



Asian Catholic Initiative
St. Henry Parish
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The year 2020 marked 500 years of Catholicism in the Philippines. Unfortunately, due to the heavy pandemic restrictions in place at the time, the Filipino Catholic Community in the archdiocese had little to no way of marking that momentous milestone nor observing the Simbáng Gabi Novena as an archdiocese.

I am glad that we can resume the Simbáng Gabi Novena in December 2021 to the fullest extent possible. My request is that parishes incorporate an act of gratitude for the 500th Anniversary with this year's Simbáng Gabi Novena. In addition to the beloved Filipino Christmas symbol of the parol lantern, symbols of Filipino Catholicism can be added as part of the art and environment of the church sanctuary or even carried in the opening procession.

For this year, each day of the novena is dedicated to different ministries of our parishes that are involved with catechesis and evangelization. This is in spirit of the first missionaries who brought the Catholic faith to the Philippines. It also continues the original purpose of the Simbáng Gabi novena which was instituted by the Spanish missionaries in the Philippines as a way to spread and propagate the Catholic faith among the early Filipinos.

For each day of the novena, there is a special prayer of blessing to honor those essential ministries. Simbáng Gabi planning committees are free to use these prayers of blessing as they see appropriate for their respective parishes. If possible, the prayers should be incorporated into the General Intercessions.

When used in conjunction with the General Intercessions, those involved in the particular ministries assigned for a specific date may be invited to stand in the sanctuary prior to the start of the General Intercessions. The General Intercessions themselves can be those prepared by the Simbáng Gabi committee or the parish liturgical planners. Then, the assigned prayer for the day will conclude the General Intercessions at which time the ministers will receive a blessing and recognition.

Parish Simbáng Gabi leaders are encouraged to partner with neighboring parishes that might also host a Simbáng Gabi Mass on different nights. This way, ministers from each parish might be invited to attend the Simbáng Gabi Masses at other parishes especially on those nights that are assigned as recognition of their respective ministries.

As another option, the prayers for each day may also be part of a Rosary prior to the start of the Simbáng Gabi Mass. Those involved in the assigned ministries for each day may be invited to join or even lead the Rosary.

As we celebrate 500 years of the Catholic faith in the Philippines and prepare once again for the birth of our Savior, may God who has begun the good work in all of us bring it to completion!

Fr. Tirso S. Villaverde

Coordinator of Simbang Gabi schedule for the Archdiocese of Chicago



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36TH ANNUAL SIMBÁNG GABI 2021 PRAYER RESOURCE

DAY 1 – DECEMBER 15 FOR CATECHISTS

Catechists and those involved with faith formation of young children.

Source of all wisdom and understanding, give light to the minds and eyes of our catechists that they may be sure guides for the children of their parish. Keep them ever faithful to your teaching, leading holy and righteous lives in the spirit of the Gospel. May they be true evangelists, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, and full of mercy, and thereby draw all who come to this parish into the joy of that Kingdom where you live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer adapted from *Sacerdos In Aeternum* edited by Denis Robinson, OSB.

DAY 2 – DECEMBER 16 ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Those involved with Adult Faith Formation (e.g.—RCIA leaders, baptism prep of parents, marriage prep of couples)

With your fatherly blessing, Lord, strengthen your servants in their resolve to dedicate themselves to the formation of adults. Grant that they will strive to share with others what they themselves derive from pondering your word and studying the Church's teaching. And let them gladly join those they teach and form in honoring and serving your name. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer adapted from the *Book of Blessings*.

DAY 3 – DECEMBER 17 EVANGELIZATION

Those involved in Evangelization efforts (e.g., Youth Ministry, Young Adult Ministry, Alpha, Lectors, Children's Liturgy of the Word)

Lord God, source of all wisdom and knowledge, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to live among us and to proclaim his message of faith, hope, and love to all nations. In your goodness bless our brothers and sisters entrusted with evangelization in their respective ministries as laypeople. Strengthen them with your gifts that they may teach by word and example the truth which comes from you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer adapted from the *Book of Blessings*.

DAY 4 – DECEMBER 18 PREACHERS

Priests and deacons

Lord Jesus, be close to your priests and deacons who faithfully preach your Word for the salvation of souls. Give us the grace of believing anew the words we have often spoken to comfort others.

Lord Jesus, mold and conform us unto yourself more and more each day. Give us always the joy of your help, and with a spirit of fervor sustain us. For you are Lord forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer adapted from *Sacerdos In Aeternum* edited by Denis Robinson, OSB.

DAY 5 – DECEMBER 19**PARENTS AS FIRST TEACHERS OF THE FAITH**

All parents or legal guardians of children

Lord God, you have called all Christian parents to be the first and best teachers of the faith for their children. Bless these parents and give them insight into your Word and the teachings of your Church. May they be true sources of inspiration for their children. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Prayer taken from *Sacerdos In Aeternum* edited by Denis Robinson, OSB.

DAY 6 – DECEMBER 20**RELIGIOUS SISTERS AND BROTHERS**

Religious sisters and/or brothers

Heavenly Father, in your wisdom you have called certain women and men to a life of special consecration so that in prayerful observance of a lifestyle of poverty, chaste celibacy and obedience, they might be witnesses to us that as St. Paul says, “our true citizenship is in heaven.” Give them, Lord, the grace of joy and perseverance in their holy vocation. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Prayer taken from catholic.org.

DAY 7 – DECEMBER 21**CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS**

Teachers working in any Catholic grammar school, high school, college or university

Lord our God, in your wisdom and love you surround us with the mysteries of the universe. In times long past you sent us your prophets to teach your laws and to bear witness to your undying love. You sent us your Son to teach us by word and example that true wisdom comes from you alone. Send your Spirit upon all teachers in Catholic schools and fill them with your wisdom and blessings. Grant that they may devote themselves to sharing what they have learned from others. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer adapted from the *Book of Blessings*.

DAY 8 – DECEMBER 22**YOUTH AND TEENS –
FUTURE GENERATIONS OF DISCIPLES**

Youth and teens

Gentle Shepherd, Jesus Christ, you call our youth to be faithful to you in their lives. Bless our youth and teenagers with your inspiration. May they be guided and directed to your Kingdom where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer adapted from *Sacerdos In Aeternum* edited by Denis Robinson, OSB.

DAY 9 – DECEMBER 23**THOSE WHO WILL SHARE THE GOSPEL
IN WORD AND ACTION**

Anyone involved in other forms of ministry (e.g., those who serve the needs of the poor and all other social outreach ministries, missionaries, Eucharistic Ministers, Ministers of Care, other liturgical ministries)

Our God and Father, your will is that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of your truth. Bless and send workers into your great harvest, so that the Gospel may be preached to every creature by both word and action. Gather your people by the word of life and strengthen them by the power of the sacraments. May we all advance in the way of salvation and love. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer adapted from the *Book of Blessings*.