

# 9 Days Novena to Our Mother of Perpetual Help

## FIRST DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP

Mary while still remaining a creature. is nevertheless, by reason of her incomparable greatness, raised above all creatures. She towers high above them all, and we, looking up at her from our lowliness, find it impossible to take in her greatness at one glance and express it by one word. Hence the numerous titles we bestow upon Our Blessed Lady are a necessity arising from the very nature of the case. Some of these titles express her dignity: Mother of GOD. Queen of Heaven, others remind us of her sorrows: Our Lady of the Seven Dolours, Queen of Martyrs: others again speak to us of her power: Our Lady of Victories; whilst others make known to us her goodness; Our Lady of Mercy, Mother of Divine Grace. Help of Christians. But there is one title which more than any other, should inspire us with confidence in Mary's powerful intercession: Our Lady of Perpetual Help. For this title reminds us that, in whatever dangers, trials and difficulties we may find ourselves, Mary is ever ready, at all times, in every place, and under all circumstances, to come to our help and assistance.

Mary is our Perpetual Help, first, because she is the Mother of Jesus. How can Jesus Who is truly God and likewise Mary's loving Son refuse His Blessed Mother anything she asks of Him. St. Brigid in vision heard Our Blessed Redeemer thus address His Holy Mother, "As you refused Me nothing whilst I was on earth, so I will refuse you nothing now that you are in heaven." Mary is our Perpetual Help, secondly because she is our Mother. In His dying breath Jesus spoke these words to St. John and through him to the whole human race: "Behold thy Mother." By these words He bequeathed to the whole human race. His divine Mother to be the Mother of their souls. Mary therefore cannot refuse to Help the souls who have been committed to her charge by her Divine Son Himself as a last sacred trust with good reason then do we call her "Our Mother of Perpetual Help."

### PRAYER TO BE SAID EACH DAY AFTER THE MEDITATION

O Mother of Perpetual Help, behold me a miserable sinner at thy feet; I have recourse to thee and put my trust in thee. O Mother of Mercy have pity upon me. I hear thee called by all the refuge and the hope of sinners, be then my refuge and my hope. Help me for the love of Jesus Christ; stretch forth thy hand to me, who recommend and dedicate myself to thee as thy perpetual servant. I bless and thank GOD for having in His mercy given to me this confidence in thee, the pledge as I believe of my eternal salvation. Alas! Too often in past times have I miserably fallen, because I had not recourse to thee! I know that with thy help I shall conquer. I know that thou will help me if I recommend myself to thee; but i fear lest in the occasions of falling I should cease to call upon thee and so should lose my soul. This, then, is the grace I seek from thee; and I conjure thee, as far as I know how and can, to obtain it for me; namely, in the assaults of hell always to have recourse to thee and to say to thee: O Mary help me; Mother of Perpetual Help, suffer me not to lose my God.

Five "Hail Mary's" to obtain the special favours you seek -- then: -- Holy Mary, assist the miserable, help the faint hearted, cheer those that weep, pray for the people be the advocate of the clergy, intercede for all devout woman; let all feel thine aid who implore thy perpetual help.

V. Thou has been for us, Our Lady, a refuge.

R. A helper in needs and tribulation.

### LET US PRAY

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## SECOND DAY

### **Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP THROUGH HER INTERCESSION**

A mother's authority over her son is so great, that, even though he be a powerful monarch and possess absolute sway over his subjects, such a mother could never become subject to her son. True it is, that Jesus Christ, who is now in heaven, seated at the right hand of GOD the Father, has sovereign dominion over all creatures, Mary not excepted. Still it is likewise true, that there was a time, when that same Jesus Christ, living on this earth, condescended to submit in all things to Mary's authority. We may therefore rightly conclude that although Mary cannot, strictly speaking, impose any commands on her Divine Son in heaven, still her petitions forever remain the petition of a mother and must therefore exercise over the will of her Son a mother's influence, powerful enough to obtain whatsoever she may ask. Hence St. Bonaventure says: "Mary possesses this singular privilege that she may be said to be all-powerful with her Divine Son. And whence is this? simply because Mary's petitions are a mother's petitions. It is then certain that Mary is not wanting in the power to assist us and save us. Neither is she wanting in good will, Because she is more anxiously concerned about our everlasting welfare than we ourselves. Since, therefore, this is really the care, how can a true servant of Mary ever fail to have unbounded confidence in Mary's Perpetual Help.

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## THIRD DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP IN TEMPTATION

We read in the first book of Kings (chap. XI) how Naas, King of the Ammonites, attacked the inhabitants of Jabes and swore he would pluck out their right eyes and make them a reproach in Israel. The men of Jabes, in their great distress, obtained a truce of seven days during which they send for help along the coasts of Israel. Great indeed was their joy, when the messengers returned and brought them glad tidings from Saul. "Go", said he, "and tell the men of Jabes: Tomorrow when the sun shall be hot, you shall have relief." There are a host of enemies on all sides, as long as we live on this earth. They are threatening to deprive us of the light of faith, so that, blind and maimed, we may fall into their captivity and become a reproach unto angels and men. To whom shall we send for help and relief? To Mary, our Perpetual Help! Yes if we but call on the Queen of Heaven with all confidence, she is sure to come to our rescue. She is that woman spoken of by St. John in the Apocalypse to whom "two wings of a great eagle were given, that she might fly into the desert." (Apoc. XII 14) and come to our aid. The wings of the eagle express the readiness and the swiftness with which Mary flies to take under her powerful protection those who place themselves under her care. The words have scarce left our lips calling upon her aid, when she is already by our side, guarding and defending us against the attacks of our enemies. There is therefore no means so sure and easy for overcoming temptations as to run to our heavenly Mother and call her again and again-- "We fly to thy patronage, O holy Mother of God; despise not our prayers in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O ever glorious and blessed Virgin!"

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## FOURTH DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP OF SINNERS

St. John says: - "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." (I. St. John 1,8.) We all therefore are sinners and because of our sins we are unworthy to appear in God's sight. Yet for our comfort and consolation let us remember that. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just." (I. St. John II, I.) Jesus Christ is our loving brother and as such, He is sure to plead for grace and mercy on our behalf. Jesus Christ is the son of the everlasting Father and as such, He is sure to be heard. Yet Jesus Christ is also truly God. And when we consider our sinfulness and our unworthiness to appear in His presence, to whom shall we go? Take courage, poor unfortunate sinner! When the Divine Majesty of Jesus terrifies thee and keep thee from approaching His Mercy seat: remember Mary, His Mother and thine, to whom you may go: Mary, who is the Perpetual Help of sinners.

Mary, is most anxious and zealous about the eternal welfare of our immortal souls. She is a most wise and prudent Virgin, knowing how to appease the just anger of the Divine Judge. She is the mother of all Christians and will therefore refuse her assistance to none of her children. Be of good heart therefore, poor unfortunate sinner, and take courage. This holy Virgin who is the Mother of our God and of your judge, is the mediatrix of the human race. She is full of zeal for your salvation and is powerful with God to do all the desires on your behalf. She is a most wise and prudent Virgin and knows what means to employ to appease the just anger of God and incline Him to mercy. She is the common Mother of all and will not exclude anyone from his loving care and protection. Mary is thus, the Perpetual Help of sinners.

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## FIFTH DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP OF SINNERS

Holy Job says:-- "Man born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries" (Job XIV, I.) The same idea is uppermost in that touching prayer of the Church: "Hail, holy Queen! Mother of Mercy!... to thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve! To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning, and weeping in this valley of tears." Exiled from our heavenly home, we are compelled to drag on a miserable existence on this earth, once a paradise, now the abode of all miseries and afflictions. But we remember Mary, our heavenly Queen and Mother, and so we cry to her and send up to her from the valley of tears our sighs and prayers: for Mary is our perpetual help in the miseries and afflictions of this life-- Why weepest thou, afflicted souls? Ah, it may be, you have some dear relation, a son or daughter, a father or mother, a husband or wife, who has strayed from the path of virtue and turned away from GOD. Turn to Mary, she has a heart to understand your weeping. It is impossible that she could not sympathize with you in your sufferings and have compassion upon you. She understands our sufferings better than we do ourselves and cannot be insensible to them. There is none among the saints of GOD, who has such compassion upon our sufferings as the Mother of GOD. St. Jerome says: Even when Mary as yet lived, on this earth, her heart was ever full of tender compassion for every one, to such an extent that there never existed anyone who suffered as much in his own sufferings of others. "And now that she is in heaven," demands St. Peter Damien. "and has been raised to the dignity of Queen of Heaven, has she become oblivious of our earthly miseries? GOD forbid that we should even entertain such a thought. Such compassion as is found in Mary's heart, can never forget miseries and afflictions under which we groan." Mary then is our perpetual help in the miseries of this life.

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## SIXTH DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP IN SORROW

Sin is the only real evil in the world and the cause of every other evil. It was on account of sin that death and all miseries came into this world. It is in punishment of sin, that GOD visits us with many ills and temporal misfortunes. Yet GOD, in punishing the sinner does not wish the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live. For this cause also He has given us Mary to be our perpetual help in sorrow and tribulations. Mary's protection is far more powerful and efficacious than we imagine. What is the reason why GOD who was wont to punish so rigorously in the Old Law is now so lenient and indulgent in regard to sinners? GOD does so primarily out of love for His Son. Who is "always living to make intercession for us." Yet, He does so also out of love for Mary, the Mother of His Son, who is ever pleading in our behalf; so that it is true to say: Were it not for Mary's intercession, the world by reason of its iniquities, would long since have perished. How many a poor sinner has obtained forgiveness of sin, because he had recourse to Mary! In her tender compassionate heart all men find a safe harbour and a secure resting place. Here the poor find relief; the sick have their health restored, the sorrowful find consolation, and the abandoned a safe refuge. What then should we poor mortals do in our sorrows and tribulations with Mary! Hence we should be truly grateful to GOD for having given us Mary to be our perpetual help, so that by appealing to her Mother's heart, we may escape the penalties our sins justly deserve.

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## SEVENTH DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP IN SORROW

The Church is the spouse of Christ, whom He has purchased with His most Precious Blood; she is therefore most closely allied to Mary the Mother of Christ. Mary moreover co-operated with her Divine Son in the formation of the Church. Finally Mary was by her Divine Son crowned Queen of heaven and earth and is therefore the Queen of GOD's universal Church. Hence St. Antonious rightly remarks that the Church has been placed by God himself not only under the protection but under the very dominion of Mary. Will a Mother even abandon her child in the hour of trial or will a queen deliver up her dominion to the enemy? For this reason the Apostles after the death of Jesus, looked upon Mary as their perpetual help. To her they had recourse to be enlightened in their doubts, to be comforted in their afflictions, and to do in our sorrows and tribulations will be encouraged in their difficulties. Yet she too was to die. By a special ordinance of Divine Providence, all the Apostles were present at her death. Did she leave them without some parting words of consolation? We may rightly therefore represent to ourselves Mary on her death bed thus addressing the Apostles: "My dear children! I will not leave you orphans. I am about to leave you, yet not to abandon you, but rather to assist you all the more effectually. Moreover, I bequeath unto you more than my heart; for I leave you my Divine Son in the Holy Eucharist. Labour to propagate the true faith and gather men into the true Church; and I shall be your perpetual help." -- Mary has indeed ever been the perpetual help of the Church. The Church on her part has never ceased to implore Mary's aid in the hour of trial, while Mary on her part has never failed to come to her aid by crushing the power of the enemies of God's Church.

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## EIGHTH DAY

### Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP OF THE DYING

Holy Job rightly declared the life of man to be a continual warfare (Job VII, I). Yet of all the struggles through which man has to pass the final combat or death struggle is the most formidable. It is not merely a combat between life and death, struggling for the possession of man's body, but rather a combat between heaven and hell, struggling for the possession of man's immortal soul. Hell employs all its powers and cunning to bring about the everlasting ruin of that soul. The evil spirit who tempted that soul during the course of its earthly career, appears on the scene once more, yet not alone; for he has called together and brought along with him, a number of other evil spirits, who now combine their efforts to hurl that soul into everlasting perdition. Which of us shall gain the victory in that awful struggle? He who during his life has been a truly devoted servant of Mary. How can a Mother abandon her child in the direst hour of need; and even though she should, yet never will Mary forget her children in the hour of death. She cannot be unmindful of the oft-repeated prayer that is rising up to her throne daily and hourly from millions of hearts: "Holy Mary Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. -- Amen." Mary is indeed the Perpetual Help of the dying.

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## NINTH DAY

### **Meditation: MARY OUR PERPETUAL HELP OF THE POOR SOULS IN PURGATORY**

A noble youth had been condemned to a degrading death by starvation in a loathsome dungeon. He was the only son of his mother, an aged widow lady, who loved him intensely and who by dint of her tears and repeated entreaties, obtained permission to visit her son in prison. Full of that tender, yet strong love and affection of which only a mother is capable, she visited him daily and succeeded, despite the watchfulness of the goalers to supply him secretly with food.

Meanwhile she ceased not to employ her influence and wealth until she also succeeded on obtaining full pardon and release from prison. Oh! What a touching scene it must have been to see that mother clasp her son to her breast and conduct him forth from death and captivity to life and liberty! Here we have a picture of what we may piously believe happens to the suffering souls, detained in the prison Purgatory. Are they not all Mary's children? Do they not suffer severely, and long ardently for the day of their deliverance? And how can Mary, their tender loving Mother, see them in that pitiful condition without coming to their relief? The rich man, of whom Our Divine Lord spoke in the parable, called upon Father Abraham to send someone who might dip his finger in water and give him even one drop of water to cool his parched tongue. But no one could go; for there is fixed an impassable gulf between heaven and hell. But there is no such gulf between heaven and purgatory. If then the suffering souls look up and behold their Mother in her glory and call upon her, will she not answer that call and comfort her children by a personal visit? Surely if she is queen she has a right to take the keys and enter the prison chambers where her children are and enter the prison chambers where her children are detained and if she is a Mother, what comfort and consolation will she not afford them by her visit? Nay, will she not go further and obtain by her powerful intercession a speedy deliverance from their prison, and when she has obtained full pardon for anyone, will she not consider it a Mother's privilege to go and announce the welcome news and conduct that happy soul to the mansions of heaven? Mary is then the Perpetual Help even of the souls in Purgatory.

### **PRAYER TO BE SAID EACH DAY AFTER THE MEDITATION**

O Mother of Perpetual Help, behold me a miserable sinner at thy feet; I have recourse to thee and put my trust in thee. O Mother of Mercy have pity upon me. I hear thee called by all the refuge and the hope of sinners, be then my refuge and my hope. Help me for the love of Jesus Christ; stretch forth thy hand to me, who recommend and dedicate myself to thee as thy perpetual servant. I bless and thank GOD for having in His mercy given to me this confidence in thee, the pledge as I believe of my eternal salvation. Alas! Too often in past times have I miserably fallen, because I had not recourse to thee! I know that with thy help I shall conquer. I know that thou will help me if I recommend myself to thee; but i fear lest in the occasions of falling I should cease to call upon thee and so should lose my soul. This, then, is the grace I seek from thee; and I conjure thee, as far as I know how and can, to obtain it for me; namely, in the assaults of hell always to have recourse to thee and to say to thee: O Mary help me; Mother of Perpetual Help, suffer me not to lose my God.

Five "Hail Mary's" to obtain the special favours you seek -- then: -- Holy Mary, assist the miserable, help the faint hearted, cheer those that weep, pray for the people be the advocate of the clergy, intercede for all devout woman; let all feel thine aid who implore thy perpetual help.

V. Thou has been for us, Our Lady, a refuge.

R. A helper in needs and tribulation.

### **LET US PRAY**

Oh almighty and merciful GOD, who hast given us to venerate the picture of Thy most Blessed Mother, under the special title of Perpetual Help, graciously grant that, amidst all the changes of our journey through life, we may be so defended by the continual protection of the same Immaculate, ever Virgin Mary, that we may deserve to obtain the rewards of Thy eternal Redemption; Who livest and reignest, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit; world without end. Amen.