

and continued penance for them. Thus do I find that I have not as yet made the first step in the way of perfect virtue. Assist me, great St. Dominic! Animate my courage that I may not fail in walking after thee.

Eighth Day

St. Dominic's Zeal for God and Souls.

"The zeal of Thy house hath eaten me up " (Ps. lxxviii. 10)

St. Dominic's love for God and his neighbor bore marvelous fruits through his zeal for souls. This was a natural outgrowth of his love; in truth, it was part of his love. The goodness of our Blessed Lord, His mercy, and His love, were so deeply fixed in St. Dominic's heart that he longed to make all men partakers of these divine gifts. His life was spent for souls.

The vision which was granted to him, - in which St. Peter and St. Paul appeared to him and told him to preach, for God had chosen him for this office - was but the confirmation of that other vision in which his saintly mother saw him, as with a flaming torch, going over the entire world, enlightening all men with the fire of divine love. To him the words of St. Paul may well be applied: "He maketh his ministers a flame of fire."

His apostolate among the Albigensians God blessed with wonderful fruits. He labored in Spain and Italy, and many thousands were brought back to the true fold by his preaching and miracles. Over the earth he scattered his devoted followers; and soon Dominican blood was poured out in every land, the fruitful witness of St. Dominic's zeal for God and souls. Every night he scourged himself till his innocent blood flowed on the ground, that God might show mercy to sinners. In naught did he spare himself; rather, in all things he spent himself for Jesus Christ and souls redeemed by Him. His life is the story of a holocaust of a victim entirely consumed for zeal.

Practice

What are we doing for God and souls? Have we ever made a sacrifice for the honor of our Divine Master? Have we ever done aught that Jesus might be better known and loved? Do we ever think of the interests of Jesus? Do we ever reflect on the value of souls, on the price which Jesus paid for them? Is our charity active? Do we seek to instruct the ignorant, to recall the wayward? Or do we content ourselves with a selfish attention to our own spiritual wants? Ah! if we have true love for our Blessed Lord, if we realize what souls have cost Him, we shall be willing to sacrifice our own ease, to forget our own interests, in order to labor for Him by helping our neighbor on the way of everlasting life; and thus we shall more effectually secure our own welfare. Earnestly ask St. Dominic to make you zealous for the interests of Jesus and souls.

Ninth Day

St. Dominic's Sweetness and Patience.

"By patience let us run to the fight proposed unto us " (Heb. xii. 1)

It was St. Dominic's gentleness and sweetness which won many souls to God, when all his other powers seemed in vain. On one occasion, a heretic maliciously led him through a thorny wood, where his feet were terribly lacerated. He exhibited such patience and sweetness towards his persecutor that the miserable man, touched with remorse, fell at his feet and renounced his errors.

During all the years of his apostolate St. Dominic not only endured the sufferings of hunger and thirst, but he was ever pursued by relentless hatred and persecutions of wicked men and Satan himself. Under all these trials he bore himself with invincible patience. Like St. Paul, he would engage in combat only with the arms of patience and sweetness. With these he conquered the demon, and won many triumphs among men. Never did he yield to impatience; never did he allow natural repugnance to overcome him. Under all circumstances, in health and sickness, in honor and persecution, he ever displayed the meekness of Jesus, for Whom he suffered all, that he might convert souls. This noble warfare against his own nature St. Dominic maintained till the end of his life, generously bearing all the sufferings which it inflicted upon him.

Practice

We are followers of Jesus Christ. Are we His imitators? Do we learn of Him, because He is meek and humble of heart? Do we strive, like St. Dominic, under the trials which come unto us, to imitate our Blessed Lord's patience and sweetness? Are we gentle only in prosperity? Do we yield to our dislikes and repugnance's? Is every little trial sufficient to rob us of peace of soul? Are we willing to endure any of our neighbor's failings? Even in our zeal, are we guided by the spirit of gentleness, or do we allow ourselves to become harsh and bitter? Let us remember that to bear and forbear, to suffer all from others, and to give others nothing to endure from us, will quickly establish in us in holy peace and gentleness. Ask St. Dominic that his spirit may be yours.

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NOVENA TO SAINT DOMINIC OF GUZMAN

**Recited from: July 30th through August 7th (Ordinary Time)
July 26th through August 3rd (Latin Calendar)**



**Feast Day: August 8th (Ordinary Calendar)
August 4th (Latin Calendar)**

Novena

The word Novena derives its name from the Latin word "novem" meaning "nine." A novena can be either a private or public devotion in the Catholic Church to obtain special graces.

NOVENA TO SAINT DOMINIC

First Day

The Faith of Saint Dominic.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. xi 6)

With his mother's milk, St. Dominic imbibed that greatest of virtues, divine faith. Blessed Jane of Aza was a woman of remarkable piety, and her son was a faithful imitator of his holy mother.

Fortified by his strong faith, St. Dominic undertook all those works which resulted in such wonderful blessings to the Church, and in such great glory to God by the salvation of so many souls. Nothing dismayed him. His confidence was unbounded. In His name he accomplished all. And though he sighed for martyrdom that he might seal his faith by shedding his blood, God did not will this sacrifice. In the thousands of his children, however, who offered their lives for Christ, St. Dominic may well be considered a martyr.

Practice

Our Lord tells us that we may know ourselves by our fruits. What are the fruits of our faith? Are they such that we may have confidence that we are pleasing God? What is the motive of all we do? Do we live, as the just man, by faith? Are we strong in trial and faithful in temptation? Do we rely on God or seek human motives and human means in the good we do?

Let us learn a lesson from St. Dominic. Let us ask of him to obtain for us the gift of a lively faith, his unshaken confidence in God.

Second Day

The Humility of Saint Dominic.

"Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls" (Matt. xi 29)

Practice

Neglect of prayer is the great evil of many. Without prayer even the sacraments will not produce their effects. Hence so many who often receive the sacraments continue in their imperfections, because of the neglect of prayer. Do we endeavor to cultivate a spirit of prayer? Do we strive to fit ourselves for prayer? Why are we so cold, so distracted? Why do we love prayer so little? Because we do not seek, like St. Dominic, to bring the Holy Ghost into our hearts. We do not guard our senses; we do not learn that meekness and humility so necessary for efficacious prayer. We do not protect the holy flame of devotion by spiritual reading and judicious silence. In these virtues St. Dominic excelled. He is our father and our master. Let us implore him to guide us in the way of prayer, to make us faithful imitators. Remember his miracles effected by prayer. Think now of his power in heaven - much greater than when on earth.

Seventh Day

St. Dominic's Spirit of Mortification.

"They, who are of Christ, have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscence's" (Gal. v. 24)

St. Dominic well knew that without the spirit of prayer and mortification all his works would be in vain. From his childhood, therefore, he was a model of mortification. Though most innocent, he longed to suffer with Jesus and to weep for the sins of others, in imitation of his Blessed Lord.

His penances were most rigorous. At all times gentle to others, he spared himself neither sleeping nor waking. Day and night he girded himself with an iron chain. His fasts, most severe in themselves were continued until death. During his journeys on foot he suffered much. Even when wearied, nature obliged him to take some repose, it was hard stones or leaning against the altar steps, that he reclined his exhausted body. Whole nights he passed in the church; never did he possess a bed or room which could be called his own. Whenever he did not remain in the church, he gladly accepted whatever accommodations the brethren had prepared for him. Ever a most faithful observer of the rule of his Order, he was likewise careful that his followers should also adhere to it. Hence he always rebuked any infractions of the constitutions; but so gentle and affectionate was his manner, that penance coming from his hands, almost ceased to be penance. As his life was one of charity for his neighbor, so was it one of mortification for his neighbor's sins.

Practice

Am I convinced, with St. Dominic, that there is no sanctity possible without mortification? He was most innocent; I have often offended God. How then can I hesitate to walk in his steps? Have I ever vigorously attacked my passions? What is my prevailing weakness? Am I strong to overcome it? Do I not rather hesitate at the first sting of mortification, and is not the shadow of the cross sufficient to frighten me? How often have I tried to justify my cowardice! How often have I drowned the reproaches of my conscience by the din of worldly pleasures! Can I not accuse myself of duty neglected simply because duty was irksome? I have forgotten God. I have not thought of the many offences which others commit against Him. Even my own sins I have sought to palliate instead of doing a rigorous

long watches before the altar, he would go from cell to cell to see that his children were protected, carefully arranging the covering of those who had disturbed it during sleep. Seldom speaking but of God or to God he was never known to utter an unkind or uncharitable word. Ever returning good for evil, ever full of gentleness and sweetness, he lived only for God's glory and the salvation of his neighbor.

Practice

True love for God must ever include love for neighbor. "If any man," says St. John, "say I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." Let us examine our hearts. What are our thoughts, our words and our deeds towards our neighbors? Do we wish them good? Do we speak well of them? Do we tell their faults, or do we conceal them, and pray for them? Do we assist them in distress? Do we endeavor to advance their salvation? Do we contribute to their happiness whenever we can? Is the motive of our love always pure? Are we not often guided solely by our sympathies or our aversions? Do we see God in our neighbor? Do we see souls redeemed by Jesus Christ? Are we willing to return good for evil? Are we willing to make any sacrifice for others? Do we love God in our neighbor, and do we seek His glory in the welfare of our neighbor?

Holy Father St. Dominic, pity our weakness. Make us faithful imitators of your ardent charity for me.

Sixth Day

St. Dominic's Spirit of Prayer.

"We ought always to pray, and not to faint " (Luke xviii. 1)

The wonderful sanctity to which St. Dominic attained was due to his continual prayer. He, indeed, prayed always. Like the apostle, he could well say that his conversation was in heaven. Prayer was his life, his light, and his strength. The spirit which in early youth made it his delight to serve at the altar, to visit the Blessed Sacrament, and to sing in the Office the praises of God, was the spirit of prayer. From prayer he learned more than from books. By prayer he accomplished more than by preaching or miracles. When his eloquence, and the wonders which he worked, failed to convert the Albigensians, it was the prayer of the Rosary that overcame them.

Whole nights he passed in prayer. On his journeys he prayed almost continually, often going aside from his companions that he might give himself to deeper contemplation. His love of prayer, as it exalted him in sanctity, also obtained many gifts. Often rapt in ecstasy, he learned in communion with God the most sublime truths. He was rewarded with the gifts of prophecy and miracles, with a keen insight into the hearts of others, and with such persuasive and convincing powers that none could resist him.

Though of illustrious birth, and endowed by God with the most splendid gifts of mind and heart, St. Dominic considered himself the lowliest, the most miserable of men. He well knew the grace he had received; but to God he gave glory. He realized that humility was the root of perfection, and as such he cherished it.

So deep was his conviction of his own unworthiness, that before he entered a town he always knelt on the road and prayed God not afflict the people for his sins, but to make his efforts fruitful in their behalf.

He embraced every occasion of humiliation. In choosing a place of residence, he always preferred Carcasson to Toulouse, because in the former place he was treated with contempt. Three times he refused a bishopric, preferring to remain with his brethren, under whose feet, as he said, he wished to be buried.

He even sought to lay aside the office of General of his Order, alleging that he was too negligent, that he had lost all his usefulness.

Practice

What ought to be our reflection at the sight of such an example? What have our lives been? Do we like the saints, examine ourselves in the light of God? Can we look back on lives of innocence and purity, like St. Dominic? And yet can we not count many acts of pride? Have we made the first step in humility? Do we realize, with St. Dominic, that, at best, our justice compared to the justice of God, is but a shadow? Do we seek occasions of humiliation? Do we strive to advance our glory in every way, entirely forgetful that to the Lord, and to Him alone, glory should be given?

Let us ask St. Dominic to change our hearts, to mold them after the model of his own.

Third Day

St. Dominic's Love for God.

"If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema " (1 Cor. xvi 22)

St. Dominic's love for Jesus Christ was the mainspring for all his actions. For Him he lived and died. All his labors, his preaching, his writings, his journeys, his miracles, were the outpouring of this love that God might be better known and better served. He ever prayed that he might love God with a pure love, that he might love Him solely for His own sake. Jesus Christ and Him crucified he only desired. The passion of our Blessed Lord was the object of his frequent meditation and this so inflamed his heart that he longed to yield himself up a victim, to shed his blood to prove how much he loved his Master. And when he was asked by the heretics what he would do if he fell into their hands, he replied that he would ask them not to kill him by a single blow, but to cut off his members one by one, and then, plucking out his eyes, leave him there to die.

The Blessed Sacrament was also the object of his most tender devotion. Frequently did he prolong his vigils before the altar during the entire night. The tabernacle was the center of his love. There he always made the first visit on arriving at the end of his journey.

In offering up the adorable sacrifice of the Mass, his devotion was most touching. Never did he celebrate without shedding abundant tears, and often while holding his Divine Master in his hands, he was raised in the air, where he remained in heavenly ecstasy.

Practice

How often do we make acts of love? Let us measure our love by our deeds, by our suffering, for suffering is the test of love. How does it appear compared with St. Dominic's burning love? Have we ever proved our love by deed and not by word only, as St. John requires? Do we try to imitate our Lord in His passion? How often do we think of Gethsemane and Calvary? And the altar? Are our visits frequent? Do we not soon grow weary of staying a few minutes with Jesus, Who remains days and nights for us?

Let us ask St. Dominic to be our master, to teach us how to love our Blessed Lord.

Fourth Day

St. Dominic's Love for Our Lady.

"Behold thy Mother " (John xiv 27)

St. Dominic's devotion to Mary grew with him from his childhood. He chose her to be his Mother, and under her protection he placed all his works. For her he did all, knowing that this was the best way to do all for Jesus. Her *Ave* was ever on his lips before he preached. Together with the name of Jesus, he ever proclaimed the glory of His Mother. The same spirit he bequeathed to his followers so long known as the Friars of Mary. And she, in her turn, was always mindful of St. Dominic, whom she lovingly called her son. As a pledge of her gracious favor, she gave to his dear

Reginald the white scapular of his Order. To himself, she gave the Rosary, the sweetest devotion to our dear Mother. One night as he prayed, a comforting vision was granted to him, as he beheld a great number of his children in heaven, even under the mantle of the Queen. And when about to close his eyes in death, our Lady made him a consoling promise that all who persevered in his order would be saved. "The mother of his God had come to him," and we, his children still receive her visits, for in the beads, which St. Dominic left us we are able to continue his love for her.

Practice

The love of Mary is natural to all who believe in her Divine Son. Our faith in Jesus made man is the root, the explanation, and the vindication of our love for our Blessed Lady. We all look up to her, the foundations of whose sanctity are laid on the summit of the holy mountains; but how many allow their devotion to end here? Do we, who ought to be the imitators of St. Dominic try to copy his example in loving Mary? Do we take her for our model? Do we endeavor, like St. Dominic, to study the lessons which she teaches us, and do we ask of her the grace to follow them in our lives? If our devotion to Mary go no further than praise; if we do not strive to produce in our lives the virtues which she practiced, we shall not offer to her the fullness of homage which she desires. Love and imitation! Let these be our watchwords in devotion to her who is Queen of the Rosary, and let her beads be our dearest companion. Let us ever remember that to do all for Mary is the safest way to Jesus.

Fifth Day

St. Dominic's Love for His Neighbor.

"This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you "
" (John xv. 12)

As St. Dominic loved God for His own sake, so he loved his neighbor in God and for God. In each individual he saw a soul redeemed by Christ, and this love he longed to save.

No sacrifice for the welfare of his neighbor daunted him. When a student he sold all his books, then far more precious than now, in order to relieve the poor. Twice he offered himself to be sold into slavery that others might be assisted. He knew no distinction of persons. He yielded to no distinction of persons. He yielded to no personal likes or dislikes. The image of his Divine Master, which he saw in every soul, was the power which moved him. His prayers, his tears, his vigils, his sufferings, his penances, were nearly all offered for others. Three times nightly he scourged himself, once for the souls in purgatory, once for sinners, and once for himself. He worked miracles to feed his brethren; and after his