

Novena in Honor of God the Holy Spirit

Prayers and Daily Meditations from:

The Paraclete: A Manual of Instruction and Devotion

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Fourth day of the novena

1. *"Thou art Rest in labor."*

Labor has been imposed on man from the beginning. "The Lord God took man and put him into the paradise of pleasure, to dress it, and to keep it." Then labor was an occupation of delight and enjoyment; but after the fall, it became a toilsome burden. "Cursed is the Earth in Thy work...With labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof... Thorns and thistles shall bring it forth...In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Labor is now a penance and across, and most men submit to it only through sheer necessity. Who will support you in labor, and give you rest? Behold, the Holy Ghost Himself is your Rest in labor. He enlightens your mind to understand that labor is a command imposed upon you by God, and that the fatigues, toils and worries accompanying it are now a penalty due to sin. And in proportion as he enlightened your mind, he strengthens your will, so that you may avoid idleness, employ your time in honest and useful labor, and accept its hardships in all humble submission to God's Holy Will, without ever a murmur or complaint.

The Divine Spirit will, moreover, sanctify your labor, so as to make it productive of supernatural merit and reward. If you consecrate to God your daily toil, it will obtain for you many special graces, it will satisfy for sin, lessen the temporal debt due to sin, and lay up for you a treasure in heaven. Even the material result of your labor will be blessed by God, so that you may have enough for your own daily needs, and yet be able to spare something to bestow in charity on your poorer Brethren. In this manner, the Holy Ghost is Rest in your labor here below, and will be your eternal Rest hereafter in heaven. Then labor manfully and courageously in the Holy Ghost, so as to enter into his rest.

2. *"Thou art Shelter from the heat."*

There is heat, which is the result of strife and conflict. Man's life on earth is a continual warfare. You are surrounded by enemies on all sides, enemies from within, and from without. You have to contend against the evil tendencies of your corrupt nature. You have to wrestle with the spirits of darkness. You have to defend yourself against the allurements of this world.

The battle is almost continual and uninterrupted. It lasts as long as life itself will last. Your enemies are powerful. The battle is fierce. Who is to be your shelter in the heat of the battle, but the Holy Ghost? He will protect you under the covert of his wings, and defend you against all your enemies as a hen guards her little ones against the birds of prey. He will enable you to fight the good fight, and obtain the palm of victory. When temptation, therefore, lays hold on you, when the heat of the conflict seems to exhaust and oppress you, do not fail to call upon the Holy Ghost to be your shelter from the heat.

There is heat, which results from the human passions. Passions, in themselves, are not sinful; on the contrary, they are useful, and even necessary. Without them, nothing great, noble or sublime, would have ever been achieved by men. But human passions are blind; they must be controlled and kept in proper check; otherwise they will, like an untamed and bridled horse, run away with you, and bring disaster upon you. But to bridle and tame the passions, and keep them in proper check, is, at times, most difficult.

Experience proves it, but too well. Who will assist you? Once more the Holy Ghost. By the power of His Divine Grace, He will temper the ardor and glow of your passions, subject them to the dictates of right reason, and compel them to submit to the yolk of God's Holy law.

And not infrequently has the Holy Ghost even literally been a shelter from physical heat, as we read in the acts of many, holy martyrs. By a special miracle, the Holy Ghost, so tempered the heat of the fire that some of them walked upon burning coals as upon a path strewn with roses, and remained on her in the midst of devouring flames as though taking of most refreshing bath.

When he, therefore, oppresses you with its stifling atmosphere call upon the Holy Ghost to come and abide within your very soul to be your shelter from the heat.

3. *"Thou art solace in our weeping"*

There are tears which are bitter and painful. They arise from the sorrows and afflictions of this life, from the loss of temporal goods, or the departure of someone near and dear to us. Such tears are natural, and not to be condemned, provided they are kept within bounds, according to the dictates of reason and faith. Never yield to excessive and unreasonable grief. Do not weep like those that have no hope. If temporal misfortunes follow you, call upon the Holy Ghost. He is your solace in this vale of tears.

But there are, also, tears which are sweet and consoling.

These are the tears of compunction for sin. Such tears are precious; for they touch the heart of God and wash away the stain of guilt.

These are the tears of compassion at the sorrows of your fellow-men. Such tears are noble; for they lead to heroic deeds of charity and self-sacrifice in the service of your neighbor.

These are the tears of grief and lament, arising from the consideration of Christ's bitter Passion and Death: or of the many offenses by which the Divine Majesty is constantly being outraged by men. Such tears are good and holy; before they bring you nearer to God.

There are the tears of holy joy and desire which spring from the contemplation of Divine and heavenly things. Such tears are sublime; for they raise

you above all mundane affairs and give you here on earth already a foretaste of the joys of heaven.

All these kinds of tears are in themselves a special gift of the Holy Ghost. Then humbly asked the Divine Spirit to grant you this gift which of itself is an unfailling source of sweet joy and comfort in the Holy Ghost. Of such as possess this gift, it is written: "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."