

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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Second day of the novena

1. *"Come Thou Father of the poor"*

These words remind you of your poverty. But are you really poor? Surely, there can be no poverty greater than yours. What are you of yourself? What have you of yourself? What can you do of yourself? The answer to each question is alike: absolutely nothing. Of course, you are void of all good, natural, and supernatural. Left to yourself, you can do nothing deserving the least reward, either temporal or eternal.

Of course, you are left defenseless in the midst of your enemies, a prey to misery and wretchedness, to death and all evils — a just penalty due to sin. Left to yourself, you cannot even pray aright and call upon God to help you in your poverty and misery. Yet be not dismayed. There is One Who will be a tender, loving Father to you. It is the Holy Ghost. Hence, Jesus Christ, in promising Him, had said; "I will not leave you orphans." This Divine Spirit will fill you with the heavenly riches of His Divine grace. He will take you "under the shadow of His wings, and protect you as the apple of His eye." Yet first humbly acknowledge your poverty. Humility is truth, and you are poor in very truth.

Then turn to the Divine Spirit with sentiments of true humility, and earnestly implore Him to enrich your poverty by the riches of His Divine grace. Say to him thus; Come, O Holy Spirit, Thou Father of the poor! Come fill my poverty-stricken soul out of the plenty of Thy heavenly riches.

2. *"Come, Thou Giver of Gifts"*

What are the gifts of the Holy Ghost? or rather, what is there, and the order of nature, or of grace, that is not His gift? All that is bright and beautiful, good and perfect, has been made so by Him. The grace and comeliness of the human body, the grandeur and nobility of the human soul, these are His gifts.

The creations of man's genius in arts and sciences, are inspirations caught from the Divine Spirit. But what about the supernatural gifts of grace, virtue, holiness, and perfection? Who can enumerate them? Who can fathom them? Who can describe them? Consider the life of the ordinary Christian and his daily struggles for mastery over himself. He may fall now and again; but he rises as often. "The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak". Yes, he is weak and frail. But he is, nevertheless, in thorough earnest. His will is strong and determined. And he continues to the end, in spite of all obstacles. Now the light, strength, peace, joy, and comfort he experiences on earth, and the glory and happiness in store for him in heaven; all these are the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Between the life of the ordinary Christian and the lives of those great Servants of God whom Holy Church has glorified, and placed upon her altars for our veneration, encouragement, and imitation — what a vast range of grace and perfection, of extraordinary favors, and privileges opens itself out to our view till we are lost in the dizzy heights of sublime virtue and heroic sanctity. All this is, once more, an effect of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

If you are, therefore, still poor in grace and perfection, whose fault is it but your own? If you really desire to lead a life of virtue, and still find yourself chained down by the fetters of sin, whose fault is it but your own? The Holy Ghost offers you His Divine gifts in abundance. True, as there are not two individuals who are altogether alike, neither does the Divine Spirit deal with all men in the same manner. He accommodate His gifts to the particular needs and conditions of each individual; yet to everyone He offers more than enough.

Then, once more, approach the Divine Spirit with a humble and contrite heart, and a grateful acknowledgment of all past favors, and say with all confidence: Come O Holy Spirit! Thou Giver of gifts! Bestow upon me out of the inexhaustible treasury of Thy Divine gifts whatever ever Thou knowest to be needful for me, for Thy greater honor and glory, the salvation of my own poor soul, and the welfare of my fellow-men.

3. *"Come. Thou Light of hearts."*

What would we do without light? Without light, all would be dark and dreary, cold and miserable. But with light, everything becomes lightsome and joyful. Yet what is the light of the heart? It is love. Hence it is written: "Love God, and

your heart shall be enlightened;" and, again: "He that loveth, his brother, abideth in the light."

Love, therefore, is the light that floods the heart of man with the sunshine of peace and contentment. Yet not everything which bears the name of love is love in reality. The love which alone can fill man's heart with true joy and happiness, is that heaven-born love, "the charity of God, diffused in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." It is, once more, a special gift of the Holy Ghost, by which we are enabled to love God, for His own sake, above all things, and our neighbors as ourselves, for God's sake.

When, therefore, this Divine Spirit of Love and Charity personally dwells in your soul, how can it remain darksome and wretched? The Holy Ghost Himself is the light of your heart, enkindling within you the fire of Divine love.

Then again call upon Him to abide with you: Come, O Holy Spirit! Thou Light of hearts! Set my heart all on fire with Divine love. Then shall I love, as I ought, enjoy true peace and happiness, and shed abroad the same upon all with whom I shall come in contact.