



AN ADVENT NOVENA FOR
OUR PRIESTS

Introductory Prayer:

Heavenly Father, from whom all fatherhood is given, I praise and thank you for the gift of priesthood and the special men you have called to be priests after your own heart. Grant me the courage to discover the beauty of Adoration by spending substantial time in your Real Presence. Do not allow me to fear the Silence but find your voice in it, increasing my resolve to remain faithful to your commandments and strengthening me to better support and help my priests. Forgive me for the times I have failed to provide whatever physical, fraternal, or spiritual support your priests needed. I resolve to unite myself more and more to Jesus Christ in the Sacraments, especially Confession and Holy Communion and strengthened with these weapons, undertake my duties proper to my state in life to protect and defend all those I love, my family, the Faith, and the Church for the sake of Jesus Christ who laid down his life for me.

DAY ONE

Heavenly Father, **equip me for the battle** you ask me to fight. Grant me the weapons of faith, hope, and love and the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit so that I may fight, not as I would choose, but as you need me to: for the greater glory of God, your Church, and the priesthood. Show me where the enemy lurks both within me and around me so that, through your Sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist, he may be routed and I may be freed and strengthened to help others, especially your priests.

DAY TWO

Heavenly Father, **train me to see with new eyes** your Son, Jesus Christ, in each priest. Forgive me for the many times my limited vision stopped at the man and judged him harshly without considering the weight of his cross. Grant me Simeon's strength to leap into the fray and help priests lift their crosses so that they know they need not travel to Calvary alone. Priests will have my support every step of the way. I will defend them.

DAY THREE

Heavenly Father, **attune my ears** to hear better the silent calls for help made by your priests. May they come to trust me, and may I ever be worthy of that trust, and not hesitate to call for support when the tide of the battle turns against them. A good soldier can read his captain's orders in his eyes without a word. Make me an attentive and reliable soldier of Christ.

DAY FOUR

Heavenly Father, **cleanse my palate** of all that is unholy and unclean and full of complaint about priests. Give me words to build up rather than tear down. Respectful speech can squelch the cancer of whining gossip and rumors before they travel to destroy unity and charity. Let me never quail at a servant girl's accusation by a charcoal fire that leads me to deny Jesus Christ and any truths of his Church. When mockery or slander are easy, give me the strength to be un-popularly yours and defend my priests and the priesthood.

DAY FIVE

Heavenly Father, **strengthen my hands** to reach only for what is truly holy. Harden the callouses and let me not spurn hard labor, scraped skin, and dirty fingernails if I am laboring for the Lord and the Lord alone. Make my fingers never stretch out toward the seduction of evil but rather clench my fists to fight directly against it with decisive and accurate blows. But make these same strong hands ever alert to extend to my priests in assistance the moment they need the aid. Forgive me for the times I have refused to help any priest (either with work or an offer of fraternal charity) in the past.

DAY SIX

Heavenly Father, **make my legs nimble** in the service of the Church. Enable me to endure with much stamina a long road to Calvary alongside my priests, eager to be of whatever service they need especially when their energy and strength are taxed beyond the limit and they still must labor without ceasing. Make me unhesitant to step up and step into whatever forays my priests conduct for the salvation of souls.

DAY SEVEN

Heavenly Father, in all these gifts you give me I ask you to **empower me to be the spiritual warrior and leader you desire**, fulfilling the roles you ask of each man to be *priest, prophet, and king* such that I may be a force-multiplier in my sphere of influence. Make me a witness to the Gospel as a recognizable disciple of Christ in home, work, parish, and Church. At this season of the year, when the Church awaits with longing the arrival of the Savior, make clearly manifest to me all the concrete ways I can help and assist my priests so that they can bear *more* fruit in the souls of many.

DAY EIGHT

Heavenly Father, to some you have granted the gift of **biological fatherhood**, allowing them to experience the first time they hold their helpless infant child in their arms the **raw and fierce desire to protect such innocence from any and all harm**. Such a reaction, even couched in gentleness, is precisely how you designed human men to be. Hone this trait within me to a new spiritual level that I will be willing to sacrifice anything rather than allow harm to come to the innocent. Help me see the spiritual fatherhood in my priest and his desire to sacrifice to save souls, and let him know I am ready to assist.

DAY NINE

Heavenly Father, to some you have granted the gift of **spiritual fatherhood**, allowing them to experience the first time they absolved sins or consecrated the Host your awesome yet tender condescension in desiring mere men to be your humble instruments. Being mere men, like me, they will fall. I resolve to help them rise. Help me to imitate their sense of reverence and awe of the Eucharist and to grow in my desire to **defend and protect** this Sacrament of Sacraments in the Church.

This Advent show me how to wait as Saint Joseph waited with Mary for the arrival of Jesus. He did not passively sit aside and allow events to unfold indifferently. He looked to his responsibilities to his wife and child as a man of God would. He sought shelter and he ensured their protection. His spiritual life was holy and sound, enabling him to respond immediately to the angel's promptings in times of persecution and danger: Protect the wife, shield the baby, listen to the angel and do your job!



Suggestions to accompany Novena

- + Go to adoration, go to confession, pray the rosary like a man
- + Free up the priest so he can attend to what really matters: the things only ordained men can do
- + Make it a point to commit to personally grow in your Catholic faith