

May 19, 2023

Good Morning!



Well, once again I was upside down . So the Novena to the Holy Spirit actually starts today so if you missed my invitation yesterday you can start today!!! As many of you know, I am a big sports fan so I am taking a mulligan and we will begin again with Day One! It never hurts to talk to the Holy Spirit on a daily basis.

The novena in honor of the Holy Spirit is the oldest of all novenas since it was first made at the direction of Our Lord Himself when He 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 every Christian. *Source: ewtn*

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

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: Since our next pope's memorial is on May 25, we will wait until then to cover his life (#158-Pope St. Gregory VII). Today, we look at pope #15, Blessed Victor II who was one of the great abbots of Monte Cassino before becoming pope.

3. Prayer of the Day: Come, Holy Spirit

*Many saints have recommended praying this prayer daily and letting the Holy Spirit guide all our actions.
Source: Aleteia*

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.
V. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created.
R. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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Linda McCormick
St. Joseph Catholic Church & School
1200 Cornelia Road
Anderson, SC 29621

Phone: (864) 225-5341

Fax: (864) 225-6432



NOVENA TO THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR THE SEVEN GIFTS

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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 late 1000s

158. St. Gregory VII (1073-85)---*Will cover on his memorial May 25th*

159. Blessed Victor III (1086-87)

Victor III was born in 1026 or 1027 and died in Rome, September 16, 1087. Being an only son his desire to embrace the monastic state was strenuously opposed by both his parents. After his father's death in battle with the Normans, 1047, he fled from the marriage which had been arranged for him and though brought back by force, eventually after a second flight to Cava obtained permission to enter the monastery of S. Sophia at Benevento where he received the name of Desiderius. The life at S. Sophia was not strict enough for the young monk who then took himself first to the island monastery of Tremite in the Adriatic and in 1053 to some hermits at Majella in the Abruzzi. About this time, he was brought to the notice of St. Leo IX and it is probable that the pope employed him at Benevento to negotiate peace with the Normans after the fatal battle of Civitate. Somewhat later Desiderius joined the monks at Monte Cassino in 1055. He was shortly afterwards appointed superior of their house at Capua. In 1057 Stephen IX (X) who had retained the abbacy of Monte Cassino came and, believing himself to be dying, ordered the monks to elect a new abbot. Their choice fell on Desiderius. The pope recovered, and desiring to retain the abbacy during his lifetime, appointed the abbot-designate his legate for Constantinople. It was at Bari, when about to sail for the East, that the news of the pope's death reached Desiderius. He returned to his monastery and was duly installed by Cardinal Humbert on Easter Day, 1058. A year later he was ordained cardinal-priest of the title of S. Cecelia.

Desiderius was the greatest of all the abbots of Monte Cassino with the exception of the founder, and as such won for himself "imperishable fame". He rebuilt the church and conventual buildings, established schools of art and reestablished monastic discipline so that there were 200 monks in the monastery in his day. On October 1, 1071, the new and magnificent Basilica of Monte Cassino was consecrated by Alexander II. Desiderius's great reputation brought to the abbey many gifts and exemptions. The money was spent on church ornaments of which the most notable were a great golden altar front from Constantinople, adorned with gems and enamels. The bronze and silver doors of the Cassinese Basilica which Desiderius erected remain, and in the Church of S. Angelo in Formis near Capua

some of the frescoes executed by his orders may still be seen. Peter the Deacon gives a list of some seventy books which Desiderius caused to be copied at Monte Cassino; they include works of Sts. Augustine, Ambrose, Bede, Basil, Jerome, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Cassian, etc.

Desiderius had been appointed papal vicar with special powers for the reform of monasteries; so great was his reputation with the Holy See that he “was allowed by the Roman Pontiff to appoint Bishops and Abbots from among his brethren in whatever churches or monasteries he desired of those which had been widowed of their patron”.

Within two years Pope Alexander died and was succeeded by Hildebrand (St. Gregory VII). Undoubtedly the chief importance of Desiderius in papal history lies in his influence with the Normans, an influence which he was able repeatedly to exert in favor of the Holy See. Already in 1059 he had persuaded Robert Guiscard and Richard of Capua to become vassals of St. Peter for their newly conquered territories: now Gregory VII immediately after his election sent for him to give an account of the state of Norman Italy and entrusted him with the negotiation with Robert Guiscard. In 1074 and 1076 he acted as intermediary, probably as Gregory’s agent, between the Norman princes themselves, and even when the latter were at open war with the pope, they still maintained the best relations with Monte Cassino. At the end of 1080 it was Desiderius who obtained Norman troops for Gregory. In 1082 he visited the emperor at Albano, while the troops of the Imperialist antipope were harassing the pope from Tivoli. In 1083 the peace-loving abbot joined Hugh of Cluny in an attempt to reconcile pope and emperor, and his proceedings seem to have aroused some suspicion in Gregory’s entourage. In 1084 when Rome was in Henry’s hands and the pope besieged in Sant’ Angelo, Desiderius announced the approach of Guiscard’s army to both emperor and pope.

Though certainly a strong partisan of the pope’s reform the gentler Desiderius belonged to the moderate party and could not always see eye to eye with Gregory. Yet when the latter lay dying at Salerno (May 25, 1085) the Abbot of Monte Cassino was one of those whom he named as fittest to succeed him. Desiderius was not willing to assume the mantle of Gregory VII, experience had taught him that his power and utility lay in being a middleman, yet at a time when the Church was surrounded by powerful enemies his influence with the Normans made him the most obvious candidate. The Romans had expelled the antipope from the city, and

Desiderius hastened to consult with the cardinals on the approaching election; finding, however, that they were bent on forcing the papal dignity upon him he fled to Monte Cassino, where he busied himself in exhorting the Normans and Lombards to rally to the support of the Holy See. When autumn came Desiderius accompanied the Norman army in its march towards Rome, but becoming aware of the plot between the cardinals and the Norman princes to force the tiara upon him, he would not enter Rome unless they swore to abandon their design; this they refused to do, and the election was postponed. At about Easter the bishops and cardinals assembled at Rome summoned Desiderius and the cardinals who were with him at Monte Cassino to come to Rome concerning the election. On May 23 a great meeting was held, and Desiderius was again importuned to accept the papacy but persisted in his refusal, threatening to return to his monastery in case of violence. Next day, the feast of Pentecost, very early in the morning the same scene was repeated. The consul Cencius now suggested the election of Odo, Cardinal-Bishop of Ostia (afterwards Urban II), but this was rejected by some of the cardinals on the ground that this was contrary to the canons. The assembly now lost all patience; Desiderius was seized and dragged to the Church of St. Lucy where he was forcibly vested in the red cope and given the name of Victor (May 24, 1086). The Church had been without a head for twelve months all but a day. Four days later pope and cardinals had to flee from Rome before the imperial prefect of the city, and at Terracina, in spite of all protests, Victor laid aside the papal insignia and once more retired to Monte Cassino where he remained nearly a whole year. In the middle of Lent, 1087, a council of cardinals and bishops was held at which the pope-elect assisted as "Papal vicar of those parts" together with the Norman princes, Cencius the Consul, and the Roman nobles; here Victor finally yielded and "by the assumption of the cross and purple confirmed the past election". How much his obstinacy had irritated some of the prelates is evidenced in the letter of Hugh of Lyons preserved by Hugh of Flavigny.

After celebrating Easter in his monastery Victor proceeded to Rome, and when the Normans had driven the soldiers of the Antipope Clement III (Guibert of Ravenna) out of St. Peter's, was there consecrated and enthroned (May 9, 1087). He only remained eight days in Rome and then returned to Monte Cassino. Before May was out he was once more in Rome but when at the end of June the antipope once more gained possession of St. Peter's, Victor again retired to his abbey. In August a council was held at Benevento, at which he renewed the excommunication of the antipope and the condemnation of lay-investiture, and anathematised Hugh of Lyons and Richard, Abbot of Marseilles. When the council had lasted three

days Victor became seriously ill and retired to Monte Cassino to die. He had himself carried into the chapter-house, issued various decrees for the benefit of the abbey, appointed with the consent of the monks the prior to succeed him in the Abbacy, just as he himself had been appointed by Stephen IX (X), and proposed Odo of Ostia to the assembled cardinals and bishops as the next pope. He died September 16, 1087, and was buried in the tomb he had prepared for himself in the chapter-house. In the sixteenth century his body was removed to the church, and again translated in 1890. The cultus of Blessed Victor seems to have begun about 60 years after his death. In 1727 the Abbot of Monte Cassino obtained from Benedict III permission to keep his feast.

Pope Victor III is a far less impressive figure in history than Desiderius the great Abbot of Monte Cassino, but there is abundant evidence that it was largely his failing health that made him so reluctant to accept the great position which was thrust upon him, indeed Ordericus tells us that he was taken ill when saying the first Mass after his consecration, so that during his papacy "he hardly got through one single Mass". On August 5, 1087, when Victor was holding the Council at Benevento, an army consisting of Roman, Genoese, Pisan, and Amalfitan troops sent by him to Africa under the Banner of St. Peter captured the town of El Mahadia, and forced the Mohammedan ruler of Tunis to promise tribute to the Holy See and to free all Christian slaves. This event may perhaps be considered as the beginning of the Crusades. The only literary work of Victor which we possess is his "Dialogues" on the miracles wrought by St. Benedict and other saints at Monte Cassino. There is also a letter to the bishops of Sardinia to which country he had sent monks while still Abbot of Monte Cassino.

Source: catholic.com