



Our Prayer Journey as Apostles

As a Missionary Cenacle Family, we nurture our apostolic spirit through the devotions that we inherited from Fr. Judge, Mother Boniface and Dr. Healy. A devotion is composed of a prayerful space where we are able to be alone and in silence with Our Lord. It is here that we find consolation, renewal and the white zeal of charity. We are apostles shaped by the devotions to the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit, the Eucharist, St. Joseph, St. Vincent de Paul, the Incarnation, the Passion of Christ, the Cross, and of Mary Queen of the Cenacle.

With due humility, we the Missionary Servants begin a second century of service to our Triune Lord. We celebrate, we are overwhelmed with gratitude and we ask you to join us in prayer. Clearly, we want our devotions to be our prayer journey as apostles. We invite everyone to pray with us a “Novena of Missionary Servant Devotions”. In what follows we offer to a prayer to begin each of the “days”. After the initial prayer, some thoughts are outlined for each day to prompt your own personal prayer. It will not be surprising that the particular devotion will accompany the rest of the day.

Also, at the start of the day, allow yourself to place before the Lord a particular intention or concern. God is never deaf to our prayers; He welcomes the trust and confidence that we place before Him. In your kindness, we would ask you to also include a prayer for the entire Missionary Cenacle Family, especially asking for the gifts of wisdom and perseverance and vocations to our Cenacle Family.



A Simple Novena

Come Holy Spirit,

and pour your gifts on me and on those with whom I pray.

Spirit of Wisdom,

show me the right path.

Spirit of Understanding,

reveal your will.

Spirit of Counsel,

open my ears to your voice.

Spirit of Fortitude,

strengthen me beyond my fear.

Spirit of Knowledge,

teach me your ways.

Spirit of Piety,

train my heart to love you.

Spirit of the Fear of the Lord,

embrace my soul with your love.

Send me forth as a power for good in the world, which hungers for your healing love.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Day One The Trinity

Scripture

We read in Acts 7:55 that Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, had a vision of the Son standing at the right hand of the Father. After giving witness to this experience of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Stephen was empowered to endure his martyrdom.

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

1. Letter to Benefactors-1924-MF 2503

The Mystery of the Blessed and Adorable Trinity is the first of all Christian mysteries and the groundwork of our Holy Faith.... This blessed truth of all the truths ever taught us by God should be dearest to the human heart because all other Christian truths find their root in this mystery.... What more beautiful spiritual wish could we entertain than to long to be an apostle of this adorable and so necessary truth. To so many, the words "Blessed Trinity" are without meaning. It should be our prayer and constant effort to do what we can to prevent these sacred words "Blessed Trinity" from becoming meaningless, to spread this truth on all sides, to keep before the multitude the most sacred name, "Blessed Trinity."

For reflection

The mystery of the Trinity is the mystery of Divine Relationship. How well do I accept and rejoice in my holy and intimate relationship with the Holy And Blessed Trinity?

Day Two The Holy Spirit

Scripture

We read in Romans 8:26 that the Spirit helps us even when we can't pray, and in these times we pray in "sighs too deep for words."

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

Conference to Missionary Servants-May 10, 1924-MF 854-56.

Put yourself and your wishes and struggles before our Lord. Ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten you and give you the gift of fortitude. This is what I mean by being fair with yourself. You may answer, "I cannot pray; I am always distracted," but remember this-if I enter the chapel and kneel down, my presence is an act of faith and I know the Lord is pleased, even though I do it mechanically, because it is a habit of faith and of devotion; providing, of course, I do what I can to check my wandering and foolish thoughts.

For reflection

Struggling with prayer is a common experience even among those we might consider quite holy! Have I ever prayed in sighs too deep for words? Can I commit to the discipline of praying this novena, trusting the Holy Spirit to work with me on this?

Day Three The Eucharist

Scripture

On the night Jesus shared the last Passover with his disciples, he began by washing their feet. In John 15:9 Jesus tells us "As the Father loves me, so I love you." These final chapters of John reveal the intimate connection Jesus makes with us at this first Eucharist.

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

Mission Sermon-1912-MF 12331-33

Sacramental union with Jesus is your birthright as Catholics, and of all that your Church has guarded and handed down to you through the centuries nothing is so precious, nothing so great as that which you receive when you kneel at this altar and strike your breast and say. "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof."(Mt. 8:8) Let us apply this.... Let us visit His parish Church. He wishes to have compassion on the multitude. He comes from His Eucharistic sanctuary at the dawn of the day. He comes to bless and have compassion. Who are those who come to Him? ...Do you realize that you of all peoples and races and tribes and tongues and generations have that which the human heart has ever sought-God in the Flesh, Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist!

For reflection

How much does your belief in the Holy Eucharist enter into your everyday life? What graces do you experience through sharing in this sacrament or praying before the Blessed Sacrament?

Day Four **Saint Joseph**

Scripture

St. Mathew has told us Joseph is “a just man”. He was unwilling to put Mary to shame and “resolved to send her away quietly”. When he woke up from a dream where an angel of the Lord asked him not to be afraid to take Mary to be his wife because she had conceived by the Holy Spirit, he did what the angel had commanded him: he married Mary.

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

1. Letter Conference to Missionary Servants-March 1922-MF 5181.

2. Letter Conference to Missionary Servants-Aug. 2, 1927-MF 5930-31.

How little we know of this blessed Saint and yet how much can we say of him-the Saint of work-a-day life, the Saint who appeals to every soul burdened with care, (everyone) upset and harassed to know what is his present duty.

We need Saint Joseph's help very much; we need his spirit of prayer. A grace of graces is to have a prayerful spirit and a heart filled with the love of God, a mind that is conscious of God's presence and a will that seeks union with God's adorable will. Oh! may Saint Joseph obtain for you this grace. (1) Let no one be so remiss and thoughtless as not to place his needs, spiritual and temporal, before the chaste spouse of Immaculate Mary. God invites us to go with simple faith and love to His beloved foster-father, that we may be helped in every necessity. Be zealous for your own good; be charitable and remember the needs and sorrows of others, living and dead; ask much for the Cenacle. Let no one be obliged to confess that they have not a strong particular devotion to Saint Joseph. (2)

For reflection

God entrusted this silent, humble man with the unique privilege of raising, protecting, teaching, and training Jesus as a growing child. Joseph accepted his role of fatherly care with faith, trust, and obedience to the will of God. Are you ready to put your trust in the Lord to give you his help and guidance in fulfilling your responsibilities? Where do you need God's help, strength, and guidance?

Day Five
Saint Vincent de Paul

Scripture

It would be impossible to enumerate all the virtues of this servant of God, the Apostle of Charity; it was his predominant virtue. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed." (Lk 4,18)

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

Letter Conference to Missionary Servants-July 19, 1921-MF 652-653.

Surely no subject could be of more spiritual profit than a consideration of this amiable saint's virtues.

What is the secret of his sanctity? We must seek it in its fountains, that is, in the heart, in the mind, in the will of the saint. St. Vincent trained his mind to a love of truth and holiness. St. Vincent's heart was a human heart and his whole life showed it was big with love. Because of the great love in his heart he found it was urgently necessary to watch its impulses.

Or

St. Vincent's life has a special meaning to the children of the Cenacle. He is one of our very particular patrons. We look upon him as our Father; our hope and confidence in his prayerful intercession has thus increased the more. Plead with him that in our hearts and the heart of the Cenacle may be that great love of God that distinguished him; that we may hold our virtue in humility, that zeal may inflame our hearts, and that our discouragements and the strife with nature may be repelled by an ardent zeal for the poor and those desolate in all things spiritual. What more blessed grace, my dear children, can I prayerfully wish than that the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul may be yours.

For reflection

As St. Vincent observed, "Heart and hand should go together as far as possible." "Weep with your poor and your sick. God has appointed you to be their consolation. Serve the poor with gentleness, compassion and love." (Melito, St. Vincent de Paul "Windows on His Vision", p. 139)

In what ways do you "bring good news to the poor?" Is your service filled with mercy, where hand and heart go together?

Day Six

The Incarnation

Scripture

We place ourselves in the presence of Jesus desiring to discover this mystery of divine love which moved God to become "one of us". "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (Jn. 1:14)

The angel answered her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; as a result, the Holy One to be born will be called Son of God." (Lk 1, 35)

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

Letter Conference to Missionary Servants-ca. Nov. 28, 1926-MF 8630-31.

Thanks be to the divine mercy, a devotional knowledge (of the Incarnation) is abundant in the Missionary Cenacle. It has been given to us to cherish this mystery. How then can we be true to this trust? First, in our own heart of hearts, to have a Bethlehem for Him...a Bethlehem in which He is to be mystically born, a Bethlehem that will make reparation for the ingratitude, inhumanity and irreverence of the first Bethlehem. Secondly, this particular knowledge and love has not been given to us for our own pious satisfaction. We are to spread a knowledge of the mystery of the Incarnation. We are to tell it especially to the little ones, to those so disadvantaged in life that otherwise they may never know it.

Or

Letter Conference to Missionary Servants - Dec. 15, 1926-MF 8629-30.

You have been so much more enlightened in the mystery of the Incarnation. You have, in fact, been brought so intimately into a knowledge of God's plan in the redemption of the world and as it were, taken into the Holy Family itself. We can take holy joy in this thought, that a devotional knowledge of a mystery may be considered a sign of God's favor. I said a devotional knowledge; that is a knowledge that begets fruit, that works in charity.

Knowledge, however, is not enough, for the rebellious angels knew and are lost. We pray further therefore, "Kindle my affections." In other words, arouse my will, make it seek Thy ways that I may do good. This then is what I would call devotional knowledge. Let us be concerned that this knowledge will bear fruit for remember, our Lord cursed the barren fig tree and the Holy Spirit has this lament against those devoid of good works: "They are all gone aside, they are become unprofitable together, there is none that cloth good, no not one." (Ps. 13:2)

For reflection

Our spirit is taken from the practice of our devotions. Incarnational spirituality is one of service in imitation of Jesus. It requires constantly looking at ourselves in the light of Jesus. How can I search for ways to make the Incarnation part of my life in a real as well as a devotional way?

Day Seven
The Passion of Christ

Scripture

We read in the sacred text that Pilate, unable to recognize the Truth, took Jesus and had him tortured and a crown of thorns placed on his head, and Jesus carried his cross to Calvary.

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

1. Retreat to Sisters-ca. 1905-MF 10566.
2. Early Mission Sermons of Father Judge-MF 3763-66.

“Meditation on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Fountain-Head from which came and continually flows every good to us, is that safe and excellent way through which all Christians should ordinarily walk in the practice of virtue and perfection.” To those who would learn to meditate this is the advice of St. Theresa: “Represent to your imagination our Redeemer present to you, near you, in a sensible form. Look at Him devoutly in that state or condition wherein He really was in the mystery of His holy life and Passion on which you desire to meditate. Listen to Him attentively, for Jesus speaks lovingly to the heart of those who wish to converse with Him. He will inspire you with the words and sentiments which He desires from your heart.” (Way of Perfection, C. 14,16)(1)

For reflection

There is no moment of pain, of tragedy of passion that is absent of God, they are sacred moments. There are words and sentiments that Christ desires from your heart especially in those moments: To allow God to minister to us? Perhaps he calls us to be apostles in ministering to others?

Day Eight
The Cross of Christ

Scripture

The hour had come, at three o'clock hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*” and Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom. “Truly this man was the Son of God!”

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

"We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee because by Thy holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the world." These solemn, adorable words are from the liturgy of the Church and they apply well to the exaltation of the Cross. To exalt the Cross is to exalt Jesus. The Cross is a sign that provokes us to love, to worship, to gratitude, to thanksgiving, to service. The Cross is our hope, our joy, our peace and consolation.

1923-MF 830-33

For reflection

As Missionary Servants, as Cenacle Family, as men and women of faith, we are drawn to the cross of Christ. The absolute self-gift of God in Christ, consummated on the cross is beyond measure, how may we make a return to the Lord?

Day Nine Mary of Jerusalem

Scripture

We know very well the narrative, standing at the foot of the cross of Jesus was his mother, Mary. Jesus saw her mother and the beloved disciple, he spoke to them: "Woman, behold, your son.", "Behold, your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

Missionary Cenacle Meditations

Jesus had died; His sacred hands and feet had been transfixed; His head had fallen on His breast. He had spirited out His soul to His Father. The last tremor of agony had shivered His blessed Body-but there stood loving by His Cross, Mary, His Mother. It was given to her, the work of counting those sad wounds. We honor five wounds; she honored more than five wounds. It seems to me there is not enough veneration to her in her sorrows. After we honor her as the Mother of Jesus Christ, as the Mother of our Savior, the Queen of the Cenacle, let us honor her as our Lady of Sorrows.

Conference to Missionary Servants-Sept. 18, 1921-MF 8458-38.

For reflection

What did it mean for the beloved disciple to take the mother of Jesus home with him? Among so many things, maybe it meant that Mary would be safe and secure. Maybe it also meant that Mary would teach the beloved disciple to be attentive and respond to the sorrow in others.

