

Novena of Grace
Sunday 3.11.18
Sarah Weller

Following Fr Patrick's reflection:

One of my great spiritual teachers, Rosie, used to tell me: "We're all just God with skin on." Over the nine days of our Novena of Grace, her voice has come to me often with this phrase. We are all God with skin on, walking together. Praying together. Bringing our needs to the God who lives in us already. We have explored how we can be in right relationship with ourselves, with God, with those closest to us and with our world, and how we can work with God to embrace and nurture Peace. But more than that, we have held each other closely. Held each other's prayers and hopes and deep desires. Whether we were here for 1 mass or each day for 9 days or for all 20 masses, we showed up for each other and reminded each other that God is close.

You may have come into this Novena with a clear intention. That may still be your intention. You may have come in with an intention and God surprised you with something new. You may have come seeking and have found what you needed. You may still be waiting to discover why you were called to be here, trusting in the path God has laid before you. Or maybe this is just something you stumbled into, a quick detour on your way to something else. However you entered this Novena, we trust that God's graces have been flowing in and around and through you during this time, whether they are obvious or not.

We invite you to share these graces with one another here. With family and friends. With neighbors and other community members. Help the ripples of this Novena stretch farther. Help these ripples of reconciliation and hope and peace move out from this place and into our families and neighborhoods and workplaces and places where they are needed most.

We wanted to take a moment to share some of the graces that have flowed in and around and through us during this Novena time:

(We shared graces that came to us through the Novena with one another and with the congregation)

We thank you for letting us be part of this prayer with you. We thank all those whose tireless work and prayer and support made this possible. We thank this community for

holding this space and time for this important time of prayer together. May we go forth from our Novena of Grace, sharing the graces we've received, in ways we know and in ways we are yet to discover and trusting that God is residing deep within us. May these graces and blessings continue to flow forth from us as we embrace and hold space for and co-create Peace with our God in our everyday lives.

And one more time, I'll let a poet end our Novena reflection. Denise Levertov writes:

*An awe so quiet
I don't know when it began.*

*A gratitude
had begun
to sing in me.*

*Was there
some moment
dividing song from no song?*

When does dewfall begin?

*When does night
fold its arms over our hearts
to cherish them?*

When is daybreak?