

Many Catholics might remember Saint Blaise's feast day, February 3, because of the Blessing of the Throats that take place on this day. Two candles are blessed, held slightly open, and pressed against the throat as the blessing is said.

Very few facts are known about Saint Blaise. It is believed he was a bishop of Sebastea in Armenia who was martyred under the reign of Licinius in the early fourth century.

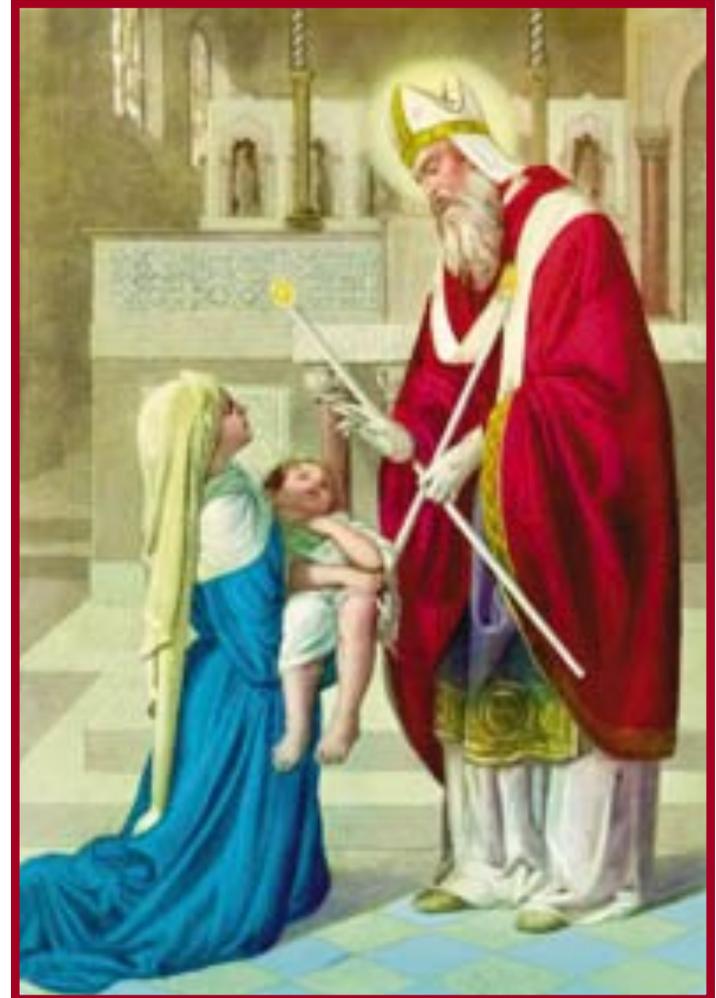
The legend of St. Blaise tells us that he was born into a rich and noble family who raised him as a Christian. He became a bishop. Later, a new persecution of Christians began. He received a message from God to go into the hills to escape persecution. Hunters discovered a cave surrounded by wild animals who were sick. Blaise walked among them unafraid, curing them of their illnesses. The hunters recognized Blaise as a Bishop, so they captured him to take him back for trial. On the way back, he talked a wolf into releasing a pig that belonged to a poor woman. When Blaise was sentenced to be starved to death, the woman, in gratitude, sneaked into the prison with food and candles. Finally, the governor had Blaise killed.

Saint Blaise is the patron of physicians, sick cattle, wax- chandlers, wool combers, and of wild animals because of his care for them and of those with throat maladies. He is invoked against afflictions of the throat.

As one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, Saint Blaise was much venerated throughout Central Europe. In art he is a bishop with a metal comb and a tall candle. He may be shown in many different ways: (1) with crozier (pastoral staff) and two candles (no comb); (2) martyred by being torn with iron combs; (3) in a cave with wild animals; (4) discovered by hunters, a fawn near him (not to be confused with the monk, Saint Giles); (5) blessing the birds in front of a cave; (6) rescuing a poor woman's pig from a wolf; (6) saving the life of a boy who swallowed a fishbone; or (7) with the city of Dubrovnik in his hand or being carried over the city by angels.

## NOVENA TO SAINT BLAISE

Recited daily from: January 25th through February 2nd



Feast Day: February 3rd

## Novena

The word Novena derives its name from the Latin word “novem” meaning “nine.” A novena can be either a private or public devotion in the Catholic Church to obtain special graces.

### Novena in Honor of Saint Blaise

#### PREPARATORY PRAYER

Almighty and Eternal God! With lively faith and reverently worshiping Thy Divine Majesty, I prostrate myself before Thee and invoke with filial trust Thy supreme bounty and mercy. Illumine the darkness of my intellect with a ray of Thy heavenly light and inflame my heart with the fire of Thy divine love, that I may contemplate the great virtues and merits of the saint in whose honor I make this novena, and following his example imitate, like him, the life of Thy divine Son.

Moreover, I beseech Thee to grant graciously, through the merits and intercession of this powerful Helper, the petition which through him I humbly place before Thee, devoutly saying, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Vouchsafe graciously to hear it, if it redounds to Thy greater glory and to the salvation of my soul. Amen.

#### Prayer in honor of St. Blaise

O GOD, deliver us through the intercession of Thy holy bishop and martyr Blaise, from all evil of soul and body, especially from all ills of the throat; and grant us the grace to make a good confession in the confident hope of obtaining Thy pardon, and ever to praise with worthy lips Thy most holy name. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Invocation of St. Blaise

Saint Blaise, gracious benefactor of mankind and faithful servant of God, who for the love of our Savior did suffer so many tortures with patience and resignation; I invoke thy powerful intercession. Preserve me from all evils of soul and body. Because of thy great merits God endowed thee with the special grace to help those that suffer from ills of the throat; relieve and preserve me from them, so that I may always be able to fulfill my duties, and with the aid of God's grace perform good works. I invoke thy help as special physician of souls, that I may confess my sins sincerely in the holy sacrament of Penance and obtain their forgiveness. I recommend to thy merciful intercession also those who unfortunately concealed a sin in confession. Obtain for them the grace to accuse themselves sincerely and contritely of the sin they concealed, of the sacrilegious confessions and communions they made, and of all the sins they committed since then, so that they may receive pardon, the grace of God, and the remission of the eternal punishment. Amen. (**Mention your request(s) here**).

#### Prayer

My LORD and my God! I offer up to Thee my petition in union with the bitter passion and death of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, together with the merits of His immaculate and blessed Mother, Mary ever virgin, and of all the saints, particularly with those of the holy Helper in whose honor I make this novena.

Look down upon me, merciful Lord! Grant me Thy grace and Thy love, and graciously hear my prayer. Amen.