

# THE NOVENA OF GRACE

## FAVORITE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER

O God, the everlasting Creator of all things, remember that the souls of unbelievers have been created by You and formed in Your own image and likeness. Remember that Your Son Jesus endured a most painful death for their salvation. I beseech You, O Lord, do not permit that Your Son should be any longer despised by unbelievers, but hear the prayers of Your faithful and of the Church, the spouse of Your most holy Son, and be mindful of Your mercy. Forget the idolatry and disbelief of men, and let it be that one day all may acknowledge Him whom You have sent, Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who is our salvation, our life and resurrection, by whom we have been saved and delivered, to whom be glory for endless ages. AMEN.

## A PRAYER OF ST. IGNATIUS

Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous. Teach me to serve You as You deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that I am doing Your will. AMEN.

## THE *SUSCIPE* OF ST. IGNATIUS

Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. Whatever I have or hold, You have given to me; I restore it all to You and surrender it wholly to be governed by Your will. Give me only Your love and Your grace, and I am rich enough and ask for nothing more. AMEN.



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The Jesuit Fathers of Southern Arizona, Kino House, 2841 East First, Tucson, Arizona. 85716

*Eusebio Francisco Kino.*

## THE NOVENA OF GRACE

Father Eusebio Francisco Kino was particularly devoted to St. Francis Xavier, the Jesuit "Apostle to the Indies." Kino championed this devotion throughout his life and taught it to the Christian communities of the desert Southwest. It seems only fitting that during the Tricentenary of his arrival that the devotion be revived as a tribute to his missionary spirit.

This devotion to St. Francis Xavier began in 1633 when the Spanish Viceroy of Naples ordered the redecoration of the royal church for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. Father Marcello Mastrilli, who directed the work, was felled by a hammer that slipped from the hand of a workman in the church's dome. Doctors despaired of Mastrilli's life, but St. Francis Xavier appeared to him, reminding him of a lapsed promise to go to the missions of India. Xavier assured Mastrilli that "all who earnestly ask his intercession with God for nine days in honor of his canonization would experience the effects of his great power in heaven and would receive whatever they asked that might contribute to their salvation." Mastrilli was quickly cured and renewed his vows for the missions. In 1635 he began preaching this devotion to Xavier in Lisbon while waiting to embark for India. Mastrilli ended an exemplary missionary career as a martyr in Japan.

Eusebio Kino, as a student at Ingolstadt, lingered close to death. He, too, promised to dedicate his life to the missions. He quickly and completely recovered. But God's plan for Eusebio was not to go to India. Instead, he was sent to the Jesuit missions of California and then the Pimeria Alta. The devotion he felt to St. Francis Xavier remained strong throughout his life. In fact, the devotion to "San Francisco" in Sonora and Arizona traces itself back to the fervor of the "Padre on Horseback"—who was truly one of the greatest missionary figures in the history of the New World.

This devotion to St. Francis Xavier is now known as the "Novena of Grace" because of the innumerable graces and extraordinary favors the faithful have obtained through his intercession. It is traditionally celebrated from March 4 through March 12, the feast of the canonization of St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier.

*[The prayer is recited during the novena, March 4 through March 12, or an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be can be recited five times in place of the formal novena prayers.]*

## PRAYER OF THE NOVENA OF GRACE

O most loveable and loving St. Francis Xavier, in union with you, I reverently adore the Divine Majesty. While giving joyful thanks to God for the singular gifts of grace bestowed upon you during your life and your gifts of glory after death, I ask you with deepest devotion to obtain for me the greatest of all blessings: the grace of living a decent life and dying a holy death. Moreover, I beg you to obtain for me (*express here the favor you wish to receive*). If what I ask of you so earnestly does not tend to the glory of God and the great good of my soul, please intercede, I pray, that I may receive what is best for both. AMEN. (Here is recited an Our Father, a Hail Mary, and a Glory Be, etc.)

Pray for us, St. Francis Xavier,  
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

### Let us pray,

Almighty God, You were pleased to bring into the Church the nations of the Indies through the preaching and miracles of St. Francis Xavier, mercifully grant that we who venerate his glorious merits may also follow the example of his virtues. This we ask through Christ Our Lord. AMEN.