**Bereavement Novena**

A novena is a Catholic tradition of praying which comes from the earliest days of the church. After the ascension of Jesus, the Acts of the Apostles tells us that the Apostles and Mary gathered together and "joined in constant prayer" (Acts 1:14). And on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of the Lord came to them. Based on this, Christians have always prayed for various needs, trusting that God both hears and answers prayer. Over time, the custom of praying for nine consecutive days for a particular need came to be called praying a novena, since novena means nine.

In this novena we call to mind our own needs and ask God for His help & protection in a time of grief. The Bible Quotes and prayers for each day help us seek a greater understanding and acceptance of God's mysterious workings in our life and in the lives of those we love. Through praying with scripture in this novena, may we draw near our Eucharistic God with confidence, "To receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb 4:16).

To be done on a daily basis:

For nine consecutive days, set apart time for quiet reflection and center your meditation on the biblical thoughts suggested for the day in light of each theme. Begin with the opening prayer which is the same for each day followed by that days scripture passage. Then end your prayer time by praying an Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and the closing prayer which is also the same for each day.

Day 1

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures,

He leads me beside still waters,

He restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths for His name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for You are with me, Your rod and Your staff - they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies, You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my hole life long.

Psalm 23 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 2

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,

because the Lord has anointed me.

He has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to release the prisoners.

To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn.

Isaiah 61:1-2

The eyes of all in the Synagogue were fixed on Him.

Then (Jesus) began to say to them:

" Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing "

Luke 4:20-21 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 3

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

As He approached the gate of the town, a man who died was being carried out. He was his mother's only son, and she was a widow, and with her was a large crowd from the town.

When the Lord saw her, He had compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." Then He came forward and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, rise!" The dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to His Mother.

Luke 7:12-15 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 4

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

When Jesus saw (Mary) weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was greatly disturbed in Spirit and deeply moved. He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord come and see." Jesus began to weep... and Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank You for having heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that You sent Me." When He had said this He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth.

John 11:33-35,41-44 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 5

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

It was now about noon, and the darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father into Your hands I commend My Spirit". Having said this He breathed His last. When the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God and said, "Certainly this man was innocent." And when all the crowds who had gathered there for this spectacle saw what had taken place, they returned home, beating their breasts. But all His acquaintances, including the women who had followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

Luke 23:44-49 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 6

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in Me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die."

John 11:25-26

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s House there are many dwelling places.

If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:1-3 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 7

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised imperishable and we'll be changed. When this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

"Death has been swallowed up in victory."

"Where, O death is your victory? where, O death is your sting?"

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 54-55, 57 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 8

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord Himself with a cry of command, with the Archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from Heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

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Day 9

Heavenly Father, in Your love, be with us in this sacred moment. We need Your comfort amid the confusion of discovering that being human means losing those we love. Help us to bear the pain and loss we feel, and renew our faith in the life to come. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.

**For meditation:**

Then I saw a new Heaven and a new earth; for the first Heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying:

"See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them; He will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

Revelation 21:1-4 To recall throughout the day:

" Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted "

Matthew 5:4 (End with the closing prayer)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the treasured gift of love, for those we have shared our lives with, and the memories we are blessed to hold in our hearts. Console us, wipe away our tears, and see us through another day. Death is not the last word, for we have the hope and promise of a life everlasting, through Your Son, our Saviour, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever Amen.