

May 18, 2023

Good Morning!

Men's Club meeting tonight in the Parish Hall at 6:30.

“Today begins the Novena to the Holy Spirit - who is actively working for us at St. Joseph's! Please recite the novena as a thank you for all the blessings we have! Come Holy Spirit - believe and receive the Holy Spirit in your life!”

1. Today's Readings: [Thursday of the Sixth Week of Easter | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: Our next 2 popes, Nicholas II and Alexander II, both continued the reforms already begun. But while they made progress, they were not able to complete them as there were still difficulties to be resolved. That will be left to the trusted advisor Cardinal Hildebrand who will follow these 2 men as the next pope.

3. Quotes of the Day: As we begin the Novena of the Holy Spirit let us meditate on the first gift of wisdom.

~**Wisdom** – “But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.” *James 3:17*

~"The wisdom of the scriptures is learned rather by prayer than by study." *St. Philip Neri*

~"Remember, then, that you received a spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear. Keep safe what you received. God the Father sealed you, Christ the Lord strengthened you and sent the Spirit into your hearts as the pledge of what is to come." - *St. Ambrose*

***St. Joseph, Pray for Us!***

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## **NOVENA TO THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS**

The novena in honor of the Holy Spirit is the oldest of all novenas. Our Lord Jesus sent His apostles back to Jerusalem to await the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost. It is still the only novena officially prescribed by the Church. Addressed to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, it is a powerful plea for the light and strength and love so sorely needed by Christians.

### **HOW TO PRAY THE NOVENA**

The particular prayer and meditation are said each day and followed by: **Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be 7x, Act of Consecration** and the **Prayer for the Seven Gifts**.

### **ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY GHOST**

On my knees before the great multitude of heavenly witnesses I offer myself, soul and body to You, Eternal Spirit of God. I adore the brightness of Your purity the unerring keenness of Your justice and the might of Your love. You are the Strength and Light of my soul. In You I live and move and am. I desire never to grieve You by unfaithfulness to grace and I pray with all my heart to be kept from the smallest sin against You. Mercifully guard my every thought and grant that I may always watch for Your light: and listen to Your voice and follow Your gracious inspirations. I cling to You and give myself to You and ask You by Your compassion to watch over me in my weakness. Holding the pierced Feet of Jesus and looking at His Five Wounds and trusting in His Precious Blood and adoring His opened Side and stricken Heart I implore You, Adorable Spirit, Helper of my infirmity, so to keep me in Your grace that I may never sin against You. Give me grace O Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Father and the Son to say to You always and everywhere "Speak Lord for Your servant is listening." Amen.

### **PRAYER FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST**

## Novenas to the Holy Spirit for the Seven Gifts ~ Day One

O Lord Jesus Christ Who, before ascending into heaven did promise to send the Holy Spirit to finish Your work in the souls of Your Apostles and Disciples deign to grant the same Holy Spirit to me that He may perfect in my soul the work of Your grace and Your love. Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom that I may despise the perishable things of this world and aspire only after the things that are eternal; the Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind with the light of Your divine truth, the Spirit of Counsel that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining heaven, the Spirit of Fortitude; that I may bear my cross with You and that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation; the Spirit of Knowledge that I may know God, know myself, and grow perfect in the science of the Saints, the Spirit of Piety that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable, the Spirit of Fear that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God and may dread in any way to displease Him. Mark me, dear Lord with the sign of Your true disciples / and animate me in all things with Your Spirit. Amen.

### **1st DAY OF THE NOVENA**

*Holy Spirit! Lord of Light!  
From Your clear celestial height,  
Your pure beaming radiance give!*

### **The Holy Ghost**

Only one thing is important—eternal salvation. Only one thing, therefore, is to be feared—sin. Sin is the result of ignorance, weakness, and indifference. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Light, of Strength, and of Love. With His seven-fold gifts He enlightens the mind, strengthens the will, and inflames the heart with love of God. To ensure our salvation we ought to invoke the Divine Spirit daily, for "The Spirit helps our infirmity. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit Himself asks for us."

### **Prayer**

Almighty and eternal God, Who has promised to regenerate us by water and the Holy Spirit and has given us forgiveness of all sins. Be pleased to send forth from heaven upon us your sevenfold Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and fill us with the Spirit of Holy Fear. Amen.

(Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be 7x, Act of Consecration, Prayer of Seven Gifts)

## Popes of the mid 1000s, part 5

### 156. Nicholas II (1058-61)

One of the outstanding papal reformers was Pope Nicholas II, Gerhard of Burgundy. Born between 990 and 995, he grew up near one of the chief reform-minded abbeys of France, Cluny. He obviously was exposed to the attitudes this abbey promoted.

As a young priest, Gerhard was a Canon in Liege, Belgium. In his late middle age, he became bishop of Florence. With this new power, he worked to restore canonical life in many parishes. But his new life was not going to be smooth.

The sudden death of Stephen IX was followed by the irregular election of Pope Benedict X in 1058. Cardinal Hildebrand, on a diplomatic mission to Germany, made his way to Florence to meet with Duke Godfrey of Spoleto. They decided that Gerhard should be the real next pope. In December of that year, the cardinals who were against Benedict X met in Siena and elected Gerhard. He took the name Nicholas II.

Approaching Rome, Nicholas called for a synod to meet at Sutri. In the presence of Godfrey and the imperial chancellor, Guibert of Parma, Nicholas pronounced Benedict X deposed and excommunicated. Once reaching Rome, Nicholas gained military control of the city. Benedict fled to Gerard of Galeria.

For several years, Milan had been a hotbed of civil unrest due to a monk's teaching against clerical marriage and simony. The priests and bishops were against the attempted reform. Both clergy and the monk, Ariald, had gone to Pope Stephen asking for help. Stephen, a reformer, was sympathetic to Ariald. He had even sent envoys to assist in this reform. In 1059, Ariald returned to Rome and Nicholas II sent Peter Damian and Anselm of Lucca to Milan. Arguments died down and Archbishop Guido submitted to Rome by attending the Easter synod there.

This was not a small synod. The 113 bishops who attended covered much ground. First, they passed a change in election procedure, allowing only cardinals to participate in the election of a pope. Aristocrats were no longer allowed, giving the Church independence from laity on this point. Second, they prohibited simony and lay investiture (laymen giving a cleric his spiritual power). Third, marriages and mistresses were forbidden among the clerics. Married clerics could no longer say Mass or hold Church benefices. Fourth, pilgrims were protected by papal order in

their persons and belongings. Papal sanction was given to the Peace of God and Truce of God movements which were promoting religious reform. Lastly, the synod forced Berenger of Tours to renounce his teaching that the Real Presence in the Eucharist was merely symbolic.

Sicily was held by the Muslims; the southern part of the peninsula was occupied by Muslims and Normans. Nicholas wanted to retake Sicily for Christianity and saw the Normans as the perfect force to accomplish this. By August of 1059, Nicholas had formed an alliance with Hildebrand, Cardinal Humbert, Abbot Desiderus of Monte Cassino and the Norman leaders Robert Guiscard and Richard of Aversa. In exchange for the duchies, Nicholas got an army. Benedict and his supporters surrendered and renounced their position. This was the end of subordination of the Pope to the Roman nobles. The ability to give Italian land to people was all based on a fake document which claimed that Constantine had given Italy to the popes. It worked to Nicholas' advantage.

Months later, in 1060, the ex -Pope Benedict X was tried and sentenced to living in a "guest house" until he died.

Within two years, the German bishops declared that all of Nicholas' decrees were null and void. They broke off relations with Rome. There were a great many causes and no one knows which one tipped the scales. Any one of the decrees at the Easter synod would have done it. And Nicholas declared so many.

It was shortly after the bishops' declaration that Nicholas died. He had gone to Florence and succumbed there on 27 July 1061. His decrees, notwithstanding the German bishops' declarations, have withstood the test of time and are still upheld.

*Source: catholic365.com*

### **157. Alexander II (1061-73)**

Anselm of Lucca had been recognized for a number of years as one of the leaders of the reform party, especially in the Milanese territory, where he was born, at Baggio, of noble parentage. Together with Hildebrand, he had imbibed in Cluny Abbey the zeal for reformation.

The first place of his activity was Milan, where he lent to that great conflict against simony and clerical incontinency the weight of his eloquence and noble birth. The

means of silencing him, contrived by Archbishop Guido and other episcopal foes of reform in Lombardy (sending him to the court of the Emperor Henry III), had the opposite effect of enabling him to spread the reform in Germany. In 1057 the Emperor appointed him to the bishopric of Lucca. With increased prestige, he reappeared twice in Milan as legate of the Holy See, in 1057 in the company of Hildebrand, and in 1059 with St. Peter Damiani. Under the able leadership of this saintly triumvirate the reform forces were strong, in preparation for the inevitable conflict. The decree of Nicholas II (1059), by which the right of papal elections was virtually vested in the College of Cardinals, would be the issue to be fought and decided at the next vacancy of the Apostolic Throne. The death of Pope Nicholas two years later found both parties ready for battle.

The candidate endorsed by the cardinals, was Anselm; the other side put forward the name of Cadalus, Bishop of Parma, a protector and example of the prevailing vices of the age. The cardinals met in legal form and elected Anselm, who took the name of Alexander II. Before proceeding to his installation, the Sacred College notified the German Court of their action. The Germans were thought to have forfeited the privilege of confirming the election, however they contemptuously dismissed the ambassador of the cardinals without a hearing. Foreseeing a civil war, the cardinals on September 30 completed the election by enthroning the pope. Meanwhile some of the Roman nobles, who were enraged at their elimination as a dominant factor in the papal elections, joined by some of the episcopate of Lombardy, had proceeded to the German Court with a request for the royal sanction to a new election.

The Empress Agnes, as regent for her ten-year-old son, Henry IV, convoked an assembly of lay and clerical magnates at Basle; and here, without any legal right, and without the presence of a single cardinal, the Bishop of Parma was declared Pope, and took the name of Honorius II (October 28). In the contest which ensued, Pope Alexander was supported by the righteousness of his cause, by public opinion clamoring for reform, by the aid of the allied Normans of southern Italy, and by the benevolence of Beatrice and Matilda of Tuscany. Even in Germany things took a favorable turn for him, when Anno of Cologne seized the regency, and the repentant Empress withdrew to a convent. In a new diet, at Augsburg (October, 1062), it was decided that Burchard, Bishop of Halberstadt, should proceed to Rome and, after investigating the election of Alexander on the spot, make a report to a later assembly of the bishops of Germany and Italy.

Burchard's report was entirely in favor of Alexander. The latter defended his cause with eloquence and spirit in a council held at Mantua, at Pentecost, 1064 and Alexander was formally recognized as the legitimate Pope. His rival was excommunicated but kept up the contest with dwindling prospects till his death in 1072. During the darkest hours of the schism Alexander and his chancellor, Cardinal Hildebrand, never for a moment relaxed their hold upon the reins of government.

Under banners blessed by Alexander, Roger advanced to the conquest of Sicily, and William to the conquest of England. He was omnipresent, through his legates, punishing simoniacal bishops and incontinent clerics. He did not spare even his protector, Anno of Cologne, whom he twice summoned to Rome, once in 1068, to do penance, barefoot, for holding relations with the antipope, and again in 1070 to purge himself of the charge of simony. In his name his legate, St. Peter Damiani, under threat of excommunication and exclusion from the imperial throne, deterred Henry IV from divorcing his queen, Bertha of Turin. Another triumph was that of compelling Bishop Charles of Constance and Abbot Robert of Reichenau to return to the King the croziers and rings they had obtained through simony. One serious quarrel with Henry was left to be decided by his successor. In 1069 the Pope had rejected as a simonist the subdeacon Godfrey, whom Henry had appointed Archbishop of Milan; Henry failing to acquiesce, the Pope confirmed Atto, the choice of the reform party. Upon the king's ordering his appointee to be consecrated, Alexander formed an anathema against the royal advisers. The death of the Pope, April 21, 1073, left Hildebrand, his faithful chancellor, heir to his triumphs and difficulties. Alexander treated well the English Church by elevating his ancient teacher, Lanfranc of Bec, to the See of Canterbury; and appointing him Primate of England.

*Source: excerpted from catholic.com*