

NOVENA

FOR VOCATIONS



WHAT IS A NOVENA?

A novena is a classic form of Catholic devotion, where on nine successive days, a prayer is said for some special occasion or intention. The practice of saying novenas is scripturally based, modeled after the nine days of consecutive prayer that the Apostles, our Blessed Mother, and other disciples of Christ prayed together in the Upper Room between Our Lord's Ascension into heaven and the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Prayed in communion with the Saints, novenas often petition the intercession of specially selected Saints (our exemplary role models in the spiritual life). Let us pray together, with the Angels and Saints, for an increase in vocations to the sacred Priesthood and Religious life in the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston. Let us also pray for all the vocations: for holy marriages in the Church, for Deacons, and those that dedicate their lives to Christ in the single life. May the Lord of the harvest send many to work in His vineyard!

Day 1: Sunday

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

With special focus on the virtues of purity and chastity

Our Lady, Queen of the Clergy, we ask your intercession today for an increase in vocations to the Priesthood and Religious life. Blessed Mary, you are the Immaculate Conception, the Ark of the New Covenant, and the fairest of our race. You are an example to all Christians of a disciple who entrusted your life completely to the divine will. You lived a life of ardent charity in service to our Blessed Lord and your most chaste spouse, St. Joseph. May your example of lively faith, divine purity, and selfless devotion to Christ be a model for us for an ever deepening devotion to Christ and His Church. A Priest espouses himself wholly in body and soul to Christ, as a bridegroom does to his bride, like God's relationship with Israel. Let us ask God our Heavenly Father that He send more workers into His vineyard. O Queen of Heaven, pray along with us today that all Priests and Religious may remain ever pure in body and heart, and that God may renew a steadfast spirit within them daily, as they are called to serve humbly, devoutly, and lovingly as ministers of God's sacred Altar. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 2: Monday

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

With special focus on the virtue of humility

St. John the Baptist, you inaugurated the Gospel as you leapt in your mother's womb. As the Prophet surpassing all other prophets, in complete humility you heralded our Holy Redeemer. Baptizing by water and preaching repentance, you prepared the way of our Lord to a world waiting in darkness. Saint John the Baptist, holy martyr for the sanctity of Holy Matrimony, we ask for your most ardent intercession today for all Seminarians who will soon serve the Church by proclaiming the Word of God, preaching truth and repentance, and baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ. Pray that these men may always fully live out their baptismal promises and follow your holy example as a strong voice proclaiming Christ's truth and mercy to our hurting and broken world. Intercede before our Lord for our Seminarians and ask that they be stirred with a bold faith, like you, to always remain faithful to the teachings of Christ's Church, even when it involves suffering on their part for the sake of the kingdom. May your words be true of them as well: "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3: 30) Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 3: Tuesday

ST. JOHN VIANNEY

With special focus on the Priestly heart

St. John Vianney, patron saint of Parish Priests, on your journey to the sacred Priesthood, you encountered many obstacles, but you realized that to suffer was to suffer with Christ, so you lovingly embraced your cross. Your motto for life became “loving while suffering and suffering in order to love.” You were totally devoted to the service of God’s holy people, especially evidenced by your tireless dedication to the Confessional, in which you spent entire days. You transformed a struggling parish into a beacon of faith and holiness to all the world. You gave all that you had to the poor, and you stood firm in your priestly zeal for souls against the assaults of the devil. Your priestly life was a vivid image of the love of the Heart of Christ for His people. O holy Priest of Ars, you know the needs of God’s Church. Pray for an increase of priestly zeal for souls in our Diocese. Pray that our priests may, like you, be beacons of humility, diligence, self-sacrificial love, and holiness. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 4: Wednesday

THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST

With special focus on union and intimacy with Christ

Lord Jesus, at each Holy Mass we celebrate that You have become food for our souls, a hidden companion at all times. Bread and wine veil Your Presence. How can God humble himself so much so as not to be even seen as human? You, Jesus, wait for us patiently to unite with You, seeking, loving, desiring to impart Your graces upon us. Yes, Lord Jesus, You are a Victim and a Sacrifice for us. In Holy Communion especially we become part of You and You part of us. If we have the proper disposition, we become totally united with You. May all your faithful be united intimately to You in Holy Communion. Lord, we also pray for more vocations to the Priesthood. It is by your Priests that you feed your Church with the Holy Eucharist. The anointed hands of your Priests will consecrate the bread and wine to be your Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. May the people of our Diocese grow in love with the Holy Eucharist, and may all of your Priests be ever more drawn into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ, who came not to be served but to serve. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 5: Thursday

ST. JOSEPH

With special focus on the virtue of obedience

Holy St. Joseph, Patron of our Diocese, Carpenter of Nazareth, Guardian of the Redeemer, Protector of the Blessed Virgin, Patron Saint of the Universal Church and of workers, you were a holy and righteous man. Angels visited you, the Christ Child watched and learned from you, and our Blessed Mother depended upon you to provide for and protect the Holy Family. You were completely obedient to whatever God asked of you, without ever knowing where your obedient acts would take you or what the outcomes of your obedience would be. Your life was a witness to our Blessed Lord of the kind of self-sacrificial love that a father is called to exercise.. O St. Joseph, we implore your fatherly intercession for all families. Guard them and pray that they follow your highest example of devoted obedience to the call of Our Father in Heaven to be holy. Implore our loving God to pour down upon married couples the special graces needed to firmly protect and defend their families from the many influences in the world today that lead our youth away from the truth of our Catholic Faith. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 6: Friday

ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX

With a special focus on the virtue of charity

O holy woman of great faith and charity, I call upon your blessed intercession today for young people. Holy St. Thérèse, one of your principal duties was to pray for the Church, and you did this throughout your days as a Carmelite nun with great fervor. May there be many women who respond generously to the call to Religious life. Most of all, please ask our Lord to form young people all in the way of Love. I pray that our youth learn from your simple words of wisdom and example. Ask Almighty God to gently guide them to be instruments for our Lord, to be, as Mother Teresa once said, “the little pencil in the hand of God who is sending a love letter to the world.” As servants of Christ’s Church, help them grow in love and zeal to fight against the greatest poverties in the modern world that Mother Teresa saw—loneliness, feeling unwanted, and deciding that an unborn child must die so that one can live as one wishes. Pray that our youth of the Diocese may desire holiness and purity, and may they grow in love and devotion to our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 7: Saturday

POPE ST. JOHN PAUL II

With a special focus on the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

Pope St. John Paul II, 264th successor to the Chair of St. Peter, you called your vocation an “inner fact of unquestionable and absolute clarity.” You defended the dignity of the human person no matter the cost. Your great devotion to the Mother of God is an example of the relationship a Priest should have to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Pray to Almighty God that those who are being called to the sacred Priesthood will be given the clarity of their vocation. Pray that the youth may use their talents, like you did, to extend the Kingdom of Christ. May this next generation stand firmly for the sanctity of life, the dignity of the human person, encouraging all to open wide the doors of their hearts to Christ. St. John Paul II, pray for all the faithful of this Diocese that they always be found praying without ceasing, fighting the good fight, finishing the race, and exemplifying a life of love for Christ, love for the Blessed Virgin Mary, and love for the holy Church. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 8: Sunday

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

With a special focus on Love for Mary

St. John the Evangelist, beloved disciple of the Lord, you knew and experienced Christ in a deeply personal way -- on the shores of Galilee, atop Mt. Tabor, in the Garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of the Cross, at the side of His Blessed Mother, and in the empty tomb. You were the beloved disciple of Christ, and to whom He entrusted the highest privilege, the care of His holy Mother. With intimate affection and relationship, your Gospel proclaims the good news in highly loving and richly symbolic ways, speaking of Christ as the light of the world, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Bread of Life, and the narrow gate. Pray that our Bishop may also be a beloved disciple of Christ, boldly approaching the foot of the Cross and leading others to the Lamb of God. Pray that all our Priests be holy, faithful and filled with great sacrificial love. Pray that our Deacons follow the example of the holy Deacons of the Scriptures: holy, generous, and actively working to serve the poor. Pray that, like Mary, our love for God will grow as we recognize the great love that God has for each of us. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

Day 9: Monday

THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

With a special focus on the gifts of faith, hope, and charity

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Your Heart beats every second with love for Your children. Place those whom you are calling to be Priests or Religious next to Your Heart. May they find refuge in Your Heart, and there, hear your invitation to love and serve. May their hope in Your Heart empower them to cast away all fears and worries in their lives. May this hope assist them to brighten lives of the faithful. May their love within Your Heart grow to serve You with great desire in every detail, and release this love with the open-hearted purpose of service for souls, seeing Christ in all, despite any sins or weaknesses. O Most Sacred Heart, increase their faith, hope, and love for Jesus and love for the Immaculate Heart of Mary, because without faith, hope, and love, there is no foundation on which to build heavenly virtues. O Lord of the harvest, send many faithful shepherds after Your own Heart into your vineyard. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

A PRIEST

To live in the midst of the world
without wishing its pleasures;
To be a member of each family,
yet belonging to none;
To share all suffering;
to penetrate all secrets;
To heal all wounds;
to go from men to God
and offer Him their prayers;
To return from God to men
to bring pardon and hope;
To have a heart of fire for Charity,
and a heart of bronze for Chastity
To teach and to pardon,
console and bless always.
My God, what a life;
and it is yours,
O Priest of Jesus Christ.

Jean Baptiste Lacordaire

NOTES:



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