



A Novena to Saint Jude

NINE DAYS WITH THE APOSTLE OF IMPOSSIBLE CAUSES
OCTOBER 19 – 27 · HIS FEAST, OCTOBER 28

JESUSCHRIST.PICTURES

How to Pray This Novena

A novena is nine days of the same asking. Not nine different prayers, but one request carried patiently, the way a friend is asked again.

Begin on October 19 and end on October 27, the eve of his feast. Each day has a page: a word of Scripture, a short reading, and the prayer to Saint Jude. Say the prayer aloud if you can, and name your intention in the silence the prayer leaves for it.

If you begin late, begin anyway. Nine days that end after the feast are still nine days.



DAY ONE

The Kinsman

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.

JUDE 1 : 1

He begins by calling himself a servant, and only then a kinsman. The man who grew up near Nazareth, who knew the carpenter's shop and the family table, claims no privilege from any of it.

Ask him today for the same grace: to hold whatever closeness you have been given to God as a service, and not as a right.

PRAYER TO SAINT JUDE

Most holy apostle Saint Jude, faithful servant and friend of Jesus, the Church honours and invokes you universally as the patron of hopeless cases, of things almost despaired of. Pray for me, I am so helpless and alone. Make use, I implore you, of that particular privilege given to you, to bring visible and speedy help where help is almost despaired of.

Come to my assistance in this great need, that I may receive the consolation and help of heaven in all my necessities, tribulations and sufferings, particularly

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here name your request

and that I may praise God with you and all the elect for ever. I promise, O blessed Saint Jude, to be ever mindful of this great favour, to always honour you as my special and powerful patron, and to gratefully encourage devotion to you. Amen.

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DAY TWO

The One Question



udas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

JOHN 14 : 22

It is the only sentence of his that the Gospels keep, and it is a question about why God hides. Every soul in trouble has asked it.

He asked it at the table, on the last night, and received no easy answer. Only a promise: that the Father would come, and make his home with those who love him.

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DAY THREE

Sent Far

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.

MATTHEW 28 : 19

Tradition sends him east, to Mesopotamia and to Persia, far from anything he had known, to people who had never heard the name he carried.

Whatever you are asking for today, ask also for the courage he needed on the first morning of that road, when nothing yet proved it was worth walking.

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DAY FOUR

Contend



e should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

JUDE 3

His letter is short and it is not gentle. He writes to people whose faith is being eroded quietly, from the inside, by those who sit at their own table.

Ask him for the particular strength that is needed when the thing wearing you down is not an enemy but a slow erosion.

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DAY FIVE

Keep Yourselves

K *keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.*

JUDE 21

Keep yourselves. The verb is active, and it is addressed to people who are tired. He does not say wait, he says stay.

There are seasons where remaining where you are, without any sign that it is working, is the whole of the task.

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DAY SIX

The Forgotten Name



nd of some have compassion, making a difference.

JUDE 22

For centuries his name was passed over, too near the betrayer's to be said comfortably. He became the apostle nobody asked, and by that very fact the apostle of those whom nobody asks for.

Being overlooked is not the same thing as being useless. Say that to him today, and then say it to yourself.

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DAY SEVEN

When Help Is Despaired Of

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies,
and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation.

2 CORINTHIANS 1 : 3-4

He is called the patron of hopeless cases, which is a strange honour. It means he is asked last, when the sensible routes are closed.

Today, name the thing you have stopped expecting. Not the polite version of it. The thing itself.

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DAY EIGHT

The Witness

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

JOHN 15 : 13

He died for the message he carried, far from home, among people who were not his own. The club he is shown holding in the old paintings is the instrument of it.

Ask him for perseverance, which is not the same as hope. Hope expects an answer. Perseverance keeps going before the answer comes.

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DAY NINE

Sim That Is Able

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

JUDE 24

His letter ends not with a warning but with a blessing, and it is one of the most beautiful in Scripture. The man who spent a page describing what corrodes a soul finishes by naming the One who holds it up.

Nine days end today. Whatever has or has not moved, end them the way he ended his letter: with the blessing, not the worry.

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