

NOVENA IN PREPARATION For the School Year 2020-2021

Introduction

We begin our Novena with the Gospel of Jesus and the woman at the well. The story of a woman whose own encounter with the Lord is so transforming that she is compelled to tell her whole community. Many came to believe because of her testimony.

This is the story of Catholic Education in the province of Ontario. The story of women and men whose own encounter with the Lord has been so transforming that they are compelled to share their testimony.

Let us witness together to our faith that God is calling us once again to be formed as his people, his Body. We are called to be witnesses as we head towards the start of the school year, in a time of such uncertainty, that we can be assured that God cares for us, is with us, saves us.

On this first day of 9 days of prayer, we will join together – parishes and schools, staff and students, parents and grandparents, parishioners and community members and we will pray for the protection of all, for the peace of all, for the wisdom and courage for us all.

Our Novena will come to completion on the first day of school – September 8th, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Bishops of Canada have dedicated our nation to Mary and have placed us under her loving protection as she brings our cares and concerns to her Son. The Diocese of Hamilton, including every one of our six English speaking and our one French speaking school boards, rests under the protection of our Lady of the Annunciation. Like Mary, let us ponder all God has done for us, let us be filled with the Holy Spirit, and let us always turn to her Son who died to save us and is even now at our side, strengthening us.

Day 1: We proclaim the knowledge of Christ crucified.

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

Let us be strengthened as we proclaim Christ crucified, knowing he died for us. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 2: We are a people who discern the Spirit's gifts among us.

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

Let us recognize the gifts of the Holy Spirit among us so that we may find wisdom, courage, and understanding in our community. Let us use our gifts to give witness to God's goodness. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 3: We are God's servants.

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

Let us be ready to serve the Lord by serving others in our families and our parishes and in our school community. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 4: All things belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.

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

Let us remember that all things belong to Christ – even our worries – and Christ belongs to God – so we can trust that our worries are carried in God's loving arms. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 5: The Lord knows our hearts

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

Let us remember that the Lord knows our hearts. Even when we have no words, the Holy Spirit will carry our prayers to our loving Father. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 6: We are hungry and thirsty for the Lord

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

We are hungry and thirsty for the Lord – for his word, his light, and his truth. We know that he will lead us closer to the Father. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 7: Love is the fulfilling of the law

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

The Lord has taught us that love is the fulfilling of the law. Let us be obedient to God's law by loving one another. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school in just a few days.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 8: Christ has saved us

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

We know that Christ has saved us. Let us live as people of the resurrection – sure of his saving power in our lives every day. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school tomorrow.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 9: Now the time has come; we rejoice in the Lord who brings good things to life

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

The time has come. School begins today. We know that our Father's timing is perfect. On this day, as we remember the birth of Mary, and how God's plan for our salvation was unfolding in that time and place as he chose her to be the Mother of God's only-begotten Son. Let us remember that God has a plan to bring good things to life in our time, too. We look to Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this day.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life,
may we be confident in your love and mercy.
May we begin this school year knowing you are always with us.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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