

Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

Novena

for the repose of the soul
of Pope Benedict XVI

Introduction

Following the funeral of a Pope it is the custom that nine days (*Novendiales*) of official mourning are marked in Rome and throughout the Church.

In addition to the celebration of Mass, Bishops may encourage for the intention of his soul:

- the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours,
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and other devotions,
- opportunities to learn and reflect on the writings of Pope Benedict,
- works of mercy and care for the poor and most vulnerable.

The nine days may also be observed with a Novena of prayer as given in this booklet.

Prayers are taken from the Roman Missal, except where indicated. The scripture readings include those chosen for the Funeral of Pope Benedict.

Day 1

You are Peter

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

Matthew 16:13–19

When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’

He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’

Followed by a period of silence.

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

O God, faithful rewarder of souls,
grant that your departed servant Pope Benedict,
whom you made successor of Peter
and shepherd of your Church,
may happily enjoy for ever in your presence in heaven
the mysteries of your grace and compassion,
which he faithfully ministered on earth.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Day 2

Feed my sheep

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

John 21:15–17

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 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 grieved because he said to him the 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.’

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

O God, immortal shepherd of souls,
look on your people’s prayers
and grant that your servant Pope Benedict,
who presided over your Church in charity,
may, with the flock entrusted to his care,
receive from your mercy
the reward of a faithful steward.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Day 3

I will be the shepherd of my sheep

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

Ezekiel 34:11-12, 14-15

For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God.

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

We pray, O Lord,
that your servant Pope Benedict,
who served by your will on earth
as the visible foundation of your Church's unity,
may be happily admitted to your blessed flock.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Day 4

You turn things upside down

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

Isaiah 29:16–19

You turn things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing made should say of its maker, 'He did not make me'; or the thing formed say of him who formed it, 'He has no understanding'?

Is it not yet a very little while until Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be regarded as a forest? In that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see. The meek shall obtain fresh joy in the LORD, and the poor among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

*Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.
And let perpetual light shine upon him.*

I pray for you:
pray for me too,
so that in all life's problems
we may always be aware
of the Lord's goodness
and thus press on
through difficult days
as well as beautiful ones.
My prayers for you all and my Blessing.

From a speech of Pope Benedict, 3 August 2008.

Day 5 He will reveal instruction in his teaching

You are Peter

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

Sirach 39:6-8

He who studies the law of the Most High, if the great Lord is willing, he will be filled with the spirit of understanding; he will pour forth his words of wisdom and give thanks to the Lord in prayer.

He will direct his counsel and knowledge aright and meditate on his secrets. He will reveal instruction in his teaching and will glory in the law of the Lord's covenant.

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

We humbly beg your mercy, Lord,
for the soul of your departed servant Pope Benedict.,
that he may rejoice at last in possession of the truth
in which he faithfully confirmed your people.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Day 6

To impart the wisdom of God

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

1 Corinthians 2:1-7

I, when I came to you, brothers and sisters, did not come proclaiming to you the mystery of God with lofty speech or wisdom.

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest on the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

We commit to your mercy the soul of your servant Pope N.,
and grant, we pray, that,
having been, in the midst of the human family,
an instrument of your charity and peace,
he may merit to delight in the same,
for ever with all your Saints.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Day 7

Steward of the mysteries of God

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

This is how one should regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

We pray that your servant Pope Benedict, who was a faithful steward of your mysteries on earth, may praise your mercy for ever in the glory of the Saints.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Day 8

Jesus, remember me

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

Luke 23:39–43

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, ‘Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!’ But the other rebuked him, saying, ‘Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.’ And he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ And he said to him, ‘Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.’

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

*Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.
And let perpetual light shine upon him.*

O God, who in your wondrous providence
chose your servant Pope Benedict.
to preside over your Church,
grant, we pray,
that, having served as the Vicar of your Son on earth,
he may be welcomed by him into eternal glory.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Day 9

A living hope

Begin and end with the Sign of the Cross.

Reading

1 Peter 1:3-5, 8-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Silent Prayer

Prayer

Pray one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Glory be*.

Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

O Lord,

support us all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shadows lengthen,

and the evening comes,

and the busy world is hushed,

and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.

Then, Lord, in thy mercy,

grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest,

and peace at the last.

Amen.

Praer of St John Henry Newman

Reflection

Our long years of life afford us the opportunity to appreciate both the beauty of God's greatest gift to us, the gift of life, as well as the fragility of the human spirit.

Those of us who live many years are given a marvellous chance to deepen our awareness of the mystery of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity. As the normal span of our lives increases, our physical capacities are often diminished; and yet these times may well be among the most spiritually fruitful years of our lives.

These years are an opportunity to remember in affectionate prayer all those whom we have cherished in this life, and to place all that we have personally been and done before the mercy and tenderness of God.

This will surely be a great spiritual comfort and enable us to discover anew his love and goodness all the days of our life.

Pope Benedict to Residents and Staff of St Peter's Nursing Home, Vauxhall,
18 September 2010

Acknowledgements Excerpts from the English translation of *The Roman Missal* © 2010, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Scripture readings from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version* Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Prepared by the Liturgy Office for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 39 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1BX. Catholic Trust for England and Wales. Registered Charity No. 1097482 Company No. 4734592.