

## Novena in honor of Saint Cloud

<http://stcdio.org/novena-honor-saint-cloud/>

*Nihil Obstat Rev. Roger Vossberg*

*Imprimatur Most Rev. Jerome Hanus, O.S.B.*

© 1989 Diocese of Saint Cloud

Scripture selections are taken from the New American Bible, Copyright 1970, by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. Used with permission. Reprinted 2009

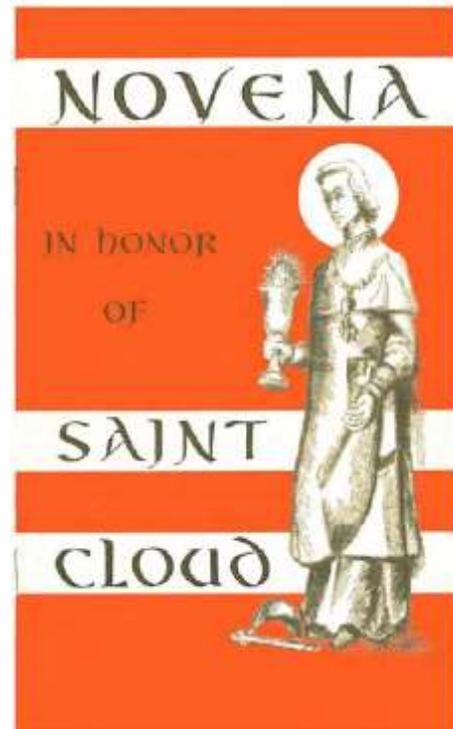
### INTRODUCTION

Pope Leo XIII named Saint Cloud the patron saint of the Church of Saint Cloud on September 12, 1891, following Bishop Otto Zardetti's consultation with priests, religious and lay people in the newly-formed diocese. Each year, from that point forward, we have honored Saint Cloud on his feast day, September 7. During some of those years, believers recited a novena of prayers publicly in his honor prior to his feast.

Monsignors Camille Thiebaut and Michael Kremer composed a novena in honor of Saint Cloud in the 1920's. Traditionally it was either recited publicly in parishes and institutions or prayed privately by individuals and families. It is believed that innumerable blessings were bestowed on the Church of Saint Cloud through the intercessions of our patron saint.

As our journey takes us into these uncertain times, let us energize ourselves spiritually with the healing power of this novena to Saint Cloud beginning on August 30 and concluding on September 7, the Feast of Saint Cloud. I invite you to follow the example of Saint Cloud so that, buoyed by the grace of our Heavenly Father, we will experience His healing power in our lives and that we, in turn, will see Christ in our brothers and sisters, especially those most in need of our care.

+John F Kinney  
*Bishop of Saint Cloud*



---

*This novena was composed by a priest of the Diocese of Saint Cloud in observance of the centennial of the Church of St. Cloud. It was completed on Easter Sunday, March 26, 1989. The author is deeply grateful to the monks of Blue Cloud Abbey, Marvin, South Dakota, 57251, for their assistance in this work.*

---



O GOD, YOU RAISED UP WITH THE OFFICE OF THE PRIESTHOOD AND THE  
SPLENDOR OF VIRTUE SAINT CLOUD

WHO WAS HUMBLED IN THIS WORLD FOR YOUR SAKE ....

GRANT THAT BY HIS EXAMPLE

WE MAY BE YOUR WORTHY MINISTERS AND THAT

THROUGH HIS INTERCESSION

WE MAY ALWAYS GROW IN GRACE AND MERIT.

---

## First Day

### A LOVING PROVIDENCE LIFE OF ST. CLOUD (*lector*)

St. Cloud, born in 522, was the grandson of Clovis, founder of the Kingdom of the Franks, and St. Clothilde. Following the death of his parents, he and his two brothers were cared for by St. Clothilde, the widowed queen. Upon his father's death his uncles sought to seize his father's throne by plotting the murder of St. Cloud and his two brothers. They succeeded in killing his brothers, but St. Cloud escaped and sought sanctuary with St. Remigius, the Bishop of Rheims. St. Cloud grew from childhood into young manhood under the guidance and protection of the holy bishop and his sainted grandmother.

### THE EVER-PRESENT GOD (*All*)

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;  
you know when I sit and when I stand;  
you understand my thoughts from afar.

My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,  
with all my ways you are familiar.

Even before a word is on my tongue,  
behold, O Lord, you know the whole of it.

Behind me and before, you hem me in  
and rest your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your spirit?

From your presence where can I flee?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;  
if I sink to the nether world, you are present there.

If I take the wings of the dawn,  
if I settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
Even there your hand shall guide me,  
and your right hand hold me fast.

### REFLECTION (*Leader*)

In considering the life of St. Cloud we might ask, "Why were his brothers killed and why did he escape? Why did he find sanctuary in the home of a bishop and not in the castle of some king more powerful than his uncles? Why was his grandmother granted a long life? Why did she succeed in fostering the love of God in her young grandson?" In our lives, too, we are often confronted with the same question: WHY? We look back at many events that happen to us and sometimes say, "Isn't that strange?" or, "Why did it happen that way?." Too often we forget that the loving providence of our heavenly Father guides and directs all our ways. The poet, Paul Claude, reminds us: "God writes straight with crooked lines."

JESUS SAYS: (*Lector*) "Take the lilies: they do not spin, they do not weave; but I tell you, Solomon in all his splendor was not arrayed like any one of them. If God clothes in such splendor the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown on the fire tomorrow, how much more will he provide for you, O weak in faith! It is not for you to be in search of what you are to eat or drink. Stop worrying. The unbelievers of this world are always running after these things. Your Father knows that you need such things. Seek out instead his kingship over you, and the rest will follow in turn."  
(*Lk 12:27-31*)

LET US PRAY: (*Leader*) Heavenly Father, grant us confidence in Your loving providence. Help us to see in our lives, as in the life of St. Cloud, Your loving care in everything that happens to us. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

## Second Day

### SILENCE AND SOLITUDE LIFE OF ST. CLOUD (*Lector*)

St. Cloud led a hidden life from the age of five until the age of eighteen. He lived most of these early years with the Bishop of Rheims and the latter years with St. Severin, a hermit. During these formative years he drew closer to God through the practice of silence and solitude. Although this situation was forced upon him by his uncles he came, in time, to appreciate his separation from the world and its concerns as a necessary condition for strengthening his union with God. He grew in wisdom and grace by choosing this life of silence.

### LONGING FOR GOD (*All*)

O God, you are my God whom I seek;  
for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts  
like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water.  
Thus have I gazed toward you in the sanctuary  
to see your power and your glory,  
for your kindness is a greater good than life;  
my lips shall glorify you.  
Thus will I bless you while I live;  
lifting up my hands, I will call upon your name.  
As with the riches of a banquet shall my soul be satisfied,  
and with exultant lips my mouth shall praise you.  
I will remember you upon my couch,  
and through the night-watches I will meditate on you;  
that you are my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy.  
My soul clings fast to you;  
your right hand upholds me. (*Psalms 63:1-9*)

### REFLECTION (*Leader*)

The paths of our lives are all too busy and noisy. We are sometimes overwhelmed by frenzied activities and incessant noises. We live daily in danger of being overcome more by noise pollution than air pollution. Nonetheless, our vocation is “in the word” and not in a contemplative monastery. To preserve sanity and grow in sanctity we must create our own time, our own place, for silence and solitude. This St. Cloud did when he sought out the hermit, St. Severin. We must create our own hermitage where we can experience silence and be alone with God. We must find the place and make the time. Without silence and solitude we cannot grow in union with God.

### JESUS SAYS: (*Lector*)

“When you are praying, do not behave like the hypocrites who love to stand and pray in synagogues or in street corners in order to be noticed. I give you my word, they are already repaid. Whenever you pray, go to your room, close your door, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees what no man sees, will repay you. In your prayer do not rattle on like the pagans. They think they will win a hearing by the sheer multiplication of words. Do not imitate them. Your father knows what you need before you ask him.” (*Mt 6:5-8*)

### LET US PRAY: (*Leader*)

Heavenly Father, we ask that You help us make a time and place each day when we may be alone with You in silence and solitude. In such a way, draw us closer to Yourself as you drew our heavenly patron, St. Cloud. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

### Third Day

#### RENUNCIATION LIFE OF ST. CLOUD (*Lector*)

At the age of twenty St. Cloud left his hermitage, appeared before the Bishop of Paris who was surrounded by religious and civic leaders and members of the royal family. He clothed himself in royal robes and carried a scissor in one hand and a coarse garment in the other. He offered the coarse garment to the bishop who clothed him with it, as a symbol that he preferred spiritual rather than material riches. With the scissor the bishop cut Cloud's long hair which was a symbol of his royalty. In the silence and solitude of his hermitage St. Cloud established priorities in his life. He learned through prayer and meditation the difference between true and false treasures. He freely surrendered worldly wealth in order to gain a spiritual treasure.

#### A PRAYER FOR RENEWAL (*All*)

Cleanse me of sin with hyssop, that I may be purified;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Let me hear the sounds of joy and gladness;  
the bones you have crushed shall rejoice.  
Turn away your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my guilt.  
A clean heart create for me, O God,  
and a steadfast spirit renew within me.  
Cast me not out from your presence,  
and your holy spirit take not from me.  
Give me back the joy of your salvation,  
and a willing spirit sustain in me. (*Psalm 51:9-14*)

#### REFLECTION (*Leader*)

We live in an affluent society. We are trapped in a superfluity of material luxuries. We have become so enslaved by "things" that what was once considered a luxury we now call a necessity. We have unconsciously made ourselves the victims, the slaves, of machines and gadgets and "things." In the process we have deadened our awareness of the spirit and unconsciously become as hard, impersonal and mechanical as the materials on which we depend. We are too much attached to the "latest," the "newest," the "best." The life of St. Cloud shows us that we only become truly free, only can be masters of our own destinies, if we practice renunciation of many material "things" around us. The poet reminds us: "The heart must give more than the hand can hold."

#### JESUS SAYS: (*Lector*)

"How blessed are the poor in spirit; the reign of God is theirs. Blessed too are the sorrowing; they shall be consoled. Blessed are the lowly; they shall inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for holiness; they shall have their fill. Blessed are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs. Blessed are the single-hearted for they shall see God. Blessed too are the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs."  
(*Mt 5:3-10*)

#### LET US PRAY: (*Leader*)

Heavenly Father, we read in Sacred Scripture that Your divine Son had "no where to lay his head." Help us to follow His example and that of our patron St. Cloud by renouncing our dependence on material gifts and practicing a detachment from them that will bring true peace and happiness. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

## Fourth Day

### GOD'S HEALING LIFE OF ST. CLOUD (*Lector*)

After St. Severin died, St. Cloud left the neighborhood of Paris to find solitude deeper in the forest. He sought silence to communicate more intimately with God in praying for the needs of people. God answered his prayers in a strange sort of way by sending people out to find him in the forest. They came at first by the hundreds and later by the thousands because they learned St. Cloud had the divine gift of healing the bodies and souls of those who believed in Jesus. Through this gift he restored physical health to many and healed many more spiritually. His was a ministry of reconciliation, restoring ailing bodies, broken hearts and wounded souls.

### GOD HEALS THOSE IN DISTRESS (*All*)

Stricken because of their wicked ways  
and afflicted because of their sins  
They loathed all manner of food,  
so that they were near the gates of death.  
They cried to the Lord in their distress;  
from their straits he rescued them.  
He sent forth his word to heal them  
and to snatch them from destruction.  
Let them give thanks to the Lord for his kindness  
and his wondrous deeds to the children of men.  
Let them make thank offerings  
and declare his works with shouts of joy ...  
But he who pours out contempt upon princes,  
and sends them astray through a trackless waste,  
lifted up the needy out of misery  
and made their families numerous like flocks.  
The upright see this and rejoice,  
and all wickedness closes its mouth. (*Psalm 107:19-22, 41-42*)

### REFLECTION (*Leader*)

We are all called by baptism and confirmation to be healers. Many people in all walks of life cry out for healing. In one way or another, each of us suffers from the effects of sinfulness in the world. We are weak; often we stumble and sometimes lose our way. We are called like St. Cloud to practice a ministry of healing. The Church is not a safe harbor for the saved but a health center for all who are sick and weary and over-burdened. Everyone is called to practice the seven corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

### JESUS SAYS: (*Lector*)

“Then the just will ask him: ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or see you thirsty and give you drink? When did we welcome you away from home or clothe you in your nakedness? When did we visit you when you were ill or in prison?’ The king will answer them: ‘I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me.’” (*Mt 25-37-40*)

### LET US PRAY: (*Leader*)

Heavenly Father, we know our own faults and failures, our own weariness and weakness. Help us to be mindful that those around us are also wounded and suffering physical and spiritual pains. Following the example of St. Cloud, make us wounded healers so that by Your grace we will experience Your healing power in our own lives by our efforts in binding up the wounds in our families, our communities, our nation and our world. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

## Fifth Day

### GOD'S WORD LIFE OF ST. CLOUD (*Lector*)

St. Cloud lived eleven years as a hermit, seeking an intimate union with God through prayer and meditation. During these years he came to know his Savior, Jesus Christ, through continually reading and reflecting on God's word. He knew in his time, as we know today, the words of St. Jerome: "To be ignorant of Sacred Scripture is to be ignorant of Christ." He recognized Jesus in both the Book of God's Word and the Bread from God's Table. These were no idle, stagnant years for the prince who fled the royal court. For this reason artists throughout the centuries have portrayed St. Cloud holding the Bible in one hand.

### GOD'S SAVING WORDS (*All*)

Your word, O Lord, endures forever;  
it is firm as the heavens.  
Through all generations your truth endures;  
you have established the earth, and it stands firm;  
according to your ordinances they still stand firm;  
all things serve you.  
Had not your law been my delight,  
I should have perished in my affliction.  
Never will I forget your precepts,  
for through them you give me life.  
I am yours, save me,  
for I have sought your precepts ...  
How I love your Law, O Lord!  
It is my meditation all the day.  
Your command has made me wiser than my enemies,  
for it is ever with me.  
I have more understanding than all my teachers  
when your decrees are my meditation.  
I have more discernment than the elders,  
because I observe your precepts.

**REFLECTION** (*Leader*) We are fortunate in recent years in witnessing a renewed interest in Sacred Scripture. Bible courses, classes and study groups are entering the mainstream of parish life. More and more Catholic people are beginning to read God's word. Good as this is, the study of Sacred Scripture is only a means to an end. Reading the scriptures leads us to praying –carrying on a conversation with the Blessed Trinity Who lives within us. In this sense reading Sacred Scripture is, as St. Bernard of Clairvaux remarked, "the oil of the lamp of prayer."

**JESUS SAYS:** (*Lector*) When the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, he unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and release to prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord." Rolling up the scroll he gave it back to the assistant and sat down. All in the synagogue had their eyes fixed on him. Then he began by saying to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." All who were present spoke favorable of him; they marveled at the appealing discourse which came from his lips. (*Lk 4:17-22*)

**LET US PRAY:** (*Leader*) Heavenly Father, give us the grace to follow the example of St. Cloud in having an ardent love for the Bible. Help us to know and love You through our daily reading of Sacred Scripture and in such a way have a daily conversation with You. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

### **Sixth Day**

#### **THE HOLY EUCHARIST LIFE OF ST. CLOUD (*Lector*)**

Although St. Cloud shared many gifts with others there was one he could not give, the Body and Blood of Christ. People recognized this and many urged Eusebius, Bishop of Paris, to ordain the hermit-prince a priest. The bishop complied with the people's request and in 551 St. Cloud was ordained a priest of the Church of Paris. He now was able to give the Bread of Angels as food for men and women to sustain them on their journey to heaven. He became the pastor of a small village consisting of poor fishermen and farmers near Paris. Today the village, now a suburb of Paris, is called St. Cloud. In his and his people's hearts he developed a deep devotion to the Holy Eucharist. For this reason artists depict him holding a chalice in his right hand.

#### **RADIANT WITH JOY (*All*)**

I will bless the Lord at all times;  
his praise shall be ever in my mouth.  
Let my soul glory in the Lord;  
the lowly will hear me and be glad.  
Glorify the Lord with me,  
let us together extol his name.  
I sought the Lord, and he answered me  
and delivered me from all my fears.  
Look to him that you may be radiant with joy,  
and your faces may not blush with shame.  
When the afflicted man called out, the Lord heard,  
and from all his distress he saved him.  
The angel of the Lord encamps  
around those who fear him, and delivers them.  
Taste and see how good the Lord is;  
happy the man who takes refuge in him. (*Psalms 34: 1-9*)

#### **REFLECTION (*Leader*)**

Through the liturgical renewal that has taken place in the past two generations and the renewed liturgies following the Second Vatican Council, we have experienced in our lifetime a reawakening of eucharistic devotion. Frequent, even weekly and daily reception of Holy Communion, is becoming a common practice among Catholic people. There is, however, a temptation which even devout people experience. Perhaps receiving Holy Communion has become so routine that we have become careless in our manner of receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus. Perhaps we show this in the physical manner in which we approach the altar. Exterior actions often reflect an interior attitude. May our spirit be that of the disciples who met Jesus on the road to Emmaus: "Were not our hearts burning inside us as he talked to us . . . ."

**JESUS SAYS: (*Lector*)** I myself am the bread of life. No one who comes to me shall ever be hungry, no one who believes in me shall ever thirst. . . . Your ancestors ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven for a man to eat and never die. I myself am the living bread come down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever; the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. . . . Let me solemnly assure you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day. (*Jn 6:48-51, 53-54*)

**LET US PRAY: (*Leader*)** Heavenly Father, give us a devotion to the Holy Eucharist such as that which filled the heart and soul of St. Cloud. Help us to show in our actions our love for the Holy Eucharist which we profess by our faith. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

### **Seventh Day**

#### **THE BODY OF CHRIST THE LIFE OF ST. CLOUD** *(Lector)*

St. Cloud served his brothers and sisters through using his gifts of healing, counseling, preaching and distributing his wealth to the poor. By faith Catholic people learn that the Body of Christ is not only in the Holy Eucharist but in each of us who are members of His body. Christ gives us His Body as heavenly food in the Holy Eucharist; Christ gives us His same Body to serve in our brothers and sisters along life's journey. As a priest St. Cloud brought the Body of Christ to the altar; as a brother St. Cloud served the same Body of Christ in all his brothers and sisters.

#### **THOSE WHO FEAR GOD** *(All)*

O Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent?  
Who shall dwell on your holy mountain?  
He who walks blamelessly and does justice;  
who thinks the truth in his heart  
and slanders not with his tongue;  
who harms not his fellow man,  
nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor;  
by whom the reprobate is despised,  
while he honors those who fear the Lord;  
who though it be to his loss, changes not his pledged word;  
who lends not his money at usury  
and accepts no bribe against the innocent. *(Psalm 15: 1-4)*

#### **REFLECTION** *(Leader)*

We receive the Body of Christ sacramentally at holy Mass; we encounter Christ every day as He lives in ourselves and our brothers and sisters. St. John reminds us that we can only truly say that we love God (Whom we cannot see) if in good deeds we love our brothers and sisters (whom we can see). Christ continues to suffer in the living members of His Body. Our love for Christ is expressed in our concern, our commitment and sacrifice for all who are oppressed, all who are in any need, all who look to us for material and spiritual support. Christ today cries out for help through the anguish and pain for everyone in need.

#### **JESUS SAYS:** *(Lector)*

This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer speak of you as slaves, for a slave does not know what his master is about. Instead, I call you friends, since I have made known to you all that I heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure, so that all you ask the Father in my name he will give you. The command I give you is this, that you love one another. *(Jn 15:12-17)*

#### **LET US PRAY:** *(Leader)*

Heavenly Father, give us the gift of seeing Christ in our brothers and sisters, especially those who are most in need. Help us to follow the example of St. Cloud by bearing witness to the presence of Christ within us by serving the same Christ who continues to suffer in the poor, the abandoned and oppressed. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

## **Eighth Day**

### **GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S GIFTS LIFE OF ST. CLOUD** *(Lector)*

As time passed the uncles of St. Cloud repented of their evil ways and reconciled themselves with their nephew. They, in turn, restored many castles, estates and lands to him. As a hermit he sold some of these properties and distributed his wealth to the poor. After he was ordained a priest he received permission from Bishop Eusebius to use a small part of that wealth to build a church for the poor people of Nogent. With his own hands he undertook the building of this church which he dedicated in honor of St. Martin of Tours. He understood well that he was the steward of God's gifts. These he generously gave to others in need.

### **YOUR WONDROUS WORKS** *(All)*

I will extol you, O my God and King,  
and I will bless your name forever and ever.  
Every day will I bless you,  
and I will praise your name forever and ever.  
Great is the Lord and highly to be praised;  
his greatness is unsearchable.  
Generation after generation praises your works  
and proclaims your might.  
They speak of the splendor of your glorious majesty  
and tell of your wondrous works.  
They discourse of the power of your terrible deeds  
and declare your greatness.  
They publish the fame of your abundant goodness  
and joyfully sing of your justice. *(Psalm 145:1-7)*

### **REFLECTION** *(Leader)*

The greatest spiritual gift God gives is the Eucharist, which means "thanksgiving." The greatest earthly gift God gives is life, in all its fullness and beauty. A modern writer observed: "Life is God's gift to you; what you do with it is your gift to God." People attached to material things are often extremely selfish and self-centered. They find it difficult to give of themselves and their possessions. They become, often unconsciously, as hard and metallic as the things they treasure. For many of them gratitude has become a lost virtue. Yet, gratitude remains the hallmark of the true Christian spirit. When was the last time you said "thank you" to God, your family, your friends, your neighbors?

### **JESUS SAYS:** *(Lector)*

Do not lay up for yourselves an earthly treasure. Moths and rust corrode; thieves break in and steal. Make it your practice instead to store up heavenly treasure, which neither moths nor rust corrode nor thieves break in and steal. Remember where your treasure is, there your heart is also. *(Mt 6:19-21)*

### **LET US PRAY:** *(Leader)*

Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your never-ending gifts to us. We thank You for the gifts that come to us from You through our families, friends and neighbors. Help us to become more like St. Cloud in sharing all that we are and all that we have more generously with all our brothers and sisters both near and far. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

---

## **Ninth Day**

### **A JOYFUL HEART LIFE OF ST. CLOUD** *(Lector)*

Joy is contagious. People like to be with happy people. Joy is the dynamic secret of every true Christian. St. Cloud radiated that deep joy of a Christian heart in love with God. Others recognized this in St. Cloud and came to live with him. In time he became the leader and teacher of those who joined him. In time they formed a religious community, not like a convent or monastery but an association of men dedicating themselves to the love of God and the service of God's people. They radiated joy in their lives of service and their fellowship of love. The last seven years of his life St. Cloud lived with his brothers in this community attached to the church of St. Martin of Tours. His body had literally become worn out by the penances he imposed upon himself; he was old before his time. Surrounded by his brothers, he died joyfully and serenely on September 7, 560.

### **SING FOR JOY** *(All)*

God arises; his enemies are scattered  
and those who hate him flee before him.  
As smoke is driven away, so are they driven;  
as wax melts before the fire,  
so the wicked perish before God.  
But the just rejoice and exult before God;  
they are glad and rejoice.  
Sing to God, chant praise to his name,  
extol him who rides upon the clouds,  
Whose name is the Lord; exult before him.... *(Psalm 68:1-5)*

### **REFLECTION** *(Leader)*

At the turn of the century Leon Bloy wrote, "There is really only one unhappiness in life and that is not to be a saint." The pagan philosopher, Plato, expressed the same thought when he wrote, "The happiest man is the holiest man." As any loving father, our Father in heaven desires nothing more than that His sons and daughters be filled with joy. All the saints, like St. Cloud, have been among the happiest people who walked the face of the earth. A good conscience and the conviction we are doing God's Will are the foundation of a Christian's joy. With these, the Christian can face any crisis in life, including death, with a serenity which St. Thomas More expressed before he was about to be beheaded: "Pray for me, as I will for thee, that we may meet merrily in heaven." St. Cloud lived his brief life of thirty-eight years with a joyful heart; in dying he entered into "a joy no one can take from you."

### **JESUS SAYS:** *(Lector)*

Within a short time you will lose sight of me, but soon after that you will see me. I tell you truly: you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices; you will grieve for a time but your grief will be turned into joy. When a woman is in labor she is sad that her time has come. When she has borne her child, she no longer remembers her pain for joy that a man has been born into the world. In the same way, you are sad for a time, but I shall see you again; then your hearts will rejoice with a joy no one can take from you. *(Jn 16:19-22)*

### **LET US PRAY:** *(Leader)*

Heavenly Father, we know that You have prepared a place of everlasting joy for each one of us. We ask for the grace of living every day of our lives with a joyful heart as St. Cloud lived his life. Make us witnesses of the joys of heaven even as we pass through the trials of this earth. This we ask through Christ our Lord.

AMEN