

Novena to Our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Francis Xavier
December 3, 2017 - December 11, 2017

Introduction

May God's peace and hope be with us as we pray our Novena to Our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Francis Xavier. We offer our prayers in solidarity with our undocumented brothers and sisters who are DREAMers and/or in the DACA program. We pray for a just, comprehensive, and compassionate immigration reform, especially the passing of a clean DREAM Act. A clean DREAM Act would provide a clear pathway to citizenship without any anti-immigrant agenda attached.

A little background... As a result of the rescinding of Deferred Action for Early Childhood Arrivals (DACA), the US Congress has been tasked with formalizing a law that will undoubtedly impact the nearly 800,000 DREAMer Americans who relied on DACA for the temporary relief it provided them including protection from deportation and permission to work and drive. **Many members of our own Arizona Jesuit communities and families are impacted by the rescission of DACA.** Arizona Jesuit institutions stand with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Arizona Catholic Conference, and the Jesuit Conference in supporting our immigrant brothers and sisters and urging Congress to support a clean DREAM Act. In collaboration with St. Francis Xavier Jesuit Parish and School, Brophy College Preparatory and the Kino Border Initiative, we pray this Novena as part of our advocacy plan of prayer and action.

Each day of our Novena, we have a reflection from "What Pope Francis Says About Community & Unity," prayer from our holy card (page 3), and a song. It is most appropriate to begin our Novena with a few prayers from our Brophy students in the DACA program:

"I pray for the thousands of DACA recipients that feel like they don't have a voice in our society. For all the families that have been separated due to deportation. I hope that our government realizes that people's lives are at risk with our immigration policy. I pray that we mature as a society and find kindness in our hearts to love one another despite of our differences." - Yael

"My hope for the following months is for Congress and the POTUS to have a clear understanding of what the true wishes of DREAMers are. I hope that the leaders of this country become mindful of the fact that wanting to succeed is a human instinct that is hardwired into us as humans. Being on DACA symbolizes the desire to stay in a country that you call home because it is the setting in which you were raised. I hope for a future that allows me to live in this country which I call home without being treated as though I am a stranger." - Saul

"With DACA being rescinded, I hope people begin to recognize the value of DREAMers. I hope the employer recognizes the undocumented employee that shows up early everyday just to get a head-start on their tasks. I hope friends recognize their undocumented loved ones who bring a smile to their face everyday. But above all, I hope people begin to recognize undocumented students, friends and coworkers, as people who embody what it means to be an American and love the "American Dream." Because what can be more American than an immigrant that brings his/her children over to the United States for a better life? The undocumented children themselves. The DREAMers. The modern representation of our idolized European pilgrims." - Nelson

AMDG

God of Unity and Love,

You created us in your image and likeness from love to love. You gave us the gift of life and made us part of this beautifully diverse family. May we honor the life and dignity of all our brothers and sisters. Help us to remember that we belong to you and to one another.

May we stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are undocumented and arrived in the U.S. as children. May we value the sacrifices parents and grandparents make to give their children a better life and more opportunities as we recall as our roots as immigrants. Help us to advocate for our families to stay together. Help us to remember and better accompany our brothers and sisters who are in detention centers or have been deported and separated from families in our community.

Our brothers and sisters known as DREAMers enrich our community as students, employees, parishioners, teammates, friends, volunteers, and members of the military. May we listen carefully to our undocumented brothers and sisters' stories and be inspired. Help us to persevere in urging our senators and representatives to support and pass comprehensive immigration reform that is just and compassionate, beginning with a clean DREAM Act.

St. Francis Xavier, as the patron of missions, you understand what it means to be at home in a country where you were not born. You were immersed in cultures and languages different from your parents and became one with our brothers and sisters in Asian countries. Intercede on our behalf that we may be at home with one another and free from all fear.

Blessed Mother Mary, you have appeared to countries all over the world reflecting the image of the people to whom you appeared. You spoke in the people's language sharing God's message of love, hope and unity. Bring us closer to God and one another. Place your mantle of protection over our DREAMers and our families.

May we patiently work to widen our circle of compassion and erase the lines that divide us so no one is excluded.* Help us to live with hope and joy that we may all be one, trusting that the best is yet to come. Amen.

Sr. Christa Parra, IBVM

SFX School Counselor

*Adapted from Fr. Greg Boyle.

**Sunday, Dec. 3rd, Feast Day of St. Francis Xavier
Day 1**

Call to Prayer

Good (afternoon, morning, or evening) and welcome.

We remember St. Francis Xavier, on his Feast Day not only as a person **for** others, but **with** others. St. Francis learned the language and culture of those he encountered and demonstrated by his actions unconditional love for his brothers and sisters in Christ. He promoted unity and love with his life and we ask him to pray for us to do the same.

We begin our prayer in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Reflection

The Power of Prayer

We must walk together, we must pray for one another, we must find ways to cooperate however we can in this world for the people of God, otherwise unity will not come about.

Preparing ourselves to start on this journey toward unity- getting ready to step out of our comfort zones in order to reach out in compassion rather than confrontation- can leave us at loose ends. How do we begin? Pope Francis brings it all back to prayer and the openness to pray together. When you think about it, what better method could we have to start to grow together than to pray for one another? If we begin to pray honestly for another's intentions, we begin to build the bridge to understanding and unity. (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

We trust the Holy Spirit is with us and guiding our Novena. God bless us on our journey.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uJv7ehbrKs>

Holy Spirit by Genesis & Nikki

Ponder

When was the last time I prayed for someone's intention- someone I didn't know?
(Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, open my heart to welcome all your people into my prayers!
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Monday, Dec. 4th
Day 2

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and love and breathe out any worries or fears. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

A Single Family

We are journeying toward unity, working through our many differences through dialogue and a sense of our common nature.

Pope Francis is fond of Blessed Paul VI's closing homily from Vatican II, where he said that to the Catholic Church, no one is a stranger, no one is unwelcome. Is this a reality in our parishes, our workplaces, our cities, and our homes today? Not necessarily, and this is why Pope Francis asks us to remember that all of us are created in God's image, and all of us are family, no matter where we come from, what economic status we have, or what our ethnic or social orientation might be. When we remember this, he says, then our dialogue together becomes all the richer for our many viewpoints. (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ir_aCbi3AzA

Open My Eyes Lord by Jesse Manibusan and Santiago Fernandez

Ponder

Whom do I exclude from "my" circle? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, help me to see everyone I need as a reflection of you!
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Tuesday, Dec. 5th
Day 3

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and hope and breathe out any stress or anxiety. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

All Beloved Children

There is only one real certainty: we are all children of God.

In today's often-broken, troubled world, it is easy to take sides, to pick a camp, to speak in terms of "us" and "them." Pope Francis urges us not to lose sight of the call and responsibility of our baptism- to see all people as brothers and sisters, to forgive without counting the cost, to be generous with what we have to those who have less. Does this fit in with most of the images the world gives us? No, but that's what makes us disciples of Christ. We reach out in hope of unity because it is what we are asked to do, not because it's fashionable. Christianity, well practiced, certainly is countercultural. (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n6W1Q-ZeLc>

We Belong to You by Trevor Thomson Victoria Thomson

Ponder

Today, can I look at everyone I meet as a loved one? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, help me to see with your eyes and to reach out in love as you do.
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Wednesday, Dec. 6th
Day 4

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and joy and breathe out any negativity. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

We're All God's Chosen People

Sometimes it's easy to forget the journey of healing and conversion that the Lord has made with us. We need to recapture that vision so that we can celebrate together.

With fewer priest and fewer faithful in the pews, parishes are clustering, yoking, even closing. At the same time, immigration and shifting populations are bringing big changes to many of the parishes those who liked their parish the way it was. But Pope Francis says that we need to see with the eyes of Jesus: Jesus was with us when the original parishioners built the parish: and he is with us now, ready to greet the Spirit's movement along with us. (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=numWIRxEsOU>

Holy Spirit, Come Now/Santo Espiritu, Ven by Jesse Manibusan and Santiago Fernandez

Ponder

Is my community the same today as it is was five years ago? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, open my heart!
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Thursday, Dec. 7th
Day 5

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and mercy and breathe out frustration or sadness. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

God's Love and Mercy Are For All

Inclusion is so important. God's mercy excludes no one. In following Christ, we need to be open to the needs of others, especially these who have the least.

All of us were newcomers once- in a country or workplace or parish or classroom, perhaps. And we've all been in situations where we needed help. But when we are settled and comfortable, it's all too easy to forget what it was like to be new or in need. In the same way, says Pope Francis, it may be easy to judge others while forgetting how we ourselves have experienced Jesus' love and mercy. Only by keeping that memory fresh can we reach out to all. (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0irHTawqIyE>

This is Your Justice by Craig Colson, Ed Bolduc, and Karen Bolduc

Ponder

Can I make one gesture today toward someone new in my school, workplace, my neighborhood, or my parish? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, help me to remember when I was the new one or in need, and help me reach out to others with the mercy you have always shown me.

Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

**Friday, Dec. 8th, Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception
Day 6**

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and compassion and let go of judgement of any kind. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

A Culture of Encounter

What can we do to encourage individuals and groups to share the richness of their traditions and experiences, to break down walls and build bridges? The answer is to build a culture of encounter.

Pope Francis is clear that we need to create the right atmosphere to encourage unity's growth. By preparing ourselves in prayer to be open to the Spirit's prompting, we start to broaden our focus to be accepting of others' perceptions and impressions. In many parishes today, we have a mixture of cultures that exist side by side but have a hard time sharing goals and dream as well as space. It we are serious about unity, then we have to be the ones to start building the bridges that will bring us together. If we are open to the challenge, the rewards will be enormous. (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8Qi6DZHUmE>

Santa Maria del Camino by Angeli

or

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuRKMvRIEGU>

Ave Maria by Jesse Manibusan

Ponder

What do I do on a regular basis to engage with cultures different from my own? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, help me to build bridges!

Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Saturday, Dec. 9th
Day 7

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and courage and let go of self doubt. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

In Perfect Harmony

We need one another; we need to encounter one another and to challenge one another. When we do this under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our diversities and conflicts can be overcome.

Pope Francis calls us to discover our interdependence, our deep need for one another. Will we always agree? No. Should we always agree? No. But our interactions should always be conversations and not debates. We don't need to engage in what he calls "subtle theoretical discussions" - what we need to do is discover how God's love is manifest in cultures and languages and faith professions different from our own. Then we'll begin to discover how beautiful and all-encompassing God's vision is, and how wonderful it is to share that good news! (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aO6TAHD2Rxs>

Christ in Me Arise by Trevor Thomson

Ponder

What can I learn today about how another faith expresses its love of God? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, give me the gift of learning something from everyone I meet.
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Sunday, Dec. 10th
Day 8

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and patience and let go of anger or negative thoughts. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

Moving Forward Together

What do we need to do? Pray for one another. This is extremely important: prayer. And second, do things together. Let us do some good for others, together.

Pope Francis says that differences of doctrine can be left to the theologians. In the meantime, there is plenty of work for the people of God to do. First and foremost, Pope Francis says, we must pray together. Then we must find ways to work together, to use our different gifts for a common cause- the care of the poor, migrants, and refugees, wherever and whomever among God's children are outcast or ignored. This in itself will help us to unite and build community. And it may help us to see Christ revealed in places we'd never have imagined! (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3NelRb1LY4>

God of Justice (We Must Go) by Tim Hughes HD

Ponder

Who are the "invisibles" in my own community? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, expand my vision to see you everywhere, in everyone, always!
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.

Optional Music Video for Reflection

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lNJviuYUEQ>

ICE Hielo by La Santa Cecilia

Lyrics in English:

<https://www.musixmatch.com/lyrics/La-Santa-Cecilia/Ice-el-Hielo-Full-Version/translation/english>

Monday, Dec. 11th
Day 9

Call to Prayer

Take a deep breathe in and slowly exhale. Breathe in God's peace and unity and breathe out anything that prevents you from being your best self and a person for others. Take another deep breathe in and slowly release that breathe.

Be still and know that God is with us and we are with God.
Pause for a moment.

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

Reflection

The Path to Empathy

Come to my house, enter my heart. My heart welcomes you. It wants to hear you.

Beyond understanding, beyond acceptance, beyond compassion, says Pope Francis, lies the all-important quality of empathy. This is when we truly walk in another's shoes and really see God revealed in the other. It calls for listening with more than our ears. It means listening with our hearts. Without this openness and receptivity, unity is impossible. With it, the people of God can work wonders. Our goal as baptized people is always to share the good news of God's love. Pope Francis gives us many helpful ways to build the trust and love we need to carry out that work. Let us begin, in unity and friendship, confident that God's presence will see us through! (Pause for a moment of silence).

Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Spo7pIMApnc>

Para Amar Como Tu by Santiago Fernandez and Jesse Manibusan

or

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFXAmB_Iq7k

The Summons by John L Bell

Ponder

How can I listen better to others with my heart? (Pause for a moment of silence).

Pray

God of unity and love, fill me with your life so that I may share it always!
Pray with your holy card or go to page 3.