

Devotion to The Infant Jesus of Prague

DEVOTION TO THE Infant Jesus of Prague is devotion to the Child Jesus. It is veneration of the Son of God, who in the form of an infant chose a stable for a palace, a manger for a cradle and shepherds for worshippers. Our Saviour grants special graces to all who venerate His Sacred Infancy. The image of the Child Jesus known as the "Infant Jesus of Prague" was in reality of Spanish origin. In the 17th century, this beautiful statue was brought to Bohemia by a Spanish princess whose mother had given it to her as a wedding gift. This noble lady, in turn, presented the image to her daughter. When the latter's husband died in 1623, she resolved to spend the remainder of her days in works of piety and charity. She was particularly generous to the Carmelite priests and brothers of Prague who, after Emperor Ferdinand II, their founder, had removed his residence to Vienna, fell into such utter destitution that at times they had scarcely enough to eat. Accordingly, she presented her beloved statue to the religious with these prophetic words: "I hereby give you what I prize most highly in this world. **As long as you venerate this image, you will not be in want.**" Her prediction was verified. As long as the Divine Infant was venerated, God showed Himself as a kind helper through His Son, and the community prospered both spiritually and temporally. But when the devotion to the Infant was relaxed, God's blessing seemed to depart from the house. For many years this statue has been enshrined on a side altar in the Church of Our Lady of Victory in the city of Prague. It is of wax and is about nineteen inches high. It is clothed in a royal mantle and has a beautiful jeweled crown on its head. Its right hand is raised in blessing; its left holds a globe, signifying sovereignty. So many graces have been received by those who invoke the Divine Child before the original statue that it has been called "The Miraculous Infant Jesus of Prague." We read the following in an old book printed in Kempt: "All who approach the miraculous statue and pray there with confidence receive assistance in danger, consolation in sorrows, aid in poverty, comfort in anxiety, light in spiritual darkness, streams of grace in dryness of soul, health in sickness and hope in despair." In thanksgiving for the numerous graces and cures received, the miraculous statue at Prague was solemnly crowned on the Sunday after Easter, in 1665. What is said of the original statue may be applied also to the images of the "Little King" which are venerated the world over. From small beginnings, this devotion has grown to great proportions. The Divine Child attracts an ever-increasing number of clients, who appeal to Him in every need.