

Feast of the Holy Innocents

December 28, 2024



Dedication of

The Chapel of the Holy Innocents

Fenton, MI

January 5, 2025

On the Feast of the Epiphany of The Lord

By the Most Reverend Earl Boyea

On this, the Feast Day of the Holy Innocents, we begin our Novena to prepare for the dedication of our Chapel. This long-awaited event will take place in nine days on the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. In this novena we will take inspiration from the Holy Family and the short lives of the Holy Innocents. We will also explore the insights of four saints who move us to honor and cherish all human life from conception to natural death: St. Teresa of Calcutta, St. Pope John Paul the Great, St. Gianna Molla and Blessed Fr. Michael McGivney.

Fr. Robert Copeland



Chapel devotional paintings by Christopher Darga

DAY ONE

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Our Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for expectant mothers, for any woman who is experiencing anxiety throughout her pregnancy, and for all women who yearn to have children.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
we pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Holy Innocents, who were violently taken from your mother's arms.... St. Gianna Molla said "One cannot love without suffering or suffer without loving."

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may touch their hearts and fill them with love.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all who are affected by violence, that they may find peace.

Holy Innocents, your Mothers grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all Mothers who have lost children, that God may send His Spirit of Peace to heal their broken hearts, and wrap His holy arms around their children..

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless in their circumstances, that they may cling to God for courage and hope. In particular, we pray for those who feel so helpless they are considering destroying life, that through The Holy Innocents' intercession, that of St. Gianna and Our Mother Mary, they may be strengthened in courage.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ...Hail Mary ...Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY TWO

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for Fathers who feel helpless to fulfill their role as protectors of life, for fathers who have not had good examples of fatherhood, and for fathers who fear for the life of their child in his or her mother's womb. We also pray for men who have lost children and those who yearn to have children.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Through the intercession of Blessed Michael McGivney, a child who was given no chance of survival at birth was fully healed from the condition that had caused doctors to counsel his mother to have an abortion. Feeling powerless to protect his child, this father turned to Fr. McGivney who led them on a pilgrimage to Fatima. The pediatrician who gave the child's mother the good news responded to her confusion with, "Honey, you just came back from Fatima. There's always hope."

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may touch their hearts and fill them with love.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all who are affected by violence, that they may find peace.

Holy Innocents, your fathers grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all fathers who have lost young children, that God may give them peace. May He wrap His holy arms around their children.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless in their circumstances, that they may cling to God for hope. We also pray for those who feel so helpless they are considering destroying life. Through the intercession of the Holy Innocents, that of Blessed Michael McGivney, St. Joseph and Our Mother Mary, may they be strengthened in courage.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY THREE

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for children whose lives were not received with expectant joy. We pray for children whose innocence is not cherished, and who suffer from all forms of abuse.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, or as she will always be known, Mother Teresa, said, "The child is the beauty of God present in the world, that greatest gift to a family."

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may touch their hearts and fill them with love.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all who are affected by violence, that they may find peace.

Holy Innocents, your parents grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all young children who have suffered because adults have not seen them as a gift to be cherished. May God wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless in their circumstances, that through the intercession of Mother Teresa and our Mother Mary, they may cling to God for courage and hope.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ...Hail Mary ...Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY FOUR

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for doctors, nurses and medical professionals. Some may forget their oath to “save lives” or recognize this applies to all life. We may never take the life of one human being for the convenience of another. We pray for those who risk standing firm and holding fast to the truth of God.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His arms; may He bless those who seek to protect them.

St. Gianna Molla said of her fellow physicians, “Just as the priest can touch Jesus, so do we touch Jesus in the bodies of our patients... We have opportunities to do good that the priest doesn't have. Our mission is not finished when medicines are no longer of use. We must bring the soul to God; our word has some authority... Catholic doctors are so necessary!”

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, and for those who are indifferent, that God may transform their hearts.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for those who have a false compassion leading them to believe that the life of a suffering person holds no value. May their confusion be lifted, and may they come to see the inherent worth of every life.

Holy Innocents, your parents grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all whose lives are not valued, that God may wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless in their circumstances, that through the intercession of St. Gianna Molla and Our Mother Mary, they may cling to God for courage and hope.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God’s love forever. Amen.

Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY FIVE

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for families in crisis as they search for safety and opportunities for their children.

St. John Paul II said, "There is no evil to be faced that Christ does not face with us. There is no enemy that Christ has not conquered. There is no cross to bear that Christ has not already borne for us and does not now bear with us." Just as the Holy Family was warned to flee to Egypt because of Herod and his plans to kill Jesus, so many families are in crisis and are forced to flee home, jobs, family and circumstances in order to find hope, safety and peace.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may transform their hearts and fill them with love.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all who are affected by violence, that they may find peace and safety.

Holy Innocents, your families grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all families in crisis, and for those who have lost young children, that God may wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless, that through your intercession, that of St. John Paul II and Our Mother Mary, they may have the courage that comes from knowing Christ will help them carry their cross.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ...Hail Mary ...Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY SIX

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for those whose lives are not valued by society, and for those who are counseled to destroy a child's life, fearing the challenges of birth defects or disabilities.

The Knights of Columbus, founded by Blessed Michael McGivney, has long supported efforts to help children with disabilities, many of whom their parents were encouraged to kill because of their condition.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all those who are not valued because of disabilities and for those who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may touch their hearts and fill them with love.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all who are affected by a violent disregard for their unique lives, that they may find peace and love.

Holy Innocents, your parents grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all parents who are encouraged by others to end the lives of their children, for those parents who struggle to take care of family members with special needs, and for those who have lost young children, that God may wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths,
pray for all who feel helpless in their circumstances, that through the intercession of Blessed Michael McGivney and Our Blessed Mother, they may cling to God to give them courage and hope.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ...Hail Mary ...Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY SEVEN

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for those who go without the necessities of life, no matter the reason they find themselves in those circumstances.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, or as she will always be known, Mother Teresa, said, "The poor are great! The poor are wonderful! The poor are very generous! They give us much more than what we give them."

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for those children who live in poverty that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who have disdain for the poor, that God may transform their hearts and fill them with love.

Holy Innocents, from rich families and from poor, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all children who live in poverty, that they may have their needs met.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all who are experiencing violence, that they may find peace and safety.

Holy Innocents, your parents grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray that we become more compassionate and loving in our response to those in need, that God may use us to wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless in their circumstances, through the intercession of Mother Teresa and our Mother Mary, they may cling to God for courage and hope.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ...Hail Mary ...Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY EIGHT

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for educators, that they may stand for the Gospel of Life and recognize that every person is a wondrous gift from God.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

St. John Paul II said, "The challenge is to make the Church's "yes" to Life concrete and effective. The struggle will be long, and it needs each one of you. Place your intelligence, your talents, your enthusiasm, your compassion and your fortitude at the service of life!"

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may transform their hearts and fill them with love. May we come to understand the value of God's gift of Life in every person.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for those experiencing violence, that they may find peace and safety.

Holy Innocents, your parents grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for all parents who have lost young children, that God may wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths;
pray for all who feel helpless, that through the intercession of St. John Paul II and Our Mother Mary, they may cling to God for courage and hope. Pray also for educators, that they may recognize and rejoice in all human life.

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God's love forever. Amen.

Our Father ...Hail Mary ...Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.

DAY NINE

[Leader is in bold; responses in plain text.]

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Father, by their wordless profession of faith in Your Son, the Holy Innocents were crowned with life at His birth.

Hear their prayers for us in this novena, especially for those in political power including legislators, administrators, judges and voters.

Holy Innocents, you died before you were old enough to know what life means;
We pray for all children who die young, that God may gather them into His loving arms.

Holy Innocents, you were killed because one man in power was filled with hatred;
We pray for those who hate, that God may transform their hearts and fill them with love.

Pray that all who hold power may seek foremost to be of service. Through the lives of St. Teresa of Calcutta, St. Gianna Molla, St. John Paul II, Blessed Michael McGivney, St. Joseph and Our Mother Mary, may we learn the truth of what it means to love and serve.

We learn service from Mother Teresa, sacrifice from St. Gianna, solidarity from Fr. McGivney, intellectual authenticity from John Paul II, and fatherly dedication from St. Joseph. All these are combined in the “Yes” of our Mother Mary in the gift of Life in her womb and in her sorrow at the foot of the cross.

Holy Innocents, you experienced a violent death;
We pray for all experiencing violence that they may find peace and safety.

Holy Innocents, your parents grieved for you with deep and lasting sorrow;
We pray for parents who have lost young children, that God may wrap a warm blanket of comfort around them.

Holy Innocents, those around you were helpless to prevent your deaths:
pray for all who feel helpless, that through the intercession of St. Teresa of Calcutta , St. Gianna Molla, St. John Paul II, Blessed Michael McGivney, St. Joseph, and Our Mother Mary, they may cling to God for courage and hope.

Mother Teresa said, “If we pray, we will believe; If we believe, we will love; If we love we will serve.”

Holy Innocents, you who are now in Heaven,
pray for all of us, that one day we may join you there to bask in God’s love forever. Amen.

Our Father ... Hail Mary ... Glory Be ...

Holy Innocents, pray for us. Amen.