

Novena for the Sick



► to St Josemaría Escrivá

Prayer to Saint Josemaría



Saint Josemaría Escrivá

Founder of Opus Dei

PRAYER

O God, through the mediation of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, you granted countless graces to your priest Saint Josemaría, choosing him as a most faithful instrument to found Opus Dei, a way to holiness through daily work and the ordinary duties of a Christian. Grant that I also may learn to turn all the circumstances and events of my life into opportunities to love you and serve the Church, the Pope and all souls, with joy and simplicity, lighting up the paths of the earth with faith and love.

Through the intercession of Saint Josemaría, please grant me the favour I request... (here make your petition). Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

Day 1

God loves us

► St Josemaría says:

It's necessary to become convinced that God is close beside us all the time. – We live as though the Lord were far away, in the starlit heavens, and we don't consider that he is also always by our side.

And he is here like a loving Father – he loves each one of us more than all the mothers in the world can love their children – helping us, inspiring us, blessing... and forgiving... We need to be imbued, to be saturated with the knowledge that the Lord, who is close beside us and in heaven, is our Father and very much our Father. (The Way, 267)

When it feels as if the Lord has given up on you, don't give way to sadness. Seek him with greater determination! He who is Love does not leave you on your own. (The Forge, 250)

If troubles come, you can be sure they are a proof of the Fatherly love God has for you. (The Forge, 815)

–A Child. –A Sick Person. –As you write these words, don't you feel tempted to put them with a capital letter? It's because, for a soul in love, children and sick people are He. (The Way, 419)

► Intention A:

May God our Lord grant me the grace to see with the clear light of faith that he is always at my side, like a loving father who will never abandon me. May he make me understand that he is Love, and that he desires my good more than anyone in the world. May he help me to have complete trust in the divine Doctor, Jesus Christ, who can give health to my body, if that is his holy Will, and peace to my soul.

► Intention B:

May God grant his son/daughter... the grace to accept suffering, full of faith and confidence and with the complete certainty that he is always by their side, helping them with great fatherly affection. And if it is his holy Will, may he grant them a cure and total recovery.

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Day 2

Jesus is our Friend

► St Josemaría says:

Jesus is your friend. –The Friend. –With a heart of flesh, like yours. –With eyes, which look so lovingly, which wept for Lazarus... –And as much as he loves Lazarus, he loves you. (The Way, 422)

You seek the company of friends who, with their conversation and affection, with their friendship, make the exile of this world more bearable for you..., although friends sometimes let one down. –I don't think it's wrong to do that. But... how is it that you don't frequent daily with greater intensity the company, the conversation of the Great Friend, who never lets one down? (The Way, 88)

By now they have fastened Jesus to the wooden cross. The executioners have ruthlessly carried out the sentence. Our Lord, with infinite meekness, has let them have their way. It was not necessary for him to undergo so much torment. He could have avoided those trials, those humiliations, that ill-usage, that iniquitous judgement, and the shame of the gallows, and the nails and the lance... But he wanted to suffer all this for you and for me. And we, are we not going to respond? (The Way of the Cross, Station 11, 1)

► Intention A:

May Most Holy Mary and St Joseph obtain for me the grace to feel the tenderness, consolation and joy of Christ's friendship, remembering that he has told us, "I have called you friends". May his friendship make it easier for me to accept and offer to God my sufferings, for as long as he decides, thinking of how lovingly Jesus chose to suffer his Passion, for love of me.

► Intention B:

May God, through the intercession of Our Lady and St Joseph, grant... the grace to feel the tenderness, consolation and joy of Christ's friendship, making it easier to accept and offer their sufferings to God, thinking of the love with which Jesus suffered for us. May they not doubt that Jesus will grant them health if that is best for their soul.

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Day 3

God hears the prayers of the sick

► St Josemaría says:

After the prayer of the Priest and of consecrated virgins, the prayer most pleasing to God is that of children and that of the sick. (The Way, 98)

Jesus speaks: "Amen I say to you: ask, and you shall receive; seek, and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." Pray. In what human venture can you have greater guarantees of success? (The Way, 96)

To pray is the way to keep all the evils we suffer in check. (The Forge, 76)

We must have complete faith in the one who saves us, in this divine Doctor who was sent with the express purpose of curing us, and the more serious or hopeless our illness is the stronger our faith has to be. (Friends of God, 193)

Repeat with a firm hope: Lord, see how ill I am; Lord, you who died on the Cross for love of me, come and heal me. Be full of confidence, I insist. Keep on calling out to his most loving Heart. As he cured the lepers we read about in the Gospel, he will cure you. (The Forge, 213)

► Intention A:

Through the grace of the Holy Spirit may my faith in prayer increase each day, in the certainty that God always listens to the humble and patient prayers of his children. May he always grant me the graces most suited for my sanctification and salvation. And in asking Jesus to cure me, may I not lack the faith that he will do so if it is for my good.

► Intention B:

May the Holy Spirit help... to have great faith in prayer, and find peace and security in it, knowing for certain that Our Lord promised to listen and pay attention to our prayers, always willing to give us whatever is best for us. May we not lose heart in asking, with the support of the Virgin Mary, for a cure for this sick person, if this is the best thing for him/her.

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Day 4

God helps us to be cheerful

► St Josemaría says:

The cheerfulness you should have is not the kind we might call physiological, that of a healthy animal, but a different, supernatural, one, which comes from the abandonment of everything and the abandonment of yourself into the loving arms of our Father-God. (The Way, 659)

Cheerfulness is a necessary consequence of our divine filiation, of knowing that our Father God loves us with a love of predilection, that he welcomes us, helps us and forgives us. –Remember this and never forget it: even if it should seem at times that everything is collapsing, nothing is collapsing at all, because God doesn't lose battles. (The Forge, 332)

True love demands getting out of oneself, giving oneself. Genuine love brings joy in its wake, a joy that has its roots in the shape of the Cross. (The Forge, 28)

I want you to be happy on earth. –But you won't be if you don't lose that fear of suffering. For, as long as we are “wayfarers”, it is precisely in suffering that our happiness lies. (The Way, 217)

► Intention A:

May God grant me the grace to experience the wonder of Christian joy, which Jesus gives to us as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, whenever we embrace the pain, illnesses and unpleasantness of this life, with total abandonment in the arms of God our Father. May he help me to understand that happiness is born of love, and that love becomes authentic, like gold in the furnace, through trials and the Cross.

► Intention B:

May God grant his son/daughter... the gift of Christian joy which the Holy Spirit gives to those souls who abandon themselves like children into the arms of God their Father. May the experience of that joy help them understand that there is no greater happiness than to love a great deal, imitating the total Love with which Jesus Christ embraced the Cross for us.

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Day 5

God blesses those who accept his Will

► St Josemaría says:

A wholehearted acceptance of the Will of God necessarily brings joy and peace: happiness in the Cross. –It's then one sees that Christ's yoke is sweet and that his burden is not heavy. (The Way, 758)

Jesus suffers to fulfil the Will of the Father... And you, who also wish to fulfil the most Holy Will of God, following in the footsteps of the Master, can you complain if you meet suffering as a travelling companion? (The Way, 213)

Are you suffering a great tribulation? –Are things going against you? Say, very slowly, as if savouring it, this strong and manly prayer: “May the most just and most lovable Will of God be done, be fulfilled, be praised and eternally exalted above all things. Amen. Amen.” I assure you that you will find peace. (The Way, 691)

► Intention A:

Helped by the Blessed Virgin Mary, may I learn how to accept the Will of God with love, saying with Mary, “Be it done”, full of faith and love. And may I never forget that the Will of God — even when I don't understand it — is always a caress from Heaven, and is for my true good. Therefore, the most perfect prayer I can say is, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”

► Intention B:

May Our Lady help her son/daughter... to accept the holy Will of God with great faith and love. And, as the first fruit of that acceptance, may he/she also find peace, and experience the truth of Jesus' words: “My yoke is gentle, and my burden is light”.

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Day 6

Jesus teaches us to turn suffering into an act of love

► St Josemaría says:

When you are ill, offer up your sufferings with love, and they will turn into incense rising up in God's honour, and making you holy.

(The Forge, 791)

The way of Love is called Sacrifice. (The Forge, 768)

With you, Jesus, how pleasurable is suffering and how luminous is darkness! (The Way, 229)

–See how lovingly he embraces the Cross. –Learn from him. –Jesus carries the Cross for you: you... carry it for Jesus. But don't drag the Cross... Carry it squarely on your shoulder, because your Cross, if you carry it like that, will not be just any Cross: it will be... the Holy Cross. Don't carry your Cross with resignation: resignation is not a generous word. Love the Cross. When you really love it, your Cross will be... a Cross, without a Cross. (Holy Rosary, 4th Sorrowful Mystery)

► Intention A:

May God Our Lord teach me to see pain, sickness and illness, not as a punishment but as a way of sharing in the Cross of Christ, so that I may get to love the Cross, as he loved it. May I learn to embrace it, and offer it to God without any denial or complaint. May I not stop praying to God with faith, for the grace of my cure, always united to his Will.

► Intention B:

May God Our Lord help... understand that pain and suffering are not a punishment but a way of sharing in the Cross of Christ, and of embracing it with the same love with which he carried that Cross to Calvary. May we also never stop praying with faith and humility that God may cure... of his/her illness.

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Day 7

God helps us to give joy to others

► St Josemaría says:

Don't forget that sometimes one needs to have smiling faces around.
(Furrow, 57)

Carefully avoid anything that can hurt other people's hearts.
(Furrow, 807)

You must make up your mind to follow the way of self-surrender: the Cross on your shoulders, with a smile on your lips, and a light in your soul. (The Way of the Cross, Station 2, 3)

All the things that are now worrying you can be solved by making an effort to smile for love of God. (Furrow, 89)

You should make sure that wherever you are there is that good humour – that cheerfulness – which is born of an interior life. (The Forge, 151)

► Intention A:

While I am ill, may God Our Lord make my heart capable of overlooking my sufferings and turning my attention affectionately to the needs and concerns of others. May he grant me good humour and pleasantness, and make me attentive to others, spreading optimism to all those who accompany me and help me: relatives, friends, carers, priests who visit, etc.

► Intention B:

May God Our Lord help... during their illness to face up to their sufferings with courage, so that rising above them, they will be a continuous source of light and joy for others through their example of generosity and self-denial, with a radiant smile, good humour, ardent faith and burning love.

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Day 8

Jesus invites us to work with Him

► St Josemaría says:

Remember this at the moment of sorrow or expiation: the Cross is the symbol of the redeeming Christ. It has ceased to be the symbol of evil, becoming instead the sign of victory. (The Forge, 782)

Therefore, if God wills that we be struck down by some affliction, take it as a sign that he considers us mature enough to be associated even more closely with his redeeming Cross. (Friends of God, 124)

If you realise that those sufferings – physical or moral – mean purification and merit, bless them. (The Way, 219)

Is it not true that as soon as you cease to be afraid of the Cross, of what people call the cross, when you set your will to accept the Will of God, then you find happiness, and all your worries, all your sufferings, physical or moral, pass away? (The Way of the Cross, Station 2)

► Intention A:

May God help me to be grateful for the cross that he sends me, and to see it for what it is: an act of God's confidence in me. Let me understand that Our Lord, in trusting me with his Cross through this illness, is giving me a great opportunity to purify and sanctify my soul, making me his collaborator in the salvation of the world. May I therefore regard pain as a treasure that I can offer up for the spiritual good of my family and friends, for the Church, sinners who have turned away from God, for those who suffer and for so many other people.

► Intention B:

May Jesus help... to discover that the cross, the suffering resulting from illness, can become a divine and holy treasure, when one knows how to unite it to the redeeming sacrifice of Christ with faith and love, both for the purification and maturing of the soul, and for the salvation of many relatives, friends and sinners who have turned away from God, for those who suffer and for so many other people.

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Day 9

Mary, our Mother, is by our side

► St Josemaría says:

My Mother! Mothers on earth look with greater love on the weakest of their children, the one with the worst health, or who is least intelligent, or is a poor cripple... —Sweet Lady! I know that you are more of a Mother than all other mothers put together. —And, since I am your son... And, since I am weak, and ill... and crippled... and ugly... (The Forge, 234)

If I were a leper my mother would hug me. She would kiss my wounds without fear or hesitation. —Well then, what would the Blessed Virgin Mary do? When we feel we are like lepers, all full of sores, we have to cry out: Mother! And the protection of our Mother will be like a kiss upon our wounds, which obtains our cure. (The Forge, 190)

Have recourse to the Blessed Virgin every day with complete confidence. Your soul and your life will feel comforted at once. —She will let you partake of the treasures she keeps in her heart, for “never has it been known that anyone who sought her protection was left unaided.” (Furrow, 768)

► Intention A:

May God grant me an even greater devotion to Our Lady, my most Holy Mother, and give me absolute confidence in her intercession, and in her maternal care. May he also make me understand that to obtain the graces that I ask him for — from the sanctification of suffering to the cure of my illness and full recovery — the gentle and sure way is to have recourse to the mediation of Mary, especially through the devotions she most appreciates, such as saying the Holy Rosary every day.

► Intention B:

May Our Lord help... take refuge in the arms of Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, with complete and filial devotion and confidence. May they feel Mary’s maternal support and proximity, and never forget to turn to her intercession for the sanctification of suffering, a cure for their illness and a speedy recovery. May they keep up the holy custom of saying the Rosary every day.

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Written by: Francisco Faus

Imprimatur:

*We grant the Imprimatur to the booklet entitled
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written by Fr Francisco Faus, in the hope that it
will produce abundant spiritual fruits.
Given at our Curia, under our seal, this 12 July
2006.*

+ Dom Fernando Antonio Figueiredo
Bishop of Santo Amaro (São Paulo)

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