

Sycamore Trust Solemn Novena

For Catholic Higher Education & The University of Notre Dame

August 14-22, 2017

As students prepare to resume classes at Catholic colleges and universities across the nation, we invite you to join us in a novena to protect and promote the mission of Catholic higher education, and especially of our beloved Notre Dame — that she may be a beacon of light, hope, and truth in a world beset by darkness, despair, and deceit.

Daily Opening Prayer

Notre Dame Our Mother, tender, strong and true, to you do we come, your loving children—alumni, students, faculty, family, supporters and friends of our beloved University, honored with the title of your name. We commend to you all your sons and daughters who are committed to the mission of Catholic higher education, Ex Corde Ecclesia, from the Heart of the Church.

To your motherly care and powerful intercession we lift up Notre Dame that she may be a beacon of light, hope and truth in a world beset by darkness, despair and deceit.

Confident in the power of the Holy Cross—Spes Unica—which animated the foundation of the University, we look to Him who was raised up that He might draw all unto himself. We draw strength from Him who with his Father has given us the Holy Spirit as our Comforter, Advocate and Guide.

Responding to the outpouring of the Spirit, we pray for the faithful and fruitful success of the Mission of the University of Notre Dame.

Drawing from that same Mission, we pray:

MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 2017 (VIGIL OF THE ASSUMPTION)

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education faithfully respond to Jesus' call to "Come, follow me."

The Lord Jesus identifies Himself as the Way, the Truth and the Life (Jn 14:6). Therefore, "no genuine search for truth in the human or cosmic order is alien to the life of faith." Called by Jesus to be salt and light, may the Light of Truth and the unending quest for it both humble and embolden all to embrace and proclaim it while following Jesus in every aspect of their lives.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of His radiant wisdom to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame



TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education embrace a shared undertaking in the world.

The Lord Jesus says that whatever we do to the least of our brothers and sisters we do to Him (Mt 25:40), and so we seek “to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning now becomes a service to justice.” Mindful of the fragility of human life and the vulnerability of the weakest among us — especially the unborn, the sick, the elderly, the physically and mentally disabled, the poor and all who are pushed to the margins of society — may the intellectual and practical efforts of the Notre Dame family and all who are united in the mission of Catholic education contribute to a just society on earth worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of understanding to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education seek His will through prayer.

The Lord Jesus prays that not His will but the Father’s will be done (Mt 26:39) and calls us to “a way of living consistent with human community and manifest in prayer, liturgy and service.” May prayerful worship, especially in the Holy Eucharist, in the sacramental life of the Church, and in private and public devotion, open up all to the will of God to live, speak, and work in a spirit of obedient love.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of piety to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 17, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education experience a purposeful fellowship in the light of Christ’s gospel.

The Lord Jesus said that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, He is present in their midst (Mt 18:20). In response “Notre Dame pursues its objectives through the formation of an authentic human community graced by the Spirit of Christ.” May the Notre Dame family and all who are united in the mission of Catholic education be animated by the Spirit of Unity in Truth and Charity so that genuine love may form and shape the work of bearing witness to the Gospel call to holiness of life and loving concern for our neighbor.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of His counsel to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.



FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education inspired to acts of love for God who first loved us.

The Gospel teaches that God so loved the world that he gave His only-begotten Son and that whoever believes in Him might not perish but have everlasting life (Jn 3:16). This universal love impels all to a “constructive and critical engagement with the whole of human culture.” May the Notre Dame family and all who are united in the mission of Catholic education confront the challenges of following Christ in a world that has abandoned God’s love and His truth by shining the light of the Gospel upon the darkness of our times, by lovingly confronting error with truth, by proclaiming the beauty of God’s goodness manifested in creation, and by witnessing to the mercy of God with contrite and humble hearts.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of fortitude to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education seek formation and transformation.

The Lord Jesus said that we shall know the truth and the truth shall make us free (Jn 8:32b). From this arises “a special obligation and opportunity, specifically as a Catholic university, to pursue the religious dimensions of all human learning.” In the commitment to the Splendor of the Truth may the Notre Dame family and all who are united with the mission of Catholic education always seek “the pursuit and sharing of truth for its own sake...to advance knowledge in the search for truth...the development of disciplined habits of mind, body and spirit that characterize educated, skilled and free human beings.”

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of knowledge to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 20, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education commit to fidelity to the Lord and responsibility to the faithful.

The Lord Jesus said “every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven” (Mt 10:32). In a community of faith and learning where Catholic identity is incarnated through the presence of Catholic intellectuals, may the Notre Dame family and all who are united in the mission of Catholic education always confess the presence of the Lord Jesus. In obedience to His command, may they always believe and teach others to believe all that He commanded, so that the saving truth of the Gospel may deliver from error and sin and keep all in a communion of love with God and each other.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of a holy and reverent fear of the Lord to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.



MONDAY, AUGUST 21, 2017

That all those who love and serve Notre Dame and all those entrusted with protecting and promoting Catholic higher education discover in the cross the hope it promises.

The Lord Jesus said that we must daily take up our cross and follow Him (Mt 16:24). May the Notre Dame family and all who are united in the mission of Catholic education always have a “disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice and oppression that burden the lives of so many,” building solidarity with them by sharing their sorrows, easing their burdens, and joyfully bearing our share of suffering for the sake of the Gospel.

May the Holy Spirit grant the gift of courage to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame

TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2017 (FEAST OF THE QUEENSHIP OF MARY)

That we may support the role of Catholic education in the Church and Notre Dame’s special place.

The Lord Jesus said to Mary, “Woman, behold your son,” and to John “Son, behold your mother” (Jn 19:26). Mary was privileged to be the first educator of the Incarnate Word. Her Immaculate Heart is one with the Heart of her Son, which beats at the center of the Church. May Notre Dame and all Catholic institutions of higher education always reflect the goodness, the virtue, and the truth which is the love between Jesus and Mary. May each of us in ways large and small, in prayer, in witness, and in sacrifice commit ourselves to the sacred mission of Catholic education so that Notre Dame and her sister institutions may be instruments of the salvation of others.

May the Holy Spirit grant a deep and abiding trust in the Providence of God to all who love and serve our beloved Notre Dame.

Daily Concluding Prayer

Notre Dame, Our Mother, trusting in your unfailing care for us, we thank you for the bountiful blessings we have received through the gift of Notre Dame, and we ask you to present our fervent prayer for our beloved University and for all institutions of Catholic higher education to Jesus, your Son and Our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father, in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.

The daily themes of the Sycamore Trust Novena petitions are inspired by the Constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross and remarks in quotation marks are taken from the Mission of the University of Notre Dame. All Scripture quotations are taken from the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition of the Holy Bible.

