

You can pray the text of the prayer 15 times all at once, or you can spread it out throughout the day. One convenient way to pray it is to recite it five times at each meal, or five times during your morning prayers, five times during your evening prayers, and five times at supper. Be sure, when you begin the novena, to have a particular intention or request in mind, and recall it each time you say the prayers. *(excerpted from: catholicism.about.com)

THE CHRISTMAS NOVENA

Prayer to Obtain Favors

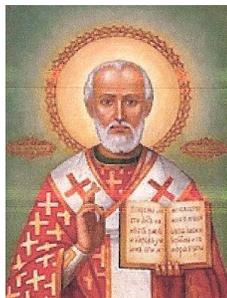
November 30th until Christmas

**O Hail and blessed be the hour
and moment in which the Son of God
was born of the most pure Virgin Mary,
at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold.
In that hour, vouchsafe, O my God!
To hear my prayer and grant my desires,
through the merits of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of
His Blessed Mother.**

Amen.

Imprimatur: + MICHAEL AUGUSTINE,
Archbishop of New York, New York, February 6, 1897

It is piously believed that whoever recites the above novena prayer fifteen times a day from the feast of St. Andrew (30th November) until Christmas will obtain what is asked.)



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Saint Andrew the Apostle

The 15 Hour Christmas Novena



St. Andrew, pray for us.

Saint Andrew the Apostle

**Saint Andrew, the first apostle, was with our Lord throughout His life as recorded in the Bible. St. Andrew's brother was Simon Peter, the first pope. After Our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, St. Andrew journeyed to Greece to spread the faith. He was martyred in Patras, Acaia (in the southern part of Greece) on November 30, 60AD by Nero who bounded him, not nailed, to an X-shaped Cross. As St. Andrew suffered for two days, people still came to him to hear his words. He is the patron saint of Russia and Scotland.*

Andrew, Peter's brother, and John were the first disciples to follow the Lord. With tender delicacy the Gospel (John 1:35-42) describes their first meeting with Jesus. Andrew did not belong to the inner circle of the apostles, Peter, James and John, and the evangelists narrate nothing extraordinary about him (John 6:8); but tradition (resting on apocryphal Acts) extols his great love of the Cross and of the Savior; and the Church distinguishes him both in the Mass (his name occurs in the Canon and in the Libera since the time of Pope St. Gregory I, who had a special devotion to him) and in the Breviary.

The story of his martyrdom rests on the apocryphal Acts which lack historical foundation. The pagan judge exhorted him to sacrifice to the gods. Andrew replied: "I sacrifice daily to almighty God, the one and true God. Not the flesh of oxen and the blood of goats do I offer, but the unspotted Lamb upon the altar. All the faithful partake of His flesh, yet the Lamb remains unharmed and living." Angered by the reply, Aegaeus commanded him to be thrown into prison. With little difficulty the people would have freed him, but Andrew personally calmed the mob and earnestly entreated them to desist, as he was hastening toward an ardently desired crown of martyrdom.

*When Andrew was led to the place of martyrdom, on beholding the cross from a distance he cried out: "O good Cross, so long desired and now set up for my longing soul I confident and rejoicing come to you; exultingly receive me, a disciple of Him who hung on you." Forthwith he was nailed to the cross. For two days he hung there alive, unceasingly proclaiming the doctrine of Christ until he passed on to Him whose likeness in death he had so vehemently desired. The legendary account of our saint's martyrdom has this value: it presents to us the mysticism of the Cross of later times. *(excerpted from acatholiclife.blogspot.com)*

**In Central and South America, the nine days before Christmas are devoted to a popular novena in honor of the Holy Child (La Novena del Nino.) In the decorated church, the crib is ready; the only figure missing is that of the Child, since the manger is always kept empty until the Holy Night. The novena service consists of prayers and carol singing accompanied by popular instruments of the castanet type.*

In Central Europe the nine days before Christmas are kept in many places as a festive season. Since most of the religious observances were held after dark or before sunrise, people began to call this season the "Golden Nights." In the Alpine region, it is the custom to take a picture of the Blessed Virgin from house to house on these nine evenings. Every night the family gathers before the image, which stands on a table between flowers and burning candles. There they pray and sing hymns in honor of Our Lady the Expectant Mother.

*(excerpted from: www.ewtn.com)

**Advent doesn't start until November 30th, but one popular Advent devotion from years past begins this day The Feast of Saint Andrew the Apostle. On this day, we begin the Saint Andrew Christmas Novena, also known as the Christmas Anticipation Prayer or simply the Christmas Novena. While a novena is technically a nine-day prayer (the word comes from the Latin word for nine, novem), the name is sometimes applied to any prayer that we say repeatedly over a series of days.*

In this case, Catholics pray the Saint Andrew Christmas Novena prayer 15 times every day from the Feast of Saint Andrew until Christmas. The prayer is addressed to God the Father and asks Him to grant us our request in honor of the birth of His Son on Christmas. It's an excellent prayer to pray with children, because it heightens their anticipation of Christmas, while keeping them focused on the fact that Advent is a time of preparation, and not an extension of the Christmas season.

