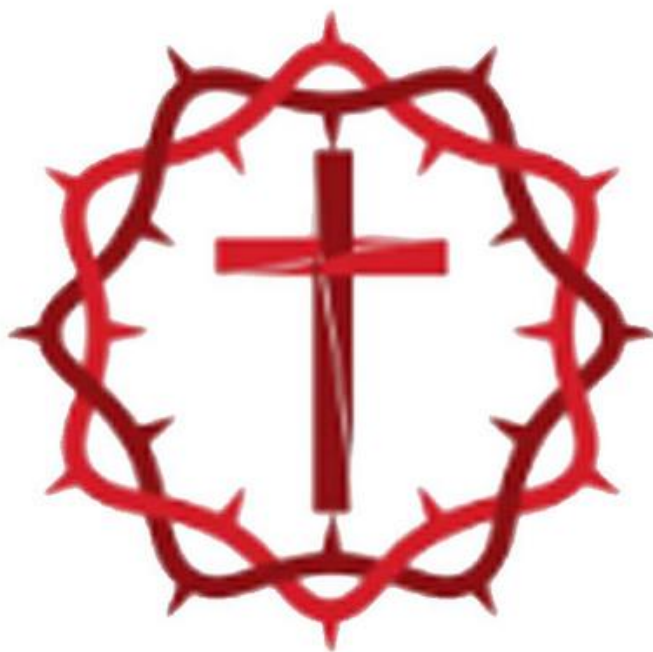


St. Dymphna Novena for Mental Health



*Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28-30).*

Introduction

Saint Dymphna lived in the 7th century as the daughter of a pagan king who ruled over what is now Ireland. Her mother, a Christian who raised her daughter after Christ, died when Dymphna was still young. Her father went into a deep state of distress that soon brought him to the verge of a mental collapse. The king's advisors suggested a second marriage, and the king agreed as long as his new wife looked exactly like his old. They searched far and wide for a suitable bride, but the king rejected them all. They then suggested his daughter, for, after all, she did look like her mother. The king was shocked but then began to agree with his advisors and began to desire after his daughter. When he approached Dymphna, she was appalled and refused, but he would not give up. Dymphna had to flee her home and cross the sea, but spies followed her. When her father caught up to her and her group, he coaxed and tried to manipulate Dymphna into marrying him. When she refused again, he fell to threats. Dymphna still refused and told him that she had made a vow of perpetual virginity. Enraged, the king leaped from his horse in pure fury and cut off the head of his own daughter. Dymphna was just 15 years old. After having lived with her father as he struggled against his various mental illnesses, Dymphna knows what it's like to see a loved one fall deeper and deeper into mental distress. While the story is shocking, you must remember that it is the story of a daughter and her dad; how, day after day, Dymphna took care of her dad, just as you take care of your loved one who struggles with mental illness or you are taken care of by loved ones. Dymphna knows the pain of being helpless against the ravages of the mind. At her age, there were no hospitals, counselors, or medications to heal the wounds of the mind. But in our age, there are. Reach out, get help. And talk to this great Saint. She wants to help you just as she so dearly wanted to help her dad.

Special Note

This version of the novena composed by Fr. Richmond Dzekoe combines prayers from the St. Dymphna novena and other Catholic prayers, such as the Act of Contrition and the Holy Rosary, as well as short meditation and a concluding prayer.

STRUCTURE

- Sign of the Cross
- Act of Contrition

Oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you. I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of Hell. But most of all, because I offended you, oh my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen

- Our Father, Three Hail Mary, & Glory Be
- Silence: Mention Intention
- Prayer: "*Oh Jesus, grant me peace of mind and calm my troubled heart*" (10 Times)
- The Day's Meditation (After the third decade)

Day 1
God sees what you're going through

Reflection

God sees what you're going through. Scripture hints that God knows more about us than we know about ourselves. Even when we lack the words to communicate how we feel--when what we're feeling might simply be a big emptiness--God's Spirit communicates on our behalf.

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words." (Romans 8:26).

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!

St. Dymphna, helper of the mentally afflicted, pray for us.

Day 2
You don't need to do it alone

Reflection

You don't need to do it alone. Scripture challenges us to be present for one another. Christians believe that God perfectly exemplified such a challenge in the person of Jesus of Nazareth--who was God on earth. God came to be with us--and so we might be present with one another. *"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26).*

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!

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Day 3
Reaching out does not make you weak

Reflection

Reaching out does not make you weak. So often, we resist reaching out not because we don't know where to turn--but because we fear being vulnerable. Jesus met others in moments of vulnerability. Jesus did not chastise or condemn these individuals. Instead, he took steps to make them well. He reminds us: *"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28-30).*

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!
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Day 4
There is hope, even when you don't feel it

Reflection

There is hope, even when you don't feel it. There is still work being done on your behalf. Good things are still possible. Scripture offers many reminders of hope for those of us feeling disconnected and hopeless at the moment. *"For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." (Romans 8:24-25).*

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!
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Day 5
Hold on to the Joy of the Lord

Reflection

Hold on to the Joy of the Lord. No matter how hard your life is right now, God is not done. He is working right now, and he will continue to work every day to make this better for you. Hold on to the joy of the Lord. Joy is not what you need after the battle is over; joy is what you need to enter the battle and win the victory with Christ. In prison and "*about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once, all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.*" (Act 16: 25-26).

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!
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Day 6
Find Joy in little things in life

Reflection

Find joy in little things in life. A journey of thousand miles begins with a step. While you cannot control the past, you can keep good memories and use painful experiences as lessons to better respond to life today and the future. God is always doing something new, and there is always some joy in the day only if you look for it in the little things in life. "*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.*" (Romans 12:12).

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!
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Day 7

Let your sufferings draw you closer to God

Reflection

Let your sufferings draw you closer to God. When God does not save us from the storms and fires of life, he is walking with us to renew our hearts and our lives. He did not promise an easy road. He promised to be there. He does not take his eyes off his children. Don't change your devotion to God because of the challenges of life. Remain rooted in Him, and you will find strength and new life. "*The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.*" (Psalm 34:18).

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!

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Day 8

God wants your healing

Reflection

God wants you healed. Life can be challenging and frightening. Sometimes, it really hurts to be a human being. It also can be quite unpredictable and, at times, unfair. We face our vulnerability and brokenness of all kinds: physical, emotional, and spiritual. Even when you hit rock bottom and feel like you can go no further, there is always hope. Remember that God made you, God loves you, God keeps you, and God wants you healed from all brokenness. "*I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you.*" (2 Kings 20:5).

Prayer

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!

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Day 9
Help others carry their cross

Reflection:

Help others carry their cross. "Take up your cross and follow me" means do not be afraid to enter into people's life and walk with them through their sufferings and pain. The wood of the Cross that Jesus carried was the ultimate symbol of our problems that He had made his own as He shares in our hunger, thirst, brokenness, and pains. He calls us, his disciples, to do the same. "*Carry one another's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ.*" (Galatians 6:2)

Prayer:

O God, we humbly beseech You through Your servant, St. Dymphna, who sealed with her blood the love she bore You, to grant relief to those who suffer from mental afflictions and nervous disorders, especially... (*Pause and Silently Mention your request here...*). You graciously chose St. Dymphna as patroness of those afflicted with mental and emotional illnesses. She is an inspiration and a symbol of charity to all who ask for her intercession. Grant through the prayers of this pure youthful martyr consolation and healing to all who suffer such trials. I beg you, Lord, to hear the prayers of St. Dymphna on my behalf. Grant me patience in suffering and acceptance of Your Divine Will. Fill my heart with hope, and grant me the relief and strength I so much desire. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen!
St. Dymphna, helper of the mentally afflicted, pray for us.

Concluding Prayer

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those whose spirit is crushed (Psalm 34:18-20). Loving God, you are always near to us, especially when we are weak, suffering, and vulnerable. Reach out to those who experience mental illness. Lift their burdens, calm their anxiety, and quiet their fears. Surround them with your healing presence that they may know that they are not alone. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen!