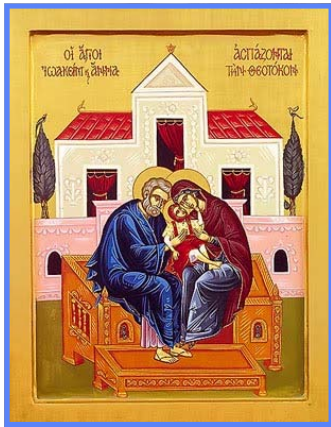


# Saints Anne & Joachim

Each year the Church venerates the memory of Saints Anne & Joachim on July 26th. An ancient story dating to the first centuries of the Church's life recalls how Saints Anne & Joachim, like Abraham and Sarah, were scorned by their neighbors because they had no children. Years of longing did not weaken their trust in God, but grief eventually drove Saint Joachim into the wilderness to fast and pray. Saint Anne, remaining at home, dressed in mourning clothes and wept because she had no child of her own. Seeing her mistress distressed, a servant girl reminded Anne to put her trust in God.

Saint Anne washed her face, put on her bridal clothes and went to a garden to plead with God for a child. Angels appeared to Saint Anne in her garden and Saint Joachim in the desert, promising that,



despite their old age, they would give birth to a child who would be known throughout the world. The new parents ran to meet one another at Jerusalem's Golden Gate, and with a kiss rejoiced in the new life which God had promised would be theirs.

Saints Anne and Joachim are powerful intercessors for all married couples, expectant mothers and married couples who are having difficulty conceiving, as well as all who have grown old.

## About the Mosaic

The art of mosaic dates back some five thousand years to ancient Babylon. The mosaic of Saints Anne and Joachim, depicted on the cover of this novena, was made of an Italian glass called smalti. Its intentionally uneven surface makes it highly reflective. The gold around the halos of Saints Anne and Joachim is 14 kt gold-leaf pressed onto the smalti. The thousands of pieces that make up the mosaic were hand cut to form the design. The mosaic depicts the moment of the meeting of Saints Anne and Joachim at the Golden Gate of Jerusalem. The words surrounding the mosaic are from the Marriage Liturgy. They echo something we already sense in our hearts and souls, that "the very meaning of life is found in the giving and receiving of love" (Evangelium vitae). As the beauty of a mosaic is in its reflected light, so we too are all called to be reflections of the love in which we were created.

## Novena to Saints Anne and Joachim



Artist: Adrienne M. Keogler © 2004

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Good parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, grandparents of our Savior, Jesus Christ,

When life seems barren, help us to trust in God's mercy.

When we are confused, help us to find the way to God.

When we are lost in the desert, lead us to those whom God has called us to love.

When our marriage seems lifeless, show us the eternal youth of the Lord.

When we are selfish, teach us to cling only to that which lasts.

When we are afraid, help us to trust in God.

When we are ashamed, remind us that we are God's children.

When we sin, lead us to do God's will.



You who know God's will for husband and wife, help us to live chastely.

You who know God's will for the family, keep all families close to you.

You who suffered without children, intercede for all infertile couples.

You who trusted in God's will, help us to respect God's gift of fertility.

You who gave birth to the Blessed Mother, inspire couples to be co-creators with God.

You who taught the Mother of God, teach us to nurture children in holy instruction.



You whose hearts trusted in God, hear our prayers for . . . *(mention your requests here)*

Pray with us for the ministry of Catholic family life.

Pray with us for the ministry of Natural Family Planning.

Pray with us for all who give their time, talent and treasure to this good work.

*Hail Mary. . . Our Father. . . Glory to the Father. . .*

God of our fathers, you gave Saints Anne and Joachim the privilege of being the parents of Mary, the mother of your incarnate Son. May their prayers help us to attain the salvation you have promised to your people. We ask this through Christ our Lord.<sup>1</sup>

**Amen.**

1. Collect from the Roman Missal. © 1973, ICEL.

