

Back to School Novena

*A novena is a Catholic practice of prayer that is done over **9 consecutive days** and dates back to the time of the apostles when after the Ascension, the apostles, with the Blessed Virgin Mary prayed together waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit. We pray novenas to obtain a special grace or intention. In our **Back to School Novena** we pray for the protection of all school students and staff, parents and grandparents, parishioners and community members so that all of us know that God is always with us, no matter what. Like Mary, let us ponder all God has done for us, let us be filled with the Holy Spirit, and let us always turn to her Son who died to save us and is even now at our side, strengthening us.*

How to pray this Novena

For 9 consecutive days, beginning August 31th, read the daily reflection followed by this novena prayer:

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life, may we be confident in your love and mercy. May we look forward to this coming school year knowing You are always with us.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Day 1: We proclaim the knowledge of Christ crucified.

Let us be strengthened as we proclaim Christ crucified, knowing he died for us. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son so that we may have everlasting life, may we be confident in your love and mercy. May we look forward to this coming school year knowing you are always with us. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Day 2: We are a people who discern the Spirit's gifts among us.

Let us recognize the gifts of the Holy Spirit among us so that we may find wisdom, courage, and understanding in our community. Let us use our gifts to give witness to God's goodness. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son...

Day 3: We are God's servants.

Let us be ready to serve the Lord by serving others in our families and our parishes and in our school community. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son...

Day 4: All things belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.

Let us remember that all things belong to Christ – even our worries – and Christ belongs to God – so we can trust that our worries are carried in God’s loving arms. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son...

Day 5: The Lord knows our hearts.

Let us remember that the Lord knows our hearts. Even when we have no words, the Holy Spirit will carry our prayers to our loving Father. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son...

Day 6: We are hungry and thirsty for the Lord.

We are hungry and thirsty for the Lord – for his word, his light, and his truth. We know that he will lead us closer to the Father. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this September.

O God, who gave us your only Son...

Day 7: Love is the fulfilling of the law.

The Lord has taught us that love is the fulfilling of the law. Let us be obedient to God’s law by loving one another. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school in just a few days.

O God, who gave us your only Son...

Day 8: Christ has saved us.

We know that Christ has saved us. Let us live as people of the resurrection – sure of his saving power in our lives every day. We look to our mother, Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school tomorrow.

O God, who gave us your only Son....

Day 9: Now the time has come; we rejoice in the Lord who brings good things to life.

The time has come. School begins today. We know that our Father’s timing is perfect. On this day, as we remember the birth of Mary, and how God’s plan for our salvation was unfolding in that time and place as he chose her to be the Mother of God’s only-begotten Son. Let us remember that God has a plan to bring good things to life in our time, too. We look to Mary, Mother of the Church and protector, to pray with us and for us as we head back to school this day.

O God, who gave us your only Son...