

The Mission of Intercession

If we are to conduct ourselves wisely and well during this Novena of Grace, in company with our patron, Saint Francis Xavier, how shall we live and how shall we pray?

We have already seen that praying the novena requires that we share in the desires and works of that great Jesuit missionary—both his desires and works of his earthly life and now his desires and works as he enjoys the happiness of Heaven. Saint Francis Xavier, since the time of his conversion, was *always* on mission; even now, he is on mission, offering us the gift of his good example and the benefits of his prayerful intercession. To pray the novena well, we in turn must strive in our own way to become like Xavier, to see ourselves never lacking opportunities to work in the vast Mission Territory of the whole wide world as well as the innermost recesses of our own soul. For love of God and love of our neighbor, Saint Francis Xavier put aside all worldly ambitions and spent himself as a herald of the Gospel. Now he works without ceasing as an intercessor before the Divine Majesty. How shall we join him and imitate him?

Some of us may be free to drop everything and go to the ends of the earth to bring the Gospel to unbelievers. Many of us are not so free. Our vocation or condition preclude us from the travel that marked the life of Xavier. Yes, we can bear witness to Christ, according to our gifts, graces and circumstances. Yet, it is surely true, without exception, that we can now join and imitate Saint Francis Xavier as he is in Heaven, by taking upon ourselves his mission of intercession.

We can join our great Jesuit patron in praying for the protection of persecuted Christians. We can join him in praying for an increase in the works and numbers of missionaries throughout the world. We can join him in praying for the restoration of those who have abandoned, betrayed, rejected or have forgotten the Faith. And we can join him in praying for the salvation of all souls – including our own.

The mission of intercession is a constant opportunity, a happy privilege and a profound obligation. As we join Saint Francis Xavier in his present mission as intercessor, let's call to mind the words of Saint Joan of Our Blessed Lord: "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you." ([Matthew 7:7](#))

Prayers for the Novena

Novena Prayer to St. Francis Xavier

(By Father Marcello Mastrilli, S.J.)

O most lovable and loving St. Francis Xavier, in union with thee, I adore the Divine Majesty with all reverence. Filled with deep joy on account of the extraordinary graces which God bestowed upon thee during thy sojourn here on earth, and on account of the extraordinary glory conferred upon thee after death, I thank Him from the depths of my soul. I implore thee at the same time from my innermost heart, to secure for me through thy powerful intercession the special grace to live a holy life and die a holy death. I also beseech thee to obtain for me the following graces. (Make some petition). But should my supplication not be in keeping with the greater honor of God or the good of my soul, obtain for me then what is more conducive to both. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be. (300 Days Indulgence)

To the Passion and Precious Blood of Jesus

Antiphon: His sweat became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. One of the soldiers opened His side with a spear, and immediately there poured forth blood and water.

V. O Lord, come to the aid of Thy servants.

R. Whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy Precious Blood.

Let us pray: O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou didst come down from Heaven and shed Thy Most Precious Blood on the Cross for our salvation; by Thy Sacred Wounds and the bitterness with which Thy holy Soul departed from Thy Body, we humbly beseech Thee, through the merits and intercession of Thy servant, St. Francis Xavier, who always bore in his heart Thy bitter Passion, mercifully grant us the favors we ask of Thy infinite mercy, Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

To the Immaculate Conception

Antiphon: Thy Immaculate Conception, O Virgin Mother of God, has brought joy to the whole world, for from Thee has arisen the Sun of Justice, Christ our Lord.

V. In Thy Conception, Thou wert immaculate.

R. Holy Mother of God, pray for us.

Let us pray: O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary didst prepare a worthy habitation for Thy Divine Son, preserving Her by the foreseen merits of the Passion and Death of Thy Son from every stain of sin: we beseech Thee through Her intercession and the prayers of St. Francis, who always devoutly venerated Her Immaculate Conception, to cleanse us from all sin, in order that we may be partakers in the Divine

Grace, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

To the Holy Angels

Antiphon: Holy Angels, Archangels, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim: praise the Lord and be our intercessors with God.

V. He hath given His Angels charge over thee.

R. To keep thee in all thy ways.

Let us pray: O Lord Who doth dispense the services of angels and men in a wonderful order, mercifully grant that our life may be defended by them on earth, as they always protected St. Francis, and that what we ask of Thee we may obtain by their intercession, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

To St. Francis Xavier

Antiphon: The Lord led the just man by right paths and showed him the Kingdom of God.

V. Pray for us, St. Francis Xavier.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: O God, Thou wast pleased by the preaching and miracles of St. Francis Xavier, to unite unto Thy Church the nations of the Indies. Grant, we beseech Thee, that we who reverence his glorious merits may also imitate his example, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of St. Francis Xavier for the Conversion of Infidels

Eternal God, Creator of all things, remember that Thou alone didst create the souls of infidels, framing them to Thy Own image and likeness; behold, O Lord! how, to Thy dishonor, hell is daily replenished with them. Remember, O Lord! Thy Only Son, Jesus Christ, Who suffered for them, most bountifully shedding His Precious Blood: suffer not, O Lord Thy Son and our Lord to be any longer despised by infidels; but rather, being appeased by the entreaties and prayers of the elect, the Saints, and of the Church, the most blessed spouse of Thy Son, vouchsafe to be mindful of Thy mercy, and forgetting their idolatry and infidelity, cause them also to know Him Whom Thou didst send, Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord, Who is our health, life, and resurrection, through Whom we are freed and saved, to Whom be all glory forever. Amen.

Saint Francis Xavier's Hymn of Love

O God, I love Thee for Thyself,
And not that I may Heaven gain,
Nor because those who love Thee not,
Must suffer hell's eternal pain.

Thou O my Jesus! Thou didst me
Upon the Cross embrace;
For me didst bear the nails and spear
And manifold disgrace;

And griefs and torments numberless,
And sweat of agony;
E'en death itself - and all for one Who was Thine enemy.

Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ,
Should I not love Thee well:
Not for the sake of winning Heaven,
Or of escaping hell;
Not with the hope of gaining aught, not seeking a reward;
But, as Thyself hast loved
me, O ever-loving Lord?

E'en so I love Thee, and will
love, and in Thy praise will sing;
Solely because Thou art my
God and my eternal King.