

A Novena for Life

honoring the Feast of the Visitation



DAY ONE

Reading (Lk 1:35-37):

And the angel said to [Mary] in reply, “The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God.”

Versicle:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
—My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.

Prayer:

O God,
nothing is impossible for You. Send Your Holy Spirit upon us, that the power of the Most High might overshadow us. Grant us the grace of evangelization and conversion, so that all may know the sanctity of human life. Grant this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns eternally with You but was born of a woman. Amen.

DAY TWO

Reading (Lk 1:38-40):

Mary said, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her. During those days Mary set out and traveled to the hill country in haste to a town of Judah, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

Versicle:

For the Lord has looked with favor on his lowly servant,
—from this day all generations will call me blessed.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ,
Your mother was obedient to the Divine will
amid trembling and awe.
Through her intercession, we pray You,
look kindly on all expectant mothers.

May any trials they now endure yield in the joy of new life.
For You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

DAY THREE

Reading (Lk 1:41-42):

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth, filled with the holy Spirit, cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."

Versicle:

The Almighty has done great things for me,
—and holy is His Name.

Prayer:

Draw near, we beseech you, O Lord, to those contemplating abortion. As John leaped for joy in the womb of his mother when You came near, may struggling women, and the children they bear, experience Your presence. Fill them with Your Holy Spirit, that they, too, may cry for joy at Your coming. You who live and reign for ever. Amen.

DAY FOUR

Reading (Lk 1:43-44):

[Elizabeth said to Mary,] "And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For at the moment the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy."

Versicle:

He has mercy on those who fear Him,
—in every generation.

Prayer:

Your mercy, O Lord, extends to the thousandth generation.
Show forth Your mercy and love
to those who have had an abortion.
Through the intercession of Your mother,
may they know Your compassion,
and may they announce Your love to the nations.
For You live and reign for ever. Amen.

DAY FIVE

Reading (Lk 1:45, 56):

[Elizabeth said to Mary,] "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." ...Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Versicle:

He has shown the strength of His arm,
—He has scattered the proud in their conceit.

Prayer:

Father,
You know us even before we are formed in our mother's womb.
May Your plans for all the unborn be fulfilled,
and may we have the grace to be obedient to Your word.
We ask this through Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

DAY SIX

Reading (Lk 1:57-58):

When the time arrived for Elizabeth to have her child she gave birth to a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her.

Versicle:

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
—and has lifted up the lowly.

Prayer:

O God,
all life is Your gift of love.
In the joy that comes with the birth of a child,
may we recognize Your great mercy,
and so come to know the love You have for all people.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DAY SEVEN

Reading (Lk 1:59-60):

When they came on the eighth day to circumcise the child, they were going to call him Zechariah after his father, but his mother said in reply, "No. He will be called John."

Versicle:

He has filled the hungry with good things,
—and the rich he has sent away empty.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ,
we pray You send Your Holy Spirit upon all parents.
May the birth of their child rouse their hearts.
Approaching the sacrament of baptism,

may they recommit to faith in You,
who live and reign for ever. Amen.

DAY EIGHT

Reading (Lk 1:62-64):

So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, “John is his name,” and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God.

Versicle:

He has come to the help of His servant Israel, for He has remembered His promise of mercy,
—the promise He made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.

Prayer:

Father,
grant that all men may find in You the source and model of their fatherhood.
May they aspire to know Your will for their children,
and live in righteousness and truth.
Grant them the grace to be men of virtue,
and the reward of children faithful to You.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

DAY NINE

Reading (Lk 1:66):

All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, “What, then, will this child be?” For surely the hand of the Lord was with him.

Versicle:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
—for He has looked with favor on His lowly servant.

Prayer:

Lord,
so often we cannot recognize Your work in the lives of others.
Grant that, like John’s relatives, we may see You working in all,
and, freed from envy, we may give You glory.
For You live and reign for ever. Amen.