

Don Bosco Novena 2024

The text for each day of the Don Bosco Novena is taken from the end of a conference given by St. John Bosco on March 19, 1876 “to all the professed, novices, aspirants and those who wanted to be aspirants at the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales” as recorded in Salesian Sources I. Don Bosco and His Work published by LAS-Roma.

Day 1: Fraternal Love

Text: There is still one thing that I believe is of extraordinary importance and that we look to see if we have it now and always preserve it. This is fraternal love. Believe me, the bond that keeps the Society, the Congregation united is this fraternal love. I believe we can call it the bond, the fulcrum around which ecclesiastical Congregations revolve.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 2: Love One Another

Text: But what degree should [fraternal love] reach? Our Divine Savior told us: Diligite vos alterutrum sicut et ego dilexi vos [Jn 13:34]. Love one another as I have loved you. And in the Scriptures we find this requirement to love one another at every step. But for this love to be as is requested it must be such that the good of one is everyone’s good and what is going wrong for one is going wrong for everyone.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 3: The Good of One

Text: We need to support one another and never criticize the other; never any jealousy. “Let him do that, I won’t”; “Everyone sees him in a good light while no one takes any notice of me”; “Look, if something good can happen it happens to him but nobody thinks about me”. No, I forbid these jealousies, the good of one has to be everyone’s good.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 4: As If It Were Us

Text: And what is going wrong for one must also be felt as going wrong for everyone. Is someone being persecuted? We should all feel persecuted and suffer with him and help him. Is someone sick? We should feel bad as if it were us.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 5: As It Happened for the Church

Text: So attempt good things together and let the initiative come from whoever. We know that not everyone has the same ability, studies, means. So great fraternal love. If

we do, do you know what will happen? It will happen as it happened for the Church. Some were apostles, but besides the apostles there were 72 disciples. Then there were deacons, people who worked for the Gospel. But they all worked together, all worked together with great fraternal love and so they succeeded in what they did, which was to change the face of the world. We can do the same so long as we save souls and above all save our own soul. We have need of it.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 6: We Are Ready for Everything

Text: All these things will only be obtained at the price of great sacrifice, by suffering something. We never achieve great things without great efforts; and that is why we have to show we are ready for everything.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 7: Only to Save Souls

Text: Yes, let everyone join the Salesian Congregation, but let him say: I want to take this path only to save souls; and this includes that while saving other souls I first want to save my own. And so this will require sacrifice? Well I am ready to make any kind of sacrifice. I would like to follow Jesus Crucified: if he died on the cross suffering terrible pain, I who wish to follow him must show myself ready for any suffering, even dying on the cross with him.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 8: Precious Stone

Text: Besides, look! In the Gospel I find it written: blessed those who are troubled and never: blessed those who are enjoying life. So, if I have to suffer? Blessed am I, this way I can more closely follow in the steps of the Divine Redeemer. Those who enjoy this world just enjoy the moment and their enjoyment will be small, indeed, nothing is worse than nothing, as far as eternity is concerned. Those who are troubled instead might suffer somewhat, but this does not last long and every suffering will be changed into a precious stone up there in Heaven and console them for eternity.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.

Day 9: Do Not Be Afraid

Text: I finish with what St Paul says, “Vos delectat magnitudo praemiorum; non vos deterreat magnitudo laborum”: do you take delight in the great reward of paradise? Then do not be afraid if you have to suffer something on this earth.

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on this theme and bringing before God your intentions.