

# *All Souls* NOVENA



## Day 1

*The king (David) was shaken, and went up to the room over the city gate to weep. He said as he wept, "My son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! If only I had died instead of you, Absalom, my son, my son!"* 2 Samuel 19:1

The death of someone we love hurts us deeply and often sends us into a period of grieving. It can be difficult to adjust our life but with God's help, through family and friends, it is possible. We also gain strength and courage from the knowledge that the love this person has for us did not die but lives eternally and continues to flow to us. Just as we pray to canonize saints, we can pray to our deceased loved ones and remain close to them, united in the communion of saints.

### Prayer

*I remember, God, my loved ones who have died. They were Your gifts to me and what wonderful gifts they were. I thank You for each of them and for the gift of eternal life, which we believe they now share with You. I hope to be with You and with them someday but, for now, I accept Your will for me on earth. Help me to bring Your love and compassion to the people in my life now. Help me to follow in their footsteps. Amen.*



## Day 2

*I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. John 15:15*

A good friend is a priceless treasure and when one leaves us through death, the pain of our loss runs deep. Jesus, our friend, understands our suffering. Remember how He cried over the death of His friend, Lazarus. It is good to remember our friends who have died and thank them for all the love, joy and support they gave us with their friendship. At the same time, it is good to rejoice in the friends now in our life and to cherish all they give us.

### Prayer

*Jesus, thank You for being my friend and for sending so many special friends into my life. Today I recall my friends who have died and are now with You in eternal life. I remember the times we laughed together, cried together, supported one another and enjoyed just sharing time with one another. Help me to be a good friend to the people in my life today and to reach out to others I meet with friendship. Amen.*



## Day 3

*Hazael asked, "Why are you weeping, my lord?" Elisha replied, "Because I know the evil that you will inflict upon the Israelites. You will burn their fortresses, you will slay their youth with the sword, you will dash their little children to pieces, you will rip open their pregnant women." 2 Kings 8:12*

It is a cold, hard fact: millions of innocent people in the world have died due to war, strife, persecution, and unjust political systems. Through prayer, our hearts can reach out to all these innocent victims in our country and around the world.

### *Prayer*

*My prayers, Jesus, are for all the innocent men, women and children who have been and even now are being killed as a result of violence in this world. They sought to live peacefully and lovingly in this world but there were those in the world who rejected them, Jesus, just as some rejected You. May they know Your loving embrace and the joy of eternal life. I pray, also, for those on this earth who live in the shadow of violence and terrorism. May they cling to You, Jesus, and be sustained by Your love.*



## Day 4

*The forces of Israel were defeated by David's servants, and the casualties there that day were heavy – twenty thousand men. 2 Samuel 18:7*

We are proud of and grateful for the millions of men and women who, when they go to their jobs, put their lives on the line for others. They include military personnel, police, firefighters and emergency personnel. They do not expect to die on the job, but they know the possibility exists. They are gifts from God to us and we treasure them.

### *Prayer*

*I pray, God, for all the military personnel, police, firefighters, emergency personnel and others who have died while working at their jobs of serving others. May they bask in the light of Your love and know the joys of eternal life. I pray, also, for the spouses, children, parents, siblings and other relatives of those who have died in the line of duty. Comfort them in their grieving. Strengthen them as they mend their lives and move onward. Let them feel Your embrace and be warmed by Your compassionate love. Amen.*



## Day 5

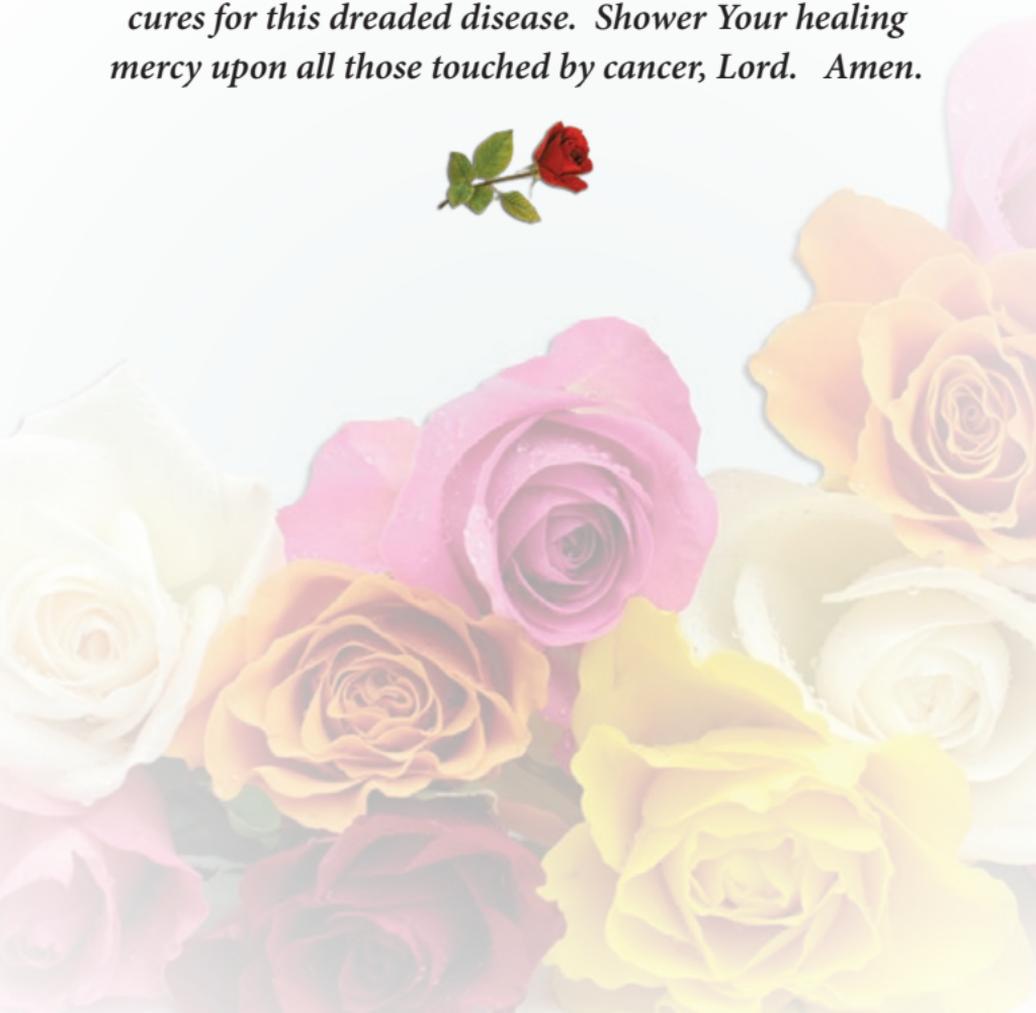
*Now there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where He was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with Him, and said, "Lord, if You wish, You can make me clean." Jesus stretched out His hand, touched him, and said, "I do will it. Be made clean." And the leprosy left him immediately. Luke 5:12-13*

We all know someone who has battled with or lost their lives to cancer. It is impossibly difficult to stand by helplessly while we watch a loved one struggle through such a terrible disease. Cancer can take victims quickly without much notice – or slowly and painfully. It doesn't discriminate; men, women and children have fought bravely through the disease. Yet a popular poem by Robert L. Lynn reminds us that cancer is limited:

It cannot cripple love.  
It cannot shatter hope.  
It cannot corrode faith.  
It cannot eat away peace.  
It cannot destroy confidence.  
It cannot kill friendship.  
It cannot shut out memories.  
It cannot silence courage.  
It cannot reduce eternal life.  
It cannot quench the Spirit.

## *Prayer*

*Lord, my heart goes out to all who suffer from cancer. May all those who have died from the disease find rest and peace in eternal life with You. May the loved ones they left behind know Your love for them. And may those who are now suffering with cancer be touched by Your healing hand. I also ask You, Lord, to lead us in finding cures for this dreaded disease. Shower Your healing mercy upon all those touched by cancer, Lord. Amen.*



## Day 6

*They were hungry and thirsty; their life was ebbing away. In their distress they cried to the Lord, Who rescued them in their peril. Psalm 107:5-6*

There are many people in the world today who are starving to death. Some are victims of war, political turmoil, ethnic cleansing and religious disputes. Others are victims of drought, earthquakes, storms and other natural disasters. Even in the United States, where food is plentiful, there are adults and children who do not have enough to eat.

### *Prayer*

*Lord, come to the rescue of my brothers and sisters throughout the world who are starving. Bless those who have already died, be with those who are dying and help us to distribute the world's bounty of food justly. You have gifted us with a world overflowing with food and drink. Help us to be good stewards and to remember that every man, woman and child in this world is our brother and sister. Amen.*



## Day 7

*Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Luke 23:24*

It is difficult for us to forgive someone who has taken the life of a loved one. It doesn't matter whether the person who caused the death is a terrorist, robber, rapist, drunk driver, enraged spouse or misguided teen. It doesn't matter if the death was the result of a deliberate act or an accident. Our hurt and loss can fill us with anger and bitterness. We want to strike back rather than follow Jesus' example and offer forgiveness. The culprit may or may not benefit from our action, but we will, because it is through forgiveness that we can find peace and try to restore the human community.

### *Prayer*

*This prayer, God, is for all those who are suffering with the loss of a loved one at the hand of another. Counsel and console them in their grief. Wipe away their tears. Help them to gather up the shattered pieces of their lives and begin anew. And lead them to forgive those who caused the death of their loved one. Help them and help all of us to find peace through forgiveness. Amen.*



## Day 8

*As they were stoning Stephen, he called out,  
“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Acts 7:59*

It is natural for us to fear death because survival on earth is a basic instinct. Yet our faith in God and in Jesus' promise of eternal life can ease our fears at the moment of death. Thus we are able to go confidently from this imperfect world into the joy of the next, where we will be reunited with loved ones and, at long last, see the face of God.

### *Prayer*

*When it is time for me to leave this earth, Jesus, send Your Mother, Mary, to come, take my hand and lead me to You. Calm my trembling heart with Your warm embrace. Welcome me with Your kiss. I am not worthy of Your generous gift of eternal life, but through Your suffering and death You have cleansed me. I long to be with You forever. Amen.*



## Day 9

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life. John 3:16*

How powerful are these words of St. John the Evangelist! Do they not take our breath away and cause us to drop to our knees in awe and wonder?

There is no love greater than God's love for us. There is no action greater than God giving His only Son so that we might have eternal life. There is no one greater than God. In one sentence, St. John has summed up the glory and majesty of God.

### *Prayer*

*I raise my voice in praise and thanksgiving to You, God. Your love for us is so magnificent that I cannot comprehend it. Your actions are so wondrous that I am spellbound. Thank You, God, for all that You have created for our use. Thank You for sending Jesus to teach us the way to eternal life. Thank You for sending Your Holy Spirit to dwell in us as our constant companion. And thank You for Your untiring love and for the gift of eternal life with You. There is nothing more we could want than to be with You forever. Amen.*





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