

THE MANTLE: The Voice of the Silent Strength Online Prayer Group

Joining in Prayer Under the Mantle of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Send prayer requests to pray@marianmantle.com **REMEMBER put "prayer request" in the subject**

- ++MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR
- ++PRAYER INTENTIONS
- ++LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
- ++GOD'S WORD FOR US
- ++WORDS OF HOPE
- ++WISH LIST
- ++FYI
- Marian Mantle Prayer Group Update For Dec 14, 2007

++MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR

Hi, Everyone,

My Christmas present came early this year! Nine months after being caught in the Sprint lay-offs, Bob has accepted a job with a company about 25 minutes from our home. We praise God for His goodness and His kindness for He has remembered His lowly servants and blessed us in abundance! To add to our joy, we learned of two other friends who had been out of work for most of 2007 who also found work that same day! Once more my dear husband's devotion to the Blessed Mother has proven priceless. He is so fond of saying, "Do what you can and ask the Blessed Mother to handle the rest of the details." The job offer came in the days between the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe—not a surprise to Bob! This man's faith and trust in God remained steadfast and strong through the entire time. He told me he is sure that was helped by all of the prayers from our friends, loved ones, and all of you, our dear friends in this group. You have heard us say often that around here we try to wrap everything in prayer. We did the same thing when the job loss happened. Prayer sustained us through the long months, and prayer helps us express our joy.

Also, I have been praying about whether or not I was to continue volunteering with the MMG or return to technical writing in the corporate world. I believe that question has been answered now.

As we look back over the year, Bob and I count the many blessings we have received both personal and with the MMG. Bob sees the biggest personal blessing as being the time he has been able to spend with family—especially our little grandson. Robert and Grandpa have developed a pretty special, and a pretty tight, bond.

So, we are praising the Lord a little louder at our house this week! He gives us the strength to continue in this effort to reach out to those who are hurting because of a prodigal loved one, and try to help each other to trust and pray, to replace anxiety and worry with prayer and peace.

One Little Advent Story

One of our members recently shared this story with me. I think you may find it inspirational (I would love to hear your story, too):

On Christmas Eve in Franklin Park, Illinois in the early 1960s, it was a tradition that after supper, my parents and brothers and sister would all pile in the car. Dad would drive around so we could look at the Christmas lights on neighborhood houses. We always looked forward to a street that was, during the Christmas season, dubbed Candy Cane Lane. Every home on that street was decorated in lights, Christmas figures, and, of course, huge candy canes. It was like our dreams of Santa's home at the North Pole. When we returned home we would find that, in our absence, Santa Claus had come and put gifts under the Christmas tree. We never noticed that after we got in the car, my father would announce that he had to go back to the house because he had forgotten something—maybe his wallet, his gloves, or his pipe. With a family the size I grew up in someone was always forgetting something, so it never seemed unusual for Dad to do so once in awhile. It wasn't until I was older that I realized he had been busy being a helper to Santa's cause. When I thought about that part of my childhood, I thought about my own kids' growing-up years and especially about my son who is no longer going to mass on Sunday. Most of us will be praying for a prodigal Catholic at Christmas mass this year. It may appear as if nothing is happening, nothing is changing. We may even begin thinking that our prayer is useless, that it is hopeless. Well, I must remember that, just like my father on all those Christmas Eves, God, our Heavenly Father is working—quietly, unseen--arranging circumstances

so that one day His prodigal children will each search for the light of truth, and will find the gift of Faith waiting for them. As for we who pray for their return—I'm not sure what our part is—perhaps our prayers are the fuel for whatever the vehicle is that helps our prodigals make that journey. I've been paying attention to what has been being shared in these updates since I have joined the Marian Mantle Group and it has helped to change the way I look at my son's situation. This year, when I start to get concerned about my son at Christmas, I'm not going to let worry rob my joy. I'm going to pray and regain my peace of mind by believing that God is behind the scenes, working in the lives of our prodigals, arranging gifts for all of us. ~Please sign me:
Father of a prodigal son

Christmas Novena

The Christmas Novena to the Divine Infant Jesus of Prague begins on December 17-25. Let us all pray this together for our prodigals' to return to the Eucharist. Won't you join us in prayer? You will find the novena prayer at

<http://www.marianmantle.com/prayer/novenas/christmas.htm>

As we wait for the birthday of the Lord, may we each continue to have the perseverance of St. Monica and the unconditional love of the father of the prodigal son, until that glorious day when we, too, can say, "Rejoice with me! The prodigal for whom I have prayed has come home!"

Peace,
MaryAnn

.....

PRAYER INTENTIONS FOR Dec 14, 2007

[Prayer intentions submitted to this group are shared only in the semi-weekly email update sent to members of the online prayer group. Please keep all of us and our prodigals in your prayers--just as we will pray for you.]

+Our Lady of Sorrows, pray for us and for our children.

+St. Benedict, pray for us.

+St. Jude, pray for us.

+St. Monica, pray for us.

+For all our prodigals to find the truth and return to the Lord and His church.

+For all those unspoken intentions in our hearts known only to us and to God, and for all previous intentions of this list.

.....

++LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Marian Mantle Group,

Enclosed is my donation for use in distributing information on the Marian Mantle Group, etc. I am so grateful for all of your hard work and was glad to hear of the happenings of the group. Your hard work will reap many rewards for people praying for their love ones to return to the faith.

I still pray for my daughter and her husband to return, even though they are attending a non-denominational church and are active.

May God continue to bless all of you during this Christmas Season and may you have a Holy, Healthy, and Happy New Year. God Bless all of you. ~Pennsylvania

Hi MaryAnn,

The Mantle is one of the nicest surprises I've had in ages. So happy Judy passed on the prodigal info on your ministry. Know how busy you are so I'll be brief. Your youngest son -- what a wonderful young man; he's a keeper. Look forward to more focus after the new year. We are leaving on a visit with our family [out of State] Will take your material with us & play your CDs in the car en route. Peace & blessings, ~Florida

[Note from MaryAnn: As I answered the writer from Florida when he said my son was "wonderful", "That's the heart of the problem—it's what makes it such a heartache for all our members—those prodigals are all keepers, someone loves each one of them and hurts because they are missing out on the fullness of faith found only in the Eucharist. So, we all keep praying and trusting.]

.....

GOD'S WORD FOR US

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance" Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. ~Isaiah 35:3-5,10

.....

WORDS OF HOPE

E-Example: Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, Joseph, The Shepherds. Ordinary people, but saints because they responded to God's call to cradle and care for John the Baptist and Jesus the Savior. People very much like the parents and grandparents [aunts, uncles, and friends] that we are – the examples – God would have us to be.

F-Family: We are part of the great "Family of Faith." In the Communion of Saints we are linked to one another. We are not alone –ever, even when we may feel so lonely as we sometimes do during the Christmas season. If we are sad because all of our family is not with us, invite Mary and the saints to share your holiday. Make Christ your guest or go visit Him in the adoration chapel. [Also, Pray for the rest of us in the MMG, because we will be praying for you.]

H-Hope: To a sin-sick world, Christ brings healing; to a downcast humanity He brings hope. Can the unfolding happiness of the holidays be an on-going reminder that "the best is yet to come"?

~ Excerpts From *An Advent Alphabet For Catholics*
by A.W Mead, Imprimatur from the Archdiocese of St Louis.

.....
WISH LIST

- +Stamps
- +Volunteers to pray from their home or chapel during talks
- +Help with operating expenses

.....
FYI

+My Request for Help I thank those who have already responded to my request for a little financial help. Your kindness and generosity is the only way this apostolate has survived since 2003. I thank you for any amount you can contribute, for your stamps, your time, and your talent. Remember, we can now accept credit card donations online at <http://www.marianmantle.com/sp/donate.htm> or click on the "Make a Gift" link at the top of the home page. If you prefer to use the postal mail, send to Marian Mantle Group, PO Box 434, Gardner, KS 66030. We continue to be an all-volunteer group. The MMG is a tax exempt corporation registered with the State of Kansas. Your gift to the MMG is tax deductible.

+ Answers to Prayer

If your prodigal has returned, or is taking steps toward returning, please let us know. Every time someone shares their pain with us we all pray together to come to their aid. Every time someone shares their joy with us we all gain strength to trust and hope that someday our prayers, too, will be answered. Your sharing helps all of us persevere—and as long as we are helping each other we are doing the work that the Lord has asked of us. You can help bring His Light to others by bringing all of us a little more hope. Share your story! Remember, we ALWAYS keep your identity private.

+Christmas Gifts If you are looking for unique, meaningful gifts, remember the Crisafulli prints and prayer card collections. These, and the book *Through Her Eyes and Other Meditations on the Mysteries of the Rosary* are only available here, and are gifts for anyone, not just those praying for prodigals. As in years past, if you will get your orders to me by email or phone, I will try to get them in the mail to you within 48 hours or less so you have them when you need them.

+For help with starting a Silent Strength prayer group to pray for the return of prodigal Catholics

contact 913-526-8977 or maryann@marianmantle.com. If you think you might want to do this, take it to the Lord in prayer. If you then wish to continue, contact MaryAnn for assistance.

+Presentations MaryAnn will be speaking on Feb 17, 2008 at Savior Pastoral Center, 12601 Parallel Pkwy, Kansas City, KS 66109, for more information Phone: (913) 721-1097 or email:

savior@archkck.org For information about bringing the Silent Strength presentation to your parish or Catholic organization, contact 913-526-8977 or maryann@marianmantle.com

+To Make a Prayer Request If you have prayer requests or wish to email me, [click here](#) or use the normal email address pray@marianmantle.com

+ New Members We welcome those who have just recently joined us in praying for our prodigals loved ones and for each other. May you feel comfort, support, and peace as a member of this group. If you have questions, email maryann@marianmantle.com

+If you wish to be removed from this list, reply to this message and place the word REMOVE in the subject.