Cor Iesu, Victima Caritatis.

Heart of Jesus, Victim of Charity.

Resurrection (Passion No. 15) by Albrecht Dürer

NOVENA TO THE

SACRED HEART

Title Page from The Small Passion by Albrecht Dürer

SYCAMORETRUST.ORG/JUNE

NOVENA

When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

— Act 1: 12-14

What Is a Novena?

From the Latin “novem” meaning “nine,” a novena is a time-honored form of Catholic devotion consisting of prayer offered over nine consecutive hours, days, weeks, or months, in petition, preparation, or thanksgiving. Its origins are both biblical and apostolic, and its use has been affirmed throughout the centuries by the saints, the faithful, and the Magisterium.

A novena is a living act of faith — a “spiritual siege” as some saints have called it — where the soul knocks at Heaven’s gate with perseverance and love, trusting not in its own merits, but in the infinite goodness of God and the intercession of the saints.

Biblical Foundations

The archetype for all novenas is found in Acts 1:14, where after the Ascension of Our Lord, the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, persevering in the Upper Room for nine days until the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. This solemn vigil of prayer and expectation gave the Church her first novena and established its pattern: prayer rooted in hope, offered with perseverance, and crowned with divine grace.

Historical Origins and Growth

As formalized devotions, novenas first appeared in the early Middle Ages and were popularized in the post-Tridentine Church (16th–18th centuries) as a means of deepening devotion to the saints, preparing for great feasts, or imploring divine mercy in times of trial. Many of the great indulgenced novenas found in “The Raccolta” were composed and enriched during this time.

How to Pray a Novena Efficaciously

Central to any novena are the prayers themselves — which are repeated for nine consecutive days. However, a novena is most fruitful when accompanied by a spirit of penance, reverence, and sacramental participation.

To that end, many Catholics seek to cleanse their souls of sin and open their hearts to grace by receiving the Sacrament of Penance before or during the novena and by making an Act of Contrition daily, even if not sacramentally confessing, to cultivate humility and dependence on God.

Some also attend daily Mass and receive Holy Communion on the first and last day of the novena as well as any feast day connected to it.

It is common to include other devotions with a novena such as the Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Litany of the Sacred Heart, or Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Penance is also a traditional companion to novenas — such as fasting from food, meat, sweets, or comforts — as is charity which disposes the soul to receive grace. Penance and charity are especially recommended when praying for conversion or divine assistance.

Because a novena is a retreat of the heart, many people seek to cultivate a recollected spirit throughout the nine days, avoiding unnecessary distractions, idle talk, or worldly entertainments — practicing custody of the senses and detachment from sin.

While all of these devout practices can make for a spiritually rich novena experience, all we are asking is that you join us each day in praying the novena prayer composed by Father John Raphael, ND ’89.

JUNE 4-12, 2026

We invite all who love Notre Dame and honor the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus to join us in this novena for the renewal of Notre Dame’s Catholic identity and for the triumph of truth, purity, and fidelity on her campus.

SACRED HEART OF JESUS, REIGN AT NOTRE DAME

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, fount of infinite mercy and divine love, we worship, praise, and adore You!

When You revealed Your wounded heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, You reminded us of the price You paid for our salvation and of the boundless love You have for us all.

Through the mission of this holy religious and servant, You invite us to behold Your Sacred Heart — which so loves mankind, and is so little loved in return. You ask us to console You by our faith, love, and devotion, and to make reparation for the sins, indifference, sacrileges, and abuses that wound Your Sacred Heart and offend Your Divine Majesty.

We at Sycamore Trust join the faithful of the Notre Dame family in responding to Your invitation. We pray for the University founded under the patronage of Our Lady and long nourished by devotion to Your Sacred Heart. May she always reverence and honor You, reject all that is contrary to Your goodness, purity, mercy, and love, and become a beacon of truth, charity, and holiness for the Church and the world.

May Mary, Our Lady of the Most Sacred Heart, intercede for us as we make our prayer to You, who live and reign with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us!
St Margaret Mary Alacoque, pray for us!
St. Claude de la Columbiere, pray for us!