

# A NOVENA, PRAYERS & LITANIES FOR THE HOLY SOULS DURING THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER



*“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let light perpetual shine upon them.  
May they rest in peace. Amen.”*

November is the month when the whole Church  
remembers the Faithful Departed.

Four Masses are offered here each week for the Holy Souls  
and the names of your own departed relatives, friends and benefactors rest on the  
altar throughout the month.

*“Oh, the dullness and hardness of a heart that looks only to the present instead  
of preparing for that which is to come! Therefore, in every deed and every  
thought, act as though you were to die this very day. If you had a good  
conscience, you would not fear death very much. It is better to avoid sin than  
to fear death.”* (from The Imitation of Christ.)



Both life and death are mysteries. We know the physical facts, but there is much that we do not understand. People, even Christian people, have different attitudes to death – ranging from terror, through fear to acceptance and even to longing expectation. Death comes to all, but Christians are able, through their faith, to meet death in a special way. Jesus, in the manner of his dying and rising again, gave a new meaning to death.

Jesus showed us that there is more to life than we experience here on earth. His words and his actions assure us of his deep love for us all – good and bad alike. We have a responsibility and opportunity to overcome the evil in us and to change and grow in goodness, so that we may become more and more like Jesus Christ. But God is not prepared to write off even the greatest sinner because he loves us all so very much.

All those who die in God's grace and friendship are assured of eternal salvation – but even they are still imperfectly cleansed of their sins and so must undergo purification so as to achieve the holiness needed to enter the joy of heaven and the presence of Christ. This final purification of God's elect is called Purgatory, and this is entirely different from the punishment of the damned.

From the beginning of the Church, prayers have been offered for the dead and their memory has been honoured by those who are still alive. These prayers are offered principally during the Mass, and the Church also commends almsgiving, indulgences and works of penance undertaken on behalf of the dead. In the Mass on All Souls' Day (2<sup>nd</sup> November) we profess that we long to be with our Father in heaven and acknowledge that we must be completely purified and free of sin if we are to enter the divine presence. We pray for those who have "gone before us marked with the sign of faith" as we ask Jesus to complete the work he began in our departed brothers and sisters at their baptism.

Catholics, in common with other Christians, believe that death is not the end of life but a stage on the road to a greater and richer fulfilment of life and all that is good, Christians hold to the certainty that in his death and resurrection Christ triumphed over death and that in our Baptism we are united for ever with Jesus and share in his triumph over death. For a Catholic, then, death means that life is changed, not ended. Our sorrow at the loss of a loved one is tempered by the sure and certain belief in the resurrection of the body from the dead and life everlasting. In the prayers of the Mass, we pray for those who have died using these words:

*“To our departed brothers and sisters  
and to all who were pleasing to you  
at their passing from this life,  
give kind admittance to your kingdom.  
There we hope to enjoy for ever the fullness of your glory  
through Christ our Lord,  
through whom you bestow on the world all that is good.”*



## A COMMENDATION OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

We entrust you to the God who created you.

May you return to the one who formed you from the dust of the earth.

May Mary, the angels and all the saints come to meet you as you go forth from this life.

May Christ who was crucified for you bring you freedom and peace.

May Christ, the Son of God, who died for you, take you into his kingdom.

May Christ, the Good Shepherd, give you a place within his flock.

May he forgive your failings and purify you and keep you among his people.

May you see your redeemer face to face and enjoy the sight of God for ever.

**Amen.**

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. **Amen.**

# A NOVENA FOR THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY

*(The people are asked to make the responses marked in bold type.)*

✠ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

○ most sweet Jesus, through the bloody sweat which Thou didst suffer in the Garden of Gethsemane, have mercy on these Blessed Souls. Have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

○ most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer during Thy most cruel scourging, have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

○ most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in Thy most painful crowning with thorns, have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

○ most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in carrying Thy cross to Calvary, have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

○ most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer during Thy most cruel Crucifixion, have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

○ most sweet Jesus, through the pains which Thou didst suffer in Thy most bitter agony on the Cross, have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

○ most sweet Jesus, through the immense pain which Thou didst suffer in breathing forth Thy Blessed Soul, have mercy on them.

***Have mercy on them, O Lord.***

*(Recommend yourself to the Souls in Purgatory  
and mention your intentions here.)*

**Blessed Souls, I have prayed for thee; I entreat thee, who are so dear to God, and who are sure of never losing Him, to pray for me, a miserable sinner who is in danger of being damned and of losing God for ever. Amen.**

Jesus, my Saviour I have so often deserved to be cast into hell; how great would be my suffering if I were now cast away and obliged to think that I myself had caused my damnation. I thank Thee for the patience with which Thou hast endured me. My God, I love Thee above all things and I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee because Thou art infinite goodness. I will rather die than offend Thee again. Grant me the grace of perseverance. Have pity on me and at the same time on those blessed souls suffering in Purgatory. Mary, Mother of God, come to their assistance with thy powerful intercession.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**,  
and this

*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory:*

Most merciful Jesus, I offer you the virtues and merits of your holy life and your passion, and also the merits of your Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints; I offer them to you, divine Father, for all the souls in Purgatory.

Most faithful Jesus, draw from your wounds and your heart those blessings that will give eternal rest to the souls of the departed. Most merciful Jesus, through your compassionate heart grant eternal rest to each and all of them.

I pray to you, through the kindness of your heart, to take pity on the souls detained in Purgatory. Remember, O Jesus, the mercies you have shown towards us; remember your pains, the wounds you have received, the blood you have shed and finally the very bitter death you have accepted for us. In consideration of all these things, I ask you to pour out on the souls in Purgatory the virtues, fruits and merits of your sufferings and passion in order that each soul may be entirely released, or at least greatly relieved.

O Jesus, remember that these are your friends, your children, your elect, whom you have redeemed. Let your justice be satisfied with what they have endured already. For your own sake, O Lord, show mercy and remit the rest of their sufferings. Amen.

Woe to me, unhappy being; so many years have I already spent on earth and have earned naught but hell! I give Thee thanks, O Lord, for granting me time even now to atone for my sins. My good God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee. Send me Thy assistance, that I may apply the time yet remaining to me for Thy love and service; have compassion on me, and, at the same time, on the holy souls suffering in Purgatory. O Mary, Mother of God, come to their assistance with thy powerful intercession.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 3

My God! Because Thou art infinite goodness, I love Thee above all things, and repent with my whole heart of my offences against Thee. Grant me the grace of holy perseverance. Have compassion on me, and, at the same, on the holy souls suffering in Purgatory. And thou, Mary, Mother of God, come to their assistance with thy powerful intercession.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 4

My God! Because Thou art infinite goodness, I am sorry with my whole heart for having offended Thee. I promise to die rather than ever offend Thee more. Give me holy perseverance; have pity on me, and have pity on those holy souls that burn in the cleansing fire, and love Thee with all their hearts. O Mary, Mother of God, assist them by thy powerful prayers.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 5

Woe to me, unhappy being, if Thou, O Lord, hadst cast me into hell; for from that dungeon of eternal pain there is no deliverance. I love Thee above all things, O infinite God and I am sincerely sorry for having offended Thee again.

Grant me the grace of holy perseverance. Have compassion on me, and, at the same time, on the holy souls suffering in Purgatory. O Mary, Mother of God, come to their assistance with thy powerful intercession.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 6

My Divine Redeemer, Thou didst die for me on the Cross, and hast so often united Thyself with me in Holy Communion, and I have repaid Thee only with ingratitude. Now, however, I love Thee above all things, O supreme God; and I am more grieved at my offences against Thee than at any other evil. I will rather die than offend Thee again. Grant me the grace of holy perseverance. Have compassion on me, and, at the same time, on the holy souls suffering in Purgatory. Mary, Mother of God, come to their aid with thy powerful intercession.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 7

God, Father of Mercy, satisfy this, their ardent desire! Send them Thy holy Angel to announce to them that Thou, their Father, are now reconciled with them through the suffering and death of Jesus, and that the moment of their deliverance has arrived.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 8

Oh my God! I also am one of these ungrateful beings, having received so much grace and yet despised Thy love, and deserve to be cast by Thee into hell. But Thy infinite goodness has spared me until now. Therefore, I now love Thee above all things, and I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee. I will rather die than ever offend Thee. Grant me the grace of holy perseverance. Have compassion on me and, at the same time, on the holy souls suffering in Purgatory. Mary, Mother of God, come to their aid with thy powerful intercession.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the  
*Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory.* (Page 5)

## Day 9

My God! How was it possible that I, for so many years, have borne tranquilly the separation from Thee and Thy holy grace! O infinite Goodness, how long-suffering hast Thou shown Thyself to me! Henceforth, I shall love Thee above all things. I am deeply sorry for having offended Thee; I promise rather to die than to again offend Thee. Grant me the grace of holy perseverance, and do not permit that I should ever again fall into sin. Have compassion on the holy souls in Purgatory. I pray Thee, moderate their sufferings; shorten the time of their misery; call them soon unto Thee in heaven, that they may behold Thee face to face, and for ever love Thee. Mary, Mother of Mercy, come to their aid with thy powerful intercession, and pray for us also who are still in danger of eternal damnation.

Say one **Our Father**, one **Hail Mary**, and the *Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory*. (Page 5)



## A LITANY FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

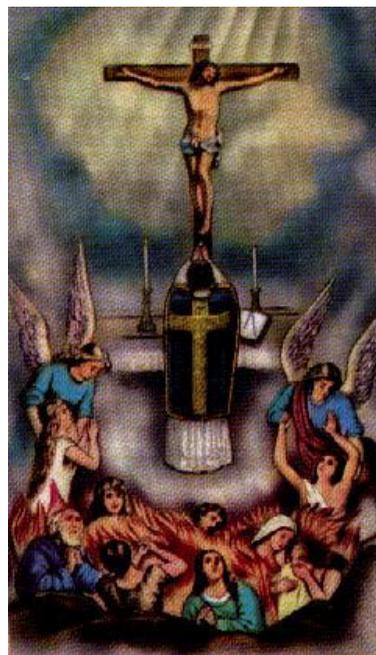
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, hear us. **Christ, graciously hear us.**

God, the Father of heaven, **Have mercy on them.**  
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, **Have mercy on them.**  
God, the Holy Spirit, **Have mercy on them.**  
Holy Trinity, one God, **Have mercy on them.**

Holy Mary, Mother of God, **pray for them.**  
Saint Michael, **pray for them.**  
Saint John the Baptist, **pray for them.**

*(continued..)*

Saint Joseph, **pray for them.**  
Saint Peter and Saint Paul, **pray for them.**  
Saint Andrew, **pray for them.**  
Saint John, **pray for them.**  
Saint Mary Magdalene, **pray for them.**  
Saint Stephen, **pray for them.**  
Saint Ignatius, **pray for them.**  
Saint Lawrence, **pray for them.**  
Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicity, **pray for them.**  
Saint Agnes, **pray for them.**  
Saint Gregory, **pray for them.**  
Saint Augustine, **pray for them.**  
Saint Athanasius, **pray for them.**  
Saint Basil, **pray for them.**  
Saint Martin, **pray for them.**  
Saint Benedict, **pray for them.**  
Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, **pray for them.**  
Saint Francis Xavier, **pray for them.**  
Saint John Vianney, **pray for them.**  
Saint Catherine, **pray for them.**  
Saint Teresa, **pray for them.**



*(The Patron Saint of the departed person, if known), pray for them.*

All holy men and women, **pray for them.**

Jesus, pardon their sins. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Jesus, remember the good they have done. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Jesus, receive them into eternal life. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Jesus, comfort those who mourn **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, **Grant them rest.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, **Grant them rest.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, **Grant them rest eternal.**

Let us pray. All-powerful God, whose mercy is never withheld from those who call on you in hope, look kindly on your servants who departed this life confessing your name, and number them among the saints for evermore. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
**and let perpetual light shine upon them.**  
May they rest in peace, **and rise in glory.**

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the love and mercy of God and the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, rest in peace. **Amen.**

## A PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

O God, who has defeated death and granted the gift of life to the world, give to your departed sons and daughters repose and security, in which pain and grief are forgotten. As you are a good and loving God, pardon every one of their sins of thought, word and deed.

O Saviour, who has purchased mortals with your own blood and redeemed them by your death, grant to us by your resurrection, life everlasting. Give rest, O Lord, to all the faithful departed, those of every age and race. Make them all worthy of your heavenly kingdom. **Amen.**

### THE ANTIPHON FOR THE DEAD

*May the angels lead you into paradise,  
may the martyrs receive you at your coming  
and bring you into the holy city, into Jerusalem.*

*May a choir of angels welcome you;  
and there, where Lazarus is poor no longer,  
may you have eternal rest.*



# A LITANY FOR THE HOLY SOULS

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, hear us. **Christ, graciously hear us.**

God, the Father of heaven, **Have mercy on them.**  
God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, **Have mercy on them.**  
God, the Holy Spirit, **Have mercy on them.**  
Holy Trinity, one God, **Have mercy on them.**

For those who have died without asking for forgiveness. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died filled with anger. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died spurning prayer. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died without forgiving others. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died hating their enemies. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died neglecting their faith. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died enslaved to egoism or individualism. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died imbued with bitterness. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died attached to worldly pleasures and indulgence.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For those who have died oblivious to the poor and needy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died ungrateful and ungiving. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died smug and self-important. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died tormented by regrets. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died with disdain for purity. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died with a vengeful or spiteful spirit. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died isolated or alienated. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died unresponsive to God's friendship. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died cold and hard-hearted. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died disappointed and hurt. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died suddenly or violently. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died without being prepared. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died dismissive of the power of grace. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died deaf to God's word. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died without the benefit of the sacraments.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For those who have died lost in their sin. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died yearning for divine mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
For those who have died without the hope of eternal salvation.

**Lord, have mercy**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, **Grant them rest.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, **Grant them rest.**  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, **Grant them rest eternal.**

Let us pray. Most merciful Father, your beloved Son, Jesus, reached out with compassion to the widow of Nain and restored her dead son to life. By his resurrection, Christ has conquered death. Fill me with confidence and trust in our Saviour's compassion. May I face death without fear and live with unwavering hope in the One who raised Lazarus from the dead, for Jesus is our Lord now and for ever. **Amen.**

## A SOLEMN BLESSING

May the God of all consolation bless you, for in his unfathomable goodness he created the human race, and in the resurrection of his only begotten Son he has given believers the hope of rising again. **Amen.**

To us who are alive, may God grant pardon for our sins, and to all the dead a place of light and peace. **Amen.**

So may we all live happily for ever with Christ, who we believe truly rose from the dead. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

