

ARMA LUCIS

Prayers for Family, Conversion & the Holy Souls

"They all go together: the household on earth and the household in purgatory."

ALLIES

St. Joseph and St. Monica

THE LAYMAN'S LANTERN

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I

HOW TO USE THIS PAGE

INTENTION *One cause, one person, one sitting.*

Pray one intention at a time. Choose the section that answers the need in front of you, say the name of the person you are praying for where the prayer leaves a space, and stay with that prayer rather than reading the whole page through.

Each section opens with its intention and names the saint who stands with you in it. A simple daily plan for a father and a mother is at the end of the page, and the sources of every prayer follow it.

Print the page for Adoration, or download it for a phone or a Kindle, from the box above.

SCOPE AND CATHOLIC CONTEXT It is not possible to list literally every Catholic intercessory prayer: the Church's liturgy, sacramentals, Scripture, novenas, and approved devotional traditions contain an enormous number. This is a carefully selected prayer guide for parents and other family members. It prioritizes official Church sources where available and clearly identifies devotional sources.

The Catechism describes intercession as asking on behalf of another and teaches that Christian intercession participates in Christ's own intercession, including prayer for sinners and for those who reject the Gospel.[1] The USCCB also states that parents should bless and pray for their children, and that certain household blessings may be prayed by baptized laypersons, especially parents on behalf of their children.[2]

IMPORTANT A parent may pray these prayers privately. A formal liturgical blessing or sacramental rite belongs to the Church's ministers; when a priest or deacon is available, ask for his pastoral help.[2]

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II

PRAYER FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

INTENTION *That this household be protected, at peace, and a witness in the world to God's glory.*

PRAYER FOR FAMILIES — USCCB

THE HOUSEHOLD PRAYS

We bless your name, O Lord,
for sending your own incarnate Son,
to become part of a family,
so that, as he lived its life,
he would experience its worries and its joys.
We ask you, Lord,
to protect and watch over this family,
so that in the strength of your grace
its members may enjoy prosperity,
possess the priceless gift of your peace,
and, as the Church alive in the home,
bear witness in this world to your glory.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.[3]

Good occasions: *after the evening meal, on a family feast day, after a serious family difficulty, or when praying for peace and unity in the home.*

✠ ALLY: THE HOLY FAMILY

FAMILY INTERCESSIONS TO ADD

After the prayer above, name each person slowly and pray for:

- faith, perseverance, and final salvation;
- healing of illness, addiction, grief, fear, or resentment;
- reconciliation between spouses, parents, children, and siblings;
- protection from serious sin and harmful influences;
- a return to Confession, Mass, the Eucharist, and the life of the Church;
- holy marriages, good vocations, and perseverance in one's vocation;
- the grace to forgive and to become a source of peace.

Conclude with an **Our Father**, **Hail Mary**, and **Glory Be**.

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III

PARENTAL BLESSINGS

INTENTION *That each child be kept from evil and grow in age, wisdom and grace.*

SIMPLE PARENTAL BLESSING

A PARENT PRAYS

A parent may make the Sign of the Cross on the child's forehead and say:

May God bless you and keep you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. [4]

This can be used when a child leaves home, returns home, goes to sleep, begins school, faces an examination, travels, is sick, or needs particular encouragement. Use holy water if desired; the essential act is the prayer and blessing in faith. [24]

EWTN BLESSING FOR CHILDREN

A priestly blessing for children is available through EWTN's Catholic prayer resources. Parents may use the simple parental blessing above at home and may ask a priest for the formal blessing, especially for a sick child or a significant family occasion. [25]

PRAYER FOR A CHILD'S PROTECTION AND GROWTH

A PARENT PRAYS

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, watch over [Name]. Preserve [him/her/them] from evil, guide [his/her/their] mind and heart, and grant that, advancing in age, wisdom, and grace, [Name] may live so as to please you always. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is a short home adaptation of the traditional Catholic blessing language for children; it is not presented as a replacement for a formal liturgical blessing. [5]

FOR A SICK CHILD

Pray the child's name in the **Our Father**, **Hail Mary**, and **Glory Be**, ask for healing and peace, and request the priest's visitation and the Sacrament of Anointing when appropriate. Parents should not treat prayer as a substitute for medical care.

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IV

PRAYERS FOR FATHERS AND MOTHERS

INTENTION *That a father guard his household as St. Joseph did, and a mother persevere for her children as St. Monica did.*

FOR FATHERS

Saint Joseph

A father may pray the **Novena to Saint Joseph**, asking him to protect the household, teach self-sacrificing fatherhood, guide the family, and obtain spiritual and temporal graces. EWTN's full novena includes meditations on Joseph as foster father, protector, worker, husband, and patron of a happy death.[6]

CLOSING PRAYER OF THE NOVENA TO SAINT JOSEPH

FATHER PRAYS

A father can conclude each day of the novena with:

Loving Saint Joseph, faithful follower of Jesus Christ, obtain for me from the Divine Heart of Jesus all the graces necessary for my spiritual and temporal welfare, particularly the grace I now implore: [state the family intention]. Guardian of the Word Incarnate, I feel confident that your prayers will be graciously heard before the throne of God. Amen.[6]

Mothers may pray this prayer too; Saint Joseph's intercession is not limited to men.

✠ ALLY: SAINT JOSEPH

FOR MOTHERS

Saint Monica

Saint Monica is a particularly fitting intercessor for mothers and fathers praying for a spouse or child who is far from God. A Catholic devotional collection records her perseverance in praying for her husband and son Augustine and provides four prayers.[7]

PRAYER TO SAINT MONICA FOR A WAYWARD CHILD

MOTHER PRAYS

Dear Saint Monica, you were once the mournful mother of a prodigal son. Your faithfulness to prayer brought you and your son so close to God that you are now with him in eternity. By your intercession and God's grace, your son Saint Augustine became a great and venerable Saint of the Church. Please take my request to God with the same fervor and persistence with which you prayed for your own son.

[Mention the intention.]

With your needs, worries, and anxieties, you threw yourself on the mercy and providence of God. Through sorrow and pain, you constantly devoted yourself to God. Pray for me that I might join you in such a deep faith in God's goodness and mercy. Above all, dear Saint Monica, pray for me that I may, like your son, turn from my sin and become a great saint for the glory of God. Amen.[7]

✠ ALLY: SAINT MONICA

PRAYER FOR MOTHERS

MOTHER PRAYS

Exemplary Mother of the great Augustine, you perseveringly pursued your wayward son, not with wild threats but with prayerful cries to heaven. Intercede for all mothers in our day so that they may learn to draw their children to God. Teach them how to remain close to their children, even the prodigal sons and daughters who have sadly gone astray. Amen.[7]

✠ ALLY: SAINT MONICA

PRAYER FOR A SPOUSE OR CHILD'S CONVERSION

MOTHER PRAYS

Dear Saint Monica, troubled wife and mother, many sorrows pierced your heart during your lifetime. Yet you never despaired or lost faith. With confidence, persistence, and profound faith, you prayed daily for the conversion of your beloved husband, Patricius, and your beloved son, Augustine. Grant me that same fortitude, patience, and trust in the Lord. Intercede for me, dear Saint Monica, for **[mention your petition]**, and grant me the grace to accept his will in all things, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.[7]

✠ ALLY: SAINT MONICA

PRAYER FOR ALL CHILDREN WHO HAVE WANDERED

MOTHER PRAYS

Blessed Monica, mother of Saint Augustine, we give thanks to our Father in Heaven, who looked with mercy upon your tears over your wayward son. His conversion and heroic sanctification were the fruit of your prayers. Dear Saint Monica, we now ask you to pray with us for all those sons and daughters who have wandered away from God, and to add your prayers to those of all mothers who are worried over their children. Pray also for us that, following your example, we may, in the company of our children, one day enjoy the eternal vision of our Father in Heaven. Amen.[7]

✠ ALLY: SAINT MONICA

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V

PRAYERS FOR CONVERSION

INTENTION *For the conversion of a family member who has left the Faith or never found it.*

PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH FOR CONVERSION OF A LOVED ONE

O glorious patriarch Saint Joseph, who merited to be called "just" by the Holy Spirit, I urgently recommend to you the soul of [Name], whom Jesus redeemed at the price of his Precious Blood.

You know how deplorable is the state and how unhappy the life of those who have banished this loving Savior from their hearts, and how greatly they are exposed to the danger of losing him eternally.

Permit not, I beseech you, that a soul so dear to me should continue any longer in its evil ways; preserve [Name] from the danger that threatens; touch the heart of this prodigal child and conduct [him/her/them] back to the bosom of the fondest of fathers.

Abandon [Name] not, I implore you, until you have opened to [him/her/them] the gates of the heavenly city, where [he/she/they] will praise and bless you throughout eternity for the happiness owed to your powerful intercession. Amen.[8]

This prayer is attributed by its source to Rev. Paul J. Gorman. It is a devotional prayer, not a required Catholic formula.[8]

✠ ALLY: SAINT JOSEPH

PRAYER FROM THE DIVINE MERCY DEVOTION

O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fountain of Mercy for us, I trust in You.

The source connects this invocation with prayer for sinners and recommends the Divine Mercy Chaplet as a prayer for conversion.[8] Pray it for a named family member, while entrusting the person's freedom and God's timing to divine mercy.

✠ ALLY: SAINT FAUSTINA, APOSTLE OF THE DIVINE MERCY

PRACTICAL CONVERSION NOVENA PATTERN

For nine days, pray:

1. Sign of the Cross.
2. The person's name and a specific intention.
3. One decade of the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet.
4. The St. Joseph or St. Monica prayer above.
5. Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.
6. A concrete act of charity or sacrifice offered for the person.

Avoid treating prayer as a way to control another person. Ask for grace, truth, repentance, healing, and freedom, and continue to love the person without pressure or contempt.

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VI

PRAYERS FOR THE HOLY SOULS

INTENTION *For the faithful departed of this family, and for the souls who have no one to pray for them.*

The Church's teaching places prayer for the departed within the Communion of Saints. The Vatican's Directory on Popular Piety says that suffrage for the dead should be understood within the relationship between the heavenly Church and the pilgrim Church on earth.[9]

ETERNAL REST

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

Pray this for deceased parents, grandparents, children, spouses, relatives, friends, priests, benefactors, and those who have no one to pray for them.

DE PROFUNDIS — PSALM 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
Lord, hear my voice.
Let your ears be attentive
to my voice in supplication.
If you, O Lord, mark iniquities,
Lord, who can stand?
But with you is forgiveness,
that you may be revered.
I trust in the Lord;
my soul trusts in his word.
My soul waits for the Lord
more than sentinels wait for the dawn;
more than sentinels wait for the dawn,
let Israel wait for the Lord.
For with the Lord is kindness
and with him is plenteous redemption;
And he will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

The Holy Souls novena source includes this Psalm as a prayer for the departed.[10]

PRAYER TO THE SUFFERING SAVIOR FOR THE HOLY SOULS

O most sweet Jesus, through the bloody sweat which you suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane, have mercy on these blessed souls. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through the pains which you suffered during your scourging, have mercy on them. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through your crowning with thorns, have mercy on them. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through your carrying of the cross to Calvary, have mercy on them. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through your crucifixion and bitter agony on the cross, have mercy on them. Have mercy on them, O Lord.

O most sweet Jesus, through your death and the offering of your blessed soul, have mercy on them. Have mercy on them, O Lord. Amen.[10]

✠ ALLY: SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

NOVENA FOR THE HOLY SOULS

The full nine-day novena attributed to Saint Alphonsus Liguori begins with an act of contrition, the **Our Father**, the **Hail Mary**, meditations, prayers to the suffering Savior, and a petition for the Holy Souls.[10] Use the complete text at the source linked below; it is especially suited to the days before All Souls' Day but can also be prayed at other times.

✠ ALLY: SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

THE MOST POWERFUL SUFFRAGES

Offer a Mass for the deceased, have a Mass intention arranged through a parish, receive Holy Communion for the intention of the faithful departed, pray at a cemetery, and offer works of mercy and sacrifices for them. Ask a priest or diocesan office for current guidance on indulgences and the conditions attached to them; do not rely on an old devotional webpage for current indulgence rules.

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VII

A LITANY FOR THE HOLY SOULS

INTENTION *One concentrated sequence of suffrages for the souls in purgatory, to be prayed straight through.*

Eight prayers, in order of priority. Pray them together as one suffrage for the Holy Souls, or take the first few when time is short; the Church attaches an indulgence to several of them, noted beneath each. A plenary indulgence asks the usual conditions besides the prayer itself: sacramental confession, Holy Communion, prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father, and detachment from all sin, even venial.

1. ETERNAL REST (REQUIEM AETERNAM)

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
Reqviem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lvx perpetva lvceat eis.
Fidelivm animae, per misericordiam Dei,
reqviescant in pace. Amen.

Partial indulgence, any day.

2. THE OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Prayed with the Creed during a visit to a church on All Souls' Day, for a plenary indulgence.

3. THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

4. DE PROFUNDIS (PSALM 130)

Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.
Let thy ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.
If thou, O Lord, wilt mark iniquities: Lord, who shall stand it?
For with thee there is merciful forgiveness: and by reason of thy law, I have waited for thee, O Lord.
My soul hath relied on his word: my soul hath hoped in the Lord.
From the morning watch even until night, let Israel hope in the Lord.
Because with the Lord there is mercy: and with him plentiful redemption.
And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

5. PRAYER FOR ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED (FIDELIUM DEUS)

O God, the Creator and Redeemer of all the faithful, grant to the souls of Thy servants departed the remission of all their sins, that through pious supplications they may obtain the pardon which they have always desired. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

6. THE HOLY ROSARY

Pray five decades for the holy souls, ending each decade with "Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord..."

Plenary indulgence when prayed in a church or with the family.

7. PRAYER OF ST. GERTRUDE

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Most Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son, Jesus, in union with the Masses said throughout the world today, for all the holy souls in Purgatory, for sinners everywhere, for sinners in the universal Church, those in my own home and within my family. Amen.

✠ ALLY: SAINT GERTRUDE THE GREAT

8. PRAYER FOR DECEASED FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Lord Jesus, lovingly welcome into Your presence my deceased family, relatives and friends who have completed their journey on this earth, and have gone to their rest in the hope of rejoicing with you forever in heaven. Source of all life and love, in Your infinite mercy, look favorably upon their goodness, and forgive any sins they may have committed, so they may enjoy for all eternity the great rewards You have promised to those who believe in You. Amen.

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VIII

A SIMPLE DAILY PLAN FOR A FATHER AND MOTHER

INTENTION *To hold the line: a little every day, for the living and the dead of this house.*

✠ MORNING

parental blessing over each child; one Our Father for the family.

✠ MIDDAY

one decade of the Rosary or "O Blood and Water…" for a person needing conversion.

✠ EVENING

USCCB Prayer for Families; name each family member; pray for one deceased relative and one Holy Soul who has no one to remember them; conclude with Eternal Rest.

✠ WEEKLY

attend Mass and offer a Mass intention for a living family member or the faithful departed; make one concrete act of reconciliation or mercy.

✠ MONTHLY

pray one day of the St. Joseph, St. Monica, Divine Mercy, or Holy Souls novena, or begin a complete novena as a household.

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IX

SOURCES

REFERENCES *Where each prayer and teaching above is taken from.*

1. Vatican, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "Prayer of Intercession," nos. 2634–2636: https://www.vatican.va/content/catechism/en/part_four/section_one/chapter_one/article_3/iii_prayer_of_intercession.html
2. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Sacramentals (Blessings)": https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/sacramentals-blessings
3. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Prayer for Families": https://www.usccb.org/prayers/prayer-families
4. Teaching Catholic Kids, "Bless your child": https://www.teachingcatholickids.com/bless-your-child/
5. EWTN, Catholic devotions and blessings for children: https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions
6. EWTN, "Novena to St. Joseph — Full": https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/st-joseph-full-novena-13879
7. Good Catholic, "4 Prayers to St. Monica for Wayward Children": https://www.goodcatholic.com/4-prayers-to-st-monica-for-wayward-children/
8. Knights of the Holy Eucharist, "Prayer for Conversion of a Loved One": https://www.knightsoftheholyeucharist.com/for-the-conversion-of-a-loved-one-prayer-download/
9. Vatican, Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*: https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20020513_vers-direttorio_en.html
10. Catholic Novena App, "Novena for the Holy Souls in Purgatory": https://catholicnovenaapp.com/novenas/novena-holy-souls-purgatory/

Prepared as a devotional aid. For questions about formal blessings, indulgences, sacramental practice, or pastoral situations involving addiction, abuse, mental illness, or serious family conflict, consult a Catholic priest or diocesan office.

✠ AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM ✠