



## *Novena to the Immaculate Conception 2026*

### **Day 4: Cause of Our Joy**

Good morning to all and welcome once again to this Novena of the Immaculate Conception that we from Malta Camp Spain 2026 want to offer you. Today, on this fourth day of the novena, we contemplate our Mother the Virgin as the Cause of Our Joy. Today, on this fourth day of the novena, we also celebrate with the whole Church the feast of Saint Francis Xavier, born in the place where Malta Camp will take place this year. To him too we entrust ourselves to discover the goodness of the heart of our Mother the Virgin.

We begin:

*By the sign of the holy cross,*

*from our enemies deliver us, O Lord, our God.*

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

*O God, Savior of mankind, who through the Virgin Mary, Ark of the New Covenant, brought salvation and joy to the house of Israel, grant that we may be docile to the inspiration of the Spirit to bring Christ to our brothers and proclaim your greatness with our praises and the holiness of our customs.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*Amen.*

The Gospel passage for today's novena says: "Mary rose and set out on her journey." "Surge et Ambula."

In some way, the Virgin once again reminds us how we should act: rise and set out, leave where you are, leave the coldness of your faith, the lukewarmness of your faith, or whatever habits keep you from returning to the Lord's path. "What do you want from me today, Lord?" That is what we should ask each morning when, like the Virgin, we welcome the gift of the Holy Spirit. We ask Him to come to us, to strengthen us, and to guide us in our daily walk. When Elizabeth sees Mary, her cousin—as the text says—she recognizes her and is filled with the Holy Spirit.

We too are called to be like Saint Elizabeth: to believe, to look, to contemplate, and to recognize God's work before us. In short, this is welcoming the gift of the Holy Spirit into our lives; we must ask for it daily, insistently. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth feels that question stirring in her heart, a question that must also arise in us: "Who am I that the mother of my Lord should visit me?" So I encourage you to ask yourself today: "Who am I? Who am I that Mary should

*Surge et Ambula. Rise and Walk.*



visit me? Who am I that she should care for me? Who am I to be worthy of so many graces?" Simply, you are Mary's child, you are God's child. I am God's beloved child; I am Mary's child.

God is our Father, but Mary the Virgin is our Mother. Mary is your Mother, and as Mother she cares for you. When we confront that question "Who am I?" our hearts must also resonate today—December 3rd, the day the Church celebrates the feast of Saint Francis Xavier as Universal Patron of Missions and of Navarre—with those words Jesus recorded in Matthew's Gospel (or rather, that Matthew records Jesus saying), words that Saint Ignatius of Loyola launched to Saint Francis Xavier to conquer that heart, to help Saint Francis Xavier redirect the course of his life toward the truth.

What do they say? "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world if he ruins his life?" Translated into more normal language: "What good is it to gain the whole world if you lose your soul?" Only when a person says "yes" to God as Mary says "Let it be done," when Mary seeks Him as the source and goal of her actions and all her deeds, only then is the heart filled with true joy and consequently with profound peace. Mary our Mother brings joy wherever she goes because she brings God wherever she goes.

Ask yourself today: "What do I have to give to others? How is my joy?" And point 724 of the Catechism reminds us: "In Mary, the Holy Spirit reveals the Son of the Father, now become the Son of the Virgin. In her, the Father is perfectly glorified, the Son fully reveals himself, and the Spirit himself has been given. She is the burning bush. Filled with the Holy Spirit, she presents the Word in the flesh of her humanity, making Him known to the poor and the first fruits of the nations."

In some way, you and I are called to be the same: a burning bush that does not consume but sets others ablaze with the fire of the Holy Spirit. We are called, filled with the Holy Spirit, to make Him known to the poorest, *officium pauperum*, and to the first fruits of the nations, to the whole world in this secularized world.

Therefore, today as a mission to please our Mother the Virgin, I propose that you stand up, dispose yourself to serve, observe the needs of those closest and most needy, and be quick to serve them. Like Mary, be available for others wherever you are needed.

And we conclude our novena as every day with the Volunteer Prayer, asking the Lord to set our hearts ablaze to serve in the midst of the world:

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 may always be present where a man's lament is heard.

Make us generous in giving, timely in trying, and effective in aiding others; instruments of good wherever needed, forever. We ask your help, You who are the ideal of our lives and who live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

*Surge et Ambula. Rise and Walk.*



*Let us pray.*

*O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son, we ask that just as you preserved her from every stain by the foreseen death of your own Son, so you may also grant that through her intercession we arrive cleansed of all guilt into 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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