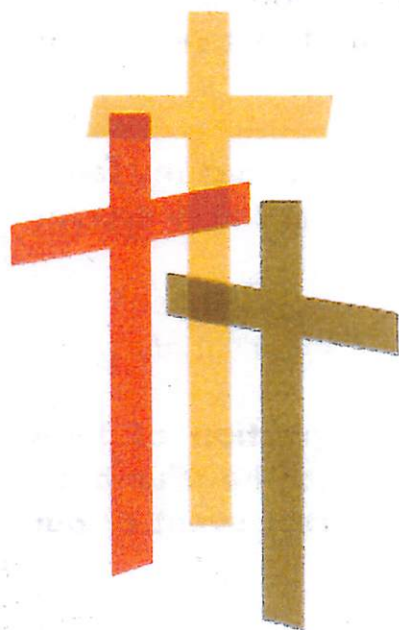




# A LENTEN NOVENA

to prepare for

# Palm Sunday



and



# Holy Week

*Prepare ye the way of the Lord!*

## At the beginning of each day's prayers:

**Leader:** ✠ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.** (You are asked to join in all the text in **bold** type.)

**Leader:** The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God! (*Go to the day.*)

## NOVENA PRAYER (*Said every day*)

**Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, during the Holy Season of Lent you call us to a closer union with yourself. Help me to prepare to celebrate the Paschal Mystery with mind and heart renewed.**

**Give me strength to purify my heart, to control my desires, to master my sinfulness and conquer my pride and so to serve you in freedom. Teach me how to live in this passing world with my heart set on the world that will never end.**

**Through my continued observance of Lent, help me to correct my faults and raise my mind to you, and thus grow in holiness that I may deserve the reward of everlasting life.**

**In your mercy, grant me this special favour:** (*State your intention(s) here.*)

**The days of the life-giving death and glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ, your son, are approaching. This is the hour when he triumphed over Satan's pride; the time when we celebrate the great event of our redemption.**

**Father, through Christ's love for us and through his suffering, death and resurrection, may I gain eternal life with you in heaven. Amen.**

## At the end of each day's prayers:

**Leader:** May we be blessed in our meditations and prayers as we draw ever nearer to the Passion and Death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and look forward to his Resurrection on the third day.

**All: Amen.**

## Day 1 (Friday)

O God, who has prepared fitting helps for us in our weakness, grant, we pray, that we may receive their healing effects with joy and reflect them in a holy way of life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand. We keep acknowledging that God is the source of our life. We realise that we have been seeking other sources of life. We recognise our weakness and turn to God for help. Though our hearts are being opened up to their depths, though we cry out to God for help, we are not discouraged. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

The Lord is near to broken hearts.

***When the just cry out, the Lord hears them,  
and from all their distress he rescues them.  
The Lord is close to the broken hearted;  
and those who are crushed in spirit he saves.***



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Let us pray to Christ our Saviour, who redeemed us by his death and resurrection. ***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

You went up to Jerusalem to suffer and so enter into your glory; bring your Church to the Passover feast of heaven. ***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

You were lifted high on the cross and pierced by the soldier's lance; heal our wounds. ***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

You made the cross the tree of life; give its fruit to those reborn in baptism. ***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

On the cross you forgave the repentant thief; forgive us our sins. ***Lord, have mercy upon us.***

#### Closing Prayer:

**Loving God of forgiveness, I come before you humbled and sad in the face of my own repeated failings. I hold out my hands as a petitioner would, asking for mercy. It is then that I feel you reach out and take my hand in your loving grasp. Thank you for the love you pour out on me so lavishly. Help me to follow more closely in the path you have set for me, the path of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Day 2 (Saturday)

May the working of your mercy, O Lord, we pray, direct our hearts aright, for without your grace we cannot find favour in your sight. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Apart from you we can do nothing. The conflict around Jesus grows. and all the while, we are turning to God for mercy. What Jesus went through is for me, that I might have mercy and the gift of everlasting life. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

We call upon the Lord for help, for strength, for trust.

***The snares of death overtook me,  
the ropes of hell tightened around me;  
and in my distress I called upon the Lord,  
and he heard my voice.***



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Let us always and everywhere give thanks to Christ our Saviour and ask him with confidence.

***Lord, help us with your grace.***

May we keep our bodies pure, as temples of the Holy Spirit.

***Lord, help us with your grace.***

May we offer ourselves this day to the service of others, and do your will in all things throughout the day.

***Lord, help us with your grace.***

Teach us to seek the bread of everlasting life, the bread that is your gift.

***Lord, help us with your grace.***

May your Mother, the refuge of sinners, pray for us and gain for us your loving forgiveness.

***Lord, help us with your grace.***

#### Closing Prayer:

**Lord, what you ask of my life seems so right. It is how I want to live; following your Son, Jesus, so closely and yet I fail so often to stay on that path. I cannot do it alone, loving Lord. I need your help and guidance. I need to remember your love for me and I want to remember how very much I need you in my life. Amen.**

## Day 3 (Sunday)

By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Inspired by his love, guided by his example, change our selfishness into self-giving. Today we begin our last week of Lent before Holy Week. It seems that there is so much left to do, to ask for, to be open to, to surrender, to change. Jesus assures us that he is the “resurrection and the life,” and that if we place our faith in him, we will “never die.” *(Pause for silent prayer)*

Today we beg for the graces we need and desire and we ask for courage in the journey ahead.

**“I am troubled now. Yet what should I say?**

**'Father, save me from this hour'?**

**But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour.**

**Father, glorify your name.”**



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Let us praise our loving Redeemer, who gained for us this season of grace, and pray to him, saying: **Lord, create a new spirit in us.**

Christ, our life, through baptism we were buried with you and rose to life with you; may we walk today in newness of life. **Lord, create a new spirit in us.**

Lord, you have brought blessings to all mankind; bring us to share your concern for the good of all. **Lord, create a new spirit in us.**

May we work together to build up the earthly city with our eyes fixed on the heavenly city that lasts for ever. **Lord, create a new spirit in us.**

Healer of body and soul, cure the sickness of our spirit, so that we may grow in holiness through your constant care. **Lord, create a new spirit in us.**

#### Closing Prayer:

**Father, it's sometimes so hard to love the world, and to love it the way Jesus did seems impossible. Help me to be inspired by his love and guided by his example. Most of all, I want to accept that I can't do it alone, and that trying to do so is arrogant and self-centered. I need you, dear God, to give me support in this journey. Show me how to unlock my heart so that I am less selfish. Let me be less fearful of the pain and darkness that will be transformed by you into Easter joy. Amen.**

## Day 4 (Monday)

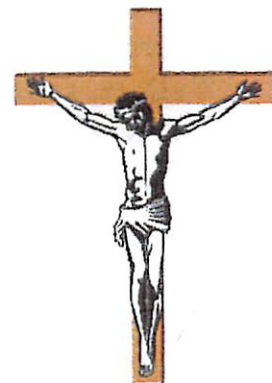
O God, by whose wondrous grace we are enriched with every blessing, grant us so to pass from former ways to newness of life, that we may be made ready for the glory of the heavenly Kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Help us to pass from our old life of sin to our new life of grace. This week we let the powerful light of God's love shine into the deepest, darkest corners of our soul, revealing the most un-loving parts of our hearts, and we ask for forgiveness and healing. Let us consider Our Lord's journey to Calvary and ask that to stir our hearts more deeply with the sense of his love for us. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

Stay with me, Lord, on my journey

***Though I walk in the valley of darkness,  
I fear no evil,  
for you are with me.***



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Praise to Jesus, our Saviour; by his death he has opened for us the way of salvation. We pray: ***Lord, guide your people to walk in your ways.***  
God of mercy, you gave us new life through baptism; make us grow day by day in your likeness. ***Lord, guide your people to walk in your ways.***  
May our generosity today bring joy to those in need and in helping them may we find you. ***Lord, guide your people to walk in your ways.***  
Help us to do what is good, right and true in your sight and to seek you always with undivided hearts. ***Lord, guide your people to walk in your ways.***  
Forgive our sins against the unity of your family and make us one in heart and spirit. ***Lord, guide your people to walk in your ways.***

#### Closing Prayer:

**God of love, I know that you are the source of all that is good and true in my life. Help me to move from the life of sin to which I so often cling, into the new life of grace you offer me. You know what I need to prepare for your kingdom. Bless me with those gifts. Amen.**

## Day 5 (Tuesday)

Grant us, we pray, O Lord, perseverance in obeying your will, that in our days the people dedicated to your service may grow in both merit and number. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

In a reading at Mass today we hear how lifting up the image of a serpent healed and protected the people during their journey of liberation in the desert. Then, in the gospel, Jesus is defending himself as if in a trial scene. The crowd want to know who he is. They want to know him - but they resist knowing him. He tells them that they'll really know him when he is "lifted up." They will lift him up on the cross, to be put to death. God transformed that tragedy, by letting his death "pay the price" for all of our sins. When we look at a crucifix, we look at the image of the one who is "lifted up" in glory. He is lifted up for our liberation from sin and death. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

"When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself."

***Put your hope in the Lord. Take courage and be strong.***

***O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you.***

### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Praise to Christ, who has given us himself as the bread from heaven. Let us pray to him, saying: ***Jesus, you feed and heal our souls; come to strengthen us.*** Lord, feed us at the banquet of the Eucharist with all the gifts of your paschal sacrifice. ***Jesus, you feed and heal our souls; come to strengthen us.***

Give us a perfect heart to receive your word, that we may bring forth fruit in patience. ***Jesus, you feed and heal our souls; come to strengthen us.***

Make us eager to work with you in building a better world so that the world may listen to your Church and its gospel of peace.

***Jesus, you feed and heal our souls; come to strengthen us.***

We confess, Lord, that we have sinned; wash us clean by your gift of salvation.

***Jesus, you feed and heal our souls; come to strengthen us.***

#### Closing Prayer:

**Loving God, You have heard my complaints, my impatience. Sometimes I become frightened when I move away from you. Guide my heart back to you. Help me to think beyond my own wants and to desire only to do you will. Thank you for the many blessings in my life and for the ways in which I feel your presence. Amen.**

## Day 6 (Wednesday)

Enlighten, O God of compassion, the hearts of your children, sanctified by penance, and in your kindness grant those whom you stir to a sense of devotion, a gracious hearing when they cry out to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Come to my heart, Lord Jesus. You have taken upon you all our sins, and the crushing defeat of death itself. Meditating on the Stations of the Cross, might help us grow in a sense that this is all "for me," for my freedom. We grow in a sense of repentance and deep sorrow. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

We grow in a desire to celebrate the glorious light in the midst of all darkness.

***Rid yourself of all your sins  
and make a new heart  
and a new spirit within you.***



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Blessed be God, the giver of salvation, who decreed that mankind should become a new creation in himself, when all would be made new. With great confidence let us ask him:

***Lord, renew us in your Spirit.***

Lord, you promised a new heaven and a new earth; renew us daily through your Spirit that we may enjoy your presence for ever in the heavenly Jerusalem.

***Lord, renew us in your Spirit.***

Help us to work with you to make this world alive with your Spirit, and to build on earth a community of justice, love and peace.

***Lord, renew us in your Spirit.***

Free us from all negligence and sloth and give us joy in your gifts of grace.

***Lord, renew us in your Spirit.***

Deliver us from evil and from slavery to the senses, which makes us blind to your goodness.

***Lord, renew us in your Spirit.***

#### Closing Prayers:

**Loving Creator, I know that in your great love for me you see the deep sorrow in my heart. Hear my prayers which are offered with such trust in you. Be with me in both mind and heart as I renew my life in your spirit. Amen.**



## Day 7 (Thursday)

Be near, O Lord, to those who plead before you, and look kindly on those who place their hope in your mercy, that, cleansed from the stain of their sins, they may persevere in holy living and be made full heirs of your promise. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Come to us, free us, help us, and guide us. We pray more intensely now, just a week before Holy Thursday. We desire more and more that we might be free. Sorrow leads to profound gratitude, when we experience the depth of unconditional love offered us. The gratitude of a loved sinner leads to great generosity. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

Jesus, help us to know the meaning of the Week for which we are preparing and recognise what you have done for us by your death and resurrection.

***Christ is the mediator of a new covenant  
so that since he has died,  
those who are called may receive  
the eternal inheritance promised to them.***



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Christ our Lord came among us as the light of the world, so that we might walk in his light, and not in the darkness of death. Let us praise him and cry out to him:

***Let your word be a lamp to guide us.***

God of mercy, help us today to grow in your likeness so that we who sinned in Adam may rise again in Christ.

***Let your word be a lamp to guide us.***

Keep us always in your sight, that we may live the truth and grow always in your love.

***Let your word be a lamp to guide us.***

Teach us to be faithful in seeking the common good for your sake, so that your light may shine on the whole human family by means of your Church.

***Let your word be a lamp to guide us.***

Touch our hearts to seek your friendship more and more, and to make amends for our sins against your wisdom and goodness.

***Let your word be a lamp to guide us.***

#### Closing Prayer:

**Lord, all I want is to be faithful to you in my life, but so often I fail. Free me from my many sins and guide me to the life I will share with you. I wait for your promise to be fulfilled with great hope in my heart and your praise on my lips. Amen.**

## Day 8 (Friday)

Pardon the offences of your peoples, we pray, O Lord, and in your goodness set us free from the bonds of the sins we have committed in our weakness. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Set us free, on this Friday before Good Friday, to focus more and more on Christ's saving journey towards his death. Our desire is becoming more focused and more intense. After our weeks of reflection, we know that our selfishness has placed us in ruts, has tied our lives in knots and has made us slaves to some very unhappy and sometimes death-dealing patterns. The celebration of our freedom and healing is close at hand. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

Jesus carried our sins in his own body on the cross so that we could die to sin and live in holiness;

**By his wounds we have been healed.**



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

Thanks be to Christ the Lord, who brought us life by his death on the cross.

With our whole heart let us ask him:

***By your death raise us to life.***

Teacher and Saviour, you have shown us your fidelity and made us a new creation by your passion; keep us from falling again into sin.

***By your death raise us to life.***

Help us to deny ourselves today and not deny those in need.

***By your death raise us to life.***

May we receive this solemn Good Friday as your gift and give it back to you through works of mercy.

***By your death raise us to life.***

Master our rebellious hearts and teach us generosity.

***By your death raise us to life.***

#### Closing Prayer:



**Most forgiving Lord, again and again you welcome me back into your loving arms. Grant me freedom from the heavy burdens of sin that weigh me down and keep me so far from you. Amen.**

## Day 9 (Saturday)

O God, who has made all those reborn in Christ a chosen race and a royal priesthood; grant us, we pray, the grace to will and to do what you command, so that the people called to eternal life may be one in the faith of their hearts and the homage of their deeds. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### Meditation:

Now we rejoice in your great love. Our journey has brought us here. It is as though we, too, are gathering in Jerusalem to celebrate our Passover week. We are ready to enter into the Passion drama and to celebrate the Paschal Mystery with mind and heart renewed. We are ready to rejoice that the death of Jesus is "for me" and that it is the ultimate victory over sin and death - my sin and my death. *(Pause for silent prayer)*

Stay with us, Lord, as we journey with you in the week to come.

**Christ was sacrificed so that he  
could gather together the  
scattered children of God.**



### Novena Prayer: (Page 1)

#### Intercessions:

To make us his new creation, Christ the Lord gave us the waters of rebirth and spread the table of his body and his word. Let us call upon him and say:

***Lord, renew us in your grace.***

Jesus, meek and humble of heart, clothe us with compassion, kindness and humility and make us patient with everyone. ***Lord, renew us in your grace.***  
Teach us to be true neighbours to all in trouble and distress and so imitate you, the Good Samaritan. ***Lord, renew us in your grace.***

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, your Mother, pray for all those who have committed themselves to the religious life, that they may deepen their dedication to you and to the Church. ***Lord, renew us in your grace.***

Grant us the gift of your mercy, so that our sins may be forgiven and that the punishment due to us may be remitted. ***Lord, renew us in your grace.***

#### Closing Prayer:

**Loving God, your eternal watchfulness keeps me safe from harm. I am filled with a great happiness when I feel your endless love for me. Thank you for your care for me, one of your children. I ask you to protect from harm those who will soon be your children, joined in the joy of your church. Please continue to pour out your blessings on all of us who have been given the life-giving waters of baptism. Amen.**

# A PENITENTIAL PSALM (51)

**You may like to pray this psalm  
before or after making the Novena.**

Have mercy upon me, O God,  
According to Your loving kindness;  
According to the multitude of Your  
tender mercies,  
Blot out my transgressions.  
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
And cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions,  
And my sin is always before me.  
Against You, You only, have I sinned,  
And done this evil in Your sight—  
That You may be found just when You  
speak,  
And blameless when You judge.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
And in sin my mother conceived me.  
Behold, You desire truth in the inward  
parts,  
And in the hidden part You will make me  
to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be  
clean;  
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than  
snow.

Make me hear joy and gladness,  
That the bones You have broken may  
rejoice.

Hide Your face from my sins,  
And blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a steadfast spirit within  
me.

Do not cast me away from Your  
presence,  
And do not take Your Holy Spirit  
from me.

Restore to me the joy of Your  
salvation,  
And uphold me by Your generous  
Spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors Your  
ways,  
And sinners shall be converted to  
You.

Deliver me from the guilt of  
bloodshed, O God,  
The God of my salvation,  
And my tongue shall sing aloud of  
Your righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips,  
And my mouth shall show forth Your  
praise.

For You do not desire sacrifice, or  
else I would give it;  
You do not delight in burnt offering.  
The sacrifices of God are a broken  
spirit,  
A broken and a contrite heart—  
These, O God, You will not despise.

**“Create  
in me a  
clean heart,  
O God,  
and put a  
new and right  
spirit  
within me.”**  
Psalm 51:10