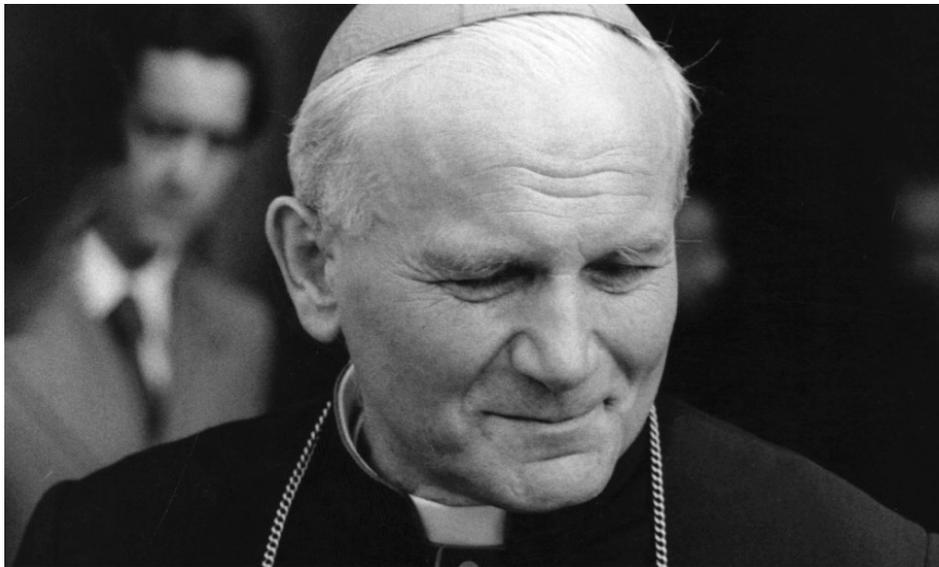


Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Catholic Church

Parish Novena

for

Life & Social Justice



*“If you want peace, work for justice. If you want justice, defend life.
If you want life, embrace the truth—the truth revealed by God.”*

– St. Pope John Paul II

Cover quotation from the conclusion of a homily during Pope John Paul II's seventh visit to the United States:

...America first proclaimed its independence on the basis of self-evident moral truths. America will remain a beacon of freedom for the world as long as it stands by those moral truths which are the very heart of its historical experience. And so, America: If you want peace, work for justice. If you want justice, defend life. If you want life, embrace the truth—the truth revealed by God.

In this way the praise of God, the language of Heaven, will be ever on this people's lips: "The Lord is God, the mighty...Come then, let us bow down and worship". Amen.

Pope John Paul II – January 27, 1999
Evening Prayer at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis



The Church in America has claimed every October as *Respect Life Month*. This novena—for the promotion of Life and Justice—prays through the intercession of saints whose feast days occur during October. In nine days, we will call upon the saints below. (Note that the indicated feast days may fall outside of the novena period.)

- October 1 – St. Thérèse of Lisieux
- October 2 – The Holy Guardian Angels
- October 3 – St. Theodore Guerin
- October 4 – St. Francis of Assisi
- October 5 – St. Faustina Kowalska
- October 7 – Our Lady of the Rosary (Our Lady of Victory)
- October 15 – St. Teresa of Jesus (Avila)
- October 16 – St. Margaret Mary Alacoque
- October 22 – St. John Paul II (Patron of this novena)
- October 28 – Sts. Simon and Jude

Day 1 – Health of Mind and Body

October 15

Reflection

St. Teresa of Avila had a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, which grew more intimate when her mother died at the age of 11. When she entered the monastery nine years later, she suffered from severe illnesses. In her humility during the times of illness and grief—the lowest points of her life—St. Teresa was overcome with mystical connections to Jesus in prayer, described as ecstasies.

Following St. Teresa as an example of carrying our crosses, we can come to know that even in dire situations and grave illnesses, our sufferings connect us intimately with our Lord, who suffered and died for our sins. We entrust all of those who have suffered loss and endured illnesses of body and mind to our Lord through the care of St. Teresa.

Prayer

O God, who through your Spirit raised up St. Teresa of Jesus to show the Church the way to seek perfection, grant that we may always be nourished by the food of her heavenly teaching, fired with longing for true holiness, and union with Christ's suffering.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa of Ávila, patron of illness and headaches – Pray for us.

Day 2 – Care for the Poor

October 16

Reflection

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, born in 1647, lost her father at a very young age, and a family member then withheld from her all her father's assets and her inheritance. Left with no money and very little support, young Margaret Mary was deeply impoverished. In her lack of physical comforts, she began frequently visiting our Lord in the blessed sacrament.

Though she was physically poor, she became very spiritually wealthy by her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Holy Eucharist. We pray through St. Margaret Mary's intercession for all who are poor, abandoned, and have no one to pray for them. May those who suffer any type of physical poverty find consolation in the wealth of graces that flow from the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Prayer

My Savior! I cheerfully accept all the painful dispositions in which it is your pleasure to place me. My wish is in all things to conform myself to your Holy Will. Whenever I kiss your cross, it is to show that I submit perfectly to mine. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, patron of the poor – Pray for us.

Day 3 – Stewardship of Creation

October 17

Reflection

In the beginning, God created the Heavens, the Earth, and all that is in it. After he created man, God said, “Let them have dominion” over the Earth. As we enjoy the gifts of creation, let us continually be good stewards of the environment God has given us, respecting both its utility and its beauty.

God created man, rational, and intellectual, as the pinnacle of his creation. God gave each human person an intellect and will, which we can use for the good of God’s creation. Pope Francis urges us that, “Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”

Prayer

O God, by whose gift St. Francis [of Assisi] was conformed to Christ in poverty and humility, grant that, by walking in Francis’s footsteps, we may follow your Son by our stewardship for your creation, and, through joyful charity, come to be united with you.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis of Assisi, patron of the environment – Pray for us.

Day 4 – End of Euthanasia

October 18

Reflection

All men, made in the image and likeness of God, belong to him as his creations. As his creations, our lives belong to God, who alone breathes life and takes it. No amount of suffering, illness, or incapacity gives man the right to take his own life or the life of a loved one. Rather than contemplating untimely death in times of great distress, let us pray that we may have the courage to turn toward our Lord on the cross—uniting our suffering with his.

In a particular way, we pray for those who feel they are abandoned or that their lives have no value. We also pray for families who are deceived that a loved one has no value in old age or a disabled state.

Our Lord walks with us through desperate situations, which he allows us to experience through physical disabilities and end-of-life sufferings. Let us look toward the apostle Jude who did not waiver in the Faith when faced with suffering his own desperate situations.

Prayer

O God, who by the blessed Apostles have brought us to acknowledge your name, graciously grant, through the intercession of St. Jude, that the Church may constantly grow by increase of the peoples who believe in you.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis – Pray for us.

St. Jude, patron of desperate situations – Pray for us.

Day 5 – Unborn Children and their Mothers

October 19

Reflection

In 1937, St. Faustina endured a long period of illness that could not be diagnosed. This caused her great suffering and pain, which no medicines could cure. She said in her diary, “At times the pain caused me to lose consciousness. Jesus had me realize that in this way I took part in His Agony in the Garden, and that He Himself allowed these sufferings in order to make reparation to God for the souls murdered in the wombs of wicked mothers.” St. Faustina accepted this call to suffering, praying that she might “save even one soul from murder.”

We entrust to St. Faustina’s care every mother who has had an abortion, that they may experience Divine Mercy. Our merciful Lord suffered and died for all sins, even those against the most innocent and precious lives of unborn children.

All the more, we fervently pray that St. Faustina will bring mothers who plan to have an abortion to the consoling hearts of Jesus and Mary, where they may experience conversion, courage, and peace.

Let us always choose life over death; adoption over abortion; and mercy over despair.

Prayer

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to your Holy Will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis – Pray for us.

St. Jude – Pray for us.

St. Faustina, patron of mercy – Pray for us.

Day 6 – Safety for Immigrants

October 20

Reflection

Each person has a guardian angel to preserve their soul from sin, protect them from the assaults of demons, and guide them to Christ. Especially in times of travel and uncertain situations, it is fitting for us to seek the intercession and protection of our guardian angels.

We entrust all immigrants and travelers to the guidance of their guardian angels, especially those who, from fear of losing their lives, are convicted their only option is to leave their native land. May God and his holy angels continue to protect the lives and souls of the most physically and spiritually vulnerable immigrants—that they reach their destination safely, and ultimately reach their heavenly homeland with him.

Prayer

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here;
ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis – Pray for us.

St. Jude – Pray for us.

St. Faustina – Pray for us.

Guardian Angels – Pray for us.

Day 7 – End of War

October 21

Reflection

According to The Catechism of the Catholic Church: The fifth commandment forbids the intentional destruction of human life, so the Church urges us to prayer and action against the evils and injustices involved in all war. Thus, all citizens and governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war. However, as long as the danger of war persists and there is no international authority with the necessary competence and power, governments cannot be denied the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed.

Our Lady of the Rosary is a powerful intercessor for peace, safety, and victory. In a 1571 naval battle at Lepanto, the Holy League achieved victory over the Ottoman Empire, which they attributed to the Rosary. The feast of the Rosary was first offered “in memory and in perpetual gratitude of the miraculous victory that the Lord gave to his Christian people that day against the Turkish armada.”

Let us continue to ask Our Lady of Victory to hastily bring about justice and victories, while protecting us from conflict and harm.

Prayer

O Victorious Lady, you who have ever such powerful influence with your Divine Son in conquering the hardest of hearts, intercede for those for whom we pray, that their hearts being softened by the ways of Divine Grace, they may return to the unity of the true faith. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis – Pray for us.

St. Jude – Pray for us.

St. Faustina – Pray for us.

Guardian Angels – Pray for us.

Our Lady of the Rosary, giver of victories – Pray for us.

Day 8 – Healing for Victims of Sexual Abuse

October 22

Reflection

Purity is a matter of spiritual life and death. In the face of stories filled with depravity and sexual sin in our beloved Church, we must cry out for justice for the sinners and pray for healing for all the victims of abuse.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux was a model of Christian purity in mind, heart and body. Her example of sanctity achieved through small daily acts of penance and prayer is one we can look to now as a way to restore the survivors, reform the clergy, and rebuild our church.

Following the lead of the Little Flower, we can pray for consolation for the heartache and anxiety that evil has caused. We can rightly ask her intercession and spiritual life for all affected by abuse. May St. Thérèse also be a spiritual guide for them and intercede for them in their healing.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, open your Most Sacred Heart to those victimized by sins of impurity. Lead us to follow trustingly in the little way of St. Thérèse, so that through her intercession we may see your eternal glory revealed in the purity of thought, word, and deed of all in the Church. Holy Spirit, comfort us, heal us, and bring light to darkness and evil. We ask these things in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis – Pray for us.

St. Jude – Pray for us.

St. Faustina – Pray for us.

Guardian Angels – Pray for us.

Our Lady of the Rosary – Pray for us.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux, patron of Missionaries – Pray for us.

Day 9 – Religious Freedom

October 23

Reflection

St. Theodore Guerin fled France during the Reign of Terror after the French Revolution. Many priests were exiled; many churches and schools were closed. During this time, Mother Guerin taught in schools and ministered to the sick and poor. Meanwhile in the United States, Bishop Bruté requested her religious order (the Sisters of Providence) to come to Indiana to continue spreading the faith in schools here.

Let us follow Mother Guerin in her example of spreading the faith in all circumstances—who trusted in God’s providence, even during widespread religious persecution. In our own places of work and study, may we always promote religious freedom by fostering conversations and policies that respect religious freedom and the free exercise thereof.

Prayer

Loving God, in St. Theodore Guerin you have given us an example of a religious woman who trusted deeply in Providence. Through her intercession, inspire us to dedicate our lives to proclaiming the Gospel through works of love, mercy, and justice. We ask this through your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father... Hail Mary... Glory Be...

St. Teresa – Pray for us.

St. Margaret Mary – Pray for us.

St. Francis – Pray for us.

St. Jude – Pray for us.

St. Faustina – Pray for us.

Guardian Angels – Pray for us.

Our Lady of the Rosary – Pray for us.

St. Thérèse – Pray for us.

St. Theodore Guerin, patroness of our diocese – Pray for us.