

THE ENCOURAGE PRAYER CALL

Prayer for our loved ones drives us to our knees. And that was how the EnCourage prayer call began. One EnCourage mom, who believed in the power of prayer, decided to dedicate 27 holy hours before the Blessed Sacrament—9 hours each day for three days. During this time, heaven was stormed. She prayed a novena each day of rosaries, a novena of Chaplets of Divine mercy and a novena of Stations of the Cross each day for three days.

God answers prayers in unexpected ways and not long after this marathon of holy hours, this mom felt compelled to begin praying with other EnCourage members over the phone. After receiving direction and guidance from the Courage office through Fr. Bochanski, a request was sent out over the EnCourage forum to see if anyone would like to pray. Many responded with enthusiasm.

The prayer calls first began in the early summer of 2016 with an average of about four members calling in nightly to pray. It began at first a few nights a week. On July 11, 2016, the feast of St. Benedict, the prayer call members began holding calls every night, and EnCourage members have been praying nightly ever since, not missing one night—often with dozens of parents on the call to pray.

Members who were able to call in at least once a week began praying an individual prayer for one loved one each day, so that, within a certain period, every loved one would receive individual prayer by those on the call. This prayer includes three Hail Mary's. Each night the set of prayers is different, but includes the:

- Rosary
- Chaplet of Divine Mercy
- Novena to our Lady of the Miraculous Medal
- Novena to our Mother of Perpetual Help
- Litany of the Precious Blood
- Chaplet of St. Michael
- Litany of the Saints

The prayers themselves have changed many times over the years. And eventually a nightly spiritual reading was added, so members would have something of the faith to ponder before retiring for the evening. A Thursday discussion night was also added, and now on this discussion night there is usually a topic to help us to grow spiritually, or we hear from someone who has been on an EnCourage or other retreat or has taken a relevant Catholic class or been to a Catholic shrine.

We have seen the fruits of our prayers. Some members have seen their loved ones step away from this behavior. But a great grace is to see EnCourage members, who may have felt shattered at the time of their loved one's announcement, eventually reach a place of peace and surrender through the power of prayer and the prayer call. All thanks and glory to God and the Blessed Mother and the saints in heaven who have kept the prayer call going over the years—ten years on July 11, 2026! Thanks too to the guardian angels who work to keep members awake and praying at night.

And thanks be to God for each prayer call member who has persevered patiently through stormy waters, strong winds and difficult times, and to the Courage apostolate which has steadfastly supported this effort.

If you would like to join the EnCourage prayer call, which prays nightly at 9:00 p.m. Eastern time, email praywithcourage@gmail.com with your request.