



Description of and Instructions for praying a Novena 20-28 September 2023

A *novena*, meaning nine, is an ancient style of prayer that is carried out consistently over a nine-day period for a particular intention and is usually directed to the intercession of a specific Saint, Our Lady, an Angel or to a Divine Person of the Blessed Trinity. The nine days, or *novena*, has its Scriptural origin in the number of days in between Jesus' Ascension and Pentecost, during which the Blessed Mother and the Apostles were together in constant prayer until the descent of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 1: 6-14).

To pray a novena, a few things should be kept in mind. First, we approach the Lord with faith, trust and in a humble, loving manner. Second, we choose a particular intention to be mentioned throughout the novena. Three, we decide to whom we address this prayer, the intercession of Our Lady or a Saint or Angel in particular. To determine the novena's starting date, count backwards nine days from the Saint's feast day; the last day of the novena is the day *before* the Saint's feast day. In the Archdiocese of Toronto, the Solemnity of Saint Michael the Archangel is celebrated on 29 September, the Feast of the Archangels, which means this novena begins on 20 September 2023.

The pattern of prayer is the same for each day: the opening prayer, which includes your specific intention, followed by one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be, and ending with the Prayer to Saint Michael and a short litany. If you miss a day, just keep going: the main focus of any prayer is always about deepening our relationship with God and dwelling in his loving embrace.

For further information on popular piety addressed to Holy Angels, see the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments **Directory in Popular Piety and the Liturgy Principles and Guidelines**, published by the Holy See, December 2001, specifically #213-217.

Schedule for the Archdiocesan Novena to Saint Michael the Archangel patron of the Archdiocese of Toronto Solemnity celebrated 29 September 2023

Day 1: September 20
Day 2: September 21
Day 3: September 22
Day 4: September 23
Day 5: September 24
Day 6: September 25
Day 7: September 26
Day 8: September 27
Day 9: September 28