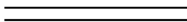




Catholic Novenas

A CLASSIC
COLLECTION





Novenas in honor of saints are moments of shared friendship with the court of heaven. We ask the saints to join their prayers with ours and, as we do, our friendship with them and with God grows. In addition to 21 novenas, this collection includes shorter intercessory prayers to the saints.

The Queen's Work

Liguori Publications has revived The Queen's Work imprint to support the needs of the people of God who desire a life of greater piety and devotion, and to encourage the positive spiritual energy that is present in the Church today.



Catholic Novenas

A CLASSIC COLLECTION

A Redemptorist Pastoral Publication



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A Redemptorist Ministry

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First edition

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Introduction

What Is a Novena?

A novena is an ancient form of Christian prayer that expresses our steadfast trust in the power of prayer. A true sign of faith and an expression of love, a novena, or nine occasions of prayer, bears testimony to our human perseverance—a mere fraction of the infinite patience that God has for us! In the creation story in Genesis 1, God is pleased to see the seven-day handiwork of creation through to completion; likewise, our perseverance to see a novena through to its completion is cause for rejoicing in union with the Lord, for we are made in that same image of God, who took delight in the accomplishment of creation and who delights in our prayerful persistence.

Traditionally, a novena is a prayer or set of prayers repeated for nine consecutive days. However, a novena can just as well be accomplished in nine consecutive

hours of one day or be spread out to include one day each week for nine consecutive weeks. For example, people who participate in the Eucharist on the first Friday of each month make a novena of First Fridays.

No fixed rules need to be set for making a novena, except to persevere in the prayer, so a novena is a good way to help us form the habit of regular prayer.

Novenas in honor of saints are moments of shared friendship with the court of heaven. Our friendship with a particular saint helps us live our lives steeped in deep love for God and neighbor. Like the saints, we strive to be a light in the world, bringing the compassion and love of God to all we meet in our journey of life. Novenas are good ways to relate to favorite saints during daily life. Through these prayers and devotions, we bring saints into our lives and share our needs and worries with them. We ask the saints to join their prayers with ours and, as we do, our friendship with them and with God grows.

In this collection of essential Catholic novenas, you will discover novenas that are popular expressions of piety, such as the Novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. You will discover specific novenas that are intended to help prepare hearts, minds, and spirits for the great liturgical feasts and solemnities of the Church, such

as the Christmas Novena by Saint Alphonsus Liguori. Still other novenas are prayed for specific purposes or to express a particular intention or intercession, such as the Novena to Saint Jude.

How to Pray a Novena

When making a novena privately, try to find a place where you can be comfortable and quiet, away from distractions. This might be before the tabernacle in a church or chapel, but even a cozy chair at home will do. Begin by closing your eyes and becoming aware of God's presence with you in that place, at that moment. Before beginning the prayers that follow, call to mind what you want to ask of our Lord.

While each novena is accompanied by guidance on how to pray it, the traditional outline of a novena prayer, to be repeated each day of the novena, follows:

1. Begin with the Sign of the Cross, followed by a few moments of quiet recollection.
2. Pray the opening prayer.
3. Read the novena meditation for the day, followed by a few moments of quiet recollection.
4. If you have any prayers of intercession or prayers of thanksgiving, pray these prayers at this time.
5. Concluding prayers may include an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be.
6. End with the Sign of the Cross.

Novena to the Holy Spirit

It is a wonderful tradition in the spiritual practice of the Church to pray this Novena to the Holy Spirit for either nine days before the feast of Pentecost or nine days after the feast of Pentecost. For the exact date of Pentecost for each liturgical year, consult the proper liturgical calendar.

SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

Saint Alphonsus Liguori (1696–1787) was born into a family of Italian nobility. He earned law degrees in civil and canon law by age sixteen. Upon recognizing corruption within the legal system, he became a priest and founded the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, commonly known as the Redemptorists, in 1732. The mission of his priests and brothers is to serve people who are “poor and most abandoned.” In 1762, he was appointed a bishop. He was ninety when he died in 1787. Pope Gregory XVI canonized him in 1839, and

Pope Pius IX named him a doctor of the Church in 1871. Saint Alphonsus' feast day is August 1.

Alphonsus, who wrote extensively on issues of spirituality and morality, is the patron of confessors. This novena is adapted from one of the many devotionals he wrote for Redemptorist priests and brothers, but it is relevant for everyone.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Among all Christian doctrines, the Trinity is perhaps the most difficult to comprehend. It declares that God is a single being yet three distinct persons. We also believe that God is eternal and existed before the creation of the universe. Saint John defines God simply as "love." (See 1 John 4:8,16.) As we know, love must be shared and expressed, or it doesn't exist. So, if "God love" existed before creation, it had to have someone to love or it could not have existed. Thus, the Christian tradition maintains that, as love, God exists in a single living being and within the dynamic of perfect, intimate love flowing among the three persons who comprise the one being we call Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is a mystery that is beyond our limited human comprehension, and we will go crazy if we try to figure it out! Yet, it is what we profess.

After Jesus appeared to his disciples several times to witness that he truly had risen from the dead, he then prepared to ascend into heaven, and he promised that his Spirit would remain with us here on earth at all times: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always” (John 14:16). That “Advocate” is the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus sent to be the presence of God always among us. The Holy Spirit constantly nudges us along to do the right thing in our lives.

First Meditation

Love Is a Fire That Inflames the Heart

OPENING PRAYER

To Be Prayed Each Day of the Novena

O Holy Spirit, I believe that you are eternally one with the Father and the Son. I now ask you to help me grow in holiness by entering my heart to enlighten it and soften it. You overshadowed the Virgin Mary when she conceived. Then, on the first Pentecost, you gave the apostles courage and zeal to carry out our Lord’s mission throughout the whole world. Now, I pray:

come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful ones
and enkindle in us the fire of your love. Amen.

LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

To Be Prayed Each Day of the Novena

Spirit of God, who inflames our hearts,
hear my prayer.

Spirit of God, who enlightens our souls,
hear my prayer.

Spirit of God, fountain of all graces,
hear my prayer.

Spirit of love, who remains with us always,
hear my prayer.

Spirit of love, who calms our restlessness,
hear my prayer.

Spirit of love, who binds us to the Father and the
Son, hear my prayer.

Spirit of strength, who helps us grow in virtue,
hear my prayer.

Spirit of presence, through whom God
dwells in our hearts,
hear my prayer.

Treasure of love, who contains all goodness,
hear my prayer.