

# A NOVENA FOR THE PANDEMIC AND THE COVID-19 VACCINE RESPONSE

## #CATHOLICARES

### INTRODUCTION

The word “novena” is derived from the Latin word for nine (“*novem*”). It is a devotional practice which repeats a prayer, a series of prayers, or an action for nine days in a row. The tradition stems from the nine days the disciples would have gathered in prayer after the Ascension of Jesus as they awaited the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

The Catholic Cares Coalition offers the following simple novena as an invitation to all Christians to pray for and with all those affected by the pandemic.

Each day includes

- a Scripture passage which details one of Jesus’ miracles or parables
- a related prayer
- a single petition
- and the Lord’s Prayer

Each day’s prayer concludes by seeking the intercession of a saint.

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## DAY ONE

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures the paralytic lowered through the roof*

*(see Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12; or Lk 5:17-26)*

**Mark 2:3-12**

They came to him bringing a paralytic carried by four men.  
Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd,  
they opened up the roof above him.  
After they had broken through,  
they let down the mat upon which the paralytic was lying.  
When Jesus saw their faith,  
he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven."  
Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves,  
"Why does this man speak this way? He is blaspheming.  
Who but God alone can forgive sins?"  
Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said,  
"Why are you thinking such things in your hearts?  
What is easier, to say to the paralytic,  
'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk.'  
But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"  
– he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home."  
He rose, picked up his mat at once and went away in the sight of everyone.  
They were all astounded  
and glorified God saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

### PRAYER

Leader: Heavenly Father,  
By our baptism, you commissioned us to serve the needs of others.  
Just as you emboldened the four stretcher bearers  
to break through the roof and lower the stretcher of the paralytic,  
so that he might be cured by Jesus,  
give us the courage to bring others to Christ  
and to seek a cure to the coronavirus through all possible means.  
Grant this through that same Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For those who still are living with the long-term effects of Covid-19,  
we pray to the Lord.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven...

### INTERCESSION

Leader: St. Joseph, help of the sick,  
All: pray for us.

## DAY TWO

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures the man at the pool of Bethesda*

John 5:2-9

Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate,  
a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes.  
In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled.  
One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.  
When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time,  
he said to him, "Do you want to be well?"  
The sick man answered him,  
"Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up;  
while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me."  
Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk."  
Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.

### PRAYER

Leader: Heavenly Father,  
You love your children equally since all people  
of every nation, race and tongue  
are made in your image and likeness.  
May all your children be granted access to the vaccine.  
May everyone find hope in its promise,  
protection from illness,  
and hope for a brighter future.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For all who do not yet have access to the vaccine,  
that compassionate voices may assure its equal distribution, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,...

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saint Raphael, angel who stirred the waters at the pool of Bethesda,  
All: Pray for us.

## DAY THREE

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures the woman with the hemorrhage*

*(see Mt 9:18-26; Mk 5:22-43, or Luke 8:41-56)*

**Mark 5:25-34**

There was a woman afflicted with hemorrhages for twelve years.  
She had suffered greatly at the hands of many doctors  
and had spent all that she had.  
Yet she was not helped but only grew worse.  
She had heard about Jesus  
and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak.  
She said, "If I but touch his clothes, I shall be cured."  
Immediately her flow of blood dried up.  
She felt in her body that she was healed of her affliction.  
Jesus, aware at once that power had gone out from him,  
turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who has touched my clothes?"  
But his disciples said to him,  
"You see how the crowd is pressing upon you,  
and yet you ask, 'Who touched me?'"  
And he looked around to see who had done it.  
The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling.  
She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth.  
He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has saved you.  
Go in peace and be cured of your affliction."

### PRAYER

Leader: Compassionate Father,  
You sent your Son to preach the Good News and to gather all into your Kingdom.  
So many people are suffering like this unnamed, afflicted woman.  
So many are seen as unnamed faces in a crowd.  
Give us the courage to see each person as someone deserving of our love.  
Give leaders the compassion to distribute the vaccine equitably  
and give each citizen the awareness that their actions, too,  
must protect each person in a faceless crowd.  
Grant this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For those who have risked their own health to minister to the dying, we pray,  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven.

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saint Camillus de Lellis, patron saint of nurses,  
All: pray for us.

## DAY FOUR

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures the man born blind*

*(see John 9: 1-41)*

**John 9:1-11**

As he passed by he saw a man blind from birth.  
His disciples asked him  
“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”  
Jesus answered, “Neither he nor his parents sinned;  
it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.  
We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day.  
Night is coming when no one can work.  
While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”  
When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva,  
and smeared the clay on his eyes,  
and said to him, “Go wash in the Pool of Siloam” (which means Sent).  
So he went and washed, and came back able to see.  
His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said,  
“Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?”  
Some said, “It is,” but others said, “No, he just looks like him.”  
He said, “I am.”  
So they said to him, “[So] how were your eyes opened?”  
He replied, “The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me,  
‘Go to Siloam and wash.’  
So I went there and washed and was able to see.”

### PRAYER

Leader: Heavenly Father, you sent your Only Son into the world  
so that your works might be made visible through him.  
In his public ministry,  
he cured those whose suffering placed them at a disadvantage.  
May we, too, bring light to those in darkness  
and may our actions increase the faith and well-being of others.  
Grant this through that same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For all those who question the efficacy of a vaccine  
and its possibility to protect us from the virus, may their eyes be opened, we pray.

### LORD’S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven...

### INTERCESSION

Leader: St. Luke, patron saint of doctors,  
All: pray for us.

## DAY FIVE

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures the man with leprosy*

Matthew 8:1-4

When Jesus came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And then a leper approached, did him homage, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." He stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I will do it. Be made clean." His leprosy was cleansed immediately. Then Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one, but go show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."

### PRAYER

Leader: Heavenly Father,  
your Son recognized the faith of the leper  
and willingly cured him of his illness.  
He also urged him to follow social and religious norms –  
to go to the priest and to offer the prescribed gifts.  
Thank you for the many skills which you give to scientists and doctors,  
for at your command,  
they continue to show your care for the world. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For all scientists, researchers, and public health officials  
who have labored to find a vaccine  
and who have sounded alarms and taken action  
to stop the spread of the virus and its variants, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, ...

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saint Albert the Great, patron saint of scientists and researchers,  
All: pray for us.

## DAY SIX

### SCRIPTURE

*The Parable of the Good Samaritan*

Luke 10:29-37

[A scholar of the law] ...said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"  
Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise, a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

### PRAYER

Leader: Heavenly Father,  
In every age, you have raised up servants to care for the sick  
and you have given them the grace to alleviate suffering,  
to offer compassionate care,  
and to show signs of your great love.  
Give them the courage to endure against overwhelming odds  
and protect them from every illness.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For nurses and other hospital workers who have administered medicine,  
monitored machines day and night, provided comfort, and held the hands of dying  
patients so they would not die alone, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, ....

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saint John of God, patron saint of hospital workers,  
All: pray for us

## DAY SEVEN

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures the deaf man*

Mark 7:31-37

Again, he left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis.  
And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him.  
He took him off by himself away from the crowd.  
He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "*Ephphatha!*" (that is, "Be opened!")  
And [immediately] the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly.  
He ordered them not to tell anyone.  
But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it.  
They were exceedingly astonished and they said,  
"He has done all things well.  
He makes the deaf hear and [the] mute speak."

### PRAYER

Leader: Heavenly Father,  
Your Son used the things of nature to cure the Deaf.  
With his own saliva, he made a cure.  
Bless the researchers whom you have inspired to find a vaccine.  
Through them, you have saved countless lives.  
May all come to know that the work of your creation  
continues to manifest your love to the world. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: That all those who doubt the efficacy of the vaccine or fear its use,  
may come to see it as a sign of your love for the world, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, ....

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saints Cosmas and Damian, patron saints of pharmacists,  
All: pray for us.

## DAY EIGHT

### SCRIPTURE

*Jesus cures Jairus' daughter*

Mark 5:21-24, 35-43

When Jesus had crossed again [in the boat] to the other side, a large crowd gathered around him, and he stayed close to the sea. One of the synagogue officials, named Jairus, came forward. Seeing him he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, saying, "My daughter is at the point of death. Please, come lay your hands on her that she may get well and live." He went off with him, and a large crowd followed him and pressed upon him. ...While he was still speaking, people from the synagogue official's house arrived and said, "Your daughter has died; why trouble the teacher any longer?" Disregarding the message that was reported, Jesus said to the synagogue official, "Do not be afraid; just have faith." He did not allow anyone to accompany him inside except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. When they arrived at the house of the synagogue official, he caught sight of a commotion, people weeping and wailing loudly. So he went in and said to them, "Why this commotion and weeping? The child is not dead but asleep." And they ridiculed him. Then he put them all out. He took along the child's father and mother and those who were with him and entered the room where the child was. He took the child by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum,*" which means, "Little girl, I say to you, arise!" The girl, a child of twelve, arose immediately and walked around. [At that] they were utterly astounded. He gave strict orders that no one should know this and said that she should be given something to eat.

### PRAYER

Leader: Merciful Father, you love all your children and give them what they need. Look with kindness on the children who have been affected by the pandemic and protect them from further harm or illness. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PETITION

Leader: For all the children whose lives have been disrupted by the pandemic, especially for those who have been orphaned due to the deaths of their parents, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, ....

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saint Nicholas, patron saint of children, All: pray for us.  
Leader: Saint Gerolamo Emiliani, patron saint of orphans, All: pray for us.

## DAY NINE

### SCRIPTURE

(see John 11:1-44)

#### *Raising of Lazarus*

**John 11:38-44**

Jesus said, "Take away the stone."  
Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him,  
"Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days."  
Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?"  
So they took away the stone.  
And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me.  
I know that you always hear me;  
but because of the crowd here I have said this,  
that they may believe that you sent me."  
And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"  
The dead man came out, tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth.  
So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go."

### PRAYER

Leader: Merciful God,  
in your loving plan of salvation,  
you have given hope to all who die believing in you.  
Receive into your loving embrace all who have died from Covid-19.  
Forgive all their sins and welcome them into your heavenly home  
where there will be no more pain or suffering.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### PETITIONS

Leader: For our beloved dead,  
for all who mourn the death of a loved one, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer,  
Leader: For religious leaders, lay and ordained, who have ministered to the dying,  
consoled the grieving, and sustained the weary, we pray.  
All: Lord, hear our prayer.

### LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, ...

### INTERCESSION

Leader: Saint Joseph, patron of a happy death,  
All: pray for us.