

Novena to Saint Lorenzo Ruiz

First Day

Act of Contrition:

O Lord my God, You created me, and You sent Your only Son to redeem me. I am truly sorry for having offended You.

My God, my Lord and my Father, whom I adore above all things, I intend to amend for all my sins and promise to approach the sacrament of penance as frequently possible.

I hope for your pardon and strength in honor of Your Holy Passion and sacrifice on the cross.
Amen

Opening Prayer:

O most merciful and almighty God, You bestowed as gift to Lorenzo Ruiz the strength to withstand the overpowering forces of death for sake of his faith in You. Through his prayers, help us to follow his example by overcoming all life's trials and eventually increase our hope and love in You.

O St. Lorenzo Ruiz, you brought honor to our country, having been a level-headed and prudent father of the family, a witness of Christ in your life until your death. We present all our petitions to God through your help so that by our actions, we may know more and love more Jesus our Lord and Savior.

We humbly implore your intercession in this novena, for the infinite glory of God and in honor of your triumph as a martyr of Christ and defender of Christianity.

Reflection:

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? As it is written: "For your sake we are being slain all the days; we are looked upon as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:35-39)

St. Paul wants to impress this thought upon us: if a man loves God, he will try to overcome all difficulties for His sake, like a man doing everything for his beloved. St. Lorenzo Ruiz denied himself and surmounted all trials, suffering, and hunger, persecution and death as proof of his faith in God. This is the reason why love for God prevailed in St. Lorenzo Ruiz's life. In our own personal lives, what is really important in our life, and whom are we following as example? (Pause for a moment to reflect on the life and attributes of St. Lorenzo)

Act of Supplication:

- St. Lorenzo Ruiz, you showed yourself to be responsible father of your family; you chose to live in the midst suffering. Look with gracious eyes upon our family that is now beset with crisis.
R: St. Lorenzo, pray for us.
- You have been loyal as a servant of the church by fulfilling your duties to God and fellowmen; inspire us to be loyal too to our commitments.
R: St. Lorenzo, pray for us.
- You had been a hardworking member of parish organizations; teach us to take an active part in parish activities and become worthy instruments of Christ in works of charity.
R: St. Lorenzo, pray for us
- You had been firm in your faith in Christ which was why you chose to die for His sake; help us to be brave and fearless defenders of Christianity.
R: St. Lorenzo, pray for us

Pray **Our Father** in honor of the Holy Passion of Jesus Christ.

Second Day:

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

This is what the Lord says in the gospel according to St. John, the Apostle: "Love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father" (John 15:12-15)

We can show our love for God in action, not just words. We can manifest this love to Him if we do things according to His will and fulfill our obligations to Him and to our neighbors. Like, St. Lorenzo Ruiz, let us offer our life to God as the greatest sign of our love, even if we experience hardship in the hands of the enemies of our faith.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Third Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

"If the world hates you, realize that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, and I have chosen you out of the world, the world hates you. Remember the word I spoke to you, 'No slave is greater than his master.' If they kept my words, they will also keep yours. (John 15:18-20)

According our Lord himself, whoever follows in his footsteps shall also suffer hardships and even persecution in reparation for sins. In the midst of suffering, one's moral strength and steadfastness in truth are put to test. By this, there is assurance that all other hardships that will come by will be overcome. But, by avoiding or complaining against life's challenges and difficulties, one's heart is weakened. We keep vigilant in prayer as we trust in the saving power of God.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Fourth Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

Now someone approach him and said "Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?" He answered him, "why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments." He asked him, "which ones?" And Jesus replied, "You shall not kill, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother"; and 'you shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" The young man said to him, "All these I have observed. What do I still lack?" Jesus said to him, If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come follow me." (Matthew 19:16-21)

Are we in the same character as the young man in the gospel? Do we also obey the commandments of God and fulfill obligations to our family and neighbors? We all want to be holy, but do

we follow the directions that Jesus gave the young man? There are still murders, adultery, social injustice, robberies and all other acts of violence and sins around us. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit may lead us to avoid any actions that may hinder us on the road to eternal life.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Fifth Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

Great crowds were traveling with Jesus, and he turned and addressed them, "If any one comes to me without hating his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple." "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:25-27)

Two points are conveyed in this gospel narrative. First, that in following Christ, we should love him more than we love our spouses and families. The meaning is that we have to love God above everything and everyone else. Of course, we should love all others, but never at the expense of God's love and commandments. The second point is that we have to bear our cross with joy. It is the cross and the way we carry it that characterize our discipline of Christ. There can be no Christ without the cross and no disciple or follower of Christ can be worthy of his love unless one bears the cross. Anyone who avoids the cross given by Christ is like renouncing Christ the crucified. St. Lorenzo has given us an example of loving Christ till death.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Sixth Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

"Before all this happens, however, they will seize and persecute you, they will hand you over to the synagogues and to prisons, and they will have you led before kings and governors because of my name. It will lead to your giving testimony. Remember, you are not to prepare defense beforehand, for I myself shall give you a wisdom in speaking that all your adversaries will be powerless to resist or refute. You will even be handed over by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name, but not a hair on your head will be destroyed. By your perseverance you will secure your lives. (Luke 21:12-19)

In this gospel we are reminded that if Christ suffered for love of us, we should not be surprised if we suffer persecution. Jesus Christ has assured us that God's grace will be sufficient to sustain ourselves in the midst of suffering and persecution, for it is for his sake that we bear hardships and difficulties. St. Lorenzo Ruiz is an example of how we should not worry about what to say when we are slandered or shamed to do in the presence of persecutors. By our example of strength of soul and heart, we also preach the gospel of love of Christ.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Seventh Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if to others, indeed, they seem punished, yet is their hope full of immortality. Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tied them and found them worthy of himself. (Book of Wisdom 3:1-5)

In these verses from the Book of Wisdom, tells us that the just are protected by the hand of God. They will triumph over every form of hardship. For the righteous, suffering are not punishments but purification and opportunities to show fidelity, whereas for the wicked suffering is truly a punishment. The little sufferings we undergo will be compensated with great blessings if we like St. Lorenzo commit ourselves to the love of God and neighbor until the end of our earthly life.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Eighth Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

Beloved, do not be surprised that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as if something strange were happening to you. But rejoice to the extent that you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice exultantly. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let no one among you be made to suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as an intriguer. (1Peter 4:12-15)

It is only through trial of one's faith that a follower of Christ will deserve the name Christian. The genuineness of gold is ascertained in fire. The truth of Christianity is tested and verified and enhanced by challenges and trials. St. Lorenzo Ruiz proved that faithfulness is tested when one is challenged to renounce his faith with promise of physical freedom. We all go through similar tests but we have to rely on God's grace and guidance. Without Christ we are nothing, with Christ we can withstand trials and persecution.

Pray Act of Supplication

Our Father ...

Ninth Day

Recite the Act of Contrition and the Opening Prayer

Reflection:

You will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved.

This verse reminds us of the need to persevere in order to attain salvation. If we looked closely into the life of St. Lorenzo Ruiz, we would realize that he was not one of those who harbored hatred against others. He persevered in the acknowledgment of his faith. His death could be a form of preaching the Good News of salvation. It is appropriate as his devotees that we all follow his footsteps so than we may likewise attain, through perseverance eternal salvation.

Pray Act of Supplication.

Our Father ...