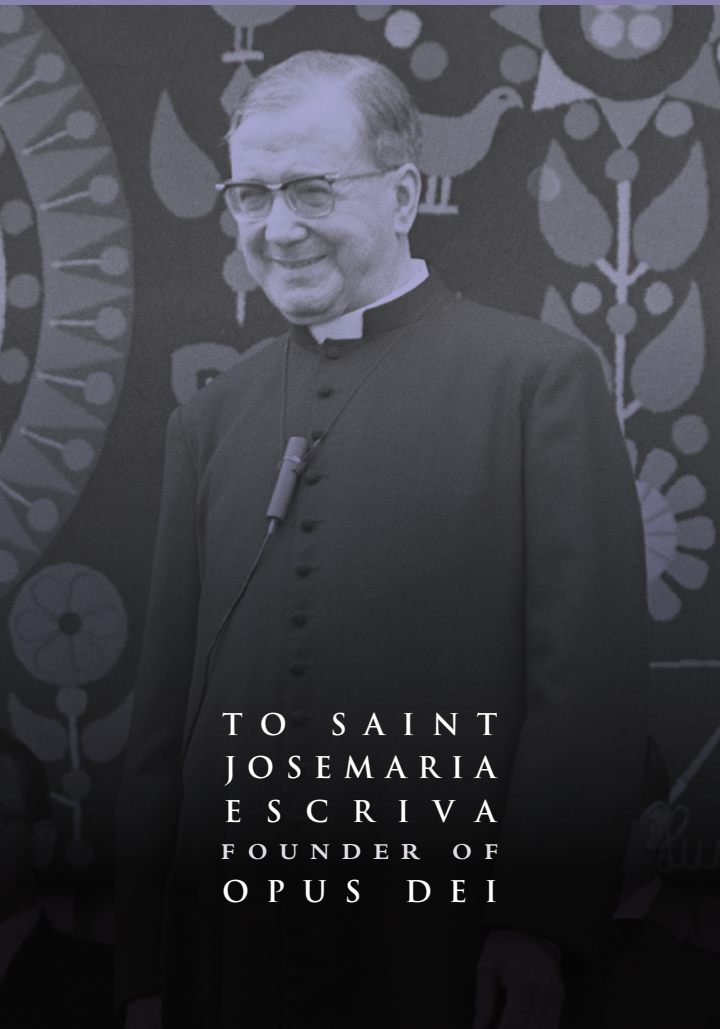


Noventa

FOR FORGIVENESS



TO SAINT
JOSEMARIA
ESCRIVA
FOUNDER OF
OPUS DEI



Day 1

FOR PEACE OF HEART

FORGIVING IN THEORY IS ONE

THING, but forgiving a real person in real life is altogether different. It is only natural to seek forgiveness for ourselves, but to forgive others when it takes a heroic effort to do so requires a greatness of soul that Saint Josemaria can ask God to give us.

WHAT IS A NOVENA?

A novena is a prayer repeated for nine consecutive days to ask God to grant a specific request or for help with a challenging situation. You can say the novena prayer by yourself or with others and you can include reading and reflection. Novenas can be prayed throughout the year and are often used in preparation for a feast day.

EACH DAY OF THE NOVENA HAS TWO PARTS:

- I A SELECTION FROM
ST. JOSEMARIA'S WRITINGS
ON FORGIVENESS
- II AN INTENTION BASED
ON THOSE TEXTS.



WHATEVER TAKES AWAY your peace of soul cannot come from God.

The Way, no. 258

A clear mark of men and women of God is the peace in their souls. They possess peace and they transmit peace to those with whom they have dealings.

The Forge, no. 649

Just as Christ "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38) throughout Palestine, so must you also spread peace in your family circle, in civil society, on the job, and in your cultural and leisure activities.

Christ is Passing By, no. 166

INTENTION

Lord, you know how much I desire to have your peace within me. But I know very well that I cannot obtain it as long as I harbour bitterness and resentment in my heart, like wounds that never heal over.

I would like to be able to say what Saint Paul said: "forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other... And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" (Col 3:13.15). Without your help, Lord, by my efforts alone, I will never be able to attain that peace.

And so I humbly beg you, through Saint Josemaria's intercession, for the grace to be able to forgive. Cleanse my heart from the infection of hatred, anger, dislikes, and other bitter feelings that divide, however much I feel my reaction is justified by other people's faults and offenses.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEMARIA

O GOD, through the mediation of Mary our Mother, you granted your priest Saint Josemaria countless graces, choosing him as a most faithful instrument to found Opus Dei, a way of sanctification in daily work and in the fulfillment of the Christian's ordinary duties. Grant that I too may learn to turn all the circumstances and events of my life into occasions of loving you and serving the Church, the Pope and all souls with joy and simplicity, lighting up the pathways of this earth with faith and love.

Deign to grant me, through the intercession of Saint Josemaria, the favour of... *(make your request)*.

AMEN.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father



Day 2

FOR UNDERSTANDING AND FORGIVENESS

NEVER THINK BADLY of anyone, not even if the words or conduct of the person in question give you good grounds for doing so.

The Way, no 442

Charity does not consist so much in “giving” as in “understanding”. Therefore, seek an excuse for your neighbour – there is always one to be found, – if it is your duty to judge.

The Way, no. 463

Put yourself always in your neighbour’s shoes. You will then see the various issues or problems calmly. You will not get annoyed. You will be understanding. You will make allowances and will correct people when and as required. And you will fill the world with charity.

The Forge, no. 958

INTENTION

Jesus, you see how difficult I find it to understand others, to see the best in them and forgive their faults when they upset me and hurt me.

I ask you for the grace to fulfill your command: “Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven” (Lk 6:37).

You know, Lord, that often the first thing I notice about people is the negative things, the things that annoy me, that I see as ridiculous or unbearable. And so I develop the vice of thinking and speaking badly about others.

Lord, have mercy on me, who am so unmerciful. Although I don’t deserve it, I beg you to grant me, through Saint Josemaria’s intercession, a heart that is able to understand and forgive.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 3

FOR OVERCOMING PRIDE

IF YOU ARE SO WEAK, is it surprising that others too have their weaknesses?

The Way, no. 446

Force yourself, if necessary, always to forgive those who offend you, from the very first moment. For the greatest injury or offense that you can suffer from them is as nothing compared with what God has pardoned you.

The Way, no. 452

Let’s reject all pride, be compassionate, show charity; help each other with prayer and sincere friendship.

The Forge, no. 454

INTENTION

Lord, it’s true that I pray, and ask you to forgive me, but I still don’t forgive those who offend me. Forgive me for disdain the words of your Son Jesus, which I say so often when I pray the Our Father: “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us” (Matt 6:12).

I realize that if I were sincere, beneath all that hardness I would see my own pride. I recognize that I am touchy, I take offense easily, I take the things people say or do the wrong way, and the slightest insinuation upsets me... And you, Jesus: how did you behave when people treated you badly? What do you do to me when I mistreat you with my sins? I know perfectly well that every time I go and confess my sins, you say to me: “I absolve you.”

Lord, I don’t want to be a hypocrite! Through Saint Josemaria’s intercession, grant me the grace to be humble, as an indispensable condition for learning to forgive.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

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Deign to grant me, through the intercession of Saint Josemaria, the favour of... (*make your request*).

AMEN.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father



Day 4

FOR CONQUERING ANGER

SAY WHAT YOU HAVE JUST SAID, but in a different tone, without anger, and your argument will gain in strength and, above all, you won't offend God.

The Way, no. 9

Never correct anyone while you are still indignant about a fault committed. Wait until the next day, or even longer. And then, calmly, and with a purer intention, make your reprimand. You will gain more by one friendly word than by a three-hour quarrel. Control your temper.

The Way, no. 10

Always remain silent when you feel the upsurge of indignation within you. And do so, even when you have good reason to be angry. For, in spite of your discretion, in such moments you always say more than you wish.

The Way, no. 656

INTENTION

I think, Jesus, about your words "learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart" (Matt 11:29). And then I think about myself: my irritations, my sharpness, the anger that boils up inside me, the conviction that it's fine to be hard on other people because "I'm right".

Saint Paul said: "Let all bitterness and wrath (...) and slander be put away from you" (Eph 4:31). Saint Josemaria responded to slander with a constant attitude of "keeping quiet, working, forgiving, and smiling".

Heart of Jesus, meek and humble, through Saint Josemaria's intercession, make my heart like your own.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 5

FOR OVERCOMING RESENTMENT

THOSE WHO ZEALOUSLY keep a "list of grudges" show themselves to be exceptionally narrow-minded. Such poor souls are impossible to live with.

Furrow, no. 738

Forgiveness. To forgive with one's whole heart and with no trace of a grudge will always be a wonderfully fruitful disposition to have! That was Christ's attitude on being nailed to the Cross: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they are doing." From this came your salvation and mine.

Furrow, no. 805

Men do not scandalize God. He can put up with all our infidelities.

Christ is Passing By, no. 64

INTENTION

My God, I know that resentment is a wound that self-love and pride keep open and stir up in the heart; it is gangrene, carefully cultivated in the soul by hatred. It scares me, my God, because I have discovered it inside myself, rooted there like a cancer.

Someone once said that resentment is the devil's oven. They were right. I too feel that it is a cursed fire that incinerates the love, understanding and peace that should always mark the relationships of God's children.

Free me from it, Jesus! Help me to get rid of this disease through frequent Confession. Grant me, through Saint Josemaria's intercession, the strength from Heaven to forgive and forget. May I never harbour resentment.

Instead, may I leave my bitterness within your Heart and learn there how to say: "Father, forgive them!" (Lk 23:34).

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

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Deign to grant me, through the intercession of Saint Josemaria, the favour of... *(make your request)*.

AMEN.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father



Day 6

FOR OVERCOMING FAMILY QUARRELS

IT IS POSSIBLE to live happily together when everyone tries to correct their own defects and makes an effort to overlook the faults of others.

Conversations with Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 108
Our love has to be a dedicated love, practiced every day and made up of a thousand little details of understanding, hidden sacrifice and unnoticed self-giving.

Christ is Passing By, no. 36

Remain silent, and you will never regret it: speak, and you often will.

The Way, no. 639

INTENTION

My God, you know that I find it really hard to forgive people's inconsiderateness towards me, their thoughtlessness, disrespect, impatience and impoliteness; and you know that I find it even harder to admit that I too fall into those same faults. I ask you, through Saint Josemaria's intercession, for help to overcome my exaggerated self-esteem and to practice what Saint Paul tells us: "with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love" (Eph 4:2).

Set me free, Lord, from obstinately thinking that only I know what is right; from being rude, getting impatient over little faults, and arguing about unimportant things... I ask you for the charity to be able to keep silent, smile, put a good face on things, and say I'm sorry when I have corrected someone sharply. And if need be, I ask you for the heroic forgiveness with which you received Judas in the garden as he was betraying you.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 7

TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP

OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN pardons any offense when his child returns to him, when he repents and asks for pardon. The Lord is such a good Father that he anticipates our desire to be pardoned and comes forward to us, opening his arms laden with grace.

Christ is Passing By, no. 64

It was the Lord who took the initiative by coming out to meet us. He gave us this example.

Friends of God, no. 228

It is in the Sacrament of Penance that you and I put on Jesus Christ and his merits.

The Way, no. 310

INTENTION

O God, Father of Mercy, I open the Gospel and see that Jesus is asking me always to take the first step to reconciliation, to be the first to say sorry and offer forgiveness. "Leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother" (Matt 5:24).

It is only fair for you to ask me to do what you did yourself. Indeed, Saint Paul says that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rm 5:8). My God, how hard I find it to take that first step when I am convinced that I'm right, that I am the one who was offended! It seems something superhuman. I can only do it with your strength, Lord! Saint Josemaria, intercede for me, so that I make up my mind to seek God's help by making a sincere Confession, because it is in the Sacrament of Reconciliation that I can find the grace I need.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

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AMEN.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father



Day 8

TO RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL

TO OUR FALLING again and again into evil, Jesus responds with his determination to redeem us, with an abundance of forgiveness.

The Way of the Cross, 7th Station

The task for a Christian is to drown evil in an abundance of good

Furrow, no. 864

Get used to replying to those poor “haters”, when they pelt you with stones, by pelting them with Hail Marys.

The Forge, no. 650

INTENTION

Good Jesus, I recognize that when I feel offended the desire to retaliate starts to boil up inside me. Exactly what you did not do! How difficult it is to subdue the fantasy of the little or big acts of revenge constructed by my imagination! And yet I know that I should be thinking about forgiving!

Lord, when I feel like that, bring to my mind your words: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt 5:44); and the words of Saint Paul: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rm 12:21).

I beg you, Lord, that my meditation on Saint Josemaria’s words for today may awaken in me, through his intercession, the resolution of always praying for those who cause me any harm, and wanting good for them, “drowning evil in an abundance of good”.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 9

FOR OUR LADY’S HELP

MARY’S MOST SWEET HEART must have suffered immensely on seeing the collective cruelty and the ferocity of the executioners that led to the Passion and Death of Jesus. Mary, however, does not speak. Like her Son, she loves, keeps silent and forgives. Here we see the strength of love!

Friends of God, no. 237

Get accustomed to entrusting your poor heart to the Sweet and Immaculate Heart of Mary, so that she may purify it of so much dross, and lead it to the Most Sacred and Merciful Heart of Jesus.

Furrow, no. 830

INTENTION

Mother of Mercy, Comforter of the afflicted, Refuge of sinners, you were united to the sacrifice of Jesus when he shed his Blood on the Cross to cleanse us from our sins: take pity on us poor sinners, when we cannot manage to forgive.

When we feel resentment, anger or the desire for revenge burning inside us, make us remember you. Never let us forget that we have a Mother who loves us and who wants to soften our hard hearts with the warmth of her Immaculate Heart.

Enfold us, Mother, in your embrace like small children; calm our anger with your smile; obtain for us from your Son the gift of forgiving, forgetting, and not stirring up grudges; and also of loving and wishing well those who do not wish us well. Lead us, Mother, as Saint Josemaria prayed, deep into the Sacred and Merciful Heart of Jesus.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

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Deign to grant me, through the intercession of Saint Josemaria, the favour of... *(make your request)*.

AMEN.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father



WHO IS ST. JOSEMARIA ESCRIVA



St. Josemaria Escriva was born in Barbastro, Spain on January 9, 1902. He was ordained to the priesthood on March 28, 1925. By divine inspiration he founded Opus Dei on October 2, 1928. St. Josemaria died in Rome on June 26, 1975 after casting an affectionate glance at a picture of our Lady in the room where he worked. At the time of his death, Opus Dei had spread to six continents with over 60,000 members of 80 nationalities, serving the Church with the same spirit of complete union with the Pope and bishops in communion with the Holy See that St. Josemaria had always lived. St. John Paul II canonized the Founder of Opus Dei in Rome on October 6, 2002. His liturgical feast is celebrated on June 26.

The body of St. Josemaria rests in the Prelatic Church of Our Lady of Peace at Viale Bruno Buozzi 75, Rome.

THE TEXT WITHIN

is based on a novena published in Brazil in 2012 by Rev. Francisco Faus.

*Authorization of the
Ordinary of Montreal, N.P. 5/2015*

Those who obtain favours through the intercession of St. Josemaria are asked to notify the Prelature of Opus Dei in Canada: Office for the Causes of the Saints 1380, avenue des Pins Ouest, Montréal, QC, H3G 1A8

Email: ocs.ca@opusdei.org

For additional information about St. Josemaria and the Prelature of Opus Dei, visit:

www.josemariaescriva.info

www.opusdei.ca

To read more of St. Josemaria's writings visit:

www.escrivaworks.org