

# NOVENA TO OUR LADY OF STUDENTS

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The *Novena to Our Lady of Students, Mother of Fair Love*, is inspired by St. Josemaria Escriva who said: "An hour of study, for a modern apostle, is an hour of prayer" (*The Way*, no. 335).

The purpose of praying this devotion is to learn from Our Lady how to be a good student and to develop and maintain good habits in daily life; how to grow spiritually and learn to navigate in troubled waters; and how to be the person God wants you to be.

This novena includes a daily intention and resolution. You can choose to pray for them all or just focus on one throughout the novena. The novena can be repeated several times throughout the year, on your own or with friends and family.

## WHAT IS A NOVENA?

A novena is a prayer to Jesus, to Our Lady, or to one or more of the Angels or Saints, usually requesting a special favor. It is said for nine days, or for sets of nine days.

## THE BEST WAY TO PRAY A NOVENA

- Pray for nine consecutive days, following the specific intention given for each day or praying for your own intention
- Set a fixed time for each day to pray to avoid forgetting
- Find a quiet place to pray to avoid being distracted. You may like to pray the novena as part of a Visit to the Blessed Sacrament.
- Use an image of Jesus Christ, Our Lady or the Angels or Saints to help you contemplate what you are praying about

## DAY ONE

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### INTENTION

As a student, I want Our Lady to teach me how to pray and keep my faith, my Catholic identity. I recognize that one of the challenges I need to overcome is the fear of being misjudged or rejected by those around me because I want to be a true Christian and show my love for God.

### GOSPEL

"The kingdom of God is in the midst of you" (Luke 17:21).

### CONSIDERATION

"...The only fear I can imagine is that of turning away from Love. God Our Lord certainly does not want us to be inhibited, timid or lukewarm about our dedication to him. He wants us to be daring, courageous and refined... 'I searched for my heart's love, but found him not' (Cant 3:1). This can happen, if one has not yet fully understood what it means to love God.

Then our hearts can be swayed by things which do not lead to Our Lord and so we lose sight of him. At other times it may be Our Lord who hides himself. He knows the reason why. In such cases, he will be encouraging us to seek him more earnestly and, when we find him, we shall be able to cry out with joy, 'I took hold of him and I will never let him go' (Cant 3:4)" (*Friends of God*, no. 277).

## RESOLUTION

From now on, I will set a fixed time when I am going to pray every day — either some minutes of mental prayer or the rosary.

## CONCLUDING PRAYER

My Immaculate Mother Mary, you received the Word of God, Jesus Christ, in your womb and so became the Mother of God, the Throne of Glory and the Seat of Wisdom. Obtain for me the grace to enjoy my prayer, my study, and my work because they are the ways in which I can show my love for God.

May my study bring me closer to you and your divine Son Jesus every day. Help me never to forget to offer it to you, as I do now, so that every hour I study may truly be an hour of prayer.

Help me, Mother Mary, to fulfill the resolution of this day so that I may be properly prepared for my mission in life, that I may be sanctified by my actions and attain the happiness of loving you forever in Heaven.

I also entrust to you those who are sick or suffering, that through your motherly care they may come closer to God. Amen.

*You can now pray the Hail Mary, Memorare, or We Fly to Your Patronage (see page 25).*

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## DAY TWO

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### INTENTION

As a student, I want Our Lady to teach me how to be a good son or daughter, always praying for my family, especially in difficult situations and in times of illness. I recognize that one of the challenges I need to overcome is falling into the temptation of anger, stress, frustration, and lacking charity and love.

### GOSPEL

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24).

### CONSIDERATION

"The commandment to love our parents belongs to both natural law and to divine positive law, and I have always called it a 'most sweet precept'. Do not neglect your obligation to love your parents more each day, to mortify yourself for them, to pray for them and to be grateful to them for all the good you owe them" (*The Forge*, no. 21).

### RESOLUTION

Out of love for God, I will do two or three little things to show my love for my parents, siblings, and friends offering this sacrifice for their salvation.

## PLAN OF LIFE

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When we examine how our piety is and what it should be like, that is, what specific points of our personal relationship with God need improving, if you have understood me right you will reject the temptation of imagining fantastic feats, because you will have discovered that Our Lord is quite happy if we offer him little tokens of love any moment of the day.

Try to commit yourself to a plan of life and to keep to it: a few minutes of mental prayer, Holy Mass — daily, if you can manage it — and frequent Communion; regular recourse to the Holy Sacrament of Forgiveness — even though your conscience does not accuse you of mortal sin; visiting Jesus in the Tabernacle; praying and contemplating the mysteries of the Holy Rosary, and so many other marvellous devotions you know or can learn.

You should not let them become rigid rules, or water-tight compartments. They should be flexible, to help you on your journey — you who live in the middle of the world, with a life of hard professional work and social ties and obligations, which you should not neglect, because in them your conversation with God still continues. Your plan of life ought to be like a rubber glove which fits the hand perfectly.

St. Josemaria Escriva  
*Friends of God*, no. 149

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# SPIRITUAL GAME PLAN

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## LOVE OF GOD

Do you want to be a really good Christian? The first of your battles will be to remain in the state of grace; to avoid any mortal sin. And, then, because you want to love God above all things, you will also try not to commit venial sins.

The practice of some acts of piety throughout the day will help you to have a divine contemplative life in the midst of your daily routine. The habitual performance of these acts will also be the foundation for growing in Christian virtues. Most important is to be consistent in your daily schedule, in your spiritual game plan, so that you will live as a child of God.

## DAILY

- Go to bed and get up at a fixed time, as early as possible. Eight hours of sleep should be enough. More than this — or less than seven hours of sleep — is usually not healthy.
- Offer your day to God through Our Lady's intercession.
- Work and study with order and intensity during the day as a way of serving God. Set goals and establish priorities in order to develop a practical schedule. Sanctifying ordinary work is the goal of your life.
- Attend Mass, receiving Holy Communion, as often as possible. This is the best sacrifice you can offer to God. Prepare yourself for the Mass by spending some time in prayer.
- Spend time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament (15 minutes is a good goal).

## HOW TO MAKE A VISIT TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Visit a Catholic church or chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the Tabernacle (shown by a lighted lamp nearby). If possible, choose a time when Mass is not being celebrated and no other public devotions are being held.

Kneeling before the Tabernacle, make an act of faith in the Real Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Say an *Our Father*, a *Hail Mary*, and a *Glory be to the Father*, three times over, and then make a spiritual communion, using these or other words: "I wish, Lord, to receive you with the purity, humility and devotion with which your most holy Mother received you; with the spirit and fervor of the saints."

A Visit to the Blessed Sacrament is a good way to thank Jesus for Mass and Holy Communion that we have received earlier in the day. It is also a good way to make atonement to him for our own sins and other people's.

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## MORNING OFFERING TO MARY

My Queen and my Mother, I give myself entirely to you, and, in proof of my affection, I give you my eyes, my ears, my tongue, my heart, my whole being without reserve. Since I am your own, keep me and guard me as your property and possession. Amen.

## WE FLY TO YOUR PATRONAGE

We fly to your patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen.

## MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

## HAIL HOLY QUEEN

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To you do we cry, poor, banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this exile show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.