

# The Ascension Weekly

January 14, 2018

## The Infant of Prague in Our Lady of Czestochowa Chapel

Visitors to our parish chapel have probably noticed the statue of the Infant of Prague that stands to the right of the altar at the front of the chapel. Those who are familiar with the devotion may know that the original miraculous statue of the Infant of Prague is a wax-coated wooden statue approximately 19 inches tall which is said to have once belonged to St. Teresa of Avila. An online article by the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Los Angeles includes a detailed explanation of the devotion:

“‘The Little King,’ another popular name given to this statue, wears a crown, and in the left hand holds an orb and cross, which signify Christ’s universal kingship. Two fingers of the right hand (symbolizing Christ’s divine and human natures) are raised in blessing, as the folded thumb touches the last two fingers, representing the unity of the Blessed Trinity.”

The article explains that in 1628, the statue was donated to the Discalced Carmelite friars of the monastery of Our Lady of Victory Church in Prague, where it lay forgotten and damaged (its hands had sadly broken off) for seven years after the monastery was pillaged during the Thirty Years War. The statue was rediscovered and devotions reestablished in 1637. One day a priest was praying before the statue and, as the article recounts, he heard a voice coming from the statue:

“Have pity on me, and I will have pity on you. Give me my hands, and I will give you peace. The more you honor me, the more I will bless you.”

The article continues, “The statue of the Infant of Prague has since drawn many pilgrims who come to place their petitions before the merciful Infant Jesus. Over the centuries, the Infant of Prague has been a source of many miracles and blessings, such as the healing of the terminally ill and paralyzed, restoration of hearing and sight and countless more who in humble simplicity and sincerity entreat the intercession of the Divine Child.”

The Infant of Prague is no less loved and tended to in our own chapel of Ascension. He has individual outfits of different colors that represent the corresponding liturgical seasons: two White outfits for the Christmas season



(running from Christmas to the Baptism of the Lord) and Easter season (Easter Vigil Mass to Pentecost), Green for Ordinary Time (Monday after the Baptism of the Lord until Ash Wednesday, and Monday after Pentecost until 1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent), and two Purple outfits for

Advent (1<sup>st</sup> week of Advent until Christmas) and Lent (Ash Wednesday until Holy Saturday). Four of the outfits (two white and two purple) were created by a former parishioner, Mrs. Phyllis Zwirko, a seamstress who moved to Virginia when her husband Richard retired in 2008. In recent years, Velma Mayfield, a current parishioner, made the fifth outfit (green). Phyllis and her husband had a special devotion to the Infant Jesus.

Before Phyllis and her husband moved, and knowing that another parishioner, Rosemarie Givens, also had a deep devotion to the Infant, they asked if Rosemarie was interested in taking care of dressing the statue. She agreed and is still doing this blessed chore for over 9 years now.

The Infant Jesus came into the lives of Rosemarie and Harry Givens early in their marriage and the major decisions and dilemmas in their lives have been guided (answered “instantly”) through the Novena to the Infant Jesus of Prague which is said every hour for nine hours in a single day. They can testify that they truly believe and trust in the Infant and His motto: “The more you honor Me, the more I will bless you.”

All parishioners are encouraged to foster a devotion to the Infant Jesus of Prague, who has been instrumental in the lives of so many.

Reference: <https://carmelitesistersocd.com/2017/the-origin-of-the-infant-of-prague/>