

'Come Holy Spirit!

ENKINDLE IN OUR HEARTS THE FIRE OF YOUR LOVE!

The Novena to the Holy Spirit begins on Friday, May 22, ending on Saturday, May 30, the eve of the Solemnity of Pentecost.

Since his arrival as Bishop of Saginaw, Bishop Gruss has been encouraging all of us to pray daily for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon ourselves, our families, our parish communities and our entire diocese. The Spirit wants to awaken our hearts to a new springtime!

As the feast of Pentecost approaches, Bishop Gruss invites the whole diocese to pray with him this nine-day prayer, the Novena to the Holy Spirit for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit across the diocese.

The Church emphasizes very urgently the honor and also the duty to pray and invoke the Holy Spirit in every phase of our life. "Lay people dedicated to Christ and anointed by his Holy Spirit (in baptism and confirmation) are marvelously called and equipped to produce in themselves ever more abundant fruits of the Spirit." The new Catechism of the Catholic Church lists the 12 fruits of the Holy Spirit as charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self control and chastity. Imagine a world where people strive to achieve such worthy goals. We can help to create that world, because by changing ourselves, we can change the world.

We are assured by the Church that all of our work, prayers, apostolic endeavors, our mental and physical relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne - all of these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

The Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans) is happy to offer you this novena so that you may pray to and invoke the Holy Spirit daily for the seven gifts: Wisdom, Understanding, Right Judgment, Courage, Knowledge, Reverence, and Wonder and Awe.

This Novena to the Holy Spirit is offered online by the TransCanada Province of the Spiritans at www.spiritans.com

I. OPENING PRAYERS

All: In the name of the Father, and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

All: Come, Holy Spirit, inflame the hearts of all people with the fire of your love.

Leader: Send forth your Spirit that all may be reborn.

All: And you will renew the face of the earth.

Leader:

We beg you, Lord, to send the Holy Spirit upon us so that, inspired and encouraged, we may fulfill the duties that are ours, to carry our cross with patience and to grow daily in Christian perfection.

Grant us through the same Holy Spirit, the intentions of this novena, or whatever is best for us and for all God's people. Amen.

II. SCRIPTURE READING see corresponding day (Short time of Silent Meditation)

III. THOUGHT FOR EACH DAY see corresponding day

IV. PRAYER OF THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

O Lord Jesus Christ, before ascending into heaven you promised to send the Holy Spirit to inish your work in the souls of your apostles and disciples. Grant that I may be open to the work of that same Spirit within me.

Grant me the Spirit of **Wisdom** that I may not be attached to the perishable things of this world but seek the things that are eternal.

Grant me the Spirit of **Understanding** to enlighten my mind with the light of your divine truth.

Grant me the Spirit of **Counsel** (Right Judgement) that I may choose the surest way of pleasing God.

Grant me the Spirit of **Fortitude** (Courage) that I may bear my cross with you and that I may overcome all the obstacles that oppose my salvation.

Grant me the Spirit of **Knowledge** that I may know God and know myself.

Grant me the Spirit of **Piety** (Reverence) that I may find the service of God sweet and attractive.

Grant me the Spirit of **Fear of the Lord** (Wonder and Awe) that I may be filled with loving reverence towards God and may avoid anything that would displease him.

Mark me, dear Lord, with the sign of your true disciples and animate me in all things with your Spirit.

Amen

V. FINAL PRAYER

O, Mary, by your humble obedience to the will of God and through the power of the Holy Spirit, you gave us the child Jesus. Help us to prepare our hearts so that we may receive and welcome the Holy Spirit and strive always to do what God asks. Grant this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

VI. HYMN IN HONOR OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

COME HOLY GHOST

Come Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And in our hearts take up your rest,
Come with your grace and heavenly aid,
To fill the hearts which you have made.
O Comforter, to You we cry,
The heavenly gift of God most high,
The fount of life and fire of love
And sweet anointing from above.

Readings AND Reflections:

FIRST DAY - THE HOLY SPIRIT

II. Scripture Reading - Romans 8:14-17

Brothers and sisters: For those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a Spirit of adoption, through whom we cry, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

III. Thought for the First Day

Only one thing is important - listening to and following the call of God. We should put all our efforts, therefore, in listening and being attentive to the Holy Spirit within each of us. The Holy Spirit, a "present" to us from God, is a Spirit of light, of strength and of love. That same Spirit enlightens our mind, strengthens our will and warms our hearts with love of God. Let us turn daily to the Holy Spirit that we may always be guided by love and gratitude.

SECOND DAY - THE GIFT OF WISDOM

II. Scripture Reading - Acts of the Apostles 1:12-14

After Jesus had been taken up to heaven the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they entered the city they went to the upper room where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

III. Thought for the Second Day

Wisdom is mentioned more than 500 times in the Bible. Many times Jesus used the word. It is the gift that strengthens our faith, deepens our hope and helps us live our life with Jesus as the center. Wisdom makes it easier for us to recognize what is of God so that God's interests will always come first in our daily lives.

THIRD DAY - THE GIFT OF UNDERSTANDING

II. Scripture Reading - Acts of the Apostles 1:1-5

In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for "the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the holy Spirit."

III. Thought for the Third Day

Understanding, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, opens our minds to grasp the meaning of the truths of our religion. By faith we know them but by Understanding we learn to appreciate them. It enables us to penetrate the inner meaning of revealed truths and through them to be awakened to newness of life - to be reborn in the Holy Spirit. Our faith becomes alive because we see reality more clearly. God's Spirit gives us a clearer grasp of life and its meaning, and when we understand reality it is easier for us to live it.

FOURTH DAY - THE GIFT OF RIGHT JUDGMENT

II. Scripture Reading - Acts of the Apostles 1:6-9

When they had gathered together they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.

III. Thought for the Fourth Day

This gift helps us to judge between what should be done, and what should be avoided in our daily life. With the assistance of the gifts of Knowledge and Understanding, Right Judgment is a wonderful help as we try to make decisions in our ordinary, day-to-day lives. It is a gift of spiritual "common sense" - a common sense that assures us the Spirit is resting gently in our hearts to guide us to the proper decisions.

FIFTH DAY - THE GIFT OF COURAGE

II. Scripture Reading - 1 John 4:17-21

In this is love brought to perfection among us, that we have confidence on the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment, and so one who fears is not yet perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

III. Thought for the Fifth Day

Frequently we link courage and fear in our daily life, both of them are very real. The Gospel uses both words often. When we fear or are frightened we naturally reach out to others for comfort and reassurance. But it is very important that we reach into our souls where God's Spirit lives. There we find the gift of Courage. When the apostles were frightened during the storm on the Sea of Galilee they turned to Jesus, calling out for help. Jesus understood their fear. He calmed the rough waves - and replaced their fear with courage. The Spirit of Jesus will always be there for us.

SIXTH DAY - THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE

II. Scripture Reading - 1 John 4:7-11

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another.

III. Thought for the Sixth Day

“Did you not know that I must be about my Father’s business?” Jesus spoke these words to Mary and Joseph when, as a young boy, he was “lost.” They found him in the Temple, preaching. The wonderful gift of Knowledge helps us to see things and events God’s way. Everything we helps us to do that. Pain and suffering without God are fearful and frightening, but when we are aware of the Spirit of God dwelling within us we feel supported and strengthened. By the gift of Knowledge we will see the things that happen to us and around through the eyes of God. This surely is a powerful gift.

SEVENTH DAY - THE GIFT OF REVERENCE

II. Scripture Reading - 1 John 4:12-16

No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us, that he has given us of his Spirit. Moreover, we have seen and testify that the Father sent his Son as savior of the world. Whoever acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains in him and he in God. We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.

III. Thought for the Seventh Day

The gift of Reverence inspires us to a filial affection for God as our most loving Father. It inspires us to love and respect all people and all things created by him. We love them because he loves them – his Blessed Mother, our parents, and our leaders because in a way they represent him. Whoever is filled with the gift of Reverence finds the practice of his religion not a burdensome duty but a delightful service. Where there is love, there is no labor. “Those who love me keep my commandments.”

EIGHTH DAY - THE GIFT OF WONDER AND AWE

II. Scripture Reading - Romans 8:5-9

Those who live according to the flesh are concerned with the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit with the things of the spirit. The concern of the flesh is death, but the concern of the spirit is life and peace. For the concern of the flesh is hostility toward God; it does not submit to the law of God, nor can it; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

III. Thought for the Eighth Day

Our respect for God is such that we will try our best to avoid anything that might damage it. This respect is a wonderful mixture of reverence and awe as we come to a greater realization of God’s love in our life. It truly is the beginning of wisdom. The gift of Wonder and Awe is something similar to a final coat of paint on a masterpiece; we stand back and marvel at God’s closeness to us through the Holy Spirit. It draws forth from our soul a cry of gratitude that our God really wants to live in us as our Friend, our Counselor and our Love.

NINTH DAY - THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE GOD OF LOVE

II. Scripture Reading - Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

III. Thought for the Ninth Day

Our Lord told us, “The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and bring to your mind whatever I have said to you.” The one thing Christ repeatedly instructed us to do was to love. “Whoever loves me, my Father and I will love and come to live in.” Love of God and love of neighbor were the two great commandments he gave. When asked who is forgiven the most, he answered, “To him who loves much, much is forgiven.” The sign of the true follower of Christ is one who loves both God and neighbor. “If you love me, keep my commandments. I will ask the Father and he will give you the Holy Spirit to live with you forever.”