



# HOLY SPIRIT NOVENA: for the Victims of Abuse

You can begin this novena whenever it is convenient for you. If you would like to join in our parish-wide novena, please plan to begin on Sunday, August 26, 2018 and pray each day for 9 consecutive days. Each day's prayer will take about 3 minutes.

In this document, you will find one page for each day's novena prayer. You may choose to read a Scripture passage before beginning your prayer. We have suggested some passages for this purpose on page 2.

If you would like to learn more about what a novena is, we have included an article at the end of this document.

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## Inspiration from Scripture

As you begin your daily prayer, you may want to consult Scripture. Below are passages to consider. They are listed in the order found in the Bible.

- Psalm 33 (*one of our musical responses during our Prayer Service came from this Psalm*)
- Proverbs 22:6; 28:13
- Ezekiel 34:1-11
- Hosea 5:1-9:17
- Matthew 18:1-5 (*this was one of three Gospel passages read at our Prayer Service*)
- Matthew 18: 1-35, 6; 24:12
- Mark 10:15 (*this was one of three Gospel passages read at our Prayer Service*)
- Mark 9:41-50, 10:14
- Luke 17:1 (*this was one of three Gospel passages read at our Prayer Service*)
- Luke 17:1-37, 2
- 1Corinthians 12:26 (*Pope Francis quoted this passage in his August 20, 2018 [Letter to the People of God](#)*)
- Ephesians 5:12
- Colossians 3:1-25
- 2Timothy 1:7
- Titus 1:15-16, 2:6-8 (*this was reading 1 at our Prayer Service*)
- 1Peter 5:1-14
- 2Peter 2:1-6, 7-10 (*this was the second reading at our Prayer Service*)
- Jude 1:1-25
- Revelation 21:8



## Day 1: We pray for the victims of abuse in the Church.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

God in heaven and here on earth, we pray for all victims of **sexual abuse**, especially those wounded by priests, bishops, and other representatives of Your Church. Bring comfort to their hearts and healing, Jesus, in mind, body, soul, emotions and memories. Help them to know Your love and to find safety in Your arms once more. Give them peace.

Use us as Your agents to provide care and support to the victims of abuse. Help us to console, guide, listen and understand with compassion, assistance and encouragement. Show us concrete actions we can take to address wounds from unspeakable harm.

### Litany to the Saints

**Abba our Father in heaven**, please heal the survivors and protect the innocent.

**May Your Holy Spirit** comfort us, give us clarity, and bring light to this darkness and evil. Guide us in the path that will end this abuse and our gravest sins as Your Church. Come into each of our hearts, because each of us truly is Your Church, and show us what we must do, guide our steps, give us Your words of wisdom and love.

**Mary, Mother of all Children**, pray for us.

**Mary, Mother of all who Suffer**, pray for us.

**Mary, Mother of all who Sin**, pray for us.

**Mary, Mother of the Church**, pray for us.

**Mary, Mother of Priests**, pray for us.

**Mary, Mother of All**, pray for us.

**St. Michael the Archangel**, defend us in battle. Be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and by the power of God, cast into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls.

**St. Maria Goretti, the Patroness of Abused Children**, pray for the healing of those abused by our priests and leaders.

**Saint Peter**, pray for the Church, that it may be re-built, healed, and made holy.

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**St. Benedict**, pray that this evil be cast out of the Church.

**St. Anthony**, pray for us to find the way forward.

**St. Paul**, pray for bishops that they may be fearless in confronting other bishops.

**St. Augustine**, pray for true repentance and transparency.

**St. Dymphna**, pray for consolation for the heartache, depression and anxiety this evil has caused.

**Our Lady of Sorrows**, pray for us!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



## Day 2: We pray for the families and communities of victims.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Abba, hear the cries of the families and communities of those who have been abused by others within our Church as they agonize over the harm done to their children. Breathe wisdom into their prayers, soothe restless hearts with hope, steady shaken spirits with faith: Show us the way to justice and wholeness, enlightened by truth and enfolded in Your mercy.

We are lost, dear Lord. Show us the way. Add our voices to theirs as we seethe with outrage at the harm done to our family. Give us peace, guidance and heavenly direction.

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### **Day 3: We pray for those who will turn away from the Church because of the abuse within.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

As this scandal rocks Your Church, we know that many thousands will turn away from Your Body here on Earth. Give them the grace to return. Divine Physician, heal their broken hearts and restore their faith in Your Church. Make them open to You and enable them to begin to cooperate with Your plan for them. Help them to see that Your Church needs people like them, people who recognize evil and are willing to do something about it.

Use us as Your agents, God. Give us opportunities to share the Catholic faith in ways that are attractive to Your fallen-away children. Give us the right words to say whenever the Church is discussed in their presence.

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**Our Lady of Sorrows**, pray for us!



## **Day 4: We pray for the laity who remain faithful to the Church.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

We thank you for the countless laypeople who quietly pursue You in their daily lives. We pray that You will fill them with Your Spirit to call Your Church to greater holiness. Help us to fight for the protection of the innocent, whatever the cost.

Help us to endure the difficulties we will now face in the world by living openly as practicing Catholics. Give us the courage, wisdom, and humility to speak truth, to continue to share Your good news but to also demand holiness from those who lead us. Guide us in our quest to become saints, ourselves.

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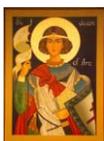
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## **Day 5: We pray for the ordained ministry who have maintained their vows and exemplify their calling as shepherds of the People of God.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

You have called men to ordained ministry to be both priest and victim; give those men who suffer unjustly from this crisis the grace to unite their sacrifice to Yours and to offer their pain in reparation for the sins of their brother priests. May they weep for the survivors of these crimes and not for their own suffering. Strengthen them to remain faithful, however heavy the Cross.

Help them always to reject tendencies toward worldliness and secularity. And remind them of their pastoral leadership and the flock who needs them to be strong leaders, witnesses and models of the faith, Your faith.

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## **Day 6: We pray for those responsible for the abuse and those who enabled or perpetuated it.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Send Your Spirit of peace upon all who wrestle with guilt over abuse suffered by those in their care. We beg for the conversion of all wolves in shepherds' clothing. Put remorse into the hearts of every deacon, priest, bishop and lay minister who has harmed any of Your people. Bring them to true repentance. May all who suffer such guilt surrender fear and shame and find truth in You. Save their souls.

We ask your mercy also, Lord, for all we and others have done to enable this sin, for our silence and complicity. Lord, have mercy on each and all of us.

We beg You to convict the hearts of bishops who ought to resign. Raise up men and women who are unconcerned with status and advancement but long only to serve You. We pray for the purification of all clergy and religious, that they would become people who seek You above all else.

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## Day 7: We pray for the leaders of the Church.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Give our leaders wisdom and courage to speak and act against the evil within their ranks. Send Your Spirit upon them, Lord, and empower them to root out this sin, to punish predators, and to repent for their own complicity, whatever the cost.

Help our leaders to usher in a new era of reform. Help us to rectify our institutional failures. Guide our leaders to address swiftly, justly and transparently all improper sexual behavior by ministers and those in positions of authority in the Church. Help them to establish strong measures in reform of clergy. Enable our leaders to bring us to see truth, Your truth.

Make our pastors in Your image, Lord. Assist them in conducting themselves in a manner worthy of the call of Christ for the sake of the faithful and the good of all people.

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## Day 8: We pray for those who will reform the Church.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

Come Holy Spirit, Come. Equip us to ward off the evil in Your Church. Strengthen us to shoulder the responsibility we all share to apologize, to repent, to make amends, to renew and to reform.

Fill the hearts and minds and souls of those who will live through and beyond this crisis. Inspire our young people to keep the faith and to recognize the role they will need to play to re-build Your Church, more perfectly conformed to Your Son, Jesus' ways.

Raise up saints and make them Your agents of reform. Give **me** the strength, courage and direction to be such a saint and to do my part to re-create Your Church on earth.

Enable us to bring about profound spiritual renewal. Foster new disciplines in each of us: participation in Sacraments, especially the Eucharist; regular time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament; increased prayer time; daily rosaries to the Blessed Mother; and more that You ask of us.

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*St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church, San Ramon, California*

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## **Day 9: We pray to protect the innocent forever more.**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Dear God in Heaven**, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

God, we beg You. Use this crisis to create a culture of life and love, of respect and dignity for every human life here on earth. Make us cherish and treasure the innocents among us. Protect them in the loving arms of us, Your Church, so that the atrocities revealed to us will never occur again.

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## What a Novena is ... and why we pray a Novena

*In the study of Acts 1:14, we observe the apostles praying in a manner that has been called the first Catholic novena. Below is background on a what a Novena is and why we might pray one.*

The word “novena” comes from the Latin “*novem*,” which means nine. Thus, novenas always include nine of something: months, weeks, days, hours or even the same prayer repeated nine times.

Novenas are an ancient tradition that goes back to the days of the Apostles. Jesus told His disciples to pray together after His ascension into heaven, so the apostles along with Mother Mary and other followers of Jesus gathered to pray in the Upper Room during the nine days between Ascension and Pentecost. (Thus, the recognition as the “first novena.”)

In the early Middle Ages, novenas were prayed in preparation for major liturgical events such as Christmas and Pentecost and later used as acts of reparation.

When we pray a novena, we focus our attention intently on a special intention in order to receive special graces and either the answer to our prayer or discernment on what we need to do.

Having the **right attitude** is key to the use of novenas. When we pray a novena, we must take on Jesus’ attitude in Gethsemane the night before He died. “Father, if You are willing, take this cup away from Me; still, **not My will but Yours be done**” (Lk 22:42).

Novenas help us to open ourselves to God in order to increase our faith and grow in love of God and neighbor. They aid in inner healing, obtaining special graces, being transformed and growing in virtue and holiness. They bring us peace and joy, regardless of the answer we’ve received to our petition.

Father Mitch Pacwa recommends three essential elements for the use of novenas:

First, the **prayers are specific**, which helps us make our needs before God specific without telling God how to answer our prayer.

Second, the prayers include an expression of **trust and confidence** in God’s ability to answer them. “Often we have some doubts, so we pray like the man with the epileptic son,” he said. “‘Lord, I believe; **help my unbelief.**’ Prayers that rouse our trust in God are aids to the graces of faith and hope.”

Third, repeating prayers and **repeating them over time** is helpful because we often need that length of time to move beyond merely making a request to **learning to listen to God** as He speaks to us in prayer. The length of time to pray the novena gives us time to consider more aspects of our prayer intention than just receiving the answer. We **develop our relationship with God**, and that is often more lasting than the actual result we see from praying with faith. The relationship with God Himself is essential, and a novena reminds us that the relationship takes time.

Novenas can be made to God and any of His three Persons in the Trinity. They are also often made to the Blessed Mother or to saints, asking their intercession for our intention, thereby strengthening our petition to God. All of the holy men and women in Heaven (including our faithful loved ones) are good intercessors for any intentions.

