

NOVENA FOR DISCERNMENT OF FOSTERING AND ADOPTION

Each day, pray the following:

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

Dear God, we thank You for all the blessings
you have given us, and praise You for the
many ways You are at work in our lives. We
ask You today to bless us with the grace of
purposeful discernment.

(Pray the intention for the day.)

(Time for personal reflection.)

Lord, hear our prayer! In the name of the
Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy
Spirit.

Amen.



The word “novena” comes from the Latin word for “nine”. Praying a novena has been a Christian tradition for centuries, dating back to the beginnings of Christianity based on the nine days the apostles spent in the upper room with Mary, waiting for help from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1-14). A novena is traditionally prayed to a specific saint for a specific intention, once each day for nine days. But you can adapt it to your schedule and time frame – maybe you will pray once a week for nine weeks, or once an hour for nine hours, if you are in a crunch! You can pray the same prayer each time you pray the novena, or have variations of your prayer for each of your nine conversations with God. However you choose to discern through prayer, we welcome you to use the novena for discernment to help you get started.

QUESTIONS FOR A TIME OF REFLECTION

In addition to the words of the prayer itself, it may be fruitful to add your own words, silently or out loud, in the form of a reflection or question in your conversation with God. As you discern a call to adoption or fostering, here are some questions you might consider as you pray your novena for discernment.

- Why do we feel called to foster or adopt?
- How would a new child fit into our life?
- What limitations do we have in accepting a child? Are we open to children with physical, emotional, or mental challenges? Are we open to sibling groups? Older children? Children of different ethnic backgrounds from our own?
- What does God most want for us in our life right now, as a married couple and as individuals?

We invite you, as a couple, to pray the novena for discernment as you consider these questions and contemplate your call to fostering or adoption.



Springs of Love
CATHOLIC FOSTER & ADOPTION SUPPORT

NOVENA FOR DISCERNMENT

DAILY INTENTIONS

Day 1: Reaching out to God in faith

Lord, we reach out to You today to discern whether we are called to foster or adopt. We know there are so many children in need of loving families. We wonder humbly if this undertaking is one that You would ask of us; if we are prepared for the hardships and heartaches that we may face if we follow this path. Please be with us as we discern this call, and guide our hearts today as we prayerfully consider what it is You ask of us.

Day 2: Openness to our path

Lord, please open our hearts to the path You set before us. We know that there are no easy crosses, and the path to adoption or fostering will not be without struggle and heartache; but we also know that if this is Your will for us, You will provide a way, and the love that will come from adopting or fostering will outweigh the hardships. Please direct our steps and make the path before us clear, so that we may follow your will and fulfill the call that you are asking of us.

Day 3: Recognizing our own imperfections and strengths

Lord, we know that we are not perfect. We continually seek to be the better versions of ourselves that you see in us. Please give us the courage to follow you always wherever the path may take us. We prayerfully consider whether our shortcomings may prevent us from being the adoptive or foster parents that you would want us to be. Lord, please help us also to consider our strengths, and to see how those strengths can be used to bring your love to a child in need of a safe and supportive home. Only You know our true hearts and our full potential; please guide us to know your will for us, whether that be adoption or fostering, or another path.

Day 4: Stepping outside our comfort zone

Lord, we know that adoption or fostering will require much of us: our time, emotional commitment, and many labors of love. We ask for your support as we consider these things, and push ourselves beyond our comfort zone. Are we willing to embrace a child's birth family, and show your love to a birth mother and father? Are we willing to accept a child with extreme physical needs? Mental limitations? Can we be open to sibling groups? To children from ethnic backgrounds or family traditions different from our own? Please help us to prayerfully consider our own limitations, and also our own capabilities, which may be greater than we know. You know us and have a plan for us; please help us to see a glimpse of that plan as we discern whether we are called to foster or adopt.

Day 5: Strength in our marriage

Lord, we pray today for strength in our marriage. We recognize the challenges that all parents face in raising their children, and also know that those challenges may be greater for children who are fostered or adopted. Please strengthen our marriage, that we would come together and provide strength for one another as we discern our call to foster or adopt.

Help us to be open and honest about our hopes and fears regarding parenting, that we may support one another and build a happy and healthy home through open communication with one another. Let our hearts be open to the call that You put before us.

Day 6: Strength in our Community

Lord, we pray today for strength through our community. Please help us to trust and rely on the community of faith that You have given us as we discern our call to foster or adopt. We thank You for the people You have put into our lives who can support us on the path to fostering or adopting: for our family members, near and far; for good friends, who know us well and are always ready to offer help when we need it; and for our community of faith, that strengthens our relationship with You and reminds us that our path will be made clear through prayer and conversation with You.

Day 7: Strength in the Holy Spirit

Lord, we pray today for strength in the Holy Spirit. Please send the Holy Spirit to us as we discern fostering or adoption; and should we become parents through fostering or adoption, let the Holy Spirit guide us and bring us strength. We know that we will not always know the next step to take or the right thing to do or say as parents; please send your Spirit to guide us, to bring us and any children you bring to us closer to You. Help us to rely on You and trust Your way.

Day 8: Surrendering to God's will

Lord, we ask that Your will be done. We surrender ourselves to the path You lay out for us, whatever it may be. We open ourselves up to hardships and heartaches, self-reflection, and emotional vulnerability, in following whatever road You choose for us. We know that you will give us the strength to pursue whatever it is You ask of us, and we give ourselves over to whatever that may be, whether it be fostering or adopting, or taking some other path. We pray that you would make Your way known to us, that we may walk humbly in faith wherever You guide us.

Day 9: Moving Forward in Faith

Lord, we thank You for this time of discernment. We thank You for this time of prayer that brings us closer to You. We pray that You provide us the strength and guidance to move forward, always in faith, on the path that You have set before us. We know that others may not always understand our call to foster or adopt; we know that it will not always be easy; but we know also that You will always be there with us, guiding our steps toward Your will for us. We pray for the next steps in our path of discernment. Thank You for Your guiding light, and for all the people and opportunities You place before us to ease our way.

