

Novena between Ascension and the Feast of Pentecost

The nine days from Ascension Day to the Eve of Pentecost are the original *novena*--nine days of prayer. Before he ascended, Jesus ordered the disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there to be baptized by the Holy Spirit. After his Ascension, they returned to the upper room in Jerusalem where they devoted themselves to prayer. These last days of the Great Fifty Days of Easter can be a time for us to prepare for the celebration of Pentecost. As we anticipate the coming of the Holy Spirit, this can be a time to pray for renewal in the Spirit and a time to reflect on the gifts which the Spirit bestows on the Church. The prayer for the newly baptized, p. 308, in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* is the traditional prayer for the seven gifts of the Spirit, based on the prophecy of Isaiah 11:2-3. This prayer could be the basis for daily reflection on the gifts of the Spirit in the days between the Ascension and Pentecost and the following adaptation of it could be used daily as a simplified novena.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sin, and have raised us to the new life of grace in your Son Jesus Christ. Sustain us, O Lord, in the gifts of your Spirit: give us an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. *Amen.*

Or, here is a fuller novena, based on the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit. It may be used at the conclusion of the Daily Office or as a separate act of devotion.

A Novena for the Gifts of the Spirit

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
and lighten with celestial fire.
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.
Thy blessed unction from above
is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
the dullness of our blinded sight.
Anoint and cheer our soiled face
with the abundance of thy grace.
Keep far our foes, give peace at home:
where thou art guide, no ill can come.
Teach us to know the Father, Son,
and thee with both to be but One,
that through the ages all along,
this may be our endless song:
praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, great Paraclete, Father of the poor, Comforter of the blest, fulfill the promise of our Savior who would not leave us as orphans. Enter our minds and hearts as you descended on the day of Pentecost upon the Mother of Jesus and upon his Apostles. Grant that every member of the Church may have a part in those gifts which were bestowed that day. O Holy Spirit, giver of every good and perfect gift, may the Father's will be done in us and through us, and may you, O mighty Spirit, equal to the Father and the Son in Being and majesty, be praised and glorified for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Here may be added any of the following prayers: Our Father; Hail Mary, Trisagion, Kyrie eleison, Gloria Patri, concluding with the prayer appropriate to the day of the novena.

First Day

Come, O Holy Spirit, the Lord and Lifegiver: Take up your dwelling within my soul and make of it your sacred temple. Make me live by grace as an adopted child of God. Pervade all the energies of my soul, and create in me a fountain of living water springing up into life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Second Day - Wisdom

Come, O Spirit of Wisdom, and reveal to me the mysteries of divine things, their greatness, and power, and beauty. Teach me to love them above and beyond all the transient joys and satisfactions of the mortal world. Show me the way by which I may be able to attain to them and participate in them forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Third Day - Understanding

Come, O Spirit of Understanding, and enlighten my mind, that I may know and believe all of the mysteries of salvation and discern your hand at work in the world. Teach me to see with your eyes that I may apply my heart unto wisdom in this life and be made worthy to attain to the vision glorious in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Fourth Day - Counsel

Come, O Spirit of Counsel, help and guide me in all my ways, that I may always do your holy will. Incline my heart to that which is good, turn it away from all that is evil, and direct me by the path of him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life to the goal of eternal life; through Jesus

Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God,
in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Fifth Day - Fortitude

Come, O Spirit of Fortitude, and give courage to my soul. Make my heart strong in all trials and in all distress, generously pouring strength into it that I may be able to resist the allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Sixth Day - Knowledge

Come, O Spirit of Knowledge, and make me understand the emptiness and chaos of life without you. Give me grace to recognize the goodness of the whole creation and to honor the Creator by using the world only for your glory and for the benefit and the salvation of all whom you have made; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Seventh Day - Piety

Come, O Spirit of Piety, possess my heart; incline it to a true faith in you, to a holy love of you, my God, that with my whole being I may seek you, and find you to be my best, my truest joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

Eighth Day - Holy Awe [Fear]

Come, O Spirit of Holy Awe, penetrate my inmost heart, that I may set you, my Lord and God, before my face forever. In joy and wonder may I be made worthy to appear before the pure eyes of your divine Majesty and behold your glory face to face in the heaven of heavens, where you live and reign in the unity of the Ever-blessed Trinity, now and forever.
Amen.

Ninth Day

Come, O Holy Comforter, come in all your fullness and power. Enrich us in our poverty, inflame us in our feebleness, melt our hearts with your love. Make us wholly yours, until your gifts are ours and we are lost in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Father, one God, in Trinity of Persons, now and forever. *Amen.*

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