



A Novena of Prayer
for Vocations to the
Society of Mary
2012

“Every specific vocation is in fact born of the initiative of God; it is a gift of the Love of God! He is the One who takes the “first step”, and not because he has found something good in us, but because of the presence of his own love “poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Rom 5:5).”

Message of Pope Benedict for the 49th World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

This year Vocations Sunday (the Fourth Sunday of Easter), falls on the day after the celebration of the Feast of St Peter Chanel (28th of April). The coincidence of these two dates highlights the urgent need to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers into his harvest.

The custom in the Society of Mary is that the nine days leading up to the Feast of St Peter Chanel are dedicated to prayer for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. You are invited to pray during this novena for Vocations to the Society of Mary. The prayers and booklet can be used group setting or as prayer.



reflections in this
individually, in a
part of community

The word *Novena* comes from the Latin *novem* meaning nine. A novena is a devotion consisting of prayer said on nine successive days, asking to obtain special grace. The practice of saying novenas is derived from Scripture. After Jesus' Ascension into heaven, he told his disciples to pray together in the upper room and devote themselves to constant prayer (Acts 1:14). The Apostles, Blessed Virgin Mary, and other followers of Jesus prayed together for nine consecutive days, concluding in the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

Day One: Thursday 19th of April.

That we call and encourage young people on the path of a priestly or religious vocation.

“Dear brother bishops, dear priests, deacons, consecrated men and women, catechists, pastoral workers and all of you who are engaged in the field of educating young people: I fervently exhort you to pay close attention to those members of parish communities, associations and ecclesial movements who sense a call to the priesthood or to a special consecration. It is important for the Church to create the conditions that will permit many young people to say “yes” in generous response to God’s loving call.”

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

For all Marists, lay and professed: that by forming a “culture of vocations” in our own faith communities we will help young people respond generously to God’s loving call.

Lord, hear us.

From the island of Futuna Peter Chanel encouraged the young people of the college of Belley to support the spread of the Gospel. May he intercede for college and university students, that from among them many will hear and answer the call to Marist life.

Lord, hear us.

For those young people sensing God’s call to the priesthood or to a special consecration: that they might encounter the support and encouragement they need to respond positively to that invitation.

Lord, hear us.

That Marists strive to create the conditions that permit many young people to say “yes” in response to God’s loving call.

Lord, hear us

Day Two: Friday 20th of April

That all Christians might be inspired by divine love and so proclaim God's call to each of us.

"The love of God is everlasting; he is faithful to himself, to the "word that he commanded for a thousand generations" (Ps 105:8). Yet the appealing beauty of this divine love, which precedes and accompanies us, needs to be proclaimed ever anew, especially to younger generations. This divine love is the hidden impulse, the motivation which never fails, even in the most difficult circumstances. "

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

For all who experience God's call to faith; that we might give witness to the presence of that divine love in our lives.

Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel was inflamed by God's love to proclaim the Gospel to the peoples of Oceania. May his example stir up a similar desire in the hearts of the young.

Lord, hear us.

That lay and professed Marists by their lives of faith might proclaim the divine call to younger generations.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for the young; that inspired by the appealing beauty of divine love, many will follow the call to serve as religious and priests.

Lord, hear us.

Day Three: Saturday 21st of April

That young people might be open to God's call to live a life of love for their neighbour.

"It is in this soil of self-offering and openness to the love of God, and as the fruit of that love, that all vocations are born and grow. By drawing from this wellspring through prayer, constant recourse to God's word and to the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, it becomes possible to live a life of love for our neighbours, in whom we come to perceive the face of Christ the Lord (cf. Mt 25:31-46)."

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

We pray that our community will always draw from the wellsprings of God's love in prayer, the Word and the Eucharist; so that we live a life of love for those we meet and serve.

Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel drew strength from prayer, God's Word and the sacraments. May his intercession and example strengthen those missioned to serve their neighbour.

Lord, hear us.

That each one of us will deepen our self-offering and openness to the love of God through prayer, reflection on the Word and in the Eucharist.

Lord, hear us.

We pray that young people be open to God's love so the seed of vocation, especially priestly and religious vocations, may germinate in the soil of their self offering.

Lord, hear us.

Day Four: Sunday 22nd of April – 3rd Sunday of Easter

That priests and religious will grow in love of their vocation.

“Love of God, which priests and consecrated persons are called to mirror, however imperfectly, is the motivation for answering the Lord’s call to special consecration through priestly ordination or the profession of the evangelical counsels. Saint Peter’s vehement reply to the Divine Master: “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you” (Jn 21:15) contains the secret of a life fully given and lived out, and thus one which is deeply joyful.”

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

For all who follow Jesus; that we might grow in love of the Lord and our response to his call will be complete and deeply joyful.

Lord, hear us.

Compelled by God’s love, St Peter Chanel offered himself to preach the Gospel to the people of Futuna. May all priests and religious mirror that divine love in their lives.

Lord, hear us.

That all young men and women will experience God’s love; may they live joyful lives fully given and lived out in service of others.

Lord, hear us.

We pray that many young people will answer the Lord’s call to special consecration through priestly ordination and the profession of the evangelical counsels.

Lord, hear us.

Day Five: Monday 23rd of April.

That all who hear the Lord's call might follow the example of his service to the "least of his brothers and sisters".

"The other practical expression of love, that towards our neighbour, and especially those who suffer and are in greatest need, is the decisive impulse that leads the priest and the consecrated person to be a builder of communion between people and a sower of hope."

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

We pray for priests and religious; that advocating for those who suffer and are in greatest need they might inspire their faith communities to work for justice and peace.

Lord, hear us.

St Peter Chanel ministered to the sick and infirm on Futuna; his kindness and sacrifice showed them God's love for them and they came to know the Lord. May we follow his example of practical love.

Lord, hear us.

For those who suffer and are in need; that the Lord will call many young young men and women to be builders of communion and sowers of hope.

Lord, hear us.

Set on fire by God's love for them, may many young people answer the call to minister that love to people in the priesthood and religious life.

Lord, hear us

Day Six: Tuesday 24th of April.

For families, that they might know and live their particular vocation as “domestic churches”

“As a response to the demands of the new commandment of Jesus, this (Christian community) can find eloquent and particular realization in Christian families, whose love is an expression of the love of Christ who gave himself for his Church (cf. Eph 5:32). Within the family, “a community of life and love”, young people can have a wonderful experience of this self-giving love. Indeed, families are not only the privileged place for human and Christian formation; they can also be “the primary and most excellent seed-bed of vocations to a life of consecration to the Kingdom of God” by helping their members to see, precisely within the family, the beauty and the importance of the priesthood and the consecrated life.”

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

For all Christian families: that as places for human and Christian formation they might help their members to see the beauty and the importance of the priesthood and the consecrated life.

Lord, hear us.

Peter Chanel first learned of God’s love and call from his family. May his example and prayer inspire children to dedicate their lives to proclaiming the Gospel.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for parents growing their families as “communities of life and love”; that they might encourage their children to consider the priesthood and religious life.

Lord, hear us.

That young people will consider each Christian vocation: single life, marriage, parenthood, priesthood and consecrated life and discern the path to which the Lord is calling them.

Lord, hear us.

Day Seven: Wednesday 25th of April
(Anzac Day in Australia and New Zealand)

For an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life in our country.

“It is my hope that the local Churches and all the various groups within them, will become places where vocations are carefully discerned and their authenticity tested, places where young men and women are offered wise and strong spiritual direction. In this way, the Christian community itself becomes a manifestation of the Love of God in which every calling is contained.”

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

We remember those who have sacrificed much, even their lives, for freedom. May young people today be inspired to work disinterestedly to make our country a place of justice and peace.

Lord, hear us.

Peter Chanel gave his life to speak the Word where it had not been heard. Through his example and prayer may young men and women offer themselves to spread the Gospel.

Lord, hear us.

May our local communities become more and more “manifestations of the Love of God”: may young people be inspired to serve in the priesthood and religious life.

Lord, hear us.

We pray for those discerning a calling to serve the Lord and his people as priests or religious. May they receive the counsel and support they need.

Lord, hear us.

Day Eight: Thursday 26th of April.

For those young men and women discerning God's call to religious life.

"The task of fostering vocations will be to provide helpful guidance and direction along the way. Central to this should be love of God's word nourished by a growing familiarity with sacred Scripture, and attentive and unceasing prayer, both personal and in community; this will make it possible to hear God's call amid all the voices of daily life. But above all, the Eucharist should be the heart of every vocational journey: it is here that the love of God touches us in Christ's sacrifice, the perfect expression of love, and it is here that we learn ever anew how to live according to the "high standard" of God's love. Scripture, prayer and the Eucharist are the precious treasure enabling us to grasp the beauty of a life spent fully in service of the Kingdom."

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

For all those young people who are trying to decide what to do with their lives: that they grow in knowledge and love of the Lord, and clearly hear his voice amid all the voices of their daily life.

Lord, hear us.

The young Peter Chanel overcame discouragement after praying for light and comfort. May all Marists encourage and guide the young into a deeper love of prayer, scripture and the Eucharist.

Lord, hear us.

We pray that the Lord will call many young people to serve the Church in religious life. May they learn of "the beauty of a life spent fully in service of the Kingdom".

Lord, hear us.

For those young people called to be religious: that they might grow in faith and friendship with the Lord and hear clearly His invitation to them.

Lord, hear us.

Day Nine: Friday 27th of April

That the Lord will call many to respond to his love, offering themselves for service as Priests

"It is a love that is limitless and that precedes us, sustains us and calls us along the path of life, a love rooted in an absolutely free gift of God. Speaking particularly of the ministerial priesthood, my predecessor, Blessed John Paul II, stated that "every ministerial action - while it leads to loving and serving the Church - provides an incentive to grow in ever greater love and service of Jesus Christ the head, shepherd and spouse of the Church, a love which is always a response to the free and unsolicited love of God in Christ" (Pastores Dabo Vobis, 25)."

Message of Pope Benedict for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2012

Intercessions:

That many young men, responding to God's boundless love, will follow the call to love and serve the Church in the ministerial priesthood.

Lord, hear us.

For priests, especially Marist priests: that their lives and ministry might witness to the limitless love that precedes, sustains and calls them along the path of life.

Lord, hear us.

For Marist seminarians: may they experience God's free gift of love and dedicate themselves to love and serve his people in the priesthood.

Lord, hear us.

Full of the love of God, Peter Chanel gladly sacrificed his life to preach the Gospel: through his intercession and following his example may all Marists act with a sense of love and service.

Lord, hear us

Prayer to St Peter Chanel

St Peter Chanel,
you left your homeland
to proclaim Jesus
Saviour of the world,
to the peoples of Oceania.

Guided by the Spirit of God,
who is the strength of the gentle,
you bore witness to love,
even laying down your life.

Grant that, like you,
we may live our daily life
in peace, in joy, and in fraternal love.

May your prayer and example
call forth from our midst
many workers for the Gospel
so that God's Kingdom may reach
to the ends of the earth.

Amen

