

NOVENA TO THE HOLY GHOST

PRAYER FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who, before ascending into heaven * didst promise to send the Holy Ghost to finish Thy work * in the souls of Thy Apostles and Disciples, * deign to grant the same Holy Spirit to me * that He may perfect in my soul the work of Thy grace and Thy love. * Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom * that I may despise the perishable things of this world * and aspire only after the things that are eternal; * the Spirit of Understanding * to enlighten my mind with the light of Thy divine truth; * the Spirit of Counsel * that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining heaven; * the Spirit of Fortitude * that I may bear my cross with Thee * and that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation; * the Spirit of Knowledge * that I may know God and know myself * and grow perfect in the science of the Saints; * the Spirit of Piety * that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable; * the Spirit of Fear * that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God * and may dread in any way to displease Him. * Mark me, dear Lord, with the sign of Thy true disciples * and animate me in all things with Thy Spirit. Amen.

FIRST DAY

The Holy Ghost

Only one thing is important—eternal salvation. Only one thing, therefore, is to be feared—sin. Sin is the result of ignorance, weakness, and indifference. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Light, of Strength, and of Love. With His sevenfold gifts He enlightens the mind, strengthens the will, and inflames the heart with love of God. To ensure our salvation we ought to invoke the Divine Spirit daily, for “The Spirit helpeth our infirmity. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit Himself asketh for us.”

Let us Pray

Almighty and eternal God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate us by water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given us forgiveness of all sins, vouchsafe to send forth from heaven upon us Thy sevenfold Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and fill us with the Spirit of Holy Fear. Amen.

SECOND DAY

The Gift of Fear

The Gift of Fear fills us with a sovereign respect for God, and makes us dread nothing so much as to offend Him by sin. It is a fear that arises, not from the thought of hell, but from sentiments of reverence and filial submission to our heavenly Father. It is the fear that is the beginning of wisdom, detaching us from worldly pleasures that could in any way separate us from God. “They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts, and in His sight will sanctify their souls.”

Let us Pray

Come, O blessed Spirit of Holy Fear, penetrate my inmost heart, that I may set Thee, my Lord and God, before my face forever; help me to shun all things that can offend Thee, and make me worthy to appear before the pure eyes of Thy Divine Majesty in heaven, where Thou livest and reignest in the unity of the ever Blessed Trinity, God, world without end. Amen.

THIRD DAY

The Gift of Piety

The gift of Piety begets in our hearts a filial affection for God as our most loving Father. It inspires us to love and respect for His sake persons and things consecrated to Him, as well as those who are vested with His authority, His Blessed Mother and the Saints, the Church and its visible Head, our parents and superiors, our country and its rulers. He who is filled with the gift of Piety finds the practice of his religion, not a burdensome duty, but a delightful service. Where there is love, there is no labor.

Let us Pray

Come, O Blessed Spirit of Piety, possess my heart. Enkindle therein such a love for God, that I may find satisfaction only in His service, and for His sake lovingly submit to all legitimate authority. Amen.

FOURTH DAY

The Gift of Fortitude

By the gift of Fortitude the soul is strengthened against natural fear, and supported to the end in the performance of duty. Fortitude imparts to the will an impulse and energy which move it to undertake without hesitancy the most arduous tasks, to face dangers, to trample under foot human respect, and to endure without complaint the slow martyrdom of even lifelong tribulation. "He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved."

Let us Pray

Come, O Blessed Spirit of Fortitude, uphold my soul in time of trouble and adversity, sustain my efforts after holiness, strengthen my weakness, give me courage against all the assaults of my enemies, that I may never be overcome and separated from Thee, my God and greatest Good. Amen.

SEVENTH DAY

The Gift of Counsel

The gift of Counsel endows the soul with supernatural prudence, enabling it to judge promptly and rightly what must be done, especially in difficult circumstances. Counsel applies the principles furnished by Knowledge and Understanding to the innumerable concrete cases that confront us in the course of our daily duty as parents, teachers, public servants, and Christian citizens. Counsel is supernatural common sense, a priceless treasure in the quest of salvation. "Above all these things, pray to the Most High, that He may direct thy way in truth."

Let us Pray

Come, O Spirit of Counsel, help and guide me in all my ways, that I may always do Thy holy will. Incline my heart to that which is good; turn it away from all that is evil, and direct me by the straight path of Thy commandments to that goal of eternal life for which I long. Amen.

FIFTH DAY

The Gift of Knowledge

The gift of Knowledge enables the soul to evaluate created things at their true worth—in their relation to God. Knowledge unmask the pretense of creatures, reveals their emptiness, and points out their only true purpose as instruments in the service of God. It shows us the loving care of God even in adversity, and directs us to glorify Him in every circumstance of life. Guided by its light, we put first things first, and prize the friendship of God beyond all else. "Knowledge is a fountain of life to him that possesseth it."

Let us Pray

Come, O Blessed Spirit of Knowledge, and grant that I may perceive the will of the Father; show me the nothingness of earthly things, that I may realize their vanity and use them only for Thy glory and my own salvation, looking over beyond them to Thee, and Thy eternal rewards. Amen.

EIGHTH DAY

The Gift of Wisdom

Embodying all the other gifts, as charity embraces all the other virtues, Wisdom is the most perfect of the gifts. Of Wisdom it is written "all good things come to me with her, and innumerable riches through her hands." It is the gift of Wisdom that strengthens our faith, fortifies hope, perfects charity, and promotes the practice of virtue in the highest degree. Wisdom enlightens the mind to discern and relish things divine, in the appreciation of which earthly joys lose their savor, whilst the Cross of Christ yields a divine sweetness according to the words of the Saviour: "Take up thy cross and follow me, for my yoke is sweet and my burden light."

Let us Pray

Come, O Spirit of Wisdom, and reveal to my soul the mysteries of heavenly things, their exceeding greatness, power and beauty. Teach me to love them above and beyond all the passing joys and satisfactions of earth. Help me to attain them and possess them forever. Amen.

SIXTH DAY

The Gift of Understanding

Understanding, as a gift of the Holy Ghost, helps us to grasp the meaning of the truths of our holy religion. By faith we know them, but by Understanding we learn to appreciate and relish them. It enables us to penetrate the inner meaning of revealed truths and through them to be quickened to newness of life. Our faith ceases to be sterile and inactive, but inspires a mode of life that bears eloquent testimony to the faith that is in us; we begin to "walk worthy of God in all things pleasing, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Let us Pray

Come, O Spirit of Understanding, and enlighten our minds, that we may know and believe all the mysteries of salvation, and may merit at last to see the eternal light in Thy Light; and in the light of glory to have a clear vision of Thee and the Father and the Son. Amen.

NINTH DAY

The Fruits of the Holy Ghost

The gifts of the Holy Ghost perfect the supernatural virtues by enabling us to practice them with greater docility to divine inspiration. As we grow in the knowledge and love of God under the direction of the Holy Ghost, our service becomes more sincere and generous, the practice of virtue more perfect. Such acts of virtue leave the heart filled with joy and consolation and are known as Fruits of the Holy Ghost. These Fruits in turn render the practice of virtue more attractive and become a powerful incentive for still greater efforts in the service of God, to serve Whom is to reign.

Let us Pray

Come, O Divine Spirit, fill my heart with Thy heavenly fruits, Thy charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, faith, mildness and temperance, that I may never weary in the service of God, but by continued faithful submission to Thy inspiration may merit to be united eternally with Thee in the love of the Father and the Son. Amen.