



OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL PARISH, DOORNSPRUIT CENTENARY 2023

Our Lady of Good Counsel Novena

Our Lady of Good Counsel's feast day is April 26th but you can pray the Our Lady of Good Counsel Novena for any reason that you want. Hence, in our case we pray it in preparation of the centenary celebration of this parish. Our Lady of Good Counsel is one of the many titles given to Mary. Titles like Our Lady of Lourdes and Our Lady of Fatima were given as the result of a Marian apparition. Our Lady of Good Counsel was a title given after a Marian miracle that took place in Italy during the 15th century. While this title was given to Mary after a single event, the novena prayers will focus on how Mary has been our counsellor throughout history.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

Most Glorious Virgin, chosen by the Eternal Counsel to be the Mother of the Eternal Word made flesh, thou who art the treasurer of Divine graces, and the advocate of sinners, I, thy most unworthy servant, have recourse to thee. I consecrate myself to thy wisdom and beg thee to be my guide and counsellor in this vale of tears. Obtain for me through the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, the forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the means necessary to obtain it. In like manner, obtain for Holy Mother the Church victory over her enemies, and the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the whole Earth.

O Holy Virgin, to whose feet we are led by our anxious uncertainty in our search for and attainment of what is true and good, invoking thee by the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel, we beseech thee to come to our assistance, when, along the road of this life, the darkness of error and of evil conspires towards our ruin by leading our minds and our hearts astray.

O Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the doubtful and the erring, that they be not seduced by the false appearances of good; render them steadfast in the face of the hostile and corrupting influences of passion and of sin. O Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us from thy Divine Son a great love of virtue, and, in the hour of uncertainty and trial, the strength to embrace the way that leads to our salvation.

If thy hand sustains us, we shall walk unmolested along the path indicated to us by the life and words of Jesus, our Redeemer; and having followed freely and securely, even in the midst of this world's strife, the Sun of Truth and Justice under thy maternal Star, we shall come to the enjoyment of full and eternal peace with thee in the haven of salvation. Amen.

FIRST DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: *A Mother of Wise Counsel*

“Star of the stormy sea of my mortal life, may thy light shine upon me, so that I do not stray from the path that leads me to Heaven.”

Meditation

Never before has the world been so sinfully foolish and foolishly sinful. Sin is the ultimate folly, for it risks separating man from his God-given eternal destiny, which is eternal life in Heaven. Hell is full of fools, who now know their incredible foolishness in preferring a brief life sin, or even just a few brief sins in life, in preference to eternal life with their Creator in Heaven. Above all else, let us ask of Our Lady of Good Counsel a wise and true notion of what sin really is, for it is the only thing that can separate from eternal happiness and joy in Heaven, giving us, instead, an eternal life of misery and torture in Hell.

Prayer

Holy Virgin, moved by the painful uncertainty we experience in seeking and acquiring the true and the good, we cast ourselves at thy feet and invoke thee under the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel. We beseech thee: come to our aid at this moment, in our worldly sojourn, when the double darkness of error and of evil plot our ruin, by leading minds and hearts astray. Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the victims of doubt and of error, so that they may not be seduced by evil masquerading as good; strengthen them against the hostile and corrupting forces of passion and of sin. Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us our most urgent need..... **(here mention your request)** and secure for us, from thy Divine Son, the love of virtue and the strength to choose, in doubtful and difficult situations, the course agreeable to our salvation. Supported by thy hand, we shall thus journey, without harm, along the paths taught us by the word and example of Jesus our Saviour, following the Sun of Truth and Justice, in freedom and safety, across the battlefield of life, under the guidance of thy maternal Star, until we come, at length, to the harbour of salvation, to enjoy, with thee, unalloyed and everlasting peace. Amen

1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

Final Prayer

Most Glorious Virgin, chosen by the Eternal Counsel to be the Mother of the Eternal Word made flesh, thou who art the treasurer of Divine graces, and the advocate of sinners, I, thy most unworthy servant, have recourse to thee; be thou pleased to be my guide and counsellor in this vale of tears. Obtain for me through the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, the forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the means necessary to obtain it. In like manner, obtain for Holy Mother the Church victory over her enemies, and the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the whole earth. Amen.

SECOND DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: *A Foolish World Needs Counselling*

“The perverse are hard to be corrected, and the number of fools is infinite!” (Ecclesiastes 1:15)

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

“Attend to my counsels, follow my instructions and receive my warnings; for if thou pass them by unheeded, I will cease to speak to thee. Hear what thou hast not until now known of the disposition of these enemies. I wish to make known to thee that no intellect, nor any tongue of man or angels can describe the wrath and fury which Lucifer and his demons entertain against mortals just because they are images of God and because they are capable of enjoying Him for all eternity. The Lord alone can comprehend the wicked malice of these proud and rebellious spirits against his holy name and against his worship. If these foes were not restrained by his almighty arm they would in one moment destroy the world; they would like famishing lions, like wild beasts and fierce dragons, dispatch all mankind and tear them to pieces.

“Consider then, as seriously as thou canst, whether anything deserves greater pity, than to see so many men misled into danger and made forgetful of it; how some of them cast themselves into it on account of their light-heartedness, some of them for trivial reasons, others for a short and instantaneous pleasure, others through negligence, and yet others on account of their inordinate appetites, tearing themselves away from the places of refuge, in which the Almighty has placed them, to fall into the hands of such cruel and furious enemies; and not only to feel their fury for an hour, a day, a month, a year, but to suffer indescribable and unmeasured torments for all eternity. Thou shouldst be filled with fear and wonder, my daughter, to see such horrible and dreadful foolishness among the impenitent mortals and to see even the faithful, who have come to know and confess all this by Faith, so far lose their understanding and allow themselves to be so insanely blinded by the devil that they neither regard nor avoid this danger.”

Prayer

Holy Virgin, moved by the painful uncertainty we experience in seeking and acquiring the true and the good, we cast ourselves at thy feet and invoke thee under the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel. We beseech thee: come to our aid at this moment, in our worldly sojourn, when the double darkness of error and of evil plot our ruin, by leading minds and hearts astray. Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the victims of doubt and of error, so that they may not be seduced by evil masquerading as good; strengthen them against the hostile and corrupting forces of passion and of sin. Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us our most urgent need..... **(here mention your request)** and secure for us, from thy Divine Son, the love of virtue and the strength to choose, in doubtful and difficult situations, the course agreeable to our salvation. Supported by thy hand, we shall thus journey, without harm, along the paths taught us by the word and example of Jesus our Saviour, following the Sun of Truth and Justice, in freedom and safety, across the battlefield of life, under the guidance of thy maternal Star, until we come, at length, to the harbour of salvation, to enjoy, with thee, unalloyed and everlasting peace. Amen

1 Our Father and 3 Haily Marys

Final Prayer

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THIRD DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: Counsels of Holiness

“Seek counsel always of a wise man” (Tobias 4:19).

Seek counsel always of a wise woman—Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

“Disorderly sorrow and excessive enjoyment, which are apt to pervert the just estimation of good or bad. Thence arise two dangerous vices: precipitation in our actions, impelling us to undertake things without considering the proper means of success, and inconstancy in our good resolutions and in the works once begun. Ungoverned anger or indiscreet fervour, both cause us to be hurried or forgetful in many of our exterior actions, because they are performed without proper moderation and counsel. Hasty judgment and want of firmness in pursuing the good, cause the soul imprudently to desist from its praiseworthy desires; for it gives easy admittance to that, which is opposed to the true good, and is highly pleased, now with the true goodness, then again with what is but apparent and deceitful, or is presented by the passions or by the demon.

“Against all these dangers I wish to see thee watchful and provident; and thou wilt be so, if thou attend to the example, which I gave thee in my life, and if thou obey the instructions and counsels of thy spiritual guides; for without them thou must do nothing, if thou wishest to proceed with docile discretion. Be assured, that the Most High will give thee plentiful wisdom; for a pure submissive and docile heart will draw from Him superabundant aid. Keep in mind always the misfortune of the imprudent and foolish virgins, who, in their thoughtless negligence, rejected wise counsel and cast aside fear, instead of being solicitous; and when afterwards they sought to make up for it, they found the portal of salvation closed against them” (Words of Our Lady to Venerable Mary of Agreda).

Prayer

Holy Virgin, moved by the painful uncertainty we experience in seeking and acquiring the true and the good, we cast ourselves at thy feet and invoke thee under the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel. We beseech thee: come to our aid at this moment, in our worldly sojourn, when the double darkness of error and of evil plot our ruin, by leading minds and hearts astray.

Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the victims of doubt and of error, so that they may not be seduced by evil masquerading as good; strengthen them against the hostile and corrupting forces of passion and of sin.

Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us our most urgent need..... **(here mention your request)** and secure for us, from thy Divine Son, the love of virtue and the strength to choose, in doubtful and difficult situations, the course agreeable to our salvation.

Supported by thy hand, we shall thus journey, without harm, along the paths taught us by the word and example of Jesus our Saviour, following the Sun of Truth and Justice, in freedom and safety, across the battlefield of life, under the guidance of thy maternal Star, until we come, at length, to the harbour of salvation, to enjoy, with thee, unalloyed and everlasting peace. Amen

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Final Prayer

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FOURTH DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: *Counsels for Prayerfulness*

“Seek counsel always of a wise man” (Tobias 4:19).

Seek counsel always of a wise woman—Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

I wish that thy prayer be without intermission and that thou watch one hour with me, that is during the whole of thy life— for, compared with eternity, life is less than one hour, yea less than one moment! At all times and in all places, occupations and operations thou must keep the Lord in sight, without releasing Him from the intimate embrace of thy heart. Offer up all thy petitions and prayers in the name of my most holy Son and my own; and be assured without doubt, that they will be heard, if they are joined with the upright intention of pleasing God.

Pray and sigh for the eternal salvation of thy brethren, and that the Name of my Son may be extolled by all and known to the whole world. Pray that all nations may know, confess and adore their true God who became man for all. Through ignorance and lukewarmness, it happens that they are not prepared to receive and acquire the true science of the Most High. They bring upon themselves the loss of the divine light and they deserve to be left in the heavy darkness, making themselves more unworthy than the infidels themselves and entailing upon themselves an incomparably greater chastisement. Pray and weep with heartfelt and fervent love, that God may furnish the remedy for such great and dangerous evil, and do not neglect any means, divine or human, as far as thou art concerned, in order to obtain the salvation of eternal life of souls.

Mourn over such great damage of thy neighbours and pray for help from the bottom of thy heart. Thou must establish the habit of this kind of prayer, by a constant resolve, founded upon firm Faith and unshaken confidence, and by never losing sight of thy misery in profound humility and self-abasement. Pray for them with lively Faith and confidence. Thou must pray for all souls, but thou must pray more earnestly for those whom the Lord will point out to thee.

My Son and I look with especial love upon those who afflict themselves on account of the perdition of so many souls. Seek thou, to distinguish thyself in this exercise and continue to pray—for thou canst scarcely imagine how acceptable are such prayers to the Almighty!

Prayer

Holy Virgin, moved by the painful uncertainty we experience in seeking and acquiring the true and the good, we cast ourselves at thy feet and invoke thee under the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel. We beseech thee: come to our aid at this moment, in our worldly sojourn, when the double darkness of error and of evil plot our ruin, by leading minds and hearts astray. Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the victims of doubt and of error, so that they may not be seduced by evil masquerading as good; strengthen them against the hostile and corrupting forces of passion and of sin. Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us our most urgent need..... **(here mention your request)** and secure for us, from thy Divine Son, the love of virtue and the strength to choose, in doubtful and difficult situations, the course agreeable to our salvation.

Supported by thy hand, we shall thus journey, without harm, along the paths taught us by the word and example of Jesus our Saviour, following the Sun of Truth and Justice, in freedom and safety, across the battlefield of life, under the guidance of thy maternal Star, until we come, at length, to the harbour of salvation, to enjoy, with thee, unalloyed and everlasting peace. Amen

1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

Final Prayer

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FIFTH DAY OF THE NOVENA **Theme: Counsels for Sacrifice**

“Sacrifice yourselves for sinners ... Pray, pray very much, and make sacrifices for sinners; for many souls go to Hell, because there are none to sacrifice themselves and pray for them!” (Our Lady of Fatima).

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

Seek to mortify the inferior part of thy being, the seat of the evil inclinations and passions. Die to all that is earthly, sacrifice, in the consciousness of God’s presence, all thy sensitive appetites, fulfil none of their impulses, nor ever satisfy thy own will outside of the narrow limits of obedience. Sacrifice thy own inclination and repress all thy appetites and passions; and when by this efficacious determination thou art dead to all the movements of self, let obedience be the soul and the life of thy works. Oblige God by the sacrifice of thy own will, submitting in humble patience to all that His divine Providence may ordain. Unite thy spirit and thy affections in union with the Church triumphant and militant, offering at the same time thy life as a sacrifice and praying that all nations may know, confess and adore their true God who became man for all. For such high purpose I wish that thou spare no labour, beseeching the Lord and offering thyself in sacrifice unto death.

Prayer

Holy Virgin, moved by the painful uncertainty we experience in seeking and acquiring the true and the good, we cast ourselves at thy feet and invoke thee under the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel. We beseech thee: come to our aid at this moment, in our worldly sojourn, when the double darkness of error and of evil plot our ruin, by leading minds and hearts astray. Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the victims of doubt and of error, so that they may not be seduced by evil masquerading as good; strengthen them against the hostile and corrupting forces of passion and of sin. Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us our most urgent need..... **(here mention your request)** and secure for us, from thy Divine Son, the love of virtue and the strength to choose, in doubtful and difficult situations, the course agreeable to our salvation. Supported by thy hand, we shall thus journey, without harm, along the paths taught us by the word and example of Jesus our Saviour, following the Sun of Truth and Justice, in freedom and safety, across the battlefield of life, under the guidance of thy maternal Star, until we come, at length, to the harbour of salvation, to enjoy, with thee, absolute and everlasting peace. Amen

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Final Prayer

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Obtain for me through the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, the forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the means necessary to obtain it. In like manner, obtain for Holy Mother the Church victory over her enemies, and the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the whole earth. Amen.

SIXTH DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: **Counsels Against Foolishness**

“The perverse are hard to be corrected, and the number of fools is infinite!” (Ecclesiastes 1:15).

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

“Although the number of fools is so great and the vices are become so measureless, there are those who think that also the perfect are numerous—there are fewer than one thinks, and many less than there should be! The foolishness of men makes them stupid and deaf, their impious malice makes them scoffers, and their unbelieving perversity turns them away from God! In senseless fury they follow their pleasures, place no restraint on their passionate desires, and care not where they walk, even if to the most dangerous precipices. They are surrounded by innumerable enemies, who pursue them with diabolical treachery, unceasing vigilance, unquenchable wrath and restless diligence.

“What wonder then, that from such extremes, or rather from such unequal combat, irreparable defeats should arise among the mortals? And that, since the number of fools is infinite, the number of the reprobate should also be uncountable, and that the demon should be inflated by his triumphs in the perdition of so many men? It is most lamentable that while the rich might purchase eternal life with their possessions, they abuse them, and draw upon themselves damnation as senseless and foolish creatures! This evil is common among the children of Adam! Men give themselves over, like brute beasts, to sensual pleasures, and consume their lives in the pursuit of apparent good, until they suddenly fall a prey to eternal perdition. Such is in reality the fate of innumerable foolish men!

“Consider all delights and joys of the world as insanity, its laughing as sorrow, sensible enjoyment as self-deceit, as the source of foolishness, which intoxicates the heart and hinders and destroys all true wisdom. Live in constant and holy fear of losing eternal life and rejoice in nothing except in the Lord until you obtain full possession of Him in Heaven!”

Prayer

Holy Virgin, moved by the painful uncertainty we experience in seeking and acquiring the true and the good, we cast ourselves at thy feet and invoke thee under the sweet title of Mother of Good Counsel. We beseech thee: come to our aid at this moment, in our worldly sojourn, when the double darkness of error and of evil plot our ruin, by leading minds and hearts astray. Seat of Wisdom and Star of the Sea, enlighten the victims of doubt and of error, so that they may not be seduced by evil masquerading as good; strengthen them against the hostile and corrupting forces of passion and of sin. Mother of Good Counsel, obtain for us our most urgent need..... **(here mention your request)** and secure for us, from thy Divine Son, the love of virtue and the strength to choose, in doubtful and difficult situations, the course agreeable to our salvation. Supported by thy hand, we shall thus journey, without harm, along the paths taught us by the word and example of Jesus our Saviour, following the Sun of Truth and Justice, in freedom and safety, across the battlefield of life, under the guidance of thy maternal Star, until we come, at length, to the harbour of salvation, to enjoy, with thee, unalloyed and everlasting peace. Amen

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Final Prayer

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Obtain for me through the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, the forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the means necessary to obtain it. In like manner, obtain for Holy Mother the Church victory over her enemies, and the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the whole earth. Amen.

SEVENTH DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: Counsels Against Sinfulness

“If sins increase in number and gravity, there will be no longer pardon for them!” (Our Lady of Akita).

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

“Fear and abhor sin, even the slightest ... If the world were to heap upon you all its punishments and insults, all of this would do you less damage than one venial sin against the God whom you are obliged to serve and love in all things and through all things. Any punishment of this life is less dreadful than sin; for it ends with mortal life, but the guilt of sin, and with it punishment, may be eternal.

All mortals are weak and afflicted by many sins, for which the only remedy is suffering ... Why then will mortals continue to deceive themselves, by expecting, in spite of their sins, to become pure and worthy of enjoying God, without the furnace or the file of sorrows? In this life any punishment or tribulation fills mortals with fear and dread, merely because it affects the senses and brings them in close touch with it through them, but the guilt of sin does not affect them nor fill them with dread. Men are entirely taken up by that which is visible, and they therefore do not look upon the ultimate consequences of sin, which is the eternal punishment of Hell. Though this is imbibed and inseparably connected with sin, the human heart becomes so heavy and remiss that it remains as if it were stupefied in its wickedness, because it does not feel it present in its senses. There are not words or sentences sufficient to describe this terrible and tremendous danger.

Remember, that a voluntary remissness in regard to one imperfection, prepares and opens the way for others, and these, in turn, facilitate the commission of venial sins; and these venial sins facilitate the commission of mortal sins. Thus, the descent is from one abyss to another, until the bottom is found in the disregard of all evil. Those that talk much, cannot keep free from grievous sins for long. The way to avoid this danger is to tend continually toward the other extreme, striving rather to reflect and be silent. For the prudent medium of speaking only what is necessary, is found more in reflection than in immoderate speech.

In order to prevent such a misfortune it is necessary to intercept from afar the current of sin, for this practice, which seems but small, keeps the enemy at a distance, while the precepts and laws concerning more important matters are the fortress walls of conscience. If the demon can break through and gain the outer defenses, he is in better position to gain the inner ones. If then an opening is made in the bulwarks by the commission of sin, although it may not be a very grievous one, he already has a better opportunity to make an assault on the interior reign of a soul. As the soul finds herself weakened by vicious acts and habits and without strength of grace, she does not resist the attack with fortitude, and the devil, acquiring more and more power over her, begins to subject and oppress her without opposition.

1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

Final Prayer

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EIGHTH DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: Counsels of Humility

“He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble!” (Luke 1:52).

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

“Be thou filled with wonder and praise at the greatness and magnificence of the Creator and in His presence humiliate thyself to the dust. Shun no difficulty or suffering in order to become meek and humble of heart. Zealously study to acquire the humility, which pleases the Most High and myself, who desire thy true advancement. Take notice that this virtue of humility was the firm foundation of all the wonders, which the Most High wrought in me. The Most High has providentially formed man in such a way, that his own existence and formation manifest the important lesson of humility.

“Wonderful was the gift of humility, which the Most High conferred upon me. My divine Son came in the guise of humility in order to teach the world this virtue in word and example, to inculcate the hate of vanity and pride and rooting out its seed sown by Lucifer among mortals in the first sin. His Majesty gave me such a deep knowledge of how much He is pleased with this virtue, that in order to be allowed to perform only one of the acts mentioned by thee, such as sweeping the floor or kissing the feet of the poor, I would have been ready to suffer the greatest torments of the world. Thou wilt never find words to express the love for humility which I had, nor to describe its excellence and nobility. I had no part in the sin of Adam, for I was exempted from his disobedience; but, because I partook of his nature and by it was his daughter, I humiliated myself in my estimation to nothingness.

“In the light of this example then, how far must those humiliate themselves, who not only have had a part in the first sin, but also have committed other sins without number? The aim and motive of this humiliation moreover, should not be to remove the punishments of those sins, but to make restoration and recompense for the decrease and loss of honour due to God. God does not reject the prayers of those who wish to receive the grace of humility.”

1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

Final Prayer

Most Glorious Virgin, chosen by the Eternal Counsel to be the Mother of the Eternal Word made flesh, thou who art the treasurer of Divine graces, and the advocate of sinners, I, thy most unworthy servant, have recourse to thee; be thou pleased to be my guide and counsellor in this vale of tears. Obtain for me through the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, the forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the means necessary to obtain it. In like manner, obtain for Holy Mother the

Church victory over her enemies, and the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the whole earth. Amen.

NINTH DAY OF THE NOVENA

Theme: Counsels of Charity

“I am the mother of fair love!” (Ecclesiasticus 24:24).

Words of Good Counsel from Our Lady

The following words of Our Lady are those addressed to the Venerable Mary of Agreda:

“Hear me, and bend your ears to these counsels and doctrines of eternal life. If I desire that you follow me and imitate me in all the other virtues, then more especially do I make known and declare to you my desire to see thee follow me in the virtue of charity, for this is the end and the crowning glory of all other virtues. I desire that you exert your utmost powers to copy, in your soul, with the greatest perfection possible, my charity.

“In order to be sure that you love God perfectly and truly, search within yourself for the following signs and effects of that love: (1) whether your thoughts and meditations dwell continually on God, whether His commands and counsel find in you no repugnance or remissness; (2) whether you fear to offend Him; (3) whether you immediately seek to appease Him after having offended Him, (4) whether you grieve to see Him offended and rejoice to see Him served by all creatures; (5) whether you desire and are delighted to speak continually of His love; (6) whether you delight in the memory of His presence; (7) whether you grieve at your forgetfulness of Him and at His absence from your thoughts; (8) whether you love what He loves, and abhor what He abhors; (9) whether you seek to draw all men towards His friendship and grace; (10) whether you pray with confidence; (11) whether you receive his benefits with gratitude; (12) whether you do not waste them, but rather put them to good use for his honour and glory; (13) whether you strive to extinguish in yourself all the movements of the passions, which delay or hinder you in loving aspirations and in works of virtue.

All these and many more are the signs of greater or less charity in the soul. When charity is ardent and strong, it will be especially careful not to suffer the forces of the soul to remain idle, nor to consent to any blemish—because it will immediately consume and wipe it out. It will not rest until it can taste the highest Good of its love. For without it, this love droops, is wounded and dies. It thirsts after that wine which inebriates the heart, causing a forgetfulness of all that is corruptible and passing.

“And as charity is the mother and the root of all virtue, its fruitfulness will immediately show itself as soon as it has found a place in the soul; it will fill it and adorn it with the habits of the other virtues, and engender them one after another by establishing the practice of them. The soul that is in charity not only feels the effects of charity in itself, but through charity it is secure of being loved by God; through this divine love, it enjoys the reciprocal effect of God’s indwelling, so that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost will come and live in it as their temple, and this is a blessing which no words and no example can properly express in this mortal life.

“The right order of this virtue is to love God above all the creatures, then to love oneself, and him who is nearest to oneself, namely, our neighbour. God must be loved with the whole understanding, without deceit, with the whole will, without reserve or division, with the whole mind, without forgetfulness, without diminution, without negligence or remissness.

“The motive of charity in loving God is none else than God Himself; for He must be loved for his own sake, being the highest Good and most perfect goodness and holiness. Loving God for such motives

causes the creature to love itself and the neighbour and itself—for both belong to one and the same God, from whom they derive their origin, their life and activity. He that loves God truly for Himself will also love all that is of God and all that in some way participates in his goodness. Therefore, charity looks upon the neighbour as a work and a participation of God and makes no distinction between friend or enemy. Charity looks only upon that which is of God and which pertains to Him in others, no matter whether the neighbour is friendly or hostile, a benefactor or a persecutor.

“All other kinds of love, such as loving creatures for less exalted motives, hoping for some kind of reward, advantage or return, or loving them under cover of disorderly concupiscence, or with a mere human and natural love, even if it should spring from naturally virtuous and well-ordered motives, are not infused charity.

“Love no creatures except for God, and for what you see in them as coming from God and belonging to Him, in the same manner as a bride loves all the servants and connections of the house of her bridegroom, because they are his. Forget to love anything not referable to God, or not lovable on His account, nor love in any other way except as I have explained to you.

“You will also know whether you love with pure charity, by your behaviour towards friends and enemies, the naturally agreeable and disagreeable, the polite and the impolite, those that possess or do not possess natural advantages. All this sort of distinction does not come from pure charity, but from the natural inclinations and passions of the appetites, which you must govern, extinguish and eradicate by means of this sublime virtue.”

1 Our Father and 3 Hail Mary's

Final Prayer

Most Glorious Virgin, chosen by the Eternal Counsel to be the Mother of the Eternal Word made flesh, thou who art the treasurer of Divine graces, and the advocate of sinners, I, thy most unworthy servant, have recourse to thee; be thou pleased to be my guide and counsellor in this vale of tears. Obtain for me through the Most Precious Blood of thy Divine Son, the forgiveness of my sins, the salvation of my soul, and the means necessary to obtain it. In like manner, obtain for Holy Mother the Church victory over her enemies, and the spread of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon the whole earth. Amen.

LITANY TO OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, One God,

Have mercy on us.

Beloved Daughter of the Eternal Father, pray for us.

August Mother of God the Son, pray for us.

Blessed Spouse of God the Holy Ghost, pray for us.

Living temple of the Holy Trinity, pray for us.
Queen of Heaven and earth, pray for us.
Seat of Divine Wisdom, pray for us.
Depository of the secrets of the Most High, pray for us.
Virgin most prudent, pray for us.
In our doubts and difficulties, pray for us.
In our tribulations and anguish, pray for us.
In our discouragements, pray for us.
In perils and temptations, pray for us.
In all our undertakings, pray for us.
In all our needs, pray for us.
At the hour of death, pray for us.
By thine Immaculate Conception, pray for us.
By thy happy nativity, pray for us.
By thine admirable presentation, pray for us.
By thy glorious Annunciation, pray for us.
By thy charitable Visitation, pray for us.
By thy Divine Maternity, pray for us.
By thy holy Purification, pray for us.
By the sorrows and anguish of thy maternal heart, pray for us.
By thy precious death, pray for us.
By thy triumphant Assumption, pray for us.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,
R. And obtain for us the gift of good counsel.

Let Us Pray.

Lord Jesus, Author and Dispenser of all good, Who, in becoming incarnate in the womb of the Blessed Virgin hast communicated to her lights above those of all the Heavenly intelligences, grant that in honouring her under the title of Our Lady of Good Counsel, we may merit always to receive from her goodness counsels of wisdom and salvation, which will conduct us to the port of a blessed eternity. R. Amen.