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Novena to Saint Josemaria for Students

God walks with us and his friends, the saints, are “allies” who help us. On 17 November, International Students’ Day, here is a novena to St. Josemaria for students.

11/17/2023

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Are you a student about to start college or university? Maybe you're

eagerly anticipating finishing your studies, or perhaps you are busy with many other commitments while you study.

Well, this prayer is for you! Life as a student can be so challenging and often involves worry and hard work. Look at what happened to Jacob in the Old Testament, who, after so many years of working to forge his way in life, was able to say: *If the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had not been for me, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, so He rendered judgment last night (Gen 31:42).*

God also walks with you through His friends – the saints – who are like “allies” to help you.

Saint Josemaría, the founder of Opus Dei, is one of these saints. He lived the life of a student intensely because

he was completing his law degree and doctorate while he was studying to be a priest.

He was always surrounded by students as he promoted many activities of formation. For this reason, the founder of Opus Dei identifies with you and with the situation you find yourself in now. He is your “ally” in Heaven and you can count on his support to help you carry out your studies.

How can he help you? By following his message and example, you can learn to study well and to do so out of love for God and for the good of other people. In the midst of adverse situations facing many nations, you can ask him to intercede for you and help you overcome challenges so that you can successfully complete your studies.

Are you thinking of asking for his help? Well, we suggest praying this novena for students.

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How to pray the novena

This novena, designed for students at any level – whether in high school, university, technical institutes, internships, or postgraduate studies – can be carried out however suits your circumstances. Rest assured that Saint Josemaría will help you. He will present your requests before God with the understanding of someone who was a student, and who helped many students, teaching them to use their circumstances to become better people and to grow as children of God.

Each day of the novena consists of two parts:

1) The first part is a selection of texts, teachings from St. Josemaría Escrivá with insights into Christian doctrine and practical guidance on some specific aspect of student life. These texts are included as themes for reflection (individually or in a group) and for self-examination.

2) The second part consists of a series of intentions, requests directed to God, through the intercession of St. Josemaría, translating the topics for meditation into concrete resolutions; sincere efforts to improve in virtues, attitudes, and effective actions for our well-being.

You can use all the texts in the novena or choose a few to focus on. If you want to pray this novena, we suggest the following:

- It is meant for students who want to sanctify themselves by fulfilling their academic duties; you can pray it alone or with

others. Teachers might also want to use it to pray for their students.

- The novena can be done over nine consecutive days, or on a single day each week for nine weeks, or less regularly, with longer intervals between the prayers. Choose the pace that works for you.
- When a group of students are praying the novena together, they can divide the reading between them, reading the texts for reflection, intentions, and the final prayer aloud, slowly and clearly. The person leading or coordinating the novena can say the final prayer. Each student or group of students, in addition to freely choosing the texts they want to use, will decide whether or not to take a silent pause after each text for reflection and each intention. Spontaneous comments can

also be made, but avoid criticism and arguments.

- If it is not possible to pray the novena with others, you can pray it individually. The novena texts can also be used for personal meditation and self-examination in silence before our Lord God.

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Ecclesiastical Approval

Today, the feast of the Blessed Virgin of Coromoto, Patroness of Venezuela, I present, with great satisfaction and full of hope, the ecclesiastical approval for the publication of the Novena to Saint Josemaría for the students. I trust that, through your intercession, many young people will obtain very concrete help to sanctify their study tasks in the different academic, work and technical tasks

and challenges that they have to face. I hope, above all, that it helps us discover, in the midst of hours of study and work, that kind face of Jesus Christ, who renews us from within and invites us to give our best every day.

Msgr. Fernando José Castro Aguayo.

*Bishop of Margarita. Venezuela.
September 11, 2020.*

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