

17th -25th November, 2020

#REDWEDNESDAY NOVENA



ACN

Pray with us for persecuted Christians.

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED



#RedWednesday Novena

Our Novena begins on Tuesday 17 November 2020 and ends on #RedWednesday 25 November.

We'll be praying for the persecuted Church and for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution in our world today.

This Novena is based on the Lord's Prayer.

How to pray Aid to the Church in Need's #RedWednesday Novena

Each day:

1. Begin with the introduction.
2. Make the sign of the cross.
3. Read Pope Francis' reflection.
4. Pray the prayer intentions for the day.
5. Pray the Our Father.
6. Take a few moments to meditate on the day's line from the Lord's Prayer.
7. Repeat the Lord's Prayer and add any private intentions.
8. Make the sign of the cross.

Novena Dates 2020:

Day 1 – Tuesday 17 November - Our Father

Day 2 – Wednesday 18 November - Who art in heaven

Day 3 – Thursday 19 November - Hallowed be thy name

Day 4 – Friday 20 November - Thy kingdom come

Day 5 – Saturday 21 November - Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Day 6 – Sunday 22 November - Give us this day our daily bread

Day 7 – Monday 23 November - And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us

Day 8 - Tuesday 24 November - And lead us not into temptation

Day 9 - Wednesday 25 November - But deliver us from evil. Amen.



DAY 1 - TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER: 'OUR FATHER'

INTENTION:

For suffering and persecuted Christians around the world and for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution in our world today.

Meditation: 'Our Father'

INTRODUCTION:

Today, as we begin this #RedWednesday Novena, we pray for a kinder, more tolerant world. We remember all those who have suffered and died for their faith as well as those who struggle to live out their faith today. We pray for an end to religious discrimination, intimidation and persecution. We pray especially for our fellow Christians treated unfairly in school and the workplace, who are humiliated, fined, imprisoned, tortured and even killed for their belief in the enduring love and eternal salvation of Jesus Christ.



MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION: 'OUR FATHER'

"When evil appears in man's life, [God] fights at his side, so that he can be freed — a God who always fights for us, not against us. He is the Father! It's in this sense that we pray the 'Our Father'.

In the most awful moments of our life, in the moments of greatest suffering, in the most anguishing moments, God watches with us, God fights with us, and he is always close to us. Therefore, don't fear. None of us is alone."

Even if your earthly father has forgotten, you know "that you are the most beloved child of God, and there is nothing in life that can extinguish his passionate love for you."



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DAY 1 - TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER: 'OUR FATHER'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

Lord, we ask you to be with those who are suffering because of their belief in you. You are the Father of us all and you have promised that you will never leave us. As our Father, you want to bring peace to the world and an end to violence, injustice and religious intolerance. Today we pray the Lord's Prayer for peace, for all those suffering for their faith and for an end to religious persecution.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.



MEDITATION FOR THE DAY: 'OUR FATHER'

Let us call to mind throughout today the words 'Our Father'. As we do, let us ask God to help us know him as 'Our Father' and to hear our prayers for peace, religious freedom and an end to intolerance. Pope Francis has said, "Either you enter the mystery, in the awareness that God is your Father, or you don't pray."

May we all enter this mystery today.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER: 'WHO ART IN HEAVEN'

INTENTION:

For all those suffering religious persecution in Pakistan.

Meditation: 'Who art in heaven'

INTRODUCTION:

Maira Shahbaz, Pakistan.

On 28 April 2020, Catholic teenager Maira was kidnapped off the street, and, aged just 14, was forcibly married to her abductor and coerced into abandoning her faith. Maira's family has been fighting a legal battle to get her back. In August Maira escaped from her abductor and is now in hiding with family members.

Pakistan's Christians are suffering as never before. Among the world's most persecuted religious communities, they are no strangers to extreme poverty, discrimination, violence, rape and kidnapping. So when Covid-19 came, they were defenceless. After losing their jobs, many have found it impossible to put food on the table. Insult was added to injury when aid organisations in Pakistan began refusing Coronavirus aid – including food – to Christians and other minority groups.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:

'WHO ART IN HEAVEN'

Sometimes people let us down, even from within our own families – the very people who should love us most. However, "another love exists: that of the Father 'who is in Heaven'. No one should doubt this love. He loves us. We can say, 'He loves me.' If even our father and our mother did not love us [...], there is a God in Heaven who loves us like no one on this earth has done or can ever do. God's love is constant."

"The expression 'in Heaven' does not mean that God is far away – it shows us another dimension of love, a tireless love, a love that will always remain."



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DAY 2 - WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER: 'WHO ART IN HEAVEN'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

God, Our Father, in heaven you are not far away, but close to us. Your tireless love is available to all your children. We pray in faith for the people of Pakistan who face extreme poverty and for the Christians who are suffering discrimination, acts of violence, rape and kidnapping. Bring an end to Covid-19 and send help to those who cannot feed their families. May all aid organisations work for the good of all people.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY:

'WHO ART IN HEAVEN'

Let us call to mind throughout today the words 'who art in heaven' to remind ourselves of God's great power. Let us renew our faith in God as we offer to him prayers for the people of Pakistan and offer too our trust that these prayers can bring about change. We can be grateful that we have the means to help others across the world through our prayers. May we all play our part in helping those most in need in Pakistan and be generous and compassionate to all.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN UNITED KINGDOM



Maira Shabaz
(C) Aid to the Church in Need



Nighat Shabbaz – mother of Maira Shabbaz
(C) Aid to the Church in Need

DAY 3 - THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER: 'HALLOWED BE THY NAME'

INTENTION:

For the suffering Church in China.

Meditation:

'Hallowed be thy name'

INTRODUCTION:

Bishop James Su Zhimin in China was arrested in 1996 during a religious procession. Bishop James has spent almost 25 years in prison without charge or trial. Visits from friends and family are not allowed. He is now 88 years old.

Practising one's Christian faith in China is difficult and dangerous. Despite increasing regulation by a government determined to reinvent the Church as a state-run institution, Christianity continues to grow in popularity, particularly among those under 40.



MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:

'HALLOWED BE THY NAME'

When Jesus prayed this, "we hear all the admiration of Jesus for the beauty and greatness of the Father, and the desire that everyone recognise and love him for what he truly is. There is also a plea that God's name is made holy in us, in our family, in our community, in the whole world.

God transforms us with his love...[but] we manifest the holiness of God in the world, making his name present.

God's holiness is an expanding force and we pray that it quickly breaks down the barriers of our world. And the first to suffer in this is evil that afflicts the world."



A C N

DAY 3 - THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER: 'HALLOWED BE THY NAME'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

Jesus, we ask you to help Bishop James Su Zhimin of China. Give him the strength he needs to live his faith boldly each day. We ask for governments and leaders to bring an end to ideologies which suppress belief in God. We pray for the whole world and for an end to the Coronavirus. We pray for all people, for peace between nations, for an end to poverty and for governments to prioritise people, not weapons. We pray for governments to prioritise moral laws, not wealth; care for the vulnerable, not power; and cooperation rather than mistrust. May every heart discover you, Lord, and may your Kingdom come.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY: 'HALLOWED BE THY NAME'

Make a decision to say the words 'Hallowed be thy name' throughout the day and each time offer it as a prayer for Bishop James.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



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DAY 4 - FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER: 'THY KINGDOM COME'

INTENTION:

That all believers may work together to make God's Kingdom visible on earth.

Meditation: 'Thy kingdom come'

INTRODUCTION:

On 4 August 2020 there was a devastating explosion in Lebanon which killed more than 200 people and left 6,000 injured. Estimates suggested that 300,000 people were displaced by the blast. Immediately after, thousands of young Christian volunteers in Beirut began to help those who had lost everything. The teams of young people cleared the debris and delivered urgent aid, with medicine, clothes, blankets and food in huge demand. Msgr Bou-Hadir, an ACN Project Partner in Beirut, highlighted the young people's "amazing" response to what he called "an apocalypse" in his country's capital city. Aid to the Church in Need is providing emergency aid to those worst affected, including food parcels for 5,000 families whose homes and livelihoods were damaged or destroyed as a result of the explosion.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:

'THY KINGDOM COME'

Pope Francis explained to us that whenever we pray "Thy Kingdom come!" in the Our Father, we are saying: "Father, we need You! Jesus, we need You to be Lord in our midst everywhere and forever!" "Thy Kingdom come, You be in our midst. "We know that even though Jesus has conquered the world, for now the "world is still by sin, populated by so many suffering people, by persons who don't reconcile themselves and don't forgive, by wars and by so many forms of exploitation." We do not lose hope, because Jesus has made all things new, but we make the choice to build up his kingdom by helping those who suffer.



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DAY 4 - FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER: 'THY KINGDOM COME'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

Lord, we ask you to bless all those who serve your people. Protect priests, religious and lay ministers as they bring your love to the sick, especially those who serve in countries where there is danger because of religious persecution. Give all those suffering persecution the courage and help they need. Send all victims of discrimination the physical, spiritual and emotional help to live their lives with hope, joy and dignity. May all believers play their part in making your kingdom, Lord, visible on earth. Holy Spirit, empower all Christians with renewed enthusiasm for prayer, good works, evangelisation and service. Amen.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY: 'THY KINGDOM COME'

As we think about these words today, let us ask ourselves how we can help bring God's kingdom of love, peace, forgiveness and joy to this world. Pray for the people of Lebanon.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



DAY 5 - SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER:
'THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN'

INTENTION:

For Christian communities in Nigeria.

Meditation:

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

INTRODUCTION:

Leah is from Nigeria. Now thought to be 17 years old, Leah is the last remaining school girl held captive after terrorists kidnapped 110 female students in February 2018. Leah refused to give up her faith and for this she was forcibly married to a Boko Haram leader, was raped and has now given birth to a child.



According to Nigeria human rights organisation Intersociety, around 350 Christians in Nigeria were killed during the first two months of 2020 as villages were attacked, churches burnt and Christians abducted. One kidnapped seminarian, 18-year-old Michael Nnadi, was killed. Women, children, babies and men have been killed by the terrorists. A leading Catholic bishop in Nigeria claimed that this systematic violence against Nigerian Christians constitutes genocide. Bishop Matthew Hassan Kookah of Sokoto, who also stressed that Muslims have been attacked, spoke in August 2020 following the execution of five aid workers (three of whom are believed to have been Christians) by ISWAP (Islamic State West African Province).

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:

'THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN'

God wills "to seek and to save that which was lost". Because of His love for us, God "knocks on the door of our heart" and "is close to each one of us with His love, in order to lead us by the hand to salvation". When we pray 'Thy will be done', we are asking God to bring salvation to the whole world.



**"God wants us to be free," Pope Francis said.
"It is His love that frees us."**



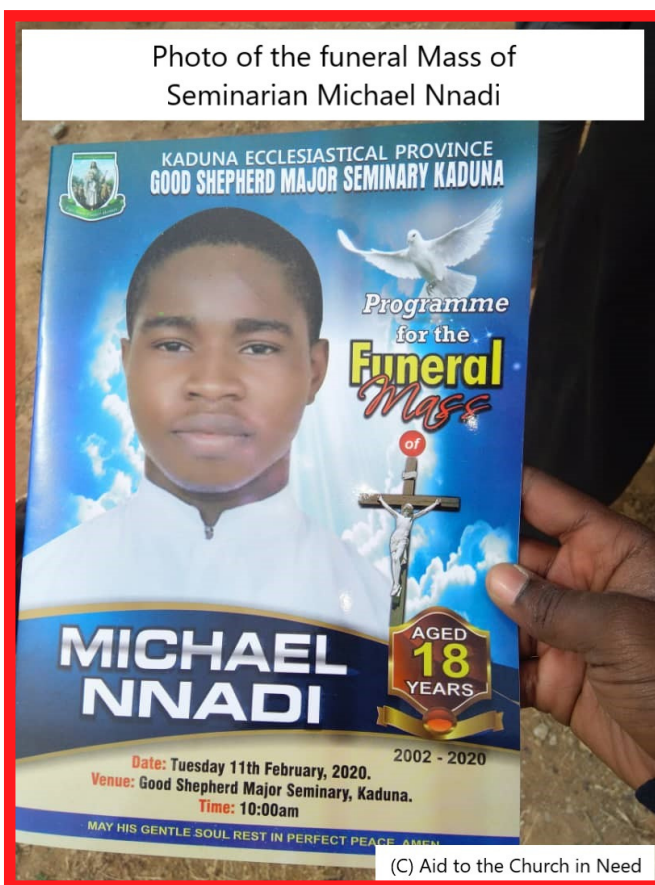
ACN

DAY 5 - SATURDAY 21 NOVEMBER:
'THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

Lord, you have called each of us to play our part in bringing your kingdom to this world. We do not understand why so much hatred and violence exists, but we know that you keep your promises and that you will bring some greater good out of all evil. We pray today for the world to wake up and take notice of what is happening to innocent Christians and others in Nigeria. We ask you to help Leah and bring her freedom. May none of us remain silent about these atrocities and may we all work together in concrete ways to bring your Kingdom to our planet.

Photo of the funeral Mass of
Seminarian Michael Nnadi



Emergency help for widows and orphans in Nigeria



PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY

'THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN'

Let us consider the times we often block God's will for us, so that we can be more open to any times when our own will tries to avoid that which God has planned for us. What is to be gained from making our will more important than God's?

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

DAY 6 - SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER:
'GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD'

INTENTION:

Let us consider the times we often block God's will for us, so that we can be more open to any times when our own will tries to avoid that which God has planned for us. What is to be gained from making our will more important than God's?

INTRODUCTION:

Imagine that you are the parent of a young girl with disabilities living in war-torn Syria. How hard would it be to survive the bombings, food shortages, joblessness, violence, destroyed transport systems and power cuts - and for nine long years? Sister Maria Lúcia Ferriera, from Mar Jakub Monastery in Qara, Qalamoun, told ACN that Maria's mother had run out of money to heat their home. Sister Ferriera said, "So she told us: 'To keep Maria, my girl, warm, we have been burning clothes that we no longer use.'"

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, has called this war the greatest humanitarian catastrophe since the Second World War with some 12 million refugees and internally displaced people, and now Syrians must face the coronavirus, too. ACN is very active in Syria. Our Project Partners help many people by providing food, medical needs, fuel vouchers and rent relief; mothers and older people receive extra support because so many of them have no one else to turn to.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:

'GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD'

"In the Lord's Prayer, we say 'our' when we ask God to 'give us our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses'. This use of the plural shows that Christian prayer never asks bread for just one person, but always on behalf of others. In our prayer, then, do we open our hearts to the cry of others? We are all children of God, and at the end of our lives, we will be judged on how we have loved. Not how we may have shared a sentimental love, but whether the love that we have shown was and is a love that can be seen as concrete, compassionate and freely given to others: **'As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me'** (Mt 25:40)."



**DAY 6 - SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER:
'GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD'**

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

God Our Father, thank you for teaching us to ask you to meet our needs, knowing you want to give us everything that can lead us to eternal happiness. When we ask for something for ourselves, let us ask always for it for everyone else as well, since you have made us to be happy when we show our love to each other. We pray for those who are suffering in Syria; we ask that they may receive what they need. We ask you to bless Maria, her mother and all the elderly, sick and lonely people in Syria who are relying on our generosity to survive. We ask you to be with refugees everywhere and to bring an end to their suffering.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER



MEDITATION FOR THE DAY:

'GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD'

Let us remember that the Lord is always overjoyed to see us come to him, and that he wants us to have everything that will draw us all closer towards him. As we think today about the line 'Give us this day our daily bread', let us remember those in Syria and elsewhere who will go to bed hungry tonight.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



DAY 7 - MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER: 'AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US'

INTENTION:

For eternal rest for those who have died as a result of persecution, war, corruption or natural disasters.

Meditation: 'And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us'.

INTRODUCTION:

November is traditionally the month when we remember all those we have lost—those known to us and loved by us, but also all those who have given their lives for a greater love. In particular, we honour our saints and martyrs, those who sacrificed themselves for their Faith and whose stories, in turn, inspire us and deepen our own faith and devotion to our Lord. There are many, many Christian martyrs whose names and stories we will never know, whose lives, hopes and prayers are known only to their loved ones and to God. Today we celebrate the lives and mourn the loss of so many brave, devout people who have been called to the Lord's presence through the depth of their devotion.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:

'AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US'

"Just as we need bread, so we have need of forgiveness. Every day! In the original Greek of Matthew's Gospel, the word used for 'trespasses' carries the meaning of being in debt, and so Christians pray asking that God will forgive their debts. We are truly in debt to God because everything we have has come as a gift from him: our life, parents, friends, creation itself.

Likewise, we are only capable of loving because we have been loved first; we are able to forgive only because we ourselves have received forgiveness. How can we not recognise, in the bonds of love that precede us, the providential presence of God's love? None of us can love God as he has loved us. We need only gaze at a crucifix to realize this. Let us pray, then, that even the holiest in our midst will never cease to be in debt to the Lord. O Father, have mercy on us all!"



DAY 7 - MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER: 'AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

We pray for those who have lost their lives because of persecution, war, corruption or natural disasters. We pray too for those mourning their loss. Lord, have mercy on those and all the souls in purgatory. Lord, make haste to come to the aid of those who are bereaved, do not delay in giving them the strength they need to hold on to your promise of eternal life. Like Jesus and the many martyrs who died forgiving their executioners, may we all learn how to forgive others daily through the power of the Holy Spirit and to seek forgiveness for our own sinfulness. Amen.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY:

'AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US'

As we ask the Lord to forgive us for our wrongs when we reach this line in the Lord's Prayer, so too should we call to mind those who perhaps remain in need of our forgiveness for wrongs real or perceived. Have we been as compassionate and forgiving towards others as we would ask God to be towards us? Life can be hectic and time seems to pass ever more swiftly as we grow older. Jesus wants us to be sure in the knowledge of his forgiveness; we, in turn, need to extend that same certainty to others.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



DAY 8 - TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER:
'AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION'

INTENTION:

For governments, civic and religious leaders and for an end to ideologies which suppress belief in God.

Meditation: 'And lead us not into temptation.'

INTRODUCTION:

Today, as we begin this #RedWednesday Novena, we pray for a kinder, more tolerant world. We remember all those who have suffered and died for their faith as well as those who struggle to live out their faith today. We pray for an end to religious discrimination, intimidation and persecution. We pray especially for our fellow Christians treated unfairly in school and the workplace, who are humiliated, fined, imprisoned, tortured and even killed for their belief in the enduring love and eternal salvation of Jesus Christ.



Photographer: Oliver Maksin
(c)Aid to the Church in Need

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION:
'AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION'

"With this expression, the one praying is not only asking not to be abandoned in times of temptation, but is also imploring to be delivered from evil. The original Greek verb is very powerful: it evokes the presence of the evil one who tends to grab hold of us and bite us (cf. 1 Pt 5:8) and from whom we ask God for deliverance. With this twofold plea: 'do not abandon us' and 'deliver us', an essential characteristic of Christian prayer emerges. Jesus teaches his friends to place the invocation of the Father above all else, also and especially in moments in which the evil one makes his threatening presence felt. It is not so infatuated with God's paternity as to forget that mankind's journey is filled with difficulties. If the last verses of the 'Our Father' were not there, how could sinners, the persecuted, the desperate, the dying, pray?"

**The last petition is precisely the petition we make when
we are at the limit, always."**



ACN

DAY 8 - TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER: 'AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

We pray for all governments, leaders and decision-makers. We ask you, Lord, for an end to ideologies which fail to respect human life, dignity and freedom. May all leaders work for an end to religious persecution, war, poverty and systems which lead to injustice. Lead us all away from the temptation to control others, selfishness and indifference to another's suffering.

Thank you, Lord, for giving us the wisdom to know that not everything we desire is good for us, and not everything we dread is bad for us. Help us always to discern the right and wrong present in every decision, so that, through the gift of your grace, we can navigate our best path through each day and each situation, enjoying your company at every turn, and never refusing to cooperate with your loving will for us and for those we meet.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY:

"AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION"

What are the temptations we are particularly prone to? What steps can we take to overcome those weaknesses and put ourselves safely in God's hands at every moment? God has already given us, in Jesus, a perfect example of someone who was able to shun temptation. Let us follow Jesus and grow ever stronger in resisting the traps that lie in our paths.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



**DAY 9 - #REDWEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER:
'BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.'**

INTENTION:

For the work of ACN, our benefactors, our projects partners and for all those helped by ACN.

Meditation: But deliver us from evil.'

INTRODUCTION:

On this the final day of the #RedWednesday Novena, we pray for all those who suffer religious persecution. We pray, too, for the thousands of people who carry out the work of ACN around the world. We also ask God to bless all those who give their time, prayers and donations to ensure that struggling Christian communities the world over receive the spiritual and material gifts they need to believe that they, too, may hope for a bright future in which they can live out their faith without fear.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

POPE FRANCIS' REFLECTION: 'BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.'

"The last cry of the Lord's Prayer is hurled against this 'wide-ranging' evil that encompasses the most diverse experiences: the bereavement of man, innocent suffering, slavery, the exploitation of the other, the cry of innocent children. All these events protest in the heart of man and find a voice in the final word of Jesus' prayer.

It is precisely in the accounts of the Passion that some expressions of the Lord's Prayer find their most impressive echo. Jesus says, 'Abba! Father! Everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will' (Mk 14: 36). Jesus experiences fully the piercing of evil. Not only death, but death on the cross. Not only loneliness, but also contempt, humiliation. Not only malice, but also cruelty, ruthlessness against Him. This is what man is: a being devoted to life, who dreams of love and goodness, but who then continually exposes himself and his peers to evil, to the point that we are tempted to despair of man.

Dear brothers and sisters, in this way the Lord's Prayer resembles a symphony that asks to be fulfilled in each one of us. The Christian knows how overwhelming the power of evil is, and at the same time he experiences how Jesus, Who never succumbed to its flattery, is on our side and comes to our aid.

In this way Jesus' prayer leaves us the most precious of legacies: the presence of the Son of God Who has freed us from evil, fighting to convert it. At the time of the final combat, He intimates to Peter to put the sword back in its sheath, He assures paradise to the repentant thief, and to all the men who were around, unaware of the tragedy taking place, He offers a word of peace: 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do' (Lk 23: 34).

From Jesus' forgiveness on the cross, springs peace, the true peace comes from the cross. It is the gift of the Risen one, a gift Jesus gives us. Think that the Risen Jesus' first greeting is 'peace be with you', peace to your souls, to your hearts, to your lives. The Lord gives us peace, He gives us forgiveness but we must ask, 'deliver us from evil', so as not to fall into evil. This is our hope, the strength given to us by the Risen Jesus, Who is here, in our midst: He is here.

He is here with that force that He gives us to go ahead, and He promises to deliver us from evil."



DAY 9 - #REDWEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER: 'BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.'

INTENTION FOR TODAY:

Today we pray for people who have lost their liberty, homes and livelihoods because of their faith in Jesus. Deliver them from evil, Lord. We pray for the millions of displaced people, for those who live in overcrowded camps and shelters and those who have had to risk their lives to flee persecution. Deliver them from evil, Lord. We pray for those who are more vulnerable to Covid-19 because of poor housing, sanitation and corruption. Deliver them from evil, Lord.

We ask you to bless the work of ACN and to bless all those benefactors and volunteers who support our work. We pray for the thousands of people who would not survive without ACN and for all the clergy and religious who run projects supported by ACN.

Finally, we come to you in prayer for all those who have been kidnapped and for those who have lost all for daring to believe in Jesus. Deliver them from evil, Lord.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER

MEDITATION FOR THE DAY:

'BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.'

Let us rejoice as we recognise every day the reality of God's saving love. Jesus has won the battle against evil, and we know we are on the winning side whenever we aim to let God take hold of us and lead us through each day of our lives. Let us work tirelessly to help our brothers and sisters around the world who are experiencing the brutal realities of standing up for God in places where their peaceful expression of faith is met with anger, violence, loss of liberty and even death. Let us stand as one Church, reaching out to everyone who needs the loving mercy of God, so that one by one God's people are set free to spend their lives in peace, with their loved ones, praising and thanking God for his saving love, and asking for mercy for those who continue to persecute others.

PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER AND ADD ANY PERSONAL INTENTIONS.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



DAY 9 - #REDWEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER: 'AMEN.'

Final Intention: 'AMEN'

For Christians, the word 'Amen' is the final affirmation of what has been said. We say it as we receive the Host and we say it at the end of our prayers. As we say the final AMEN of this #RedWednesday Novena, perhaps we can take this away as a personal affirmation of our ongoing commitment to ending religious persecution and supporting the suffering Church through prayer, information and action.

MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.



(c) Aid to the Church in Need

For more information:

#RedWednesday: acnuk.org/our-campaigns/redwednesday/

The work of ACN: <https://acnuk.org/about/our-projects/>

The reflections on the 'Our Father' have come from Pope Francis' catechesis on the Our Father which took place during his Wednesday General Audiences in March 2019.

The text we have used is from the Vatican News website.

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-05/pope-francis-general-audience-lords-prayer-our-father-conclusion.html> a subheading



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