

Novena in Honor of
St. Francis of Assisi



Cathedral Basilica of
St. Francis of Assisi
September 25 - October 3

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Leader:

During these nine days of walking with Saint Francis we are going to shift our attention from the “world” from “ourselves” and open our eyes and our hearts to the great wonders and blessings that God sets before us each day. Every moment of this day is a gift to us. The clouds that float above our heads, the soft wind blowing upon our faces; all these, everything is God reaching out to us, blessing us and showing how much He loves us.

All:

To him we must always attribute all praise, glory, honor, blessing and every good. Amen.

Day 1 - September 25

Leader:

Many times in our lives like Saint Francis, God has called us to do some kindness for someone we would rather just forget. Doesn't have to be a big thing, maybe just a smile for someone we often frown at. Maybe just a word of encouragement for someone we unwittingly find ourselves putting down. All of us have someone in our life that God sets before us as an opportunity to give to His least ones. When we do that, when we rise above our natural feelings and extend a small kindness, we are the ones who find the blessing!

All:

Saint Francis, friend of the lowly and poor open my eyes to see God in all my brothers and sisters. Pray for me, Saint Francis, that I too, might experience a conversion this day and in the days to come. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: Show your humility by doing a good deed for someone today.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Day 2 - September 26

Leader:

Today, let us thank God for all the blessings He has given to us. Let us thank Him for each moment we have received, for even those that were not consecrated to Him from our past, can be proofs now of the wonderful transforming work of grace daily taking place in us.

All: Saint Francis, you are the Saint of Joy because you found the true riches in God's field. You are the Saint of Peace because you found the true peace, that comes from trusting in God. Help us, Saint Francis, to find this same joy and experience this same peace in our hearts and in our lives. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: See the suffering Christ in someone around you.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Day 3 - September 27

Leader:

The saints had to overcome their natural aversion to the crosses and trials of this life. Francis is no exception. Not only did he have a great fear of lepers, he also had a great loathing for them. He came across a leper, went past him, then he turned around and came back to help him. Who or what are the lepers in our lives. If we can change our response to them we will find that the lepers disappear and only Christ remains.

All:

Saint Francis, all holiness stems from how we treat one another. Open my heart and my conscience to see the areas I need to change. Pray that I may act upon the grace given to respond lovingly and generously. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: Throughout the day, give Your cares to the Lord.

Day 4 - September 28

Leader:

If we want God to speak to us then we also must spend that time in prayer. Another word for prayer is “relationship” we speak to God and God speaks to us. As readily as we want God to listen to us so we must give that same readiness to listening to God. If we want God to answer our prayers, we must be ready as Saint Francis, to respond to God in the same manner.

All:

Saint Francis, I do not often have the resolution and firmness of heart to pray as much as I should. Beg God to give me the grace of prayerful and listening heart. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: Consider today how you can do God’s will.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Day 5 - September 29

Leader:

The Franciscan order originates with a simple person listening to God and hauling around some rocks. Pretty amazing. Jesus will speak as simply and plainly to us. We must imitate Saint Francis. Maybe we don’t quite know what God is saying, maybe we make a few false starts, but if we listen, and then follow as we think we are given to do, amazing things will happen for us as well. God will clear up things as we go along, but first we must dig in and get started.

All:

Saint Francis, help me to listen, help me to follow through! Help me to just get started in the way I think God is drawing me. You are not calling me to do great things but to pick up a few rocks, a few simple stones, and rebuild your church right where I am today. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: For God’s sake, help some person whom you may not like.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Day 6 - September 30

Leader:

Francis was determined to belong totally to God. Since his father complained to the Bishop that the clothes Francis has on his back belonged to him, Francis readily gave them up. Much as we hate to admit it, I need to be as ready and willing to give everything up to totally follow Jesus.

All:

Saint Francis help me to let go of the many things that are holding me back from living a truly free and unencumbered life. Not the responsibilities that my state of life require work, family, etc. but those interior things that hold me down, the little puffed up images of self that need to be stripped and given up. Help me, like Saint Francis to be more of a fool in this world and to be more lighthearted and joy-filled because I am not always protecting my image. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: Banish from your mind and tongue unkind words and thoughts today.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis

Day 7 - October 1

Leader:

Today, Saint Francis is one of the popular saints. Yet, he was thought a fool of the worst kind because of the way he lived. In many ways we too must live a “fool’s” life if we want to be true followers of Christ. We may not live as radical as Saint Francis did but each day we are called to make choices that will determine who we are following.

All:

Saint Francis help me to become more committed to living my life totally as a follower of Jesus Christ. Give me the courage and boldness to live totally for God each day. Make known to me any changes I need to do to make this possible. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: In imitation of Christ and St. Francis, do good to those who may dislike you.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Day 8 - October 2

Leader:

Francis lived a free and simple life, but it was not without certain imposed boundaries. These boundaries were the words and life of Jesus. His life was guided by the gospel of Jesus Christ. He was not a very learned or educated man, he accepted the gospels as they were presented and lived them. Completely. It was enough to make him one of the greatest saints of all time.

All:

Saint Francis, you loved God and took Him completely at His Word. Help me to do that too. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: Help someone you know who is in need of your friendship and support.

Please turn to page 7 to conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Day 9 - October 3

Leader:

Each religious order has a certain charisma about it that sets it apart from others. While many associate the spirit Poverty or Joy with Franciscans one must not discard lightly the great spirit of "fraternity" that is so present among all the brothers of the order. "See how they love one another" must always be the witness of every Christian. How we relate to one another, how we treat differences among ourselves with respect and understanding, is always the bottom line in every walk of faith. Not how much we know, how much we suffer, or give up but always and forever, how much we love one another.

All:

Saint Francis I know there is no greater virtue than love to draw souls to God. Help me to let go of self and embrace my brothers and sisters with the great love and generosity God is asking of me. Amen.

Leader:

Our offering today: In gratitude, be good to others today.

Conclude with the Prayer of St. Francis.

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me sow love,
Where there is injury, pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy

O Divine Master
Grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
in pardoning that we are pardoned
and in dying that we are born to eternal life.

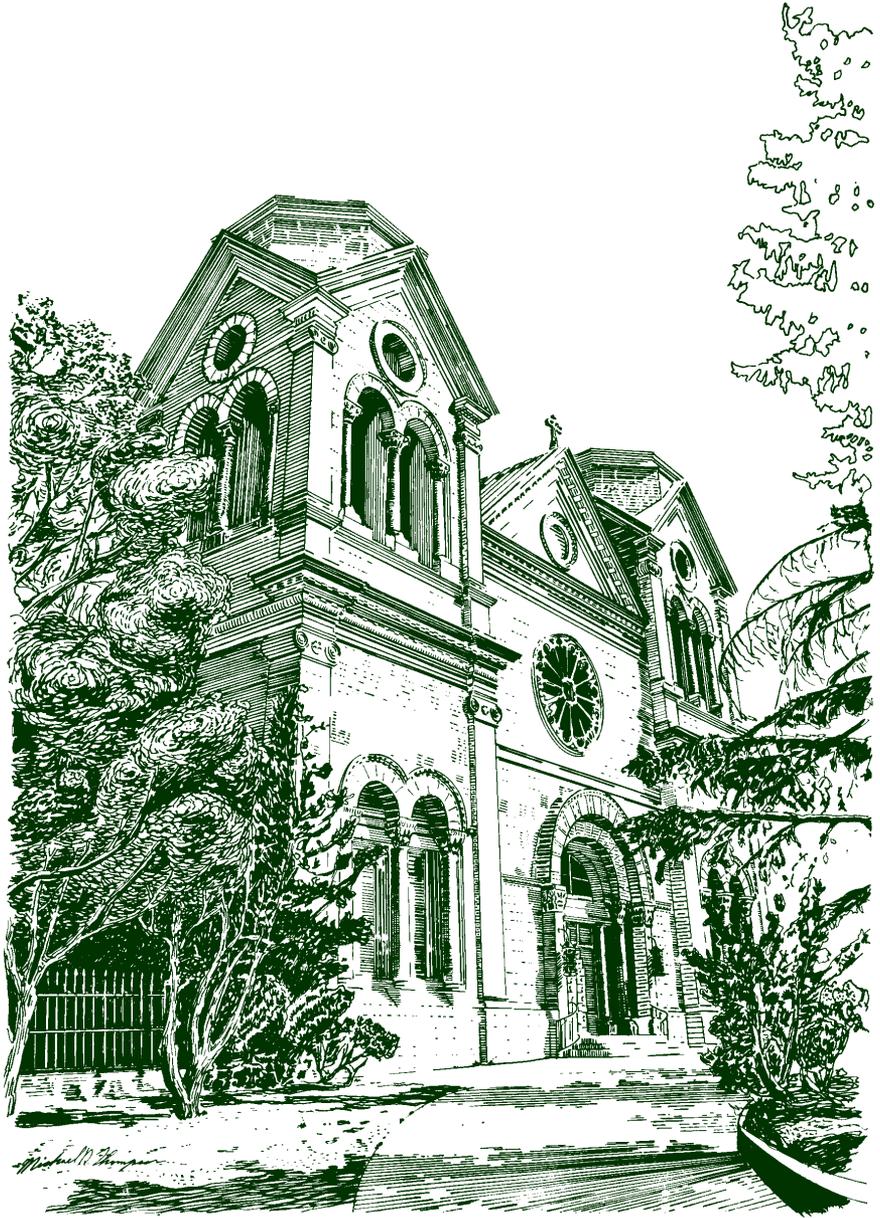
Amen.

Concluding Blessing:

Leader:

May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord show His Face to you and have mercy on you. May He turn His Countenance towards you and give you Peace.

+In the name of the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Go in peace.



Please do not remove, Thank you.