



Novena to The Immaculate Conception 2026

Day 1: Morning Star

Good morning on this first day of the Novena of the Immaculate Conception.

We begin today, November 30th, this novena, although in other traditions it starts on November 29th, looking to Mary as the morning star, "Stella Matutina."

We start by placing ourselves in the presence of God, praying:

*By the sign of the Holy Cross;
from our enemies,
Deliver us, Lord, our God.*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The same Holy Spirit who formed the Virgin Mary as a new creature, so that from her, filled with heavenly dew, Jesus Christ, your son, the fruit of salvation, would be born, now sanctify our gifts, Lord, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Today we approach the Virgin Mary under this title of Morning Star, to truly recognize her as the morning light. Mary reflects the light of Christ just as the moon reflects the light of the sun.

Saint Bernard of Clairvaux tells us in a beautiful text: "Look at the star, invoke Mary." Mary is the awaited one from the origin of creation so that God's redemptive plan, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, may be fulfilled with us, to restore and bring salvation to us.

That is why the Book of Revelation, 20:27, sings: "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let the one who hears say, 'Come!'..". The Lord desires our 'yes' and therefore sets Mary as our model. She reveals herself as a mother, gifts herself as a mother, and sets an example so that we can walk by her side.

Thus, the Virgin Mary becomes a light in the midst of darkness. She is the first sign of the coming redemption, which we will celebrate in a few days when Christmas begins.

Today, the first Sunday of Advent, precisely that hope must flood our hearts. Mary, as mother and guardian of the divine plan of salvation, must make herself present in our lives.

Therefore, I encourage you to say to the Virgin: "Móstrate esse Matrem," "Show yourself as Mother." The purest love of her heart, that sweetest heart, must also reign in our lives. That is why the Lord has given us the Virgin as Mother. She, without stain and with her "Yes," brings us Christ.

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Ask yourself today how your "yes" to God is. Have you ever considered saying "yes" to God? Or simply, where do you find it difficult to say yes in the face of your plans?

Mary, Mother. Mary, Savior. Mary, Queen. She rises as a light in our lives amidst the storm, darkness, and suffering. In the midst of joy and happiness too, Mary becomes the light and guide of our lives.

Mary reigns because she is the Mother of the King, and simply as mothers do, she knocks on the door of our hearts to make room, so that you and I can truly discover that profound love that overwhelmed her that day of the Annunciation with the angel's announcement.

You may also wonder, as Mary did: "How can this be, since I do not know man?" - as we will read on the day of the Immaculate Conception. "Do not worry Mary, the Spirit of God will cover you with his shadow."

Dear listener, do not worry either, because if you put yourself in God's hands, if you take the Virgin Mary's hand, the Holy Spirit will cover you with his shadow. Take advantage of these days to pause. Take advantage of these days to take the Virgin by the hand. Take advantage of these days to set out on the journey to discover God as Lord, Mary as Mother, to offer yourself with your "Yes" in the midst of the world.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, in point 2677, includes the Hail Mary. And in the Hail Mary, we say to Our Mother: "Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

Most Holy Mother, truly intercede for us as you do. May we have the certainty and hope to know that as Mother, you do. And so, as a resolve for today, to please Our Mother, I encourage you to truly keep in mind to have generosity of spirit. Disposition, like Mary. Material and spiritual generosity to be able to go beyond ourselves and give ourselves to the Lord.

Dear Mother, we place ourselves in your hands through that Volunteer Prayer, which is customarily prayed in all activities of the Order of Malta. For you, Mother, we turn to your Son Jesus and say:

Lord Jesus, you have called us to be prepared on the frontiers of service and love for all:

Make yourself present among us so that we too can always be present where a man's cry is heard. Make us generous in giving, timely in trying, and effective in helping others. Instruments of good wherever needed, forever.

We ask for your help, You who are the ideal of our lives, and who live and reign forever and ever.

Amen.

I am Father José Ángel Zubiaur, and I have the honor and privilege to accompany you these days by the hand of the Virgin so that we may discover the mysteries of her kind and generous

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heart. I will accompany you these days by unraveling these pearls of Divine love through the figure of Our Mother the Virgin.

Every day we will end with a final prayer and receive the blessing. That is why we encourage you to prepare yourself, in spirit, to receive this blessing from Almighty God.

Let us pray.

O God! that by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin you prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son; we pray that just as you preserved Her from every stain by the foreseen death of your own Son, so you may also grant that through your intercession we arrive cleansed of all guilt before your presence.

Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

The Lord be with you. And may the blessing of Almighty God:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit descend upon you, keep you, and accompany you always.

Amen.

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