

Sycamore Trust Solemn Novena

FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION & THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

August 15 – 23, 2019

As students prepare to resume classes at Catholic colleges and universities across the nation, we invite you to join us in a novena to protect and promote the mission of Catholic higher education, and especially of our beloved Notre Dame — that she may be a beacon of light, hope, and truth in a world beset by darkness, despair, and deceit.

OPENING PRAYER (DAILY)

Notre Dame Our Mother, tender, strong and true, to you do we come, your loving children--alumni, students, faculty, family, supporters and friends of our beloved University, honored with the title of your name. We commend to you all your sons and daughters who are committed to the mission of Catholic higher education, Ex Corde Ecclesia, from the Heart of the Church.

To your motherly care and powerful intercession we lift up Notre Dame that she may be a beacon of light, hope and truth in a world beset by darkness, despair and deceit.

Confident in the power of the Holy Cross--Spes Unica--which animated the foundation of the University, we look to Him who was raised up that He might draw all unto himself. We draw strength from Him who with his Father has given us the Holy Spirit as our Comforter, Advocate and Guide.

Responding to the outpouring of the Spirit we pray for the faithful and fruitful success of the Mission of the University of Notre Dame.

Drawing from that same Mission, we pray that...

DAY 1 – AUGUST 15, 2019 (THE ASSUMPTION)

We may faithfully respond to Jesus' call to "come, follow me":

The Lord Jesus identifies himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life (cf. Jn 14:6). Therefore, "no genuine search for truth in the human or cosmic order is alien to the life of faith." Called by Jesus to be salt and light, may the Light of Truth and our unending quest for it both humble and embolden us to embrace and proclaim it as we follow Jesus in every aspect of our lives.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of His radiant wisdom to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.



DAY 2 – AUGUST 16, 2019

We may embrace a shared undertaking in the world:

The Lord Jesus says that whatever we do to the least of our brothers and sisters we do to him (cf. Mt 25:40), and so we seek “to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning now becomes a service to justice.” Mindful of the fragility of human life and the vulnerability of the weakest among us—especially the unborn, the sick, the elderly, the physically and mentally disabled, the poor and all who are pushed to the margins of society—may our intellectual and practical efforts contribute to a just society on earth worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of understanding to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

DAY 3 – AUGUST 17, 2019

We may seek His will through prayer

The Lord Jesus prayed that not his will but the Father’s will be done (cf. Mt 26:39), and calls us to “a way of living consistent with human community and manifest in prayer, liturgy and service.” May our prayerful worship, especially in the Holy Eucharist, in the sacramental life of the Church, and in private and public devotion, open us up to the will of God in our lives, that we may live, speak, and work in a spirit of obedient love.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of piety to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

DAY 4 – AUGUST 18, 2019

We may experience a purposeful fellowship in the light of Christ’s gospel

The Lord Jesus said that where two or three are gathered together in his Name, he is present in their midst (cf. Mt 18:20). In response “Notre Dame pursues its objectives through the formation of an authentic human community graced by the Spirit of Christ.” May our Notre Dame family and all who are united to the mission of Catholic education be animated by the Spirit of Unity in Truth and Charity so that genuine love may form and shape the work we do in bearing witness to the Gospel call to holiness of life and loving concern for our neighbor.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of His counsel to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.



DAY 5 – AUGUST 19, 2019

We may engage acts of love for God who first loved us

The Gospel teaches that God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life (cf. Jn 3:16). This universal love impels us to a “constructive and critical engagement with the whole of human culture.” May we be inspired to confront the challenges of following Christ in a world that has abandoned God’s love and his truth by shining the light of the Gospel upon the darkness of our times, by lovingly confronting error with truth, by proclaiming the beauty of God’s goodness manifested in creation, and by witnessing to the mercy of God with contrite and humble hearts.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of fortitude to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

DAY 6 – AUGUST 20, 2019

We may seek formation and transformation

The Lord Jesus said that we shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free (cf. Jn 8:32b). From this arises “a special obligation and opportunity, specifically as a Catholic university, to pursue the religious dimensions of all human learning.” In our commitment to the Splendor of the Truth may we always seek “the pursuit and sharing of truth for its own sake...to advance knowledge in the search for truth...the development of disciplined habits of mind, body and spirit that characterize educated, skilled and free human beings.”

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of knowledge to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

DAY 7 – AUGUST 21, 2019

We may commit ourselves to fidelity to the Lord and responsibility to the faithful

The Lord Jesus said that whoever confessed him before human beings he would confess before his Father in heaven (cf. Mt 10:32). In our Catholic identity incarnated through the presence of Catholic intellectuals in a community of faith and learning, may we always confess the presence of the Lord Jesus. In obedience to his command, may we always believe and teach others to believe all that he commanded that the saving truth of the Gospel may deliver us from error and sin and keep us in a communion of love with God and each other.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of a holy and reverent fear of the Lord to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.



DAY 8 – AUGUST 22, 2019

We may discover in the cross the hope it promises

The Lord Jesus said that we must daily take up our cross and follow him (cf. Mt 16:24). May we always have a “disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice and oppression that burden the lives of so many” and may we place ourselves in solidarity with them by sharing their sorrows, easing their burdens, and joyfully bearing our share of suffering for the sake of the Gospel.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of courage to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

DAY 9 – AUGUST 23, 2019

We may support the role of Catholic education in the Church and Notre Dame’s special place

The Lord Jesus said to Mary, “Woman, behold you son,” and to John “Son, behold your mother” (cf. Jn 19:26). Mary was privileged to be the first educator of the Incarnate Word. Her Immaculate Heart is one with the Heart of her Son, which beats at the center of the Church. May Notre Dame and all Catholic institutions of higher education always reflect the goodness, the virtue, and the truth which is the love between Jesus and Mary. May each of us in ways large and small, in prayer, in witness, and in sacrifice commit ourselves to the sacred mission of Catholic education so that Notre Dame and her sister institutions may be instruments of the salvation of others.

May the Holy Spirit grant a deep and abiding trust in the Providence of God to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

CONCLUDING PRAYER (DAILY):

Notre Dame, Our Mother, trusting in your unfailing care for us, we thank you for the bountiful blessings we have received through the gift of Notre Dame, and we ask you to present our fervent and loving prayer for our beloved University and for all charged with protecting and promoting the mission of Catholic higher education, to Jesus, your Son and Our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

The daily themes of the Sycamore Trust Novena petitions are inspired by the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross and remarks in quotation marks are taken from the Mission of the University of Notre Dame. All Scripture quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition of the Holy Bible.

