

## Prayer

Blessed Child Mary, destined to be the Mother of God and our loving Mother, by the heavenly graces you lavish upon us, mercifully listen to my supplications. In the needs which press upon me from every side and especially in my present tribulation, I place all my trust in you.

O holy Child, by the privileges granted to you alone and by the merits which you have acquired, show that the source of spiritual favors and the continuous benefits which you dispense are inexhaustible, because your power with the Heart of God is unlimited.

Deign through the immense profusion of graces with which the Most High has enriched you from the first moment of your Immaculate Conception, grant me, O Celestial Child, my petition, and I shall eternally praise the goodness of your Immaculate Heart. **(Mention your request(s) here)** Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be...

IMPRIMATUR  
In Curia Archiep. Mediolani  
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Can. CAVEZZALI, Pro Vic. Gen



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## NOVENA TO MARIA BAMBINA

May be recited on any nine consecutive days



## Novena

The word Novena derives its name from the Latin word "novem" meaning "nine." A novena can be either a private or public devotion in the Catholic Church to obtain special graces.

### Introduction

The Italian words "Maria Bambina" mean "Baby Mary." Although the Holy Childhood of the Blessed Virgin, under the image of Our Lady as an infant, is honored in Mexico, Poland and Italy, relatively few Catholics in the United States know of this devotion. Several saints, including St. John Eudes, St. Joseph Cupertino and St. Padre Pio loved to contemplate the Blessed Mother as a baby. Reflecting on Our Blessed Mother as an infant and child will enrich your love and devotion to her as it did for these saints. As the perfect disciple of Jesus Christ, Our blessed Mother imitated Our Lord in all of His virtues. She imitated, in advance, the virtues of Our Lord's Holy Childhood.

Reflecting upon a likeness of the Child Mary is one of the many rich fruits of Franciscan spirituality. St. Francis is credited with preparing the first Christmas Crèche and with popularizing the Stations of the Cross. This great saint understood that holy images could be used as teaching tools that could stimulate the soul to a greater love of God. This is the beloved image of Maria Bambina venerated at the Convent of the Sisters of Charity in Milan, Italy. Simply gazing upon this charming image of Our Blessed Mother as a baby moves the heart to a great tenderness for our Heavenly Mother. Great numbers of the faithful come to the Convent of Maria Bambina in Milan to bring their petitions to the Child Mary. Particularly, couples, who are having difficulty conceiving often come there to pray for the gift of a baby. Many later return to the convent with their newborns to thank Maria Bambina for having answered their prayers.

The earliest document commemorating the feast of The Nativity of the Mother of God comes from the sixth century. St. Romanus, the great ecclesiastical lyricist of the Greek Church, composed a hymn for the feast ("Hymnogr. Graeca") which is a poetical sketch of the apocryphal Gospel of St. James.

The devotion to Maria Bambina in the city of Milan can be traced back to 1007, the year in which the church of Santa Maria Fulcorina was dedicated to the "Mystery of the Nativity of Mary." Eventually the church became the Cathedral Church of Milan, Saint Mary Major. In 1251 Pope Innocent IV granted in perpetuity a plenary indulgence for those who visit the Cathedral on the feast day of Mary's Nativity (September 8th). From this time on, Mary's birthday was celebrated with great solemnity. A new and more beautiful church was built whose high altar, Pope Martin V consecrated in 1418. The present Duomo (Italian for cathedral) was consecrated more than 100 years later in 1572 by St. Charles Borromeo who dedicated it officially

in honor of the Birth of Mary. Over the main entrance of the cathedral are the words in bronze letters: "Mariae Nascenti," meaning, "birth of Mary." (The tomb of St. Charles Borromeo is in the crypt of the Duomo.)

### Novena to Maria Bambina

Holy Child Mary of the royal house of David, Queen of the angels,  
Mother of grace and love, I greet you with all my heart.  
Obtain for me the grace to love the Lord faithfully during  
all the days of my life. Obtain for me, too, a great devotion  
to you, who are the first creature of God's love.  
Hail Mary, full of grace.....

O heavenly Child Mary, who like a pure dove was born  
immaculate and beautiful, true prodigy of the wisdom of  
God, my soul rejoices in you. Oh! Do help me to preserve  
the angelic virtue of purity at the cost of any sacrifice.  
Hail Mary, full of grace.....

Hail, lovely and holy Child, spiritual garden of delight, where,  
on the day of the Incarnation, the tree of life was planted,  
assist me to avoid the poisonous fruit of vanity and pleasures of the world.  
Help me to engraft into my soul the thoughts, feelings,  
and virtues of your divine Son.  
Hail Mary, full of grace.....

Hail, admirable Child Mary, Mystical Rose, closed garden,  
open only to the heavenly Spouse. O Lily of paradise,  
make me love the humble and hidden life;  
let the heavenly Spouse find the gate of my heart always open  
to the loving calls of His graces and inspiration.  
Hail Mary, full of grace.....

Holy Child Mary, mystical dawn, gate of heaven,  
you are my trust and hope.  
O powerful advocate, from your cradle stretch out your hand,  
support me on the path of life.  
Make me serve God with ardor and  
constancy until death and so reach an eternity with you.  
Hail Mary, full of grace.....