

A gift for Our Lady. From the Parish of St. James in Medjugorje.
A Novena to the Queen of Peace

What could we offer to Our Lady for the anniversary of Her apparitions? This is the question many pilgrims ask, and we answer with another question: Wouldn't the dearest gift be if we would really start to live Her messages?

The main theme of Our Lady's messages is the call to peace and reconciliation, but She underlines very often that we can obtain them only through prayer. This is why She calls us unceasingly to pray, to renew prayer until it becomes a joy for us, to pray with the heart

We have composed a simple novena with the deep desire to offer something special to Our Lady for this Anniversary, something that unites all Her children in the whole world, something that helps us to live Her messages.

Why a Novena?

The idea for the Novena comes from the New Testament, when Mary and the Apostles, 40 days after the Resurrection of Jesus, remained in prayer for nine consecutive days. They prayed with one heart and persevered in prayer, waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, that was promised them, and that filled them "when the time of Pentecost was fulfilled" (Ac 2,1). Since then, Novenas have become a frequent practice in the tradition of the Church. Also in Medjugorje, Our Lady calls us: "Dear children, offer novenas, making sacrifices wherein you feel the most bound." (July 25, 1993)

How to pray this Novena?

One special intention is devoted to each day. We pray for this intention, meditating on the texts that are proposed, through the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary. The first text is a passage from the Gospel, the second - a message of Our Lady from one of the previous anniversaries, and the third - a passage from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. These have been chosen to give a threefold insight into the prayer intention: A Gospel, a Marian (through the messages of Medjugorje) and an Ecclesiastical insight, to help the person who is leading the prayer and introducing the Mysteries. The passages from the Catechism on prayer show us the richness, the depth and the immensity of the experience of Christian prayer, of which Our Lady reminds us here in Medjugorje. The concluding prayer unites all the intentions of prayer regarding the intention for the day.

Together towards something new

We believe that this unity in prayer will bring a new experience of the love of God, which has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. This experience is always a new beginning, a passage to a new level of existence. Real wars, wars of our doubt and our incredulity can be stopped, and even natural laws can be changed through prayer. We sincerely hope that our common prayer, united in the Heart of Mary for the victory of Her Immaculate Heart, will obtain a conversion in our hearts and in our lives and bring forth the most pleasing and dearest gift to Our Lady.

1st day

We pray for the Visionaries

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you,

that everything written about me in the law and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. And he said to them: "thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with the power from on high." (Lk 24,44-49)

"Dear children! Today I thank you for living and witnessing to my messages with your life. Little children, be strong and pray so that prayer may give you strength and joy. Only in this way will each of you be mine and I will lead you on the way of salvation. Little children, pray and with your life bear witness to my presence here. May each day be a joyful witness for you of God's love. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1999)

"Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God." But when we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will, or "out of the depths" of a humble and contrite heart? He who humbles himself will be exalted; humility is the foundation of prayer, only when we humbly acknowledge that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer. "Man is a beggar before God." (2559)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: Lord, You call all Christians to be real witnesses of Your life and of Your love. Today, we thank You in a special way for the visionaries and for their mission in witnessing to the messages of the Queen of Peace. We present to You all of their needs. We pray for each one of them personally, that You may be near them, so that they may grow unceasingly in the experience of Your strength. We pray that You guide them to a deeper and more humble prayer in further witnessing to the presence of Our Lady in Medjugorje. Amen.

2nd day

We pray for all Priests who Minister at the Sanctuary

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "Amen, amen I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father. And whatever you ask in my name, I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it." (Jn 14,12-14)

"Dear children! Today I am with you in a special way and I bring you my motherly blessing of peace. I pray for you and I intercede for you before God, so that you may comprehend that each of you is a carrier of peace. You cannot have peace if your heart is not at peace with God. That is why, little children, pray, pray, pray, because prayer is the foundation of your peace. Open your heart and give time to God so that He will be your friend. When true friendship with God is realized, no storm can destroy it. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1997)

"If you knew the gift of God!" The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there, Christ comes to meet every human being. It is he who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus thirsts; his asking arises from the depths of God's desire for us. Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts that we

may thirst for him. "You would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." Paradoxically our prayer of petition is a response to the plea of the living God: "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water!" Prayer is the response of faith to the free promise of salvation and also a response of love to the thirst of the only Son of God. (2560 2561)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: Lord, You are the only source of life, the only One who can quench our thirst for love and friendship. We thank You for Your humility in working through a simple man, a priest, giving Yourself to Your people in Holy Mass, in the Sacraments, in Benedictions Today, we invoke in a special way Your blessing on all priests who minister at the Sanctuary of the Queen of Peace. May they further discover the power of faith through which You grant them whatever they ask of You. May they also become true carriers of peace, fruits of their deeply felt friendship with You. Amen.

3rd day

We pray for all Parishioners

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me will be thrown out like a branch and wither; people will gather them and throw them into a fire and they will be burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. By this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. As the Father loves me, so also I love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete." (Jn 15,5-8)

"Dear children! Today I thank you for all the sacrifices you have offered me these days. Little children, I invite you to open yourselves to me and to decide for conversion. Your hearts, little children, are still not completely open to me and therefore, I invite you again to open to prayer so that in prayer the Holy Spirit will help you, that your hearts become of flesh and not of stone. Little children, thank you for having responded to my call and for having decided to walk with me toward holiness." (Message, June 25, 1996)

Where does prayer come from? Whether prayer is expressed in words or gestures, it is the whole man who prays. But in naming the source of prayer, Scripture speaks sometimes of the soul or the spirit, but most often of the heart (more than a thousand times). According to Scripture, it is the heart that prays. If our heart is far from God, the words of prayer are in vain. (2562)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: Thank You, Lord, for Your love, thank You for the call to remain with the heart in Your love and to bear much fruit. Thank You for having chosen this parish in a special way, by giving it to Your Mother, the Queen of Peace, with the mission to call the world to peace and reconciliation, to conversion through the renewal of fasting and prayer. Thank You for the openness of each heart, which knew how to receive Her, and allowed Her to make each of them

a visible sign for those who come here. Today we pray to You, o Lord: make this parish an even greater sign of the Kingdom of God, and help the parishioners to become joyful and holy fruits of the presence of Our Lady. Amen.

4th day

We pray for all Leaders in the Church

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (Jn 8,12)

"Dear Children! Today I am happy to see you in such great numbers, that you have responded and have come to live my messages. I invite you, little children, to be my joyful carriers of peace in this troubled world. Pray for peace so that as soon as possible a time of peace, which my heart waits impatiently for, may reign. I am near to you, little children, and intercede for every one of you before the Most High. I bless you with my motherly blessing. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1995)

The heart is the dwelling-place where I am, where I live; according to the Semitic or Biblical expression, the heart is the place "to which I withdraw." The heart is our hidden centre, beyond the grasp of our reason and of others; only the Spirit of God can fathom the human heart and know it fully. The heart is the place of decision, deeper than our psychic drives. It is the place of truth, where we choose life or death. It is the place of encounter, because as image of God we live in relation: it is the place of covenant. (2563)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: Thank You, O Lord, for giving us the Church as Mother and Spouse, to lead us in our earthly life on a path of light towards You. Thank You, because in the Church we are all brothers and sisters, and members of one Mystical Body. Today we pray for those who lead the Church: may they unceasingly renew within themselves their covenant with You, the One and Only True Head, so as to become faithful and joyful carriers of peace and truth in this troubled world. Amen.

5th day

We pray for all Pilgrims who already came to Medjugorje

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and that of the gospel will save it. What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? (Mk 8,34-38)

"Dear children! Today I am happy, even if in my heart there is still a little sadness for all those who have started on this path and then have left it. My presence here is to take you on a new path, the path to salvation. This is why I call you, day after day to conversion. But if you do not pray, you cannot say that you are on the way to being converted. I pray for you and I intercede

to God for peace; first peace in your hearts and also peace around you, so that God may be your peace. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1992)

Christian prayer is a covenant relationship between God and man in Christ. It is the action of God and of man, springing forth from both the Holy Spirit and ourselves, wholly directed to the Father, in union with the human will of the Son of God made man. (2564)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: Our lives, O Lord, are in Your hands. You alone know what we need to be saved. Thank You for teaching us this here in Medjugorje for 20 years through Your Mother, who came to lead us on the way of salvation. Bless and strengthen all those who have started to walk on the way of conversion and prayer here in Medjugorje. Strengthen their faith, their hope and their charity and never let them betray their covenant with You. Amen.

6th day

We pray for all Pilgrims who will come to Medjugorje

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

At that time Jesus said: "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him. Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light." (Mt 11,25-30)

"Dear children! Today I also rejoice at your presence here. I bless you with my motherly blessing and intercede for each one of you before God. I call you anew to live my messages and to put them into life and practice. I am with you and bless all of you day by day. Dear children, these are special times and, therefore, I am with you to love and protect you; to protect your hearts from Satan and to bring you all closer to the heart of my Son, Jesus. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1993)

In the New Covenant, prayer is the living relationship of the children of God with their Father who is good beyond measure, with his Son Jesus Christ and with the Holy Spirit. The grace of the Kingdom is "the union of the entire holy and royal Trinity . . . with the whole human spirit." Thus, the life of prayer is the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-holy God and in communion with him. This communion of life is always possible because, through Baptism, we have already been united with Christ. Prayer is Christian insofar as it is communion with Christ and extends throughout the Church, which is his Body. Its dimensions are those of Christ's love. (2565)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: We have not chosen You, O Lord, but You have chosen us. You alone know all the little ones who will receive the grace of the revelation of Your love through Your Mother, here in Medjugorje. We pray for all pilgrims who will come to Medjugorje: protect their hearts from all satanic attacks and open their hearts to all inspirations coming from Your Heart and from the Heart of Mary. Amen.

7th day

We pray for all the Medjugorje Prayer Groups and Centres in the Whole World

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets. Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow is the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few." (Mt 7,12-14)

"Dear children! I am calling you to that love which is loyal and pleasing to God. Little children, love bears everything bitter and difficult for the sake of Jesus who is love. Therefore, dear children, pray that God come to your aid, not however according to your desire, but according to His love. Surrender yourself to God so that He may hear you, console you and forgive everything inside you which is a hindrance on the way of love. In this way God can move your life, and you will grow in love. Dear children, glorify God with a hymn of love so that God's love may be able to grow in you day by day to its fullness. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1988)

In prayer the Holy Spirit unites us to the person of the only Son, in his glorified humanity, through which and in which our filial prayer unites us in the Church with the Mother of Jesus. Mary gave her consent in faith at the Annunciation and maintained it without hesitation at the foot of the Cross. Ever since, her motherhood has extended to the brothers and sisters of her Son "who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties." Jesus, the only mediator, is the way of our prayer; Mary, his mother and ours, is wholly transparent to him: she "shows the way" (hodigitria), and is herself "the Sign" of the way, according to the traditional iconography of East and West. (2673 2674)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: Love is the sign of recognition to Your disciples, O Lord. We thank You for every response of love given through service and gifts to others. We pray for all members of the Medjugorje Prayer Groups and Centres in the whole world. Together with Your Mother, may they more courageously and resolutely, within their families and wherever they live, always show this narrow way, the only one that leads to You. Help them to grow day by day in the fullness of Your Love. Amen.

8th day

We pray for the realization of all fruits and Messages of Medjugorje

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

Jesus said to his disciples: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him will not be condemned, but whoever does not believe has already been condemned, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the verdict, that the light came into the world, but people preferred darkness to light, because their

works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come towards the light, so that his works might not be exposed. But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God." (Jn 3,16-21)

"Dear children! Today, on this great day, which you have given to me, I desire to bless all of you and to say: these days while I am with you are days of grace. I desire to teach you and help you to walk the way of holiness. There are many people who do not desire to understand my messages and to accept with seriousness what I am saying. But you I therefore call and ask that by your lives and by your daily living you witness my presence. If you pray, God will help you to discover the true reason for my coming. Therefore, little children, pray and read the Sacred Scriptures so that through my coming you discover the message in Sacred Scripture for you. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1991)

Mary is the perfect Orans (pray-er), a figure of the Church. When we pray to her, we are adhering with her to the plan of the Father, who sends his Son to save all men. Like the beloved disciple we welcome Jesus' mother into our homes, for she has become the mother of all the living. We can pray with and to her. The prayer of the Church is sustained by the prayer of Mary and united with it in hope. (2679)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: We thank You, O Father, for having given us Your Son and His Mother, so that none of those who believe in them and listen to them may be lost. Thank You for caring for each person and, in Your mercy, for condemning no one. We pray today for all that Our Lady has prayed for here in Medjugorje, and for every grace that has been poured out here into the world. May it bring the fruit of holiness and serve You in Your plan of salvation. Amen.

9th day

We pray for the Intentions of the Queen of Peace

1. Prayer to the Queen of Peace
2. Veni Creator Spiritus
3. Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary

Meditation

At that time Jesus said: "Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them." (Jn 17,24-26)

"Dear children! Today I thank you and I want to invite you all to God's peace. I want each one of you to experience in your heart that peace which God gives. I want to bless you all today. I am blessing you with God's blessing and I beseech you, dear children, to follow and to live my way. I love you, dear children, and so not even counting the number of times, I go on calling you and I thank you for all that you are doing for my intentions. I beg you, help me to present you to God and to save you. Thank you for having responded to my call." (Message, June 25, 1987)

Mary's prayer is revealed to us at the dawning of the fullness of time. Before the incarnation of the Son of God, and before the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, her prayer cooperates in a unique way with the Father's plan of loving kindness: at the Annunciation, for Christ's conception; at Pentecost, for the formation of the Church, his Body. In the faith of his humble handmaid, the Gift of God found the acceptance he had awaited from the beginning of time. She whom the Almighty made "full of grace" responds by offering her whole being: "Behold I am the handmaid

of the Lord; let it be [done] to me according to your word." "Fiat": this is Christian prayer: to be wholly God's, because he is wholly ours. (2617)

4. The Litany of the Blessed Virgin

Concluding prayer: We thank You, O Father, for the gift of prayer which allows us to touch Your heart; prayer in which You give Yourself entirely to us and in which You teach us to give ourselves entirely to You. We pray today for all intentions of the Queen of Peace and for all that is necessary so that the whole world, through Mary, may enter into Your glory, the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Amen.

Prayers

Prayer to the Queen of Peace

Mary, Mother of God and Our Mother, Queen of Peace! You came to us to lead us to God. Obtain for us the grace not only to say: "Be it done to me according to Your will!", but to live it, as You did. Into Your hands we put our hands, so that You may lead us to Him amidst these afflictions and woes. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Creed, 7 Our Fathers, 7 Hail Marys, 7 Glory Be's.

Veni Creator Spiritus Come Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, Creator, come best gift of God above, the living spring, the living fire, sweet unction and true love.

Thou Who are called the Paraclete, from Thy bright heavenly throne, come, take possession of our souls, and make them all Thine own.

Thou who are sevenfold in Thy grace, finger of God's right hand, His promise, teaching little ones to speak and understand.

O guide our minds with Thy blest light, with love our hearts inflame; and with Thy strength, which never decays, confirm our mortal frame.

Far from us drive our deadly foe, true peace unto us bring, and through all perils lead us safe beneath Thy sacred wing. Through Thee may we the Father know, through Thee the eternal Son, and Thee the Spirit of them both, thrice-blessed Three in One.

All glory to the Father be, with his co-equal Son: the same to Thee, great Paraclete, while endless ages run. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of Your love.

- Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created.

- And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray: God, who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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