

Nine Days for Life Novena

Day One: Saturday, January 18, 2014

Intercession: For the mother who awakens each morning with the memory of abortion fresh in her mind: that the Lord may still the terror in her heart and lead her gently to the well-spring of his love and mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. May she, and all who've been involved in an abortion decision, find healing and hope through Project Rachel Ministry.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today's Gospel reading from Mark recounts Jesus dining with tax collectors and sinners. When the Pharisees question Jesus about this, he responds, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." In a society where millions of people have fallen prey to the false promises of the culture of death, let us witness to the mercy of Jesus and invite all who've been harmed to experience his abundant love and healing.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Take time to write a handwritten note to someone who is lonely or needing encouragement.

Pray for your deceased relatives and those who have no one to pray for them.

"Spiritually adopt" a baby by saying this prayer every day: "Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of [baby's name], the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion." – Prayer of Archbishop Fulton Sheen

Day Two: Sunday, January 19, 2014

Intercession: For the father whose child died with his cooperation and consent: that the Lord grant him the grace to repent and be reconciled with God.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: In today's Gospel reading (Jn 1:29-34), John the Baptist testifies that Jesus is both the Son of God and "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." At every Mass we repeat these words, but how often do we meditate on this great mystery? There is nothing we could ever accomplish on our own that could atone for our daily failures to love others with the merciful and sacrificial love of Christ. But in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he forgives our faults, wipes the stain of sin from our souls and gives us the strength to begin anew with the help of his grace. Let us live each day in gratitude for the mercy God has shown us!

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

When others are speaking uncharitably about someone else, change the conversation, leave, or offer a counter opinion that is kind and charitable.

Pray the [Divine Mercy Chaplet](#). . . for mothers and fathers who've lost a child through abortion, asking that they find the courage to seek Reconciliation and counseling through Project Rachel Ministry.

Read about the life of a modern (19th or 20th century) saint. You might be surprised by how much you have in common with them.

Day Three: Monday, January 20, 2014

Intercession: For the parents who influenced their child's choice to abort their grandchild: that they may have the humility and wisdom to see the wrong they've done and to seek forgiveness from God and from their child.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today is the memorial of St. Sebastian, the famous martyr and patron of athletes, who lived his faith courageously in the midst of intense Roman persecution. St. Sebastian's life reminds us that in the midst of threats to the faith, living and dying for Christ is the ultimate witness – one that changes others. In today's Mass readings, the prophet Samuel chastises King Saul for failing to obey the Lord's command, reminding him that God values our obedience more than sacrificial offerings. The Psalm, too, reminds us that an upright life is more pleasing to God than empty professions of faith. Are our actions always consistent with what we profess as Catholics? Do we sometimes hope that God will overlook our disobedient hearts by distracting him with rote prayers?

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

It's easy to put our headphones on and ignore our siblings or parents in the car. Instead, enjoy the opportunity you have to talk to them, ask them how they are doing.

Smile. Ask God today for the grace to be extra joyful and share your love for Christ with those who need that encouragement the most today. "Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing." –Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta

We can sometimes forget how blessed we are to have many of our daily comforts. Give up sleeping with your pillow tonight.

Day Four: Tuesday, January 21, 2014

Intercession: For the doctors, nurses and counselors who now know they were wrong in cooperating with abortion: may God grant them the courage to renounce their involvement in the abortion industry and open their hearts to doing his will from now on.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today we honor the life of St. Agnes, a 12-year-old girl martyred in Rome in 304 AD, during the Diocletian persecution. Agnes never wavered in her commitment to remain a virgin and to give her whole life to the Lord, refusing proposals to marry. Her innocence and heroism facing death helped bring an end to the persecution of Christians in Rome. Following the example of St. Agnes, let us remain steadfast in recognizing Christ, who is Love Incarnate, as the source and summit of our lives. May his love give us the determination and courage to live for him and for others, especially the most vulnerable among us.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Go to an abortion clinic and pray, or set aside an hour today to pray for those who are struggling with a decision of life or death for their unborn child.

Pray the Rosary today for someone who has hurt or disappointed you, and ask for the grace to forgive that person.

Instead of donating "old clothes," offer to buy a new piece of clothing or item a charity is seeking.

Day Five: Wednesday, January 22, 2014

Intercession: For an end to legal abortion in our nation and for the conversion of all hearts, so that the inherent rights of every human being—especially those most at risk of abuse and rejection—will be upheld.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today, on this 41st anniversary of Roe v. Wade, we consider the past four decades in which our society has legally permitted abortion and wandered far from God. Instead of accepting children in joy and hope, many hearts seem hardened against making commitments to others, fearing the demands others may make on our time or our freedom. We are becoming a culture marked by rejection, by loneliness and sorrow. In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus grieved over the Pharisees' hardness of heart, as he heals the man with the withered hand. They remained silent when Jesus pointedly asked them: "Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil, to save life rather than to destroy it?" Our laws now make it legal to destroy life by abortion, by abortifacient drugs, in destructive embryo research, in the course of in vitro fertilization procedures, and in some states by assisted suicide and the death penalty. How Jesus must grieve over this culture of death! Let us open our hearts in faith, entrusting our culture to the healing power of Christ, the One who has overcome sin and the power of evil.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Today is a day of prayer and penance for restoration of the right to life. Step out of your comfort zone and witness publicly to life in a march or rally, or call your elected representatives to ask them to promote policies and laws that respect life.

Gratitude helps us love God and neighbor. Today try to not complain or be negative. Say a prayer of thanksgiving instead.

Don't push the snooze button. Get right out of bed and offer your day in prayer to God. "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light" (Ephesians 5:14).

Day Six: Thursday, January 23, 2014

Intercession: For those whose work involves promoting abortion and contraceptive use: may God help them understand that the casual sex they foster undermines the capacity for the self-giving, faithful and enduring love that is the longing of every heart.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today marks the feast day of the newly canonized American saint, Mother Marianne Cope, OSF (1838-1918). St. Marianne Cope emigrated with her family from Germany as an infant and grew up in Utica, NY. She joined the Sisters of St. Francis at the age of twenty-four and later helped to found and operate two regional hospitals in upstate New York. In 1883, she answered the plea of Hawaii's king to operate hospitals and care for the victims of leprosy, travelling to Hawaii with six Franciscan sisters. During the last thirty years of her life, she chose to be exiled on the island of Molokai where she cared for women and children with leprosy. She was a life-long witness to the equal dignity and value of every human being. She brought beauty and order to the lives of these outcasts, and provided them with educational and religious instruction as well as teaching them music and the decorative arts. St. Marianne, help us to see the beauty and value in every human life!

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Learn how to pray the [Angelus](#) . . . prayer, and get into the habit of saying it every day—at noon or 6 pm or on awakening (or all three times).

Today ignore your sweet tooth. Make healthy eating choices.

Clean a room in your house without being asked or without telling anyone. Pray for your family members while you clean, "and your Father who sees in secret will repay you" (Matt 6:6).

Day Seven: Friday, January 24, 2014

Intercession: For elected leaders who oppose any restriction on the abortion license: may God allow them to grasp the brutal violence of abortion and the reality of post-abortion suffering experienced by countless women and men.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: On this feast of St. Francis de Sales, let us consider these words of the great saint: "All that we do must be motivated by love and not force. We must love to obey rather than fear to disobey." St. Francis reminds us that all of our actions must be borne of a spirit of love, and that we find our freedom in living the truth. As we defend the dignity of human life, let us ask St. Francis de Sales to pray for us so that everything we say and do for unborn children and their grieving parents is imbued with both compassion and truth.

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Go to Confession—today, if possible—or during this week.

Fast from snacking today. Eat three meals only.

Today, go visit an adoration chapel and spend an hour with Jesus.

Day Eight: Saturday, January 25, 2014

Intercession: For scientists and pharmaceutical employees who help create and manufacture contraceptive and abortifacient drugs: that the Lord will open their eyes to the moral danger and health risks these drugs pose for women and prompt them to work only on medications that benefit human life.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: Today's reading from Acts tells the story of St. Paul's conversion. Before, he was "breathing murderous threats against the disciples of the Lord." After encountering Christ, Paul became a "chosen instrument," filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to suffer for Jesus' name. There is absolutely nothing and no one outside of the power of God's loving embrace. Today we remember the children, the mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and all those who have been involved in or affected by abortion. We entrust them to the unfathomable healing mercy of God, recalling the words of Jesus to St. Faustina: "The greater the misery of a soul, the greater its right to My mercy" (Diary, 1182).

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Read about a Church teaching you don't understand in the [Catechism](#).

Make an honest assessment of your "giving finances" – are you giving too little? Make a resolution to give a set weekly or monthly donation to your parish or favorite local charity.

Do you love your cup of tea or coffee in the morning? Fast from caffeine today or try your coffee black.

Day Nine: Sunday, January 26, 2014

Intercession: For repentance, healing and peace, in every heart and every nation.

Our Father, 3 Hail Marys, Glory Be

Reflection: In today's Gospel Jesus preaches, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And after calling the first apostles, he went around all of Galilee, "proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people" (Mt 4:23). Repentance is necessary for healing, but the Lord doesn't want us to remain stuck in misery over our sins. With healing comes peace and the joy of knowing we are loved and forgiven by God. The message of the Gospel of Life is one of great joy! Our call to live this Gospel is not marked with sadness and despair, but with hope, expectation and exuberant joy. "It is up to you, young followers of Christ, to show the world that faith brings happiness and a joy which is true, full and enduring. ... The Gospel is the "good news" that God loves us and that each of us is important to him. Show the world that this is true!" (Pope Benedict XVI, Message for the 27th World Youth Day, March 15, 2012).

Acts of Reparation (choose one):

Spend quality time with a family member or friend; ask them if they would like to help out at a local charity with you.

Say three Hail Mary's for your parish priest. Without our priests, we could not have the sacraments.

Make a "quiet hour" today, turning off all electronic devices (cell phone, iPod, computer, television, radio, video game system), and retreat to your room.