



YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST

Catholic Life Conference Novena for the success of the Eucharistic Congress in the Diocese of Springfield

A Novena prayer leading up to the Eucharistic Congress was constructed by the Catholic Life Committee. The novena prayer is a nine-day prayer to help usher in all the graces necessary for a fruitful Eucharistic Congress. Each day is associated with a saint who had a miraculous reception of Holy Communion and demonstrated a great love for the Eucharist. We pray for their intercession for the Congress. Your prayers help serve the day and beyond. God bless you and thank you in advance.



Novena Prayer We thank you, almighty Father, for the example of the saints who have gone before us to teach us true devotion to the Eucharist. We ask you to turn your gaze towards the Diocese of Springfield as we host our Eucharistic Congress. We pray that many may be inspired to attend the Congress. May we gain true knowledge of all aspects of our faith, transforming every aspect of our lives. May our participation in the Eucharistic Congress foster true repentance to our Eucharistic Lord, generating a love that is both contagious and instrumental in drawing others back to Communion. We ask this through Christ our Lord.



February 23: Day 1. Bl. Imelda Lambertini From childhood on, she showed great love for the Eucharist. She wanted to receive Holy Communion when she was nine years old, but she was told by her priest that she could not receive until she was fourteen. On May 12, 1333, the Vigil of the Ascension, when she was only 11, she went to Mass and presented herself for Holy Communion. The priest ignored her, but a host went and levitated to her, and hovered over her for a few moments. She received Holy Communion, and stayed in the chapel. A few hours later, her superiors were looking for her and they found her praying peacefully, but ice cold. She died of happiness after receiving Holy Communion. Bl. Imelda is the patroness of First Communicants. ⁱ

May we always receive the Eucharist as if it were our first, last, and only time.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



February 24: Day 2. St. Thomas Aquinas During the years of 1269 to 1272, he was at the height of mature theological thought. St. Thomas was called to Paris to resolve a matter of importance with regard to the Eucharist. He did not want to speak poorly of the Eucharist and prayed humbly to our Lord, feeling as though he had a great weight and duty to speak correctly. His prayer was “Lord Jesus, truly and wonderfully present in this Sacrament, I seek to understand Your truth and teach it without error...keep me from teaching anything that could deviate from the Catholic faith.” When he had finished his discourse, he returned to the church, and it was there where he heard the voice of Jesus say: “You have written well of Me, Thomas.” ⁱⁱ

May we pray well, write well and speak well of Jesus, always.

Pray the Novena Prayer.

February. 25: Day 3. St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia He is known as the Bishop of the Abandoned Tabernacle and was born in Seville, Spain. He prayed before the tabernacle and felt the sadness of Jesus being left alone. He stated: “My faith was looking at Jesus through the door of that tabernacle, so silent, so patient, so good gazing right back at me...His gaze was telling me much and asking me for more. It was a gaze in which all the sadness of ‘no room in the inn’, the sadness of those words, ‘Do you also want to leave me?’” In 1902, he dedicated himself to Eucharistic works in praise of Jesus Christ.

May we emulate his great love for the Eucharist.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



February 26: Day 4. St. Bernard of Clairvaux St. Bernard was at the center of an important Eucharistic miracle. The Duke of Aquitaine separated himself from the Church and had no intention of returning. St. Bernard celebrated Mass and after doing so, St. Bernard walked intently up the aisle and presented the Eucharist to the Duke. He said to him: “We pleaded with you, and you ridiculed us. Now He, the Son of the Virgin, the Lord of the Church, He Whom you persecute has come to you... resist him if you can.” The duke, overcome with grief and overcome by a mysterious force, fell to his knees and begged for forgiveness. ⁱⁱⁱ

May those who have been separated from the Church hear the call to come back to full communion.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



February 27: Day 5. St. John Vianney St. John Vianney is the patron saint of parish priests as well as the patron saint of the Year of the Eucharist in the Diocese of Springfield. He was born in Dardilly, France. He wanted to become a priest but struggled a great deal learning Latin. His studies were interrupted when he was drafted into the army. He persevered and became a priest in the small town of Ars. He was known for his skill in the confessional and many penitents would travel to him to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He would spend long hours hearing confessions. He died on August 4, 1859 and was canonized in 1929 by Pope Pius XI, who named him the patron saint of parish priests.

May we approach the Eucharist with a repentant and contrite heart.

Pray the Novena Prayer



February 28: Day 6. St. Faustina Kowalska There is a very popular devotion in the Church which occurs on the second week of Easter, known as Divine Mercy Sunday. This popular devotion is attributed to St. Faustina Kowalska. Jesus appeared to St. Faustina on February 22, 1931, with two fingers on his heart and pointing toward her. There were rays that were white and red. These rays represent the Blood and Water which flowed from the side of Jesus when his heart was pierced with a lance. They symbolize the purifying power of Baptism and Confession as well as the regenerative power of the Holy Eucharist. ^{iv}

As the Eucharist is the sacrament of charity, may we respond with mercy to the faults of others.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



March 1: Day 7. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque St. Margaret Mary Alacoque of Paray-le-Monial, a Nun of the Visitation received a vision from Jesus which contains the “Twelve Promises of the Sacred Heart.” Jesus reveals many graces associated with this devotion. One of the promises is that through the devotion to the Sacred Heart, we receive all the graces necessary to fulfill our vocation. The love one has for the Sacred Heart of Jesus is directly related to love for the Holy Eucharist. The Jesuit priest Henri Ramiere had a great devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and he wrote, “It is in the Eucharist that we truly find the Heart of Jesus nearest us; it is in the Eucharist that He unites Himself to us in the most intimate way and we to Him.”^v

Through our reception of the Holy Eucharist, may we trust in a lifetime supply of graces necessary to fulfill our vocation.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



March 2: Day 8. St. Stanislaus Kostka St Stanislaus Kostka was seventeen when he fell ill. He was so ill that he was near death. He belonged to the Fraternity of St. Barbara; whose members trust their patroness to grant them the grace of Communion at the point of death. At the time, he was living with a Protestant tutor who would not even permit a Catholic priest to visit him. He was not discouraged by this; he only prayed. One night, he miraculously received the Eucharist in the presence of his tutor. He said: “Here is St. Barbara! Here she is with two angels! She’s bringing me to the Blessed Sacrament!” It was reported that the angels gave him Holy Communion. Shortly after, he decided to enter the Jesuit order.^{vi}

In the face of adversity, may we never lose heart.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



March 3: Day 9. Blessed Carlo Acutis Blessed Carlo Acutis is the Patron of the Eucharistic Congress. He was a regular young boy who loved soccer, playing video games, and going to the movies with his friends. While living a relatively normal life, there was something truly remarkable about him. He possessed a deep love and devotion to Christ in the Eucharist. As the internet was gaining popularity in the early 2000s, he helped form websites for parishes, the Vatican, and made a website with information on Eucharistic miracles. In October of 2006, in the midst of his research of Eucharistic miracles, he was diagnosed with advanced leukemia. He offered his sufferings for Pope Benedict XVI, the Church, and for his direct entry into heaven. He is quoted as saying: “If we stand in front of the sun, we get a tan, but if we stand before the Blessed Sacrament, we become saints.”

May our devotion to the Blessed Sacrament inspire us to use our talents to the best of our abilities for the good of all.

Pray the Novena Prayer.



Endnotes

i The Institute of St. Clement I, Pope and Martyr. The Eucharistic Miracles of the World. Bardstown, KY, Eternal Life, 2016 pg 355

ii Ibid 334

iii Ibid 300

iv Ibid 306

v Ibid 316

vi Ibid 330