things were made,  
give us the grace to do your will,  
to protect those forgotten  
and walk with those who need us.  
For you are God for ever and ever. Amen.

**December 28<sup>th</sup>**  
**Holy Innocents, martyrs**

The responsory for this day is taken from Isaiah 65: 19 and Revelation 21: 4 and 5: "I will take delight in my people. Never again will weeping and crying be heard among them. Death shall be no more; grief and tears and sorrow will be forgotten, for behold I make all things new."

Lord Jesus, source of life,  
deliver us from all sorrow and pain,  
darkness and death.  
Grant that we may see the day  
when the darkness of abortion may be dispelled  
by your light.  
For you are Lord, fore ever and ever. Amen.

**December 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**Saint Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr**

Saint Thomas once wrote: "We must strive to keep our eyes on him whom God appointed high priest forever, and to follow in his footsteps. For our sake he offered himself to the Father upon the altar of the cross. He now looks down from heaven on our actions and secret thoughts, and one day he will give each of us the reward his deeds deserve."

Lord Jesus Christ,  
may we ever keep our eyes on you,  
the source of our life,  
and the summit of all truth.  
Teach us how to save those who are lost,  
protect those who are in danger  
and defend all that is true.  
For you are Lord, for ever and ever. Amen.

**December 31st**  
**Saint Sylvester I, pope**

Saint Sylvester was pope in the early fourth century. The Canticle of Zechariah for today: "Let the peace of Christ reign in your hearts; as members of one body you have been called to that peace; be thankful."

Father,  
as the last days of this year  
draw to an end,  
help us to consecrate our life  
to the Gospel of life.  
May we be defenders of the lost  
and evangelists of the truth,  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.