

HPP 2017 Novena - for Jesus in the Park

Dear Friends,

Once again we are drawing near to performing our play and once again I have a novena prepared which I would like to invite you, your families and friends, to pray as we lead up to our special weekend. It is based on the prayer of Sir Francis Drake.

Over the last few weeks we have enjoyed a wonderful time rehearsing. It has been great being reunited with friends we made in 2015 and with meeting new crew and cast members. God has certainly blessed us in abundance. It has been hard work, but great fun.

Our novena is a prayer of thanksgiving, joy and hope.

Hope that we may do justice to the wonderful script that James has prepared for us.

Thanksgiving for the fellowship that has developed and deepened amongst us as a group gathered together with a common purpose. Hope that the weather will be kind to us during the weekend, and most importantly, for success in bringing the Word to others, in a way that is accessible to them and may bring change into their lives.

With God's blessings and strength, we dare to go out again, to spread his Word.

With prayers and blessings to you all, Jacky

The dates are only suggestions. You can of course start it earlier or later, it is the intention that counts! There are some prayers on the last page you might like to also include each day.

DAY ONE: Tuesday 1st August 2017



Jesus said,
"Zacchaeus come down.
Hurry, because I must stay
at your house today."

Luke 19:5

"Disturb us Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves,"

Zacchaeus was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man (Luke 19:3). He wanted to see what kind of a man Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd, so he climbed up a tree. When he met Jesus he was disturbed and mended his cheating ways, giving away half of his wealth to the poor and paying back four times what he owed to those he had cheated.

REFLECTION: Lord, help us to be disturbed by the wrong things we do, sometimes in your name. May we be disturbed by the needy in the world and all those we have wronged.

Prayer: Lord help us to see more clearly the things we need to change in our lives and with your loving help may we have the courage to make the necessary changes. Amen

DAY TWO: Wednesday 2nd August 2017



"What have I to do to inherit eternal life?"
Luke 18:18

"Disturb us Lord, when our dreams have come true, because we have dreamed too little."
The rich young man, from a leading family, had all that money could buy. The eternal life he sought, he could only obtain by selling all he owned and following Jesus, but this was too high a price for him, so he walked away, 'filled with sadness.'

REFLECTION: Lord, help us to be disturbed enough by the material wealth we have, so that we still can see the importance of you in our lives. Help us to get our priorities right.

Prayer: Lord, help us to do without some of the things we feel are necessary in our lives. Help us to realise that without the unnecessary trappings of life, we can dream more. Amen

DAY THREE: Thursday 3rd August 2017



Jesus said to Simon,
"Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch."
Luke 5:4

'Disturb us Lord, when we arrived safely, because we sailed too close to the shore.'
Jesus had been preaching from Simon's boat, he then told him to go fishing again, in deeper water. Simon was not keen, they had been fishing all night and caught nothing. He did as Jesus asked and caught so many fish his nets were at breaking point.

REFLECTION: Lord, help us to understand that you are always with us, even when we get into 'deep water'. Help us to trust in you and to know that we should never give up, even when things disturb us and seem insurmountable. You are always at our side.

Prayer: Jesus was always telling his disciples, 'Do not be afraid'. Help us to not sail 'too close to the shore', just to feel safe. With you by our side, we have nothing to fear Amen

DAY FOUR

Friday 4th August 2017



Another said;

'I have just got married and so am unable to come.'

Luke 14:20

*Disturb us Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess,
we have lost our thirst for the waters of life.'*

Jesus told a parable of a man who gave a Great Banquet. His invited guests made excuses not to come so the man sent his servants out into the streets and alleys of the town to bring in 'the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' He filled his house so that not one of those he had invited could have 'a taste of my banquet.'

REFLECTION: How often do we refuse the invitations Jesus so readily gives to us?

How often do we lose sight of the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame?

There is only one way to the Father; we have to accept the invitation!

Prayer: Disturb us Lord, when we come blasé about our own importance and our faith. Help us not to be so busy doing good to others, that we lose sight of our relationship with you. Amen

DAY FIVE

Saturday 5th August 2017



'I was hungry and you never gave me food, I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink.'

Matthew 25:42

Disturb us Lord, because having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity, and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim.

Jesus tells a parable of the sheep and the goats. The core message of which is, that God's people, love others. Followers of Christ, the sheep, treat others as they wished to be treated. While 'goats' may treat others with kindness and charity their hearts are not right with God, and their actions are not for the right purpose; to honour and worship God.

REFLECTION: We may say the right things and outwardly seem to do them, but our important relationship with God may be missing. God should come first in all we say and do.

Prayer: Disturb us Lord, so that we put you first in all our thoughts, words and actions.

Help us to keep you in our hearts, minds and souls always. Amen

DAY SIX Sunday 6th August 2017



'If I can touch even his clothes,
I shall be well again.'

Mark 5:28

Disturb us Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas.

The woman who had suffered from a haemorrhage for twelve years heard about Jesus. Her faith in him was so great that she told herself she would be cured, if she could only touch his clothes. She was bold enough to dare to do so, never thinking that Jesus would know what she had done. He felt that power had gone out of him and she had to confess her action.

Jesus said, 'your faith has cured you, go in peace and be cured.'

REFLECTION: The woman dared to touch Jesus. In doing so, by Jewish Law, she would make him unclean, by grace the opposite happened. Without a word, a look or a touch from Jesus, she was made whole.

Prayer: Disturb us Lord, to be brave, like the sick woman. Help us to venture more boldly, to open ourselves to 'touch and to be touched' by you and so be made whole again. Amen

DAY SEVEN Monday 7th August 2017



Jesus said,
'Woman, you are rid of your infirmity'
and he laid his hands on her.
At once she straightened up,
and she glorified God.

Luke 13:12

*Disturb us Lord, when storms will show your mastery,
where losing sight of the land, we shall find stars.*

The crippled woman, bent double and unable to stand upright was healed by Jesus in the synagogue on the Sabbath. The synagogue official was indignant that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, which was against the Jewish Law. The people were overjoyed at the wonder he had worked.

REFLECTION: The woman had suffered for eighteen years, but as soon as Jesus healed her, showing his mastery, she stood upright and glorified God. She had found the stars!

Prayer: Disturb us Lord, so that we can see your mastery and we too can look outward and upward and see the stars in our lives. Amen

DAY EIGHT

Tuesday 8th August 2017



Jesus said;
 "I am the living bread which has
 come down from heaven.
 Anyone who eats this bread will
 live forever."

John 6:51

Disturb us Lord, as we ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes.

Jesus told his disciples that their ancestors ate manna when they were in the desert, but those ancestors were now dead. He is the bread that came down from heaven so that people may eat it and not die. 'Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise them up on the last day.'

REFLECTION: By equating himself with bread, Jesus is saying he is essential for life. He is not only speaking about physical life, but eternal life. He is also saying he will satisfy our hunger and thirst to be made righteous in the sight of God.

Prayer: Disturb us Lord, so that we may see beyond what is in front of us. May our hunger to know you better be satisfied, day by day, as our thirst for knowledge of you is quenched in scripture and prayer. Amen

DAY NINE

Wednesday 9th August 2017



Jesus said;
 'I know my sheep, and my sheep
 know me.'

John 10:14

Disturb us Lord, and guide us into the future in strength, courage, hope and love.

Jesus is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep. He knows his sheep and they know him. It is a tremendous privilege to be known personally and lovingly by Jesus, the Son of God. It is a precious gift to all his sheep, and contains the promise of eternal life.

REFLECTION: Jesus is a polite and willing guest in our lives, waiting patiently for us to invite him in. He constantly tells us how precious we are to him, 'why every hair on your head has been counted' Matthew 10:30. However much we grow to love him, he loves us more.

Prayer: Spirit of God, disturb, renew, encourage and guide us day by day.

We ask this in the name of our Captain, who is Jesus Christ. Amen

Additional prayers

You may like to add one or other of these prayers to your novena each day, or other prayers of your own choice.

DISTURB US LORD

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too well pleased with ourselves, when our dreams have come true because we have dreamed too little; when we arrive safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess we have lost our thirst for the waters of life; having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wider seas, where storms will show your mastery; where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. We ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes, and to guide us into the future in strength, courage, hope and love.

Spirit of God, disturb, renew, encourage and guide us day by day.

This we ask in the name of our Captain, who is Jesus Christ. Amen

The Prayer of Sir Francis Drake (1540-1596)

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We pray that we may submit our wilful natures to God.

We ask that our minds may be fed with the truth of God.

May our imagination be purified by the beauty of God.

And may we surrender our will to the purpose of God.

As we open our hearts to the love of God. Amen

*adapted from a prayer by William Temple (1881-1944) Archbishop of Canterbury 1942-4*

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Christ has no body now on earth, but yours;

No hands, but yours; no feet, but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world.

Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good.

Yours are the hands with which he is to bless his people. Amen

The prayer of St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582)

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Day by day, O Dear Lord,  
for these three things I pray:

to see you more clearly,

to love you more dearly

and follow you more nearly,

day by day. Amen

*Prayer of St Richard of Chichester, abbreviated version, (1197-1253)*