

NOVENAS

A novena is a nine-day period of prayer in preparation for some particular feast or to pray for some special object. It may be made by an individual or by a group, either in public or in private. The first novena was kept at the express command of the Risen Christ, by the Apostles, Mary and the disciples in the Upper Room from the day of our Lord's Ascension to Pentecost. (Acts 1:12 to 14). The earliest ecclesiastical novena recorded is the one in preparation for Christmas.

NOVENA IN PREPARATION FOR
CHRISTMAS

To Be Said Daily

O LORD Jesus Christ, who for our sake didst vouchsafe to descend from thy throne of glory to this vale of tears and woe; who wast conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man; Make, we beseech thee, our hearts a fit habitation for thyself. Beautify and fill them with all spiritual graces, and possess them wholly by thy power. Give us grace to prepare for thy coming with deep humility, to receive thee with burning love, and to hold thee fast with a firm faith; that we may never leave thee nor forsake thee, Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

Here say one of the antiphons below, according to the day. Then say:

OUR Father.

HAIL, Mary.

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Daily Antiphons

December 16

O SHEPHERD that rulest Israel, thou that ledest Joseph like a sheep: Come to guide and comfort us.

December 17

O WISDOM, which camest out of the mouth of the Most High, and reachest from one end to another, mightily and sweetly ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.

December 18

O ADONAI, and Leader of the house of Israel, who appearedst in the bush to Moses in a flame of fire, and gavest him the law in Sinai: Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

December 19

O ROOT of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people, at whom kings shall shut their mouths, unto whom the Gentiles shall seek: Come and deliver us, and tarry not.

December 20

O KEY of David, and Sceptre of the house of Israel; that openest and no man shutteth, and shuttest and no man openeth: Come, and bring the prisoners out of the prison-house, them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

December 21

O DAY-SPRING, Brightness of the Light everlasting, and Sun of righteousness: Come and enlighten them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

December 22

O KING of Nations, and their Desire;
 the Cornerstone, who makest both one:
 Come and save mankind, whom thou
 formedst of clay.

December 23

O EMMANUEL, our King and Law-
 giver, the Desire of all nations and
 their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord
 our God.

December 24

O THOU whose dominion is great, and
 whose kingdom shall have no end; the
 mighty God, the Governor, the Prince of
 Peace: Come show thy face, and we shall
 be saved.

NOVENA TO THE HOLY GHOST

*(especially for use from the Ascension of
 our Lord to the Vigil of Pentecost)*

To Be Said Daily

O HOLY Spirit, my Lord and my God,
 I adore thee and humbly acknowledge
 here in thy sacred presence that I am