



# *Easter Blessings*

## Easter Novena Prayers

From the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

# Easter Novena

## Day 1 - Easter Sunday

*Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were indeed buried with Him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with Him through a death like His, we shall also be united with Him in the Resurrection. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. (Romans 6:3-5,8)*

When we are young, we do not associate ourselves with death. Others may die but we don't think we will. As we grow older, however, we begin to realize that our life on earth will end. Gradually, we come to accept this reality. But because we are followers of Christ, we do so with hope. The meaning of Jesus' Resurrection blossoms in our hearts. He conquered death so that we might live forever with Him in a new and better life. How wondrous it is for us to realize the limitless depth of God's love for us!

*Jesus, Your Resurrection leaves me speechless. I cannot find the words to express my joy, my wonder, my gratitude to You for the gift of eternal life. There is only one thing I can do in return. It is to give myself to You completely, without any reservations. I do this now, Jesus. Take me and mold me into the person You want me to be. All I have comes from God, our Father. All I have returns to You, Jesus, my Savior, my Brother. Amen.*

## Day 2 - Monday

*After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, approached, rolled back the stone and sat upon it. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are seeking Jesus the crucified. He is not here, for He has been raised just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay. Then go quickly and tell His disciples, 'He has been raised from the dead, and He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him.' Behold, I have told you." Then they went away quickly from the tomb, fearful yet overjoyed, and ran to announce this to His disciples. (Mathew 28:1-2, 5-8)*

The Good News of the Resurrection has been told to us, just as it was told to Mary Magdalene and the other women with her. Like them, we are to spread the news. Like them, we are called to tell the stories of how God has worked in our lives. And just as they were sent to tell the disciples, we, too, are sent to tell our stories, our news, to fellow believers. In doing so, we help one another grow in faith.

*Jesus, help me to tell the stories of the many wonderful things You have done for me. I am not an eloquent speaker but, if You put the words in my mouth, I will speak them. For I love You and want to do Your will. Amen.*

## Day 3 - Tuesday

*But Mary Magdalene stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomb and saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid Him." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to Him, "Sir, if you carried Him away, tell me where you laid Him, and I will take Him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher. (John 20:11-16)*

Like Mary Magdalene, we know Jesus well. We know Jesus lives in us and in others. Yet we are not always consciously aware of Jesus' presence in our lives. But occasionally we have a moment, as Mary Magdalene did, when Jesus makes us aware of His presence. It may occur while we are praying, but it may also happen while we are quietly alone observing nature, walking, reading or even in the midst of a busy day. We followers of Jesus know His voice. We know His touch. We recognize Jesus. Sometimes it is good to remember such moments, for they can be a source of strength for us.

*Many times, Lord, I have searched high and low for You and have not found You. But then, suddenly, You come and prick my awareness of Your presence. Like an old friend, You suddenly appear and I recognize Your voice. How good it is, Lord, that You come to me. I thank You for this gift and I bask in Your love for me. Amen.*

## Day 4 - Wednesday

*Now that very day two of them were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus Himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them what referred to Him in all the Scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, He gave the impression that He was going on farther. But they urged Him, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over." So He went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while He was with them at the table, He took bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He vanished from their sight. (Luke 24:13-16, 27-31)*

Jesus walks with us but does not intrude. Like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, we must invite Jesus to come and live in our hearts. One way we do this is by receiving the Eucharist. But there are many other times when, through our words and actions, we welcome Jesus into our hearts.

*Jesus, come and live in my heart. Nourish me with Your Body and Blood. Inspire me with Your Words. Lead me to do Your will on earth. Amen.*

## Day 5 - Thursday

*While they (the disciples) were still speaking about this (Jesus' appearance in Emmaus), Jesus stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought that they were seeing a ghost. Then He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as He said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, He asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of baked fish; He took it and ate it in front of them. (Luke 24:36-43)*

The apostles saw, heard and ate with the Risen Christ. We have their eyewitness reports. But our faith is not based on these reports. Our faith is based on our own experiences of God in our lives. We believe in God the Father, we believe in the Risen Christ, we believe in the Holy Spirit because we have come to experience God in our lives.

*Jesus, You are my constant companion in good times and bad. You walk beside me when I am strong. You carry me when I am weak. You laugh and cry with me. You give me hope. You give me love. You are everything to me, Jesus, and I am Yours. Amen.*

## Day 6 - Friday

*Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in His hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." Now a week later His disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see My hands, and bring your hand and put it into My side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:24-28)*

Thomas was deep in mourning over the loss of Jesus, whom he loved. He was also filled with fear about his own future. What would happen to him now? In this hurting and confused state, he could not believe what his friends told him – that Jesus was alive and still with them. Like Thomas, we sometimes find ourselves in a hurting or confused state, perhaps over the loss of a loved one, a job or our independent lifestyle. We can't see Jesus in our life. But He is there, revealing Himself not in a vision but in the people who surround us. We can reach out and take His hand, hug Him, cry on His shoulder, pour out our hearts to Him.

*Jesus, in my times of need, open my eyes to see You in others. Let me hear Your voice in their words. Let me feel Your presence in their touch. And, as they bring You to me, help me to bring You to them. Let Your love flow among us and deepen our faith in You. Amen.*

## Day 7 - Saturday

*Jesus revealed Himself again to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We also will come with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. When it was already dawn, Jesus was standing on the shore; but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you caught anything to eat?" They answered Him, "No." So He said to them, "Cast the net over the right side of the boat and you will find something." So they cast it, and were not able to pull it in because of the number of fish. When they climbed out on shore, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you just caught." So Simon Peter went over and dragged the net ashore full of one hundred fiftythree large fish. Even though there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come, have breakfast." And none of the disciples dared to ask Him, "Who are You?" because they realized it was the Lord. (John 21:1,3-6,9-12)*

After His Resurrection, Jesus continued to want to share in the ordinary lives of His disciples. So He went fishing with them. He also wanted to let them know that, even though He would not always be physically present with them, He would always take care of them. So He filled their net with fish and cooked breakfast for them. It is the same with us. Jesus loves us so much that He wants to share every moment of our ordinary lives. He wants to be with us and to take care of us always.

*Jesus, I cannot fully comprehend the depth of Your love for me. But I know that I want You in every ordinary moment of my life. And I want You to take care of me now and forever. I surrender to Your love, Jesus, and ask that You let it flow through me to others. Let everyone know the joy of being loved by You. Amen.*



## Day 8 - Sunday

*When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” He then said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to Him. “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was distressed that He had said to him a third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to Him, “Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.” And when He had said this, He said to him, “Follow me.” (John 21:15-17, 19)*

“(your name), do you love Me?” “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” “(your name), do you love Me?” “Yes, Lord, You know that I love You.” “(your name), do you love Me?” “Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You.” “Then, feed my lambs. Tend my sheep. Feed my sheep. Follow me.” Jesus speaks to each of us as He spoke to Peter. And we can answer with Peter’s words. This is what it means to be a follower of Christ.

*You call me, Jesus, as you called Peter. I love You and want to follow You. Lead me where You want me to go. I will do Your will because You reign in my heart. Amen.*

## Day 9 - Monday

*Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1Corinthians 5:6-8)*

Through His Resurrection, Jesus calls us to a new life. It is a life based on faith and filled with hope, love and compassion. But it is also a life that calls us to change and to grow by letting go of the things that keep us from being the loving persons God made us to be. The baggage we carry varies for each of us but may include our fears, old hurts, anger and prejudice. With Jesus' help, we can free ourselves from all that binds us.

*Jesus, Your Resurrection fills me with joy. I hear Your call to me to participate in a new life of hope and love. How eager I am to do so. Help me to cast away the things that hamper my ability to love others as You do. Give me a compassionate heart. Let wisdom temper my words and actions. Teach me Your ways. Make me anew, Jesus, and send me forth to do Your work on earth. Amen.*



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