

Nagasaki, Japan, is familiar to Americans as the city on which the second atomic bomb was dropped, immediately killing over 37,000 people. Three and a half centuries before, 26 martyrs of Japan were crucified on a hill, now known as the Holy Mountain, overlooking Nagasaki. Among them were priests, brothers and laymen, Franciscans, Jesuits and members of the Secular Franciscan Order; there were catechists, doctors, simple artisans and servants, old men and innocent children—all united in a common faith and love for Jesus and his Church. Brother Paul Miki, a Jesuit and a native of Japan, has become the best known among the martyrs of Japan. While hanging upon a cross, Paul Miki preached to the people gathered for the execution: “The sentence of judgment says these men came to Japan from the Philippines, but I did not come from any other country. I am a true Japanese. The only reason for my being killed is that I have taught the doctrine of Christ. I certainly did teach the doctrine of Christ. I thank God it is for this reason I die. I believe that I am telling only the truth before I die. I know you believe me and I want to say to you all once again: Ask Christ to help you to become happy. I obey Christ. After Christ’s example I forgive my persecutors. I do not hate them. I ask God to have pity on all, and I hope my blood will fall on my fellow men as a fruitful rain.”

When missionaries returned to Japan in the 1860s, at first they found no trace of Christianity. But after establishing themselves they found that thousands of Christians lived around Nagasaki and that they had secretly preserved the faith. Beatified in 1627, the martyrs of Japan were finally canonized in 1862.

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NOVENA TO SAINT PAUL MIKI AND COMPANIONS

Recited From: January 28th through February 5th



Feast Day: February 6th (Ordinary Time)

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 Paul Miki and Companions

**O God, strength of all the Saints,
who through the Cross were pleased to call
the Martyrs Saint Paul Miki and Companions to life,
grant, we pray, that by their intercession
we may hold with courage even until death
to the faith that we profess.
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.**

(Mention intention (s) here)

Amen.

PRAYER TO ST PAUL MIKI AND HIS COMPANIONS FOR COURAGE

**God our Father,
source of strength for all your saints,
you led Paul Miki and his companions
through the suffering of the cross
to the joy of eternal life.
May their prayers give us courage
to be loyal until death in professing our faith.
Through Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.**