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A Novena to Saint Mary Magdalene



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Opening Prayer for Each Day

St. Mary Magdalen, a woman of many sins, who through your conversion became the beloved of Jesus and remained by His cross, thank you for witnessing that Jesus forgives through the miracle of love. You who now possess eternal happiness in His glorious presence, please intercede for me, so that one day I may share in your same eternal joy. Amen.

Day 1: Humility (Set Free by Christ)

«After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.» (Luke 8:1-3)

Reflection: We begin this novena by meditating on humility of heart. No past, no matter how dark, is a barrier to God's grace. Pope Francis teaches us that Jesus did not just clean up Mary Magdalen's outward appearance, but healed the deepest wound of her soul. By freeing her from seven demons, He worked a total recreation within her. Let us never be afraid to bring our greatest weaknesses to the confessional; the very same love that transformed Magdalen's past into a story of holiness awaits us there.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, we may obtain true humility of heart to recognize our miseries and surrender ourselves entirely to His divine mercy.

Day 2: Love in Action (Faith Without Works is Dead)

«Many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to care for his needs. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph,^[a] and the mother of Zebedee's sons.» (Matthew 27:55-56)

Reflection: We begin this day by contemplating how true love always shows itself through concrete actions. Upon discovering Christ's mercy, Mary Magdalen did not stand idly by. Pope St. John Paul II explained that she and the holy women are living examples of what it means to set out on the path of service. Her faith did not stop at words or good intentions; it translated into a total offering of who they were and all they possessed. The Gospel of St. Matthew confirms that her dedication

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was not a passing phase; she persevered in active service for the Kingdom from the time she left Galilee through the most difficult days. Mary Magdalen teaches us that love for God is never passive, nor is it confined to a single place: it is a living force that must blossom into steadfast and generous service both in our church and within the heart of our own families, driving us to build the Kingdom in every corner of our daily lives and to serve our brothers and sisters with total devotion.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, we may receive the grace to put our love into action, so that our faith may always be shown through living works of service within our church, our homes, and in our attentive care for others.

Day 3: Perseverance in Prayer (Seeking the Beloved)

«Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."» (John 20:11-13)

Reflection: We dedicate this day to contemplating the strength of a soul that seeks God with all its heart. Seeing Mary Magdalen weeping before the empty tomb, Pope St. Gregory the Great explained that her tears and her devotion are the living reflection of deep, heartfelt prayer. She stands firm in the very place of her sorrow, showing through her weeping and her gentle questions to the angels that her only desire is to find Christ. St. Gregory reminds us that prayer is never about repeating mechanical words, but about setting the soul on fire with a longing to be close to our Creator. When life grows heavy, when sorrow overwhelms us, or when we feel the quiet silence of God, Mary Magdalen teaches us to stay, to endure, and to rest in the intimacy of prayer, because the heart that seeks the Lord with tender love and constancy always finds Him in the end.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, He may grant us the grace of deep and constant prayer, keeping us steadfast in faith and filling us with a sincere desire to always seek His presence in our lives.

Day 4: Conversion of Heart (The Perfume of Reparation)

«A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood

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behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.» (Luke 7:37-38)

Reflection: Today we meditate on the mystery of conversion of heart. Contemplating this deeply moving passage, Church tradition, guided by the beautiful homilies of Pope St. Gregory the Great, sees in this gesture the very image of Mary Magdalen's repentance. St. Gregory explained that love transforms a person's story, so that everything previously used for vanity and worldly desires, such as her eyes, her hair, and her costly perfumes, is turned by grace into a sacred offering at the feet of Jesus. The tears of this encounter do not spring from the fear of punishment, but from a pure sorrow that flows from feeling immensely welcomed and forgiven by God. This scene teaches us that returning to the Lord is never a path of sadness, but a beautiful opportunity to gently bring order to our lives, heal our wounds, and consecrate everything we are to the glory of God.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, He may grant us the grace of a true conversion, giving us a sincere sorrow for our faults and a burning desire to heal and renew our hearts through a holy life.

Day 5: Fidelity in Suffering (At the Foot of the Cross)

«Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, "Woman,[a] here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.» (John 19:25-27)

Reflection: We dedicate this day to meditating on the witness of a faithful love. Pope Francis, in contemplating the scene of Calvary, highlights the immense courage of Mary Magdalen. While fear caused most of the disciples to flee, she remained unshakable, standing beside the Virgin Mary in the hour of the most heartbreaking pain and apparent failure. Her faithful devotion was stronger than the danger of the Roman soldiers and the mockery of the crowd. Mary Magdalen teaches us that true fidelity is tested in difficult times, inviting us never to abandon our faith or our community when the cross comes, but to remain steadfast with our hearts on fire with love.

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Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, we may receive the grace of a faithful and steadfast heart, so that we remain true to our Christian commitments and stand at the foot of the cross in our moments of pain.

Day 6: The Virtue of Hope (Guarding the Tomb)

«Joseph took the body, wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb and went away. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting there opposite the tomb.» (Matthew 27:59-61)

Reflection: Today we meditate on the theological virtue of hope, which sustains our trust in the promises of Christ. St. Gregory the Great explained that when everyone else returned home weighed down by sadness, Mary Magdalen remained seated before the cold stone keeping vigil. Her quiet hope kept her bound to the place where the Lord rested, and her love grew even deeper in the midst of His painful absence. In the dark nights of our own lives, when it seems that God is silent or that our troubles are overwhelming us, Mary Magdalen teaches us to trust. She reminds us that behind the silence of the tomb, God's promise keeps beating and new life is already preparing to break through.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, He may grant us a steadfast virtue of hope, so that we may remain confident in God's love, even in the midst of life's deepest silences.

Day 7: The Virtue of Faith (The Mystery of the Empty Tomb)

«Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.» (John 20:1)

Reflection: We dedicate this day to meditating on the theological virtue of faith. In his Easter homily, Pope Benedict XVI invited us to look at Mary Magdalen as the great icon of the Church's faith. She journeyed toward the tomb while it was still dark, meaning her faith outran the dawn. By becoming the first to see the empty tomb, her testimony became the bedrock of our certainty, reminding us that death and sin have been conquered forever. Mary Magdalen teaches us that having faith does not mean walking with everything clearly in sight, but moving forward with the absolute assurance that the light of the risen Christ will eventually dispel any darkness on our path.

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Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, He may increase our faith so that we always trust in Him, especially when we walk in the dark or in the midst of difficulties.

Day 8: The Virtue of Charity (Deep Concern for the Beloved)

«So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!”» (John 20:2)

Reflection: Today we meditate on the theological virtue of charity, which is the absolute love that unites us to God. Contemplating this passage, Pope St. John Paul II explained in his teachings that the words and the urgency of Mary Magdalen reflect the very essence of charity. John Paul II highlighted that her only concern, her driving force, and her constant thought was the well-being of her Lord, proving that her heart belonged completely to Christ. She did not stand idly by; her love put her into immediate motion to seek Him and protect Him. Mary Magdalen teaches us that true charity is never passive, but a living force that drives us to seek God with urgency and to care for others with hearts on fire with love.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, He may pour the virtue of charity into our hearts, so that our entire lives may reflect His love and we may learn to love others with the very heart of Christ.

Day 9: The Witness of the Risen Christ (Apostola Apostolorum)

«He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?” Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”). Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: “I have seen the Lord!” And she told them that he had said these things to her.» (John 20:15-18)

Reflection: We conclude our novena by contemplating the crowning moment when sorrow is transformed into the eternal joy of the Resurrection. St. Augustine gave Mary Magdalen the beautiful title of Apostle to the Apostles, a recognition that the Church has solemnly embraced within its liturgy. Jesus chose her to be entrusted

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with the greatest message in history, sending her to rekindle the faith that had gone out in the hearts of the disciples. St. Augustine emphasizes that she did not keep this miracle a secret, but ran, overflowing with joy, to announce what she had experienced. She teaches us that a true encounter with Jesus transforms us into courageous witnesses, capable of proclaiming through our lives and our words that the Lord is alive and walks beside us.

Let us ask our Lord that, through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen, He may grant us the grace to be courageous witnesses of the Resurrection, so that we may share the joy of the Gospel with everyone around us.

Closing Prayer for Each Day

Lord God, Father of mercy, who in Your immense love willed that Your Son should show Himself alive to St. Mary Magdalen before anyone else. Grant that, guided by her example and sustained by her intercession, we may seek You with a sincere heart all the days of our lives.

Just as she experienced the profound joy of being called by her name by the Master, may we also recognize Your voice in the midst of our daily duties and find the courage to follow Your footsteps through the cross and into the resurrection.

(In this moment of silence, gently present to the Lord the particular request you wish to obtain through the intercession of St. Mary Magdalen)

Hear, Heavenly Father, the petitions we bring before You in this novena. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.



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