

ANIMA CHRISTI

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**THE SAINT MICHAEL PRAYER AND THE ROSARY
ARE ALSO POWERFUL PRAYERS TO HELP US THROUGH VERY TURBULENT TIMES!**

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Do you need a break from life's daily grind? Turn to Jesus in The *Anima Christi* (Latin for "Soul of Christ"), a prayer inviting us to ask our Lord for comfort, strength, and guidance.

It offers us a chance to meditate on His Passion and pray for His help to gain Eternal Life. The *Anima Christi* is profoundly Christ-centered. Is there any wonder that it is often recited after communion?

**Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O Good Jesus, hear me.
Within Thy wounds hide me.
Suffer me not to be separated from thee.
From the malignant enemy defend me.
In the hour of my death call me.
And bid me come unto Thee,
That with all Thy saints,
I may praise thee
Forever and ever.
Amen.**



The actual origins of the *Anima Christi* are uncertain but the prayer has been widely attributed to St. Ignatius Loyola, pictured above, one of the towering figures of our faith.

(St. Ignatius was the key founding member of the Society of Jesus, better known as the Jesuits, in the 16th century. This religious order, dedicated to serving the pope and the Church through education and missionary work, is still well known today.)

However, the *Anima Christi* dates back to the 14th century and was popular enough that it turned up in prayer books way before St. Ignatius featured it in his classic work *Spiritual Exercises* in the 16th century. He designed this book, still popular today both for retreats and private use, to bring souls closer to God through a series of meditations and prayers.

The *Anima Christi*'s rich imagery can certainly help on that score! As we are called in our prayer life to be one with Jesus, we ask here that His soul may purify us and give us holiness.

Christ's body is the bread of life essential for our Salvation, as He himself said in John's Gospel (6:51-59). We receive Him in communion *not as a symbol* but *truly* as discussed [here](#) in "body, blood, soul and divinity," as is said at Mass.

The line about Christ's blood, which we also receive in communion, brings to mind the account of the birth of the Church at Pentecost. Some people thought that Jesus' disciples were "drunk on new wine" (Acts 2:13) as they proclaimed the wonderful works of God and were heard in languages other than their own. Yet the Spirit filling the disciples was Holy, not distilled!

The *Anima Christi* also reminds us of the moving Gospel account of our Lord's Crucifixion in which "one of the soldiers with a spear opened His side, and immediately there came out blood and water" (John 19:34).

We who were immersed in the water of baptism when we came into the faith are now immersed here in the water from His Passion to cleanse us of our sins!

Meditating on Christ's Passion itself can strengthen our spirits when we think of how much He endured for our sake. Remember, He is always there to help us cope when we unite our sufferings with His on the cross for the forgiveness of sins and for our salvation.

Thinking of our Lord's wounds along these lines reminds us that "with his stripes we are healed," as the prophet Isaiah put it (Is 53:5).

As the *Anima Christi* continues, we ask Christ to keep us close to him. Being "separated" from Him could cost us His love and our salvation, making our souls an inviting target for Satan.



This flows right into the line about the “malignant enemy,” which brings to mind that verse in the Lord’s Prayer, “deliver us from evil,” where we ask God to keep us safe from the clutches of the Evil One!

Along this line, the reference to “the hour of my death” points out how important it is for us to *persevere* in prayer and good works in order to reach Heaven. Just as no one knows the day or the hour of Christ’s Second Coming, neither do we know our day or hour when we will pass away.

Will Jesus say to us at that point “Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you” (Matt 25:34) or, tragically, “I never knew you: depart from me” (Matt 7: 23)? The *Anima Christi* can help us stay focused on attaining Eternal Life in a world filled with not-so-divine distractions.

St. Paul has said of Heaven “Eye has not seen nor ear heard...what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor 2:9). Can you imagine anything sweeter than being in the company of our Lord and His saints “forever and ever”? May we all be in Heaven with Him to sing His praises for all Eternity!

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