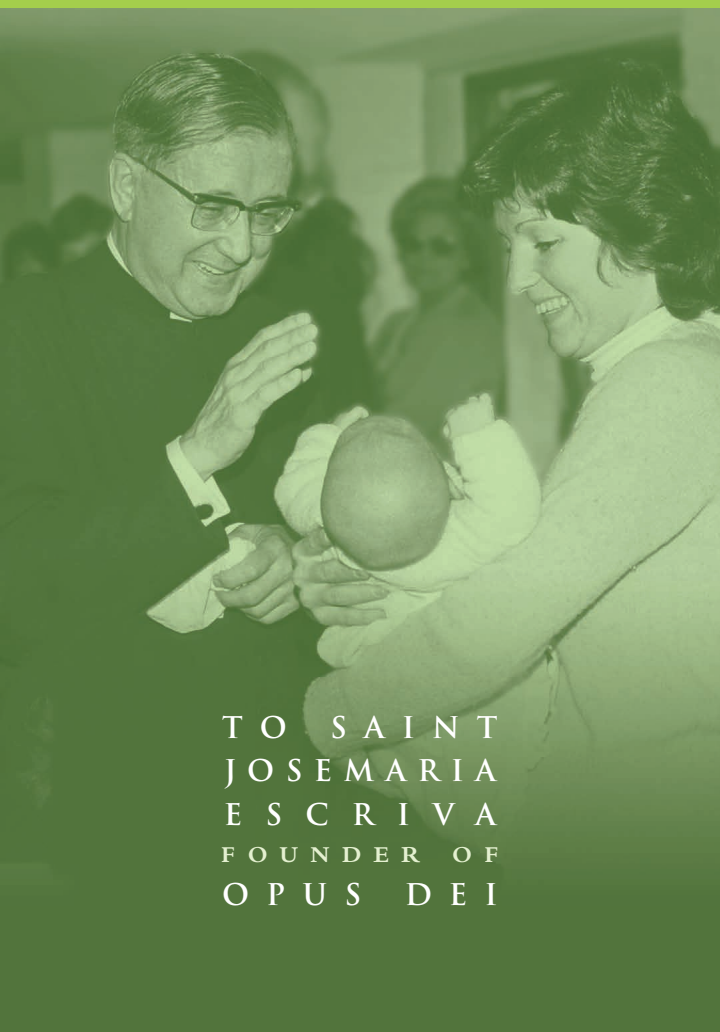


Novena

FOR FAMILIES



TO SAINT
JOSEMARIA
ESCRIVA
FOUNDER OF
OPUS DEI



THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF ST. JOSEMARIA may Christian spirit and authentic love reign in the family. May the family be a path to sanctity for parents and children. With God's grace, may each member of the family learn to deal in a Christian way with the difficulties that are part and parcel of life.

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 THE FAMILY
- II AN INTENTION BASED ON THOSE TEXTS.



Day 1

MARRIAGE A DIVINE VOCATION

IT IS IMPORTANT for the couple to acquire a clear sense of the dignity of their vocation. They should realize that God calls them to love Him among other ways through their human love; that they have been chosen from all eternity to cooperate with God's creative power in bearing and educating their children; that the Lord asks them to give an example of all the Christian virtues through their family life.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 93*

INTENTION

Lord, show us the greatness of Christian marriage. Help us appreciate it as a divine vocation – a personal, loving call from you – with a mission that is entrusted to us in this world: to establish a Christian family that is healthy and holy and, in the words of Saint John Paul II, the “first and vital cell of society” and of the Church.

Lord, help us dwell on the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Filled with faith and love and forgetful of themselves, they lived entirely for you and for each other in simple, joyful and generous self-giving.

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

MARRIAGE A WAY TO HOLINESS

MARRIAGE IS to help married people sanctify themselves and others. Those who are called to the married state will, with the grace of God, find within their state everything they need to be holy.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 91*

To sanctify the home, day after day, creating with affection an authentic family atmosphere: that is the goal.

Christ is Passing By, no. 23

INTENTION

Lord, help us understand that we can sanctify ourselves by fulfilling our conjugal and family duties (toward our spouse, parents, sons and daughters) with love. Help us realize that, step by step, we can attain the Christian ideal of holiness and that, day by day, we can increasingly identify ourselves with Jesus Christ by imitating his love and practicing the other Christian virtues. Lord, help us to fashion a true family environment. Help us strive to live the virtues that can aid us “to be a family”: self-denying tenderness, humility, self-forgetfulness, understanding, generosity in giving and forgiving, and in general, everything that helps us prevail over selfishness and enables love to triumph.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 3

CHRISTIAN LOVE

SOMETIMES we speak of love as if it were an impulse to self-satisfaction or a mere means to selfish fulfilment of one’s own personality. But that’s not love. True love means going out of oneself, giving oneself. Love brings joy, but a joy whose roots are in the shape of a cross. As long as we are on earth and have not yet arrived at the fullness of the future life, we can never have true love without sacrifice and pain.

Christ is Passing By, no. 43

INTENTION

Lord my God, free us from egoism and from considering marriage as a way to fulfil our selfish ambitions, such as “the right to be happy”. May we see this as deceitful, turning marriage into a means of pursuing satisfaction, pleasure and personal dreams, instead of realizing what it really is: a vocation of love, of the sort of true love that – as Jesus teaches – finds greater joy in giving than in receiving.

Grant us the strength to check our temper, our moods, our defects (however small), our love of comfort, and all shortcomings that hinder social interaction.

At the same time, grant that we may be understanding and patient with the faults of others, and not give those faults undue importance or make a drama out of minor problems.

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

THE LOVE OF EACH DAY

THE SECRET of married happiness lies in everyday things, not in daydreams. It lies in finding the hidden joy of coming home in the evening, in affectionate relations with their children, in the everyday work in which the whole family cooperates, in good humour in the face of difficulties.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 91*

If a marriage is to preserve its initial charm and beauty, both husband and wife should try to renew their love day after day and that is done through sacrifice, with smiles and also with ingenuity.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 107*

INTENTION

Grant us the grace of never slipping into routine in the way we behave towards others. Help us show our love through our joy and courtesy, taking care of the things of the home and safeguarding the time we set aside for the family.

May we spouses treat one another as we did when we were engaged. May we become more aware of the joy we can instil in one another and in our children. May we learn self-forgetfulness through small acts of love (in the way we dress, in our effort to show affection and smile despite tiredness), avoiding even the smallest manifestations of unkindness.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 5

BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL HOMES

EVERY CHRISTIAN HOME should be a haven of peace and serenity. In spite of the small frustrations of daily life, an atmosphere of profound and sincere affection should reign there together with a deep-rooted calmness, which is the result of authentic faith that is put into practice.

Christ is Passing By, no. 22

What really makes a person unhappy and even destroys a whole society is the frenzied search for well-being and the attempt to eliminate, at all costs, all difficulties and hardships. Each situation brings its own grace. Each one is a special call from God, a new opportunity to work and to give the divine testimony of Charity.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 98*

Don't forget that sometimes one needs to have smiling faces around.

Furrow, no. 57

INTENTION

Lord, help us disguise any impatience or small annoyances we may feel with others' shortcomings. May we never convey a sense of victimhood if we feel misunderstood, ignored or unappreciated.

Imbue our conversations with optimism and help us avoid being negative about events or people. Teach us not to create drama about financial or other hardships. Fill us with hope and the conviction that with you we will overcome these difficulties with serenity.

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

WITH GOD'S HELP, OVERCOME THE CRISES AND DIFFICULTIES OF MARRIED LIFE

ANYONE WHO THINKS that love ends when the worries and difficulties that life brings with it begin, has a poor idea of marriage. It is precisely then that love grows strong. Torrents of worries and difficulties are incapable of drowning true love because people who sacrifice themselves generously together are brought closer together by their sacrifice.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 91*

We are never a hundred per cent right. In fact one can say that in matters like these, which are usually so debatable, the surer we are of being completely right, the more doubtful it is that we really are. Following this line of reasoning makes it easier to correct oneself later on and if necessary to beg pardon, which is the best way of ending a quarrel. In this way peace and love are regained.

*Conversations with
Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, no. 108*

INTENTION

Lord, help us avoid any negative criticism or offensive words concerning our relatives and, in general, shun all attitudes, words and omissions that could hurt others and open wounds that would be difficult to heal.

Help us see the need to come closer to you with the guidance of a good confessor. Give us the strength to overcome resentment and maintain hope in reconciliation, rejecting any bitterness while focusing on our children, apostolate and peace in the family.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 7

COOPERATING WITH GOD

OUR LORD SANCTIFIES and blesses the mutual love of husband and wife. He foresees not only a union of souls but a union of bodies as well. He has wanted to use love to bring new human beings into the world and to increase the body of the Church.

Christ is Passing By, no. 24

You share in the creative power of God: that is why human love is holy, good and noble. It is a gladness of heart that God – in his loving providence – wants others freely to give up. Each child that God grants you is a wonderful blessing from him: don't be afraid of children!

The Forge, no. 691

INTENTION

Lord, make us thankful to you every day for the marvellous gift of children. Help us show our gratitude by putting great care into their Christian formation and their material well-being.

Lord, if you have not granted us children, let this not diminish in us the holy ideal of fatherhood and motherhood. We can dedicate ourselves to others in many ways, like caring for members of our own family, helping institutions for abandoned children, and contributing to the Christian formation of young people. We can also consider the possibility of adopting one or more children, after proper counselling and with due prudence.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

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AMEN.

Our Father
Hail Mary
Glory be to the Father



Day 8

EDUCATING THE CHILDREN

PARENTS ARE the first persons responsible for the education of their children, in human as well as in spiritual matters. They need prudence, understanding, a capacity to love and a concern for giving good example. Imposing things by force, in an authoritarian manner, is not the right way to teach. The ideal attitude of parents lies more in becoming their children's friends – friends who will be willing to share their anxieties, who will listen to their problems, who will help them in an effective and agreeable way.

Christ is Passing By, no. 27

INTENTION

Lord, grant us the grace of giving ourselves unstintingly to the integral formation of the children you have entrusted to us. Help us realize that absolutely nothing can replace our daily example, perseverance and effort to help them become upright adults and genuine Christians.

Lord, help us keep in mind St. Josemaria's teaching that each person is like a precious stone to be cut in its own way to bring out all its qualities. Let us seek his intercession to aid us in educating each of our children in virtue, not giving in to lukewarmness or lethargy or simply giving up. Grant them the wisdom to recognize their different personalities and treat each one of them according to their needs.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

Day 9

GOD IN THE HOME

THERE IS PERHAPS no better model for a Christian couple than that of the Christian families of apostolic times. Families who lived in union with Christ and who made him known to others. Small Christian communities that were centres for the spreading of the Gospel and its message. Families no different from other families of those times, but living with a new spirit, which spread to all those who were in contact with them. This is what the first Christians were, and this is what we have to be: sowers of peace and joy, the peace and joy that Jesus has brought to us.

Christ is Passing By, no. 30

INTENTION

Lord, help our children notice the joy and constancy with which we attend Mass, receive Holy Communion, pray the Rosary, etc. May they realize that we pray in this way out of love, not as an obligation or formality.

With the help of your grace, Lord, may we never tire of praying for one another and for our children, especially when they encounter serious moral or spiritual difficulties. Fortify our conviction that our love, good example and patience will plant a good seed in our children's hearts that will eventually bear fruit. Mary, receive our persevering prayer for this intention.

Prayer to Saint Josemaria

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEMARIA

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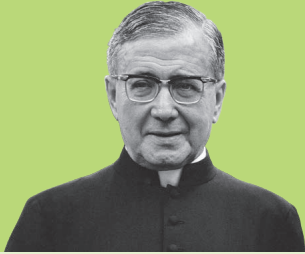
Deign to grant me, through the intercession of Saint Josemaria, the favour of... *(make your request)*.

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 2004 by Rev. Francisco Faus.

*Authorization of the
Ordinary of Montreal, N.P. 8/2013*

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

