



## **Novena to Our Lady of La Salette, Reconciler of Sinners**

**What is a novena?** A novena is a prayer tradition that ties back to the time the apostles and Mary spent praying together between Jesus's ascension into heaven and Pentecost. It is a set of reflections intended to be said over nine successive days. Novenas can be prayed in a group or in private. All that's needed is a sincere heart as you pray for the intentions of the novena.

### **First day of novena – Welcome**

**Scripture says:** “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.” (Matthew 11:28, 30)

**Mary said:** “Come near, my children.”

**Meditation:** What a wonderful invitation! In all simplicity Mary at La Salette calls the two children to come near. Her words echo her son's invitation to come to him that we may find rest from our burdens and refreshment for our spirits. This, too, is Mary's desire: that her children – meaning us as well – should feel welcomed and loved.

Mary wishes us to come nearer to God who desires only good for us. We must approach and listen to her words, spoken with the love and concern of Jesus. She and her son wish that during this La Salette novena, we may “have life and have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10b) This special time of prayer can help us experience the welcoming presence of Mary and her loving son. [quiet reflection]

**Our prayer:** Virgin Mother of La Salette, we approach your loving son with confidence. During these days of prayer and reflection, we place before our savior our labors and burdens, our thoughts and feelings, our words and actions. May Christ ease our burdens and fill us with his presence. With faith, we ask for his blessings on us and on those we hold close to our hearts. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary

**Invocation:** Our Lady of La Salette, reconciler of sinners, pray without ceasing for us who have recourse to you.



## **Second day of novena – Freedom from fear**

**Scripture says:** “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.” (Luke 1:30b)

**Mary said:** “Do not be afraid.”

**Meditation:** At her annunciation, Mary’s initial response to the presence and words of the angel was anxious fear. She could easily sympathize with the reaction of fear that overcame the two children at her sudden appearance on the holy mountain of La Salette. Her words, like those of the angel, were most welcome and reassuring.

Mary, who was relieved of her fears, now relieves us of our own. She who “found favor with God,” finds favor for us. Mary, who knew the God of her ancestors as a God of power and might, now encounters God in a personal and intimate way. At La Salette, she speaks from that privileged relationship with God to teach us that we, too, are “beloved of the Father.”

St. John declares, “Perfect love drives out fear.” (1 John 4:18a) Mary came to know that perfect love as her own son. May he cast out our fear as well and perfect his love in us. [quiet reflection]

**Our prayer:** Remember, Mother of Sorrows, how often fear keeps us from God. Lovingly guide us to Jesus, the source of grace. As we take comfort in your invitation to draw ever closer to your son, may your words melt our hearts, dispel our fears and increase his peace within us. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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### Third day of novena – Joy

**Scripture says:** “The angel of the Lord appeared to [the shepherds] and said, ‘For behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.’” (Luke 2:9a, 10b)

**Mary said:** “I am here to tell you great news.”

**Meditation:** The good news spoken to Mary at her annunciation brought forth a prayer of praise. This prayer, the Magnificat, not only expresses her deep joy and the conviction of her strong faith, it also recounts how God cares for and helps the needy, the downtrodden, the lost.

Like the Gospel, the message of Mary at La Salette is one of good news. Her words announce great joy, the joy of our salvation. Sin is forgiven, death is destroyed, a broken world has been renewed.

The angels announced the good news of Jesus’s birth, God breaking forth into our world. Mary at La Salette reminds us that God continues to break into our world, restoring and renewing the face of the earth. This is the Good News! This is the source of our joy! [quiet reflection]

**Our Prayer:** Gentle Virgin of La Salette, you urge us to find joy in God our Savior. Gladly we hear your words and pledge to spread this good news. May our lives give glory to your Son and be filled with joy in serving Christ, now and forever. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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### **Fourth day of novena – Rest**

**Scripture says:** “Six days you may labor and do all your work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, your God. ... For remember that you, too, were once slaves in Egypt and the Lord, your God, brought you from there with his strong hand and outstretched arm. That is why the Lord, your God, has commanded you to observe the sabbath day.” (Deuteronomy 5:13-14a, 15).

**Mary said:** “I gave you six days to work; I kept the seventh for myself...”

**Meditation:** Yes, the seventh day belongs to God and God shares this gift with us. This consecrated time is meant to free us from the vicious cycle of production and consumerism. It points us to the greater reality of God’s presence and our life of grace. We are restored to the divine image.

The one who made the heavens and the earth has reserved this day for himself to remind us that we are “children of God.” (Romans 8:16) This day, then, is also meant to restore our community. In sharing the body of Christ we are called to be the body of Christ. We are given into one another’s care as were Jesus’s mother and disciple at the foot of his cross. [quiet reflection]

**Our Prayer:** Faithful Virgin of La Salette, you uphold our dignity as free people and as children of God. May the day of the Lord shine on us and give meaning to our work and our relationships so that in Jesus Christ we may give thanks to God. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** The Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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### **Fifth day of novena – True fasting**

**Scripture says:** “This, rather, is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry; sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them; and not turning your back on your own.” (Isaiah 58:6-7)

**Mary** said: “If the harvest is ruined, it is only on account of yourselves. I warned you last year. You paid no heed! Instead, you swore. The rest will do penance through the famine!”

**Meditation:** Mary’s message startles us to an awareness of the evils of our world and to our own indifference. Today two-thirds of the world suffers or dies from hunger. Human rights are ignored across the face of the earth and injustice lies on our very doorstep. These signs cry out for our response.

If we listen to and act upon her words and those of her son, she promises that one day Jesus will say to us: “Come, you who are blessed by my father... For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me ... whatever you did for one of these least [ones] of mine, you did for me.” (Matthew 25:34a,35-36, 40b) [quiet reflection]

**Our prayer:** Mother of compassion, open our eyes to the sufferings of our sisters and brothers. Open our hearts and hands to share with the most needy of your children the blessings of this earth. Inspired by your words, Mary, may your people continue to nourish and heal, to love and forgive, to build the world our God desires. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** The Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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### **Sixth day of novena – Promised blessings**

**Scripture says:** “The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song ... . They will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God.” (Isaiah 35:1, 2b)

**Mary** said: “If [my people] are converted, rocks and stone will turn into heaps of wheat ... .”

**Meditation:** Jesus who opens the eyes of the blind and makes the lame dance, comes to restore us to life. The constant temptation is to harden our hearts and narrow our vision, so that we miss his very presence.

Let us come to Jesus, who is the way to follow, the truth to be discovered, the life to be enjoyed and shared. He is the one who can make the desert of our heart – and of our world – bloom and bear abundant fruit.

Mary’s apparition on the mountain near the village of La Salette has unleashed a stream of life-giving water, bearing the promise of refreshment and renewal. Heeding Mary’s call to conversion makes our own lives rich and fruitful. [quiet reflection]

**Our Prayer:** Virgin Reconciler, may your unceasing prayer and loving concern for us bear fruit in the constant conversion of our minds and hearts. May our lives burst forth anew with love for your son. May we obtain the blessings you and your son have promised and faithfully give him thanks as our savior and Lord. [Mention intentions.]

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## Seventh day of novena – Prayer

**Scripture says:** “Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances, give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.” (Thessalonians 5:16-18)

**Mary** said: “Do you say your prayers well, my children? You should say them well, at night and in the morning ... . [People] go to Mass just to make fun of religion. In Lent they go to the butcher shops like dogs.”

**Meditation:** The virgin at La Salette questions us on the quality of those gestures of faith that link us to God and serve as the source of our ongoing conversion.

Each day, we are invited to express in prayer our free and constant dialogue with God. We remember the words of Jesus’s own prayer: “Father ... not my will but yours be done.” (Luke 22:42)

Each week, we are called to celebrate the Eucharist, the central memorial of the death and resurrection of Christ. The presence of the risen Lord in our gathering revives our faith and helps us wait in hope until he comes again.

Each year, our Lenten penance, prayer and sharing strengthens our faith. With renewed vigor, we give our lives to God daily in service to our sisters and brothers.

[quiet reflection]

**Our prayer:** Mary, first disciple of Jesus, make our lives a living prayer. May we always be ready to pray, to celebrate God’s presence and to follow Jesus faithfully every day. Hold us close beside you in the heart of the Church, ready to share the struggles and sufferings of all your people. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** The Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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## **Eighth day of novena – Bread of life**

**Scripture says:** Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.” (John 6:35)

**Mary said:** “But you [Maximin], surely you must have seen some [spoiled wheat] once at [the field of] Coin... . Your father gave you a piece of bread and said to you: ‘Here, my child, eat some bread while we still have it this year.’”

**Meditation:** The fear of a future evil, the carefree attitude of a child, the concern of parents for their family, the sharing of bread: all are details of life held in the memory and heart of the Virgin Mary at La Salette. Her solicitude invites us to trust in her concern for our welfare.

Her loving son, Jesus, also reminds people how much our Heavenly Father watches out for our welfare. “If you, then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him?” (Matthew 7:11)

The promise of shared bread and good gifts is a consoling message. This pledge reminds us that the bread of life willingly broke and gave himself to satisfy our deepest hunger for God. He continues to do so and invites us to do the same. [quiet reflection]

**Our prayer:** Mother, ever attentive to our needs, awaken in us compassion for the hungry and the needy. Help us to share our creator’s concern for all human hungers, of body, heart or spirit. Give us always a yearning for the bread of life, Jesus, your son and our Lord. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** The Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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### **Ninth day of novena – Our mission**

**Scripture says:** Then Jesus said to them: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of” time. (Matthew 28:18-20)

**Mary said:** “Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people.”

**Meditation:** As Mary challenges and encourages us to follow her son, she reminds us of our mission. We are to bring to the whole world the Good News of Jesus Christ. Marked by his Spirit and consecrated in truth and love, the followers of Jesus work together to advance the kingdom of God. The “great news” of Mary is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Like Mary, as we hear and bear the word of God, we carry on the mission of Jesus, the mission entrusted to his apostles and to all the baptized. Such is our mission: so plain and simple that it was entrusted to two young children on the mountain of La Salette.

With maternal concern, the Virgin Mary encourages us one final time: “Well, my children, you will make this known to all my people.” [quiet reflection]

**Our Prayer:** Mother of the Church, watch over us, your people. Help us who have heard the word of God to proclaim it in word and deed. As you were filled with the Spirit and gave birth to the savior, may we, filled with that same Spirit, advance the kingdom of unity and peace for which Jesus gave his life on the cross. [Mention intentions.]

**Pray:** The Lord’s Prayer and Hail Mary

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