



Novena in Honor of the Holy Family

Day 1 - Holy Family

Intention: For all families (Add your own personal intentions quietly or aloud as circumstances allow)

We often think of the Holy Family as a family without struggles. God, of course, was their center and their strength, but God called Jesus, Mary and Joseph to a great self-emptying love.

Joseph took to himself a young maiden with a child not his own, believing in the darkness that this faithful, protecting love would serve God's plan. Mary watched her Son grow to the fullness of manhood, only to be murdered. And Jesus enfleshed the enduring love of His Father despite the cost to those He loved, and to Himself.

Prayer: God, grace us with the fidelity, courage and love of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Be for us a still point and a resting place in this life where we must see all with the eyes of faith to be true to our call.

Like Jesus, Mary and Joseph, we embrace this human journey, despite its times of doubt and fear, because today and always You are our security and our strength. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 2 - New Families

Intention: For engaged couples and newlyweds (Add your own personal intentions)

Many couples, at this very moment, are contemplating marriage for many reasons. They need to look deeply into the commitment they are asking of one another, a commitment that calls for the greatest love they can give - the total giving of themselves to one another and the total acceptance and support of one another. They are the seeds of a newly forming family.

Prayer: God, Keeper of Promises, help the newly married from the very onset to love each other into the best that they can become for themselves, for each other and for all those whose lives they touch.

Expand their hearts to include new life born of that love, if such is part of Your plan for them. Mary and Joseph, just as at Nazareth you laid the foundation for Jesus to grow in wisdom, age and grace, give these couples the greatness of heart to love their children into new loving persons. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 3 - Families in Pain

Intention: For persons suffering because of broken relationships and family problems (Add your own personal intentions)

There is so much suffering and pain in the world today. One of the greatest pains comes when members of families can no longer continue loving one another into wholeness. So much healing and forgiveness are needed - gifts that can come only from turning to God for the strength and courage that lie at the base of forgiving love.

Prayer: Jesus Healer, we ask You to be present to members of families who are broken and hurting. To those who are the cause of the pain, give the strength of conversion of heart to see their problems and deal with them. Those who are the victims will need from You - and others who love them - a great deal of support and strength to forgive and to love so greatly that healing can happen.

But, God, there are also families where the pain has been too great and the bonds have been severed. Be with each member of those families so that they may have the courage to "gather up the fragments" and move on in life. Allow them to go beyond the crippling effects of the pain and to find in You and in those who love them, the support, affirmation and courage to go on. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 4 - Persons without Families

Intention: For all who have become alienated from their families (Add your own personal intentions)

Many people have been victims of families who were not able to live out a real loving commitment to one another. Some have come from unions never blessed with love; others are children of those who have been victims themselves and were unable to give love. Not having known the love of parents, or other special family members, they found themselves part of a cycle that seemed only to turn in on itself.

Prayer: Compassionate God, we pray that there be persons who are willing to reach out in love to these victims, to share of their abundance with those who have so little, whether physically, spiritually or emotionally.

Grant to those who feel unloved the grace and gift to see love in another's heart. Give them also the courage to accept that love so that at least one life can break the cycle of unloving.

Open the hearts of every family member to realize how special each other family member is, so that they never become the source of another's pain. May they rather be guilty of loving too much than not enough. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 5 - Families Starting Over

Intention: For step-families and couples in a second marriage (Add your own personal intentions)

There are those among us who are struggling with the joys and tensions of putting together a new family, beginning again to build and to strengthen the bonds of love that will carry them, together, through life. Many members of those families are picking up the pieces of their puzzled lives at very vulnerable times. They need special grace to put it all together with the love and affirmation that each family member can give.

Prayer: God of Struggle, these new families need all the support and affirmation they can get, not only from within, but also from loved ones and friends outside their homes. We ask that all those who relate in any way to family members be conscious of their need for support and understanding.

Grant to each family member enough love to be open to one another, accepting the new patterns, personalities and gifts that they may encounter, building up and strengthening this new foundation so that it may grow in love to be a firm and lasting foundation. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 6 - My Family

Intention: For all the members of my extended family (Add your own personal intentions)

There is one very special family whom we need to keep in prayer - our own families into which we were born. There is no set pattern that defines who that may be since, for each of us, it is unique. In Jesus there is no barrier of time and space - all is present now. In that understanding, call to mind each member of your family. (Silently name them)

Prayer: No family is perfect and mine is no exception. I give thanks to You, God of My Life, for all the joys and blessings that have been part of my experience in my family, but I also offer to You the pain and hurts. And I give both of these to You that I may not forget either, for all in life is related, and I do not want the joys to be blotted out by the pain. Help me to forgive those members of my family, including myself, who have caused pain. And help me to affirm those who have been a source of joy.

Give me the strength to be a light within my family, to be a witness of Your love to others, and to continue to place before You all of our needs. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 7 - Families Celebrating

Intention: For those celebrating special events this year (Add your own personal intentions)

"Rejoice with those who rejoice." There are many things to celebrate in families - births and birthdays; weddings and anniversaries; first steps and graduations; and all the everyday seemingly small joys that come with loving, sharing, affirming and appreciating the gifts of one another.

Prayer: We rejoice and thank You, Gracious God, for the special gifts that family members can be to one another.

We thank you especially for those couples who celebrate Silver and Golden Anniversaries of marriage - lives of loving, faithful commitment to one another. They are a special witness to their children and to the world - a reflection of Your faithful commitment to Your people. Grant to them the rewards of their fidelity - the peace and joy that come from knowing they have lived life to its fullness, constantly mindful of the other rather than themselves. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 8 - Families as Servants

Intention: For those families who take the time to help others (Add your own personal intentions)

"They will know we are Christians by our love." And the love that is shared intimately among family members cannot help but spill out beyond their circle to others. The very love they share is a much needed witness to our world.

Prayer: Jesus, Center of Life, give to those families who desire to share their love more deeply, the strength to reach out, to go beyond themselves. Help them to find ways of reaching out that will build rather than divide the bonds which love has created. Above all, help them always to keep You as the focus of their lives, as did Mary and Joseph.

We pray, too, for those men and women who have been leaders in movements that have offered support to couples and families, enabling them to find ways of sharing with other families. Give them and others the courage and strength to continue to channel their great love for You, through their families, to the world. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Day 9 - Family of the World

Intention: For our sisters and brothers throughout the world (Add your own personal intentions)

There is a larger circle of family members to whom we are related - the family of the World. Jesus provides for us the WAY, the TRUTH and the LIFE that models the universal bonding that links us together.

Prayer: God, Creator of the earth and all its people, grant that we may never become so self-centered as to lose sight of this larger family to which we all belong. Help us to be mindful that, as members of one family, we are all equal in the eyes of God.

We all have gifts to share, as did each member of the Holy Family - may we be generous and creative in the sharing of those gifts, whether they be material or spiritual. Together, then, we can truly build a better world. *We ask this through the intercession of the family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, model for all Christian families. Amen.*

Concluding Prayer

Lord God, from You every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. Father, You are Love and Life. Through Your Son, Jesus Christ, born of woman, and through the Holy Spirit, fountain of divine charity, grant that every family on earth may become for each successive generation a true shrine of life and love.

Grant that your grace may guide the thoughts and actions of husbands and wives for the good of their families and of all the families in the world. Grant that the young may find in the family solid support for their human dignity and for their growth in truth and love. Grant that love, strengthened by the grace of the sacrament of marriage, may prove mightier than all the weaknesses and trials through which our families sometimes pass.

Through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that the Church may fruitfully carry out her worldwide mission in the family and through the family.

We ask this of You, who are Life, Truth and Love, with the Son and the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Pope John Paul II

Novena Text
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