

Saint Ignatius Church
Portland, Oregon

**Novena
of Grace**



March 4th to March 12th

A. M. D. G.

The
Novena of Grace

in honor of

St. Francis Xavier

Apostle of the Indies
and Japan


March 4th ✠ March 12th

History
of the
Novena of Grace
revealed by
St. Francis Xavier
to
Father Mastrilli
of the Society of Jesus



St. Francis Xavier was one of the first companions of St. Ignatius, founder of the Society of Jesus. In 1541 he went as a missionary to India, then a far-off world buried in the darkness of idolatry. For eleven years he labored in India and Japan and converted to the faith hundreds of thousands of infidels. Not content with the mighty conquest of India and Japan, his great heart went out in sympathy to the hundreds of millions of Chinese

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to whom God was unknown. With the hope of bringing these people to the knowledge of the true God, Xavier sailed from Malacca in 1552 and soon reached the island of Sancian, off the coast of China. Here he was stricken with a deadly fever. In utter destitution, without proper food, under a wretched shelter, exposed to the biting December winds, deprived even of the last sacraments, the great Apostle Xavier breathed out his noble spirit on the second of December, 1552. His body lay unburied for two days and then, without any of the ceremonies of the Church, it was consigned to a lonely grave by the seashore.

When word of his death reached India, some influential Christians sent orders to have the body exhumed and brought to Malacca, where it arrived on the twenty-second of March, three and a half months after Xavier's death.

So far God had allowed His great Apostle to die a death that would seem to befit an outcast; but now He was about to manifest to the whole world the high degree of sanctity to which Xavier had arrived.

When the ship that conveyed Xavier's body reached Malacca, the city was in a pitiful condition. A fearful pestilence had been raging for many weeks, and the populace was simply melting away under the scourge. As soon,

however, as the body of Xavier was brought ashore, the plague suddenly disappeared; no new cases developed and all who were already infected, Mahometans and infidels, as well as Christians, were cured immediately. In consequence of such manifest miracles the name of Xavier was enshrined in the hearts of Mahometans and infidels and Christians alike. From Malacca the sacred remains were transferred to Goa, and here again God testified to Xavier's sanctity. The report had reached Goa of the wonderful miracles that had taken place at Malacca and hence, when the saint's remains arrived in the harbor, the streets were lined with people suffering from every known human ailment. Many who were too sick to be moved from their beds were carried by friends and laid in the streets. While Xavier's body was being carried through the streets to the Church of St. Paul, the wonders of the "Apostolic Age" were renewed. There went out from the body a power to heal all. The blind suddenly recovered their sight; the lame and the paralyzed recovered the use of their limbs; the deaf recovered their hearing; the dumb recovered their speech; lepers were made clean; the bed-ridden arose and walked. Tears of joy overflowed from grateful hearts, while shouts of triumph broke forth from hundreds of lips as they beheld the instantaneous and miraculous cures all about them. The whole city went

wild with triumphant hope, and the name of Xavier was borne along on every breath.

The miracles wrought here were so numerous, were so stupendous in their nature and were witnessed by so many thousands that they caused a great sensation not only in India, but also throughout Europe. The story of Xavier's Apostolic labors and his power to obtain favors from God was told in every land. Very soon an unbounded confidence in the intercession of Xavier diffused itself throughout all Catholic countries. Prayers directed to him, invoking his aid, brought such manifest proof of his power in heaven that on the twelfth of March, 1622, Xavier was canonized as a saint.

Novena of Grace

Among the many devotions adopted by the faithful to invoke the intercession of Xavier was a nine-days' prayer called the "Novena" in honour of Xavier's canonization. St. Francis himself suggested this devotion to Father Mastrilli, whom he miraculously cured at the point of death. In the year 1633 the Viceroy of Naples wished to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception and requested Father Mastrilli to superintend the decorations in the Royal Church. While the Father was adorning the altar, a hammer slipped from the hand of one of the tradesmen working at the dome and, striking him on the temple, felled him to the ground. For days he lingered at the point of death, and although eminent physicians were in attendance, they at last despaired of his recovery and announced that his death was at hand. At this crisis St. Francis Xavier appeared to him, reminding him of his promise to go to the Indian Mission and asked him to repeat his vow. Before the apparition ceased, Xavier assured him that "*All who would earnestly ask his intercession with God for nine days in honour of his canonization, would infallibly experience the effects of his great power in heaven and would receive whatever they asked that would contribute to their salvation.*" Thereupon the sick man raised himself in bed, removed the bandages from his head, where there was not the least trace of the wound; he got up and dressed himself, completely cured. Later on he went to Japan and closed a glorious missionary career by a martyr's death. This Novena was cele-

brated annually with great solemnity from the fourth of March to the twelfth, the anniversary of Xavier's canonization. It became known throughout the whole Catholic world as the "NOVENA OF GRACE," on account of the innumerable graces and extraordinary favors obtained through the intercession of Xavier. God's ways are wonderful. He Himself did not convert three thousand or five thousand people in Jerusalem by a single sermon, but He did use Peter, the fisherman, to convert these thousands. He Himself did not convert to the Faith twelve hundred thousand infidels in India, but He did use Xavier, the Missionary, to accomplish this mighty task. So it was in the beginning, so it was during Xavier's mortal career, so it is today. God uses his saints, in heaven and on earth, as the medium through which He manifests His power.

As for Xavier, who, in heaven, begged and obtained countless and stupendous miracles not only for Christians, but also for infidels and Mahometans, who despised the very name of Christ, what will he do for us if we earnestly ask his intercession? His influence in heaven is not less effective for us than it was for Pagans and Mahometans. He is still the same Xavier full of zeal for souls, only now this zeal is intensified a thousandfold by the vision of God's great love.

There are few large cities where this Novena is not celebrated with abundant fruit; the crowds who attend are so great, their devotion so earnest, their confidence in Xavier so strong, that remarkable conversions, miraculous cures and extraordinary graces flow abundantly from the hand of God.

Prayers

for the

Novena of Grace



In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

V. Thou, O Lord, wilt open my lips.

R. And my mouth shall announce Thy praise.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen.

Prayer

PRIEST: O God! who wast pleased to reduce to the bosom of Thy Church, the nations of the Indies, through the preaching and miracles of St. Francis Xavier, mercifully grant us, that we may imitate his virtues, whose glorious merits we hold in veneration. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PEOPLE: Amen.

Hymn

Oh, Father St. Francis, We kneel at thy feet

While blessings and favours we beg and
entreat,

That thou from thy bright throne in heaven
above

Would look on thy clients with pity and
love.

St. Francis Xavier, Oh pray, pray for us!

St. Francis Xavier, Oh pray, pray for us!

Oh, Father St. Francis, thy words were
once strong

Against Satan's wiles and an infidel throng,

Not less is thy might where in heaven thou
art;

Oh, come to our aid, in our battle take part.

St. Francis Xavier, Oh pray, pray for us!

St. Francis Xavier, Oh pray, pray for us!

Prayers of Novena



PRIEST AND PEOPLE: O most amiable and loving St. Francis Xavier, in union with thee, I adore the Divine Majesty. Whilst joyfully giving thanks to God for the wonderful graces which He conferred upon thee in life, and for the great glory with which He has gifted thee in heaven, I come to thee with heartfelt love, begging thee to secure for me, by thy powerful intercession, the inestimable blessings of living and dying in the state of grace. I also beseech thee to obtain the favour I ask in this Novena. (Here each will for a few moments ask, in private, the special favour he wishes to obtain.) But if what I ask is not for the glory of God, or for the good of my soul, do thou obtain for me what is most conducive to both. Amen.

PRIEST: Pray for us St. Francis Xavier.

PEOPLE: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Discourse



Hymn of St. Francis Xavier

O God, Thou art the object of my love,
Not for the hope of endless joys above,
Not for the fear of endless pains below,
Which those who love Thee not must undergo.
For me, and such as me, Thou once didst bear
The ignominious cross, the nails, the spear;
A thorny crown transpierced Thy sacred brow;
What bloody sweats from every member flow!
Such as then was, and is Thy love to me,
Such is and shall be still my love for Thee;
Thy love, O Jesus, will I ever sing—
O God of love, sweet Saviour, dearest King!

Benediction

of

The Most Blessed Sacrament



PEOPLE: O Salutaris hostia,
Quae Coeli pandis ostium:
Bella premunt hostilia
Da robur, fer auxilium.
PEOPLE: Uni trinoque Domino
Sit sempiterna gloria:
Qui vitam sine termino,
Nobis donet in patria. Amen.
PRIEST:

Favorite Prayer of St. Francis Xavier

ETERNAL GOD: Creator of all things!
remember that the souls of infidels have
been created by Thee, and formed to Thine
own image and likeness; behold, O Lord!
how, to Thy dishonour, with these same
souls hell is being filled. Remember that
Jesus Christ, Thine only Son, for their sal-
vation, suffered a most cruel death. Do not
permit, O Lord, I beseech Thee, that Thy
Divine Son be any longer despised by in-
fidels, but rather, being appeased by the
prayers of Thy Saints and of the Church,
the most holy Spouse of Thy Son, vouch-

safe to be mindful of Thy mercy; and forgetting their idolatry and their infidelity, bring them also to know Him Whom Thou didst send, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord, Who is our health, life, and resurrection, through Whom we have been redeemed and saved, to Whom be all glory for ever. Amen.

PEOPLE: Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui,
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui;
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.

PEOPLE: Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et jubilatio,
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio:
Procedenti ab utroque
Compar sit laudatio. Amen.

PRIEST: Panem de coelo praestitisti eis.

PEOPLE: Omne delectamentum in se
habentem.

Oremus

PRIEST: Deus qui nobis sub Sacramento mirabili, passionis tuae memoriam reliquisti, tribue quaesumus, ita nos corporis et sanguinis tui sacra mysteria venerari, ut redemptionis tuae fructum in nobis jugiter sentiamus. Qui vivis et regnas in saecula saeculorum.

PEOPLE: Amen.



The Divine Praises

Priest and People:

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His Holy Name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ true God and true Man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

Blessed be His Most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Holy God

(Standing All Sing)

1.

Holy God, we praise Thy name,
Lord of all, we bow before Thee,
All on earth, Thy sceptre claim.
All in heaven above adore Thee;
Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign.

2.

Hark! the loud celestial hymn,
Angel choirs above are raising,
Cherubim and Seraphim.
In unceasing choirs praising,
Fill the Heaven with sweet accord
Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord.

PEOPLE—Divine Jesus, lonely tonight in so many tabernacles, without visitor or worshipper, I offer Thee my Heart. O! may its very beating be a prayer of love to Thee. Thou art ever watchful under the Sacramental veils. In Thy love Thou never sleepest, and Thou art never weary of Thy vigil for sinners. O loving Jesus, O lonely Jesus, may my heart be a lamp the light of which shall burn and beam for Thee alone. Watch Sacramental Sentinel, watch, for the weary world, for the erring soul and for me, Thy poor child.

Good Night, Dear Jesus

Standing—All Sing

1.

Good night, dear Jesus, thanks for Thy love
And all Thy gifts showered from above.
For our offences we are contrite
Dear gentle Saviour, good night, good
night,
Good night, dear Jesus, good night, good
night.

2.

Good night, sweet Jesus, guard us in sleep,
Our souls and bodies in Thy love keep.
Waking or sleeping, keep us in sight,
Dear gentle Saviour, good night, good
night,
Good night, dear Jesus, good night, good
night.